

## **TD concerned about cross-boundary traffic in early hours this morning**

A spokesman for the Transport Department (TD) said today (January 1) that in anticipation of a large number of visitors returning to the Mainland in the early hours of the morning after the New Year's Eve fireworks musical, the service operators had already increased the number of vehicles in accordance with the TD's recommendations, for example, strengthening service headway at Prince Edward from every 15 minutes to every 10 minutes, in order to cope with the demand of cross-boundary visitors returning to the Mainland overnight. The TD is concerned about the long waiting time for cross-boundary visitors and will review the situation and take follow-up action.

The spokesman added that as of last night (December 31), the number of visitor arrivals to Hong Kong was 223 000, which was the highest one-day figure in 2023. The Hong Kong Tourism Board's "Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations" fireworks musical on Victoria Harbour, which resumed last night after New Year's Eve 2018, was also very popular, with more than 479 000 people watching on both sides of the Victoria Harbour. The TD has been closely monitoring the traffic situation in various districts after midnight and has maintained liaison with local and cross-boundary transport operators with a view to facilitating the dispersal of local residents and cross-boundary visitors as soon as possible. However, as only the Huanggang Control Point maintained passenger clearance service between Hong Kong and Shenzhen after midnight, and as the number of outbound travellers was higher than expected, the vehicle queue extended from Huanggang Control Point to the San Tin Highway, and therefore even though the cross-boundary bus operators had deployed additional vehicles, visitors still had to wait for a longer time for cross-boundary coaches in the urban area.

The TD will review and follow up the incident with the relevant departments and service operators with a view to providing better service arrangements for cross-boundary visitors.

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## **Special announcement on voltage dip in New Territories**

Attention TV and radio duty announcers:

Please broadcast the following special announcement as soon as possible, and repeat it at suitable intervals:

A voltage dip occurred in part of the areas in New Territories at 3.17pm today (January 1), resulting in cases of person being shut in lift and automatic fire alarm.

Members of the public who are being affected by the incidents are advised to stay calm. The Fire Services Department is conducting rescue operations and handling the incidents.

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## **Members of seventh term District Councils take oaths and assume office**

The Government today (January 1) held the oath-taking ceremony for members of the seventh term District Councils (DCs) at the Conference Hall of the Central Government Offices.

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, attended the ceremony. He congratulated the DC members on their taking of oaths and assumption of office. He outlined four requirements for the DC members, namely upholding the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (Basic Law) and bearing allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China; ensuring effective communication between the Government and the people by serving as a connection between the two; implementing the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" at the district governance level and upholding the important duty of safeguarding national security; and adopting a people-oriented approach to bring tangible improvements to the community.

Mr Lee also expected the DC members to facilitate the Government in implementing its policies in the districts, strengthening district governance to build a better Hong Kong together.

Pursuant to the Oaths and Declarations Ordinance, all 470 DC members took oaths to uphold the Basic Law and bear allegiance to the HKSAR. The Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, served as the oath administrator as authorised by the Chief Executive.

According to the Interpretation of Article 104 of the Basic Law by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (the Interpretation), the person administering the oath has the duty to ensure that the oath is taken in a lawful manner. He or she shall determine that an oath taken in compliance with the Interpretation and the requirements under the laws of the HKSAR is valid, and that an oath which is not taken in compliance with the Interpretation and the requirements under the laws of the HKSAR is invalid. If the oath taken is determined as invalid, no arrangement shall be made for retaking the oath.

Based on the principles laid down by the Interpretation and the relevant legal provisions, the oath administrator determined that the oaths taken by all 470 DC members were valid.

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## **Red flags hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (January 1) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

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## **Anti-Deception Coordination Centre to enhance scam intervention through SMS communications (with photo)**

The Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) of the Hong Kong Police Force will expand its scheme of “Upstream Scam Intervention” starting tomorrow (January 2) to include sending SMS messages to potential scam victims as a means to provide timely alerts and advice.

The ADCC has registered with the Office of the Communications Authority’s “Short Message Service (SMS) Sender Registration Scheme”, and its “Registered SMS Sender ID” is “#ADCC18222”. The SMS messages aim to send alerts and provide ways for verification and seeking assistance. The ADCC seizes this opportunity to remind members of the public that phishing or malicious messages often contain hyperlinks, QR codes or attachments for installing malicious software on victims’ devices to access sensitive information. Members of the public are urged to be cautious.

In response to the evolving landscape of deception and the imperative need for proactive countermeasures, the ADCC launched the scheme of “Upstream Scam Intervention” in May 2023 in collaboration with 12 retail banks to

enhance the efficacy of preventing deception and mitigating losses incurred by scam victims. By analysing suspicious bank accounts, the scheme identifies individuals who may be at risk of falling victim to scams. Through coordinated efforts between the banks and Police, in addition to contacting these potential victims via phone calls or police visits, the ADCC will expand its prevention efforts to include sending SMS alerts to provide timely warnings. During the interactions, the ADCC officers or bank personnel will provide the potential victims with the needed information, such as details of the implicated bank accounts that they have transacted with, to facilitate their verification and assessment. As of the end of November 2023, 579 ongoing deception cases were intervened under the scheme.

Police reiterate that officers and bank personnel will never, under any circumstances, request the disclosure of personal information or banking credentials, nor the transfer of funds to any accounts during these interactions. To verify callers' identities, the public can contact their respective banks or the ADCC directly via designated contact numbers. Individuals are encouraged to utilise Scameter on the CyberDefender website (<https://cyberdefender.hk/en-us/scameter/>) or the mobile application Scameter+ to check if the recipient bank accounts are associated with any reported scams in order to verify whether their transaction counterparts are suspicious or high-risk.

The scheme of "Upstream Scam Intervention" exemplifies the commitment of the ADCC and the banking sector to combating deception and minimising its impact on individuals and society, thereby fostering a more secure and resilient financial environment. The ADCC and the participating banks dedicate their efforts to ensuring that all engagements are conducted with the utmost professionalism and with the sole purpose of protecting individuals from scams. Members of the public shall remain vigilant against scams at all times and exercise circumspection in their financial dealings.

