

Setting up of Fishermen Claims Appeal Board

The Government today (August 23) announced the establishment of a Fishermen Claims Appeal Board (FCAB) to process ex-gratia allowance (EGA) appeal cases by fishermen who claim to have been affected by marine works projects implemented in the waters on the northern side of Lantau Island.

The FCAB is a non-statutory body set up on an ad hoc basis and comprises one non-official Chairman and four non-official members. Mr Erik Shum has been appointed as Chairman of the FCAB and the members are Mr Andrew Chan, Mr Thomas Cheng, Mr Kevin Law and Mr James Li. These appointments take immediate effect. Their term will last until completion of the work on all appeals.

Recognising that fishermen affected by marine works projects may suffer a reduction in income and/or may have to incur extra expenses in relocating their fishing activities elsewhere, the Government has put in place a mechanism to grant EGA to the fishermen affected, subject to fulfilment of certain eligibility criteria. An Inter-departmental Working Group (IWG) within the Government has been set up to handle these EGA claims arising from a total of four marine works projects implemented in the said waters. EGA claimants feeling aggrieved by the decisions made by the IWG concerning the EGA amount offered to them or about their eligibility may lodge appeals to the FCAB. A total of 60 related appeals have been received.

The terms of reference of the FCAB are:

- to hear and consider the appeals against the decisions of the IWG relating to the claimants' eligibility for EGA and/or the amount of EGA granted under the Government policy on granting EGA to fishermen affected by marine works projects; and
- having examined any new or additional information/evidence provided by the appellants (or their representatives) or the relevant departments, the relevance of and the weight to be given to such information/evidence, to consider whether to uphold the IWG's decisions on the appellants' cases or to revise the decisions, and to determine the amount of EGA payable to the appellants, as appropriate.

The secretariat of the FCAB will be housed in the Lands Department.