

Public views sought on proposed amendments to Noise Control Ordinance

The Environment Protection Department (EPD) today (August 9) released a consultation paper on the proposed amendments to the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO), including (a) strengthening control over the noise from loudspeakers by shops and hawkers for peddling; (b) introduction of a fixed penalty system; (c) adjustment of the maximum fines and empowering the authority to obtain information to enhance enforcement efficiency and deterrent effect; and (d) relaxation of the restrictions on noise from festive celebration activities so that such activities may suitably be carried out after 11pm. The consultation will last for two months until October 8. Members of the public are welcome to offer their views.

A spokesman for the EPD said that the public has been increasingly concerned about issues arising from the noise from domestic premises and street cries from shops. The Government proposed in the 2022 Policy Address to impose control over the use of loudspeakers for street cries and introduce a fixed penalty system to effectively control and remediate associated noise nuisance. To enhance enforcement efficiency, the Government proposes to add relevant provisions to the NCO to empower the authority to request case-related information from any person by serving a written notice. The abovementioned fixed penalty system will also be applicable to other offences of noise emitted from domestic premises and public places in order to deal with the relevant noise issues more effectively.

On the other hand, it is noted that the public generally accepts the noise level generated by festive celebration activities (including music, singing and instrument performing activities) to enjoy the festive atmosphere more. Therefore, the proposed amendments also include the relaxation of restrictions on the noise limit for public entertainment activities at specified festivals.

The consultation paper is available on the EPD website (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/noise/pub_consult/noise_consult.html). Public views on the proposed amendments can be submitted to the EPD as detailed in the consultation document within the consultation period. The EPD will hold a public consultation forum and details will be announced on the website later.