

Appointment of Research Grants Council Chairman

The Government announced today (February 9) that the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, has appointed Professor Timothy Tong Wai-cheung as the Chairman of the Research Grants Council (RGC) for a term of three years with effect from March 1, 2024.

Professor Tong, an expert in the field of heat transfer, was the President of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University between 2009 and 2018. He has over 30 years of teaching, research and administrative experience, with a distinguished public service record. He is currently the Chairman of the Council of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum and a member of the InnoHK Steering Committee and the Global STEM Professorship Scheme Assessment Panel. His past notable public service roles include serving as the Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations and a member of the Advisory Committee on Corruption of the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

"Professor Tong is a prominent scholar, seasoned educator and university administrator. With his profound experience in higher education and research, I am confident that he will continue to strengthen the vibrant research culture in Hong Kong's higher education sector and lead the RGC to scale new heights in the years to come," Dr Choi said.

Dr Choi also paid tribute to Professor Wong Yuk-shan, the outgoing RGC Chairman, for his significant contributions and sterling leadership. "Over his past three years of service, the RGC has excelled and firmly established itself as a major academic research funding body in Hong Kong that is admired internationally and has contributed to strengthening the solid foundation of Hong Kong's academic research. With Professor Wong at the helm, RGC's support has not only expanded considerably, catering to the distinctive needs of researchers in all disciplines, at different career stages, but also deepened the academic exchange and collaboration with the Mainland," she said.

The RGC advises the Government, through the University Grants Committee, on the needs of Hong Kong's higher education institutions in academic research and on the distribution of funding for academic research projects undertaken by academic staff of higher education institutions. The RGC manages a variety of research funding programmes, including the General Research Fund, the Early Career Scheme, the Collaborative Research Fund, the Research Impact Fund, the Theme-based Research Scheme, the Areas of Excellence Scheme, the Strategic Topics Grant and various Joint Research Schemes. It has set up committees and subject panels to assess research bids in various disciplines. It also manages a number of fellowship schemes, such as the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme and the RGC Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme.

Appointments to Human Organ Transplant Board

The Government announced today (February 9) the appointments of two new substantive members and three new panel members to the Human Organ Transplant Board. The reappointments of a substantive member, two panel members and the legal adviser were also made at the same time.

Among the appointments, Dr Emmy Li Yuen-mei and Mr Wong Tim-wai are appointed as new substantive members while Dr Thomas Yau Chung-cheung is reappointed as a substantive member. Meanwhile, Professor Vincent Mok Chung-tong, Dr Chan Ka-yee and Mr Joseph Chow Shiu-wing are appointed as new panel members while Professor Carmen Wong and Ms Hsu Siu-man are reappointed as panel members. K&L Gates is reappointed as the legal adviser. All appointments will take effect from February 15 for a term of three years.

Serving substantive members, Dr Josephine Grace Wong Wing-san and Mr Nicholas Chan Hiu-fung, along with serving panel members, Dr Stanley Tam Kui-fu and Mr Vincent Chin, will retire from the Board upon completion of their term on February 14. A spokesman for the Health Bureau expressed appreciation for their service and contributions to the Board.

Established under section 3 of the Human Organ Transplant Ordinance (Cap. 465), the Human Organ Transplant Board is tasked to consider applications made for the Board's written approval to carry out restricted organ removals and/or restricted organ transplants, to receive prescribed information about transplant operations and certificates accompanying imported organs, and to perform any other functions that the Board is required or permitted to perform under the Ordinance.

The membership of the Board with effect from February 15, 2024, is as follows:

Substantive members

Ms Sandy Wong Hang-yee (Chairperson)
Dr Mark Li Kin-yin (Vice-Chairperson)
Dr Li Chak-ho
Dr Raymond Lo See-kit
Dr Emmy Li Yuen-mei *
Dr Thomas Yau Chung-cheung #
Ms Samantha Ko Kit-mui
Mr Wong Tim-wai *
Ms Priscilla Wong Wai-yee

Panel members

Dr Chan Kwok-ki
Dr Joan Fok Pui-chu
Dr Grace Lui Chung-yan
Dr Loletta So Kit-ying
Dr Chan Ka-yee *
Dr Joyce Tang Shao-fen
Professor Carmen Wong #
Professor Vincent Mok Chung-tong *
Ms Louisa Chu Wai-san
Ms Hsu Siu-man #
Mr Joseph Chow Shiu-wing *
Mr Jason Joseph Lee Kwong-yee
Mr Jonathan Lee Wing-fung

Legal adviser

K&L Gates #

* New appointees

Reappointees

[Judiciary conducts another trial run of live webcast of court proceedings](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (February 9) announced that it will be launching the second trial run of live broadcasting of court proceedings through video webcasting for two appellate proceedings in the Court of Final Appeal (CFA) to be heard respectively in March and May.

Open justice is a key to maintaining public confidence in the judicial system and upholding the rule of law. To enhance the transparency of court procedures and public confidence in the judicial process, the Judiciary has been actively pursuing the initiative of live broadcasting of selected judicial proceedings outside court premises.

The Judiciary launched the first trial run of live broadcasting of court proceedings on two CFA cases heard on January 10 and 16 respectively for testing the technical feasibility of the arrangements, including the information technology and audio-visual setup, as well as the logistical and operational details.

To further test certain technical and operational arrangements including the possible element of remote hearing and another screen layout of fixed grids view, the Judiciary has identified two additional CFA substantive

appeal hearings respectively on March 4 and May 3 for another trial run of live webcast. Major details are as follows:

- Members of the public can view the live webcast of the two selected CFA cases on the CFA website via desktop computers or mobile devices installed with common browsers.
- Relevant information of the live webcast will be provided nearer the time of the court proceedings on the websites of the CFA and the Judiciary.
- After the live webcast ends, the videos of the court proceedings will be uploaded to and kept on the CFA website for three calendar days after the hearing date to allow easy access and flexible viewing.
- Members of the public, including the media, must not record the live webcast or use the live broadcast footage for any purpose. Measures such as digital rights management commonly found on streaming platforms will be put in place to deter unauthorised recording, screen capturing and illegal distribution of the live broadcast footage. Any person who records, edits or re-broadcasts the live broadcast footage without prior permission of the Court is liable for contempt of court or copyright infringement. Warnings will be shown on the CFA website during the live webcast and webcast playback.

Upon completion of the second trial run, the Judiciary will conduct a review and consider the way forward for live broadcasting of court proceedings outside court premises in the longer term.

Property owners fined \$60,000 for not complying with removal order

A property owner who failed to comply with a removal order issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123) was convicted and fined \$60,000 at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts last week.

The case involved an unauthorised swimming pool and an unauthorised ground floor structure with area of about 67 and 54 square metres respectively at a village house in Tai Kek, Pat Heung, Yuen Long. As the

unauthorised building works (UBWs) were carried out without prior approval and consent from the Buildings Department (BD), a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the BD. The owner subsequently completed the removal. After inspection and confirmation by the BD, the owner pleaded guilty and was fined \$60,000 at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on February 2.

A spokesman for the BD said today (February 9), "UBWs may lead to serious consequences. Owners must comply with removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with the removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, to ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the BO. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$200,000 and one year's imprisonment, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.

Postal services to Chile subject to delay

Hongkong Post announced today (February 9) that, as advised by the postal administration of Chile, due to wildfires, mail delivery services to the Valparaíso region in Chile are subject to delay.