LCQ22: Enhancing the efficiency of travellers' immigration clearance at Luohu

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Dennis Lam and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, in the Legislative Council today (June 26):

Question:

It has been reported that the Shenzhen Municipal Government has recently stated that it is planning to redevelop the Luohu Port and hopes to collaborate with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to bring the MTR East Rail Line (ERL) into Luohu and implement "co-location arrangement" at the Luohu Port. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the average time taken for travellers to cross the Luohu Port in each of the past three years;

(2) given that in reply to my question on April 10 this year, the Government pointed out that in planning for the redevelopment of existing boundary control points (BCPs) and the development of new BCPs in the future, the Government would actively explore the adoption of new clearance mode to enhance passenger clearance efficiency, including implementing the "collaborative inspection and joint clearance" mode in new land BCP projects, whether the Government will discuss with the relevant Mainland authorities the implementation of the said mode at the redeveloped Luohu Port to enhance the efficiency of travellers' immigration clearance;

(3) whether it has projected the amount of time savings for travellers crossing the Luohu Port after completion of its redevelopment; and

(4) as it has been reported that the Luohu District's Three-year Action Plan for the Development of a Shenzhen-Hong Kong Integrated Development Demonstration Zone for Attracting Global Resources has unequivocally stated that Shenzhen and Hong Kong will join hands to develop a co-operative demonstration park in Lot B1 of the transit land adjacent to the Luohu Port, whether the Government has estimated the benefits to be brought to the lot's development by bringing ERL into Luohu?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Transport and Logistics Bureau, my reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Dennis Lam is as follows:

(1) Except for the service suspension period during the COVID-19 pandemic, in each of the past three years (2021, 2022 and 2023), the Lo Wu Control Point was able to complete immigration clearance for Hong Kong residents and visitors within 15 minutes and 30 minutes respectively.

(2) to (4) Having a long history, the Lo Wu Port has connected Hong Kong and Shenzhen since the 1900s. It has always been one of the busiest land boundary control points (BCPs) with the highest number of inbound and outbound passengers. In 2023, the daily average of passengers trips nearly reached 138 000. The passenger terminal buildings of Hong Kong and Shenzhen at the port are built within their respective boundary along the Shenzhen River and are connected by a pedestrian bridge. This allows passengers from the two places to complete departure clearance at one side and then walk to the passenger terminal building of the other side via the pedestrian bridge in order to conduct arrival clearance. The port has been very popular among passengers since it is connected to the central part of Shenzhen and is well-connected by public transport, being served by railways of both Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government understands from the Shenzhen side that their relevant authorities will soon carry out modification works for the Luohu Port on the Shenzhen side. The modification works aim to "eliminate safety hazards, improve the port's functions, and upgrade the inspection facilities", with a view to further enhancing the port's clearance capability as well as its image as a gateway to the city, and facilitating travellers' clearance. The scope of works is limited to the Shenzhen side only and does not include the extension of MTR East Rail Line (ERL) into Luohu district of Shenzhen side.

As the modification works of the Shenzhen side will not involve the operation of the Lo Wu Control Point of the Hong Kong side, it is envisaged that upon the completion of works, the time required for immigration clearance at the Lo Wu Control Point of the Hong Kong side will not be affected.

In planning for the redevelopment of existing BCPs and the development of new BCPs in the future, the HKSAR Government will actively explore the adoption of new clearance mode to enhance passenger clearance efficiency, including implementing the "collaborative inspection and joint clearance" mode in new land BCPs projects. Issues involved in changing the clearance mode of existing BCPs are far more complicated than implementing new clearance mode at new BCPs, and the related works must be carried out on the premise that the BCPs' existing operations will not be affected. It is therefore necessary for the HKSAR Government and relevant Mainland authorities to make careful planning to ensure that the port design, boundary arrangements, facilities layout, passenger flow, and other ancillary facilities can accommodate the operation of the new clearance mode before its implementation could be considered.

Although Shenzhen is about to carry out modification works for the Luohu Port, the works will not bring about changes in the overall facilities layout and passenger clearance route (i.e. Hong Kong and Shenzhen to have their own

passenger terminal buildings within their respective boundary along the Shenzhen River and the two buildings to be connected by a pedestrian bridge). Therefore, after the modification of the Port in Shenzhen, the current clearance mode will continue, instead of adopting the "collaborative inspection and joint clearance" mode. Besides, the HKSAR Government noted that the Shenzhen side has no plan to extend the MTR ERL into the Luohu district of Shenzhen.

[LCQ9: Combating frauds involving deepfake](#)

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Tan Yueheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, in the Legislative Council today (June 26):

Question:

A study has reportedly found that the number of scams involving deepfake in Hong Kong in the first quarter of this year has scored a 10-fold increase year-on-year, which is among the highest in the Asia-Pacific region, and the rate of deepfake identity fraud involving the fintech industry in Hong Kong is the highest in the Asia-Pacific region. On the other hand, some members of the public are worried that there is no way to guard against law-breakers who have in recent years successfully committed frauds by making use of deepfake technology to create highly realistic faces and voices. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective numbers of proactive investigations conducted and reports received by the Government in each of the past three years in respect of fraudulent activities using deepfake technology, and set out for each case the type of fraud and amount of money involved; the detection rate of such cases;

(2) whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the measures introduced by the Government to combat fraud cases involving deepfake-generated false information; and

(3) of the measures in place to enhance the regulation of the application of deepfake technology, and what new measures are in place to step up efforts to combat the dissemination of disinformation on the Internet and social media?

Reply:

President,

Deception is a serious offence. Deepfake refers to the use of deep learning (namely a technique of artificial intelligence (AI)) to synthesise images for the purpose of creating falsified images. In recent years, the Police have noticed a new online deception tactic that involves the use of deepfake technology to impersonate government officials or celebrities for promoting suspicious investment products in fraudulent messages and videos. The Police will continue to enhance public awareness and combat all types of fraud through stepped-up law enforcement measures, including those against deepfake deception, publicity and education, intelligence analysis, cross-boundary collaboration, as well as collaboration with sectors that have a higher chance of being affected by deepfake deception (such as advertisers and website operators).

In consultation with the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, the reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Tan Yueheng is as follows:

(1) In view of the emergence of new modus operandi involving deepfake technology in recent years, the Police have maintained separate statistics on this type of fraud since 2023. Up to May 31, 2024, the Police have received three cases relating to deepfake technology, which occurred in August 2023, January 2024 and May 2024 respectively. The first case has been successfully detected and the remaining two cases are still under investigation.

The first case was detected after the Police's proactive intelligence-led investigation. In August 2023, the Police smashed a local fraud syndicate in an operation code-named Smashscam. The syndicate was suspected of stealing others' identities and using an AI face-swapping programme to apply for loans online from finance companies between September 2022 and July 2023, involving money amounting to HK$200,000. Subsequently in August 2023, the Police arrested a total of nine persons, including the mastermind of the syndicate, for the suspected offence of "conspiracy to defraud". This is the first detected case involving AI face-swapping.

In end-January 2024, the Police received one fraud case involving the use of deepfake technology to fabricate a pre-recorded video conference. The informant received a phishing email from a fraudster, who impersonated the Chief Financial Officer of the informant's head office in the United Kingdom (UK) and invited the informant into a group video conference for some alleged confidential transactions. As instructed, the informant eventually gave authorisation to transfer funds to five local bank accounts and suffered a loss of about HK$200 million. After investigation, the Police believed that the pre-recorded video conference was generated using downloaded online public video clips and voices of the impersonated officer. Since the meeting was pre-recorded, there was actually no interaction between the informant and the fraudster. After making the instruction to the informant, the fraudster ended the meeting under some pretext and then continued with the payment transfer instructions using instant messaging software. The case is still under Police investigation.

On May 20, 2024, a staff member of a multinational trade company received a WhatsApp message from a fraudster, who impersonated the Chief

Financial Officer of the head office in the UK, and they took part in a video conference for nearly 30 minutes. During the meeting, the "fake boss" instructed the staff member to transfer nearly HK$4 million to a local bank account. According to Police investigation, it is believed that the suspect had used online public videos as materials for alteration using deepfake technology, and then played the altered content at the video conference to mislead the victim into making money transfers. Police investigation is ongoing.

In addition, since November 1, 2023, the Police have started to maintain statistical figures of cases identified or reports received in respect of online deepfake video clips. As at May 31, 2024, a total of 21 online deepfake video clips involving impersonation of government officials or celebrities were identified by or reported to the Police. Two of them were identified as a result of proactive investigations and 19 cases were reported by members of the public. Of the 21 videos, 20 were identified between November 2023 and January 2024 and the remaining one in March 2024. At the request of the Police, the online or social media platforms concerned had already removed those 21 videos to prevent the public from being defrauded. So far, the Police have not received any reports involving members of the public being defrauded as a direct result of these deepfake video clips.

(2) In response to various challenges posed to cyber policing by AI such as deepfake technology, the Police have been exchanging intelligence with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), law enforcement agencies of different jurisdictions and the AI industry. The Police have also been keeping track of the latest modus operandi and criminal trends worldwide, which included the application of deepfake technology.

To combat different technology crimes, the Police set up the Cybercrime Policing Advisory Panel (CPAP) in December 2022. Led by the Director of Crime and Security and comprising 12 experts and leaders from the technology sector, the CPAP seeks to look into risks of crime and fraud involving AI (including deepfake technology) and to enhance public awareness on the potential risks of AI. The Police will continue to step up co-operation with stakeholders of relevant sectors, and will jointly explore and formulate effective measures to combat relevant crimes.

Regarding strengthening of professional competence, the Police have been organising internal training from time to time to enrich colleagues' knowledge on deepfake technology and its related cybercrimes. Related equipment will also be upgraded on a timely basis to achieve greater capability in combatting different types of cybercrimes.

On publicity and education, the Police have been working on various fronts to educate members of the public about the general concepts of AI as well as the fraudsters' latest modus operandi, so as to prevent the public from falling into traps. The Police also hold press conferences from time to time to explain common tricks of fraudsters, and demonstrate how fraudsters use deepfake technology to conduct video conferencing. Through its Facebook page and the CyberDefender website, the Police have been disseminating

information about the latest crime situation and anti-deception advice related to deepfake technology.

In fact, the AI powered deepfake technology utilised by fraudsters is not infallible. On various occasions, the Police have called on the public to stay alert to fraud at all times and reminded them to verify the authenticity of videos with different methods so as to avoid falling into deepfake traps. These methods include:

1) requesting the person to make certain movements in front of the camera, such as turning their head up, down, left or right, and then observe whether there is any abnormality of the person's image on the screen;

(2) using the content of the conversation to test the authenticity of the other party;

(3) staying alert and verifying with a phone call when a relative or a friend makes a request for remittance via a video or an audio recording; and

(4) avoiding answering unknown video calls and, in case of doubt, utilising the Scameter and Scameter+ or calling the Anti Scam Helpline 18222 for enquiry.

The Police have also been conducting online patrols and enforcement actions from time to time to proactively combat various cybercrimes. To minimise the chances of the public's access to suspicious fraudulent online advertisements, video clips or posts (including those involving the use of deepfake technology), the Police will swiftly request relevant advertisers and website operators to remove them in cases where they are identified. In fact, all the 21 deepfake video clips mentioned above have been removed promptly to prevent members of the public from falling victims to deception. So far, the Police have not received any reports involving members of the public being defrauded as a direct result of these deepfake video clips.

We will not let down our guard. The Police will continue to monitor closely the various new modus operandi of deception and continue to combat fraud cases, including those involving the use of deepfake technology, through the various channels mentioned above.

(3) We note that the pace of AI development and its popularity vary in different regions, and the impact of AI technology on various industries and sectors are not entirely the same. Different regions and organisations have started to look into various measures in light of the latest development in order to cope with the implications and challenges brought by AI, while striking a balance between promoting technology innovation and ensuring compliance of relevant requirements.

As regards combatting the dissemination of false information on the Internet and social media, the Internet is not an unreal world that is beyond the law. Under the existing legislation in Hong Kong, most of the laws enacted to prevent crimes in the real world are applicable to the online

world. There are various provisions in place under the existing legal framework to deal with the dissemination of untrue or inappropriate information. For instance, the Crimes (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 introduced the offences of publication or threatened publication of intimate images without consent. The offence is also applicable to intimate images that have been altered (including that altered by AI technology).

In addition, a sub-committee was set up under the Law Reform Commission (LRC) in 2019 to commence a study on cybercrime. At the first stage, a public consultation exercise on cyber-dependent crimes (e.g., illegal access to programme or data) was completed in October 2022. For the next stage, the sub-committee will study cyber-enabled crimes, i.e., traditional crimes which can be increased in scale or reach by the use of computers, computer networks or other forms of information and communications technology (e.g., offences such as setting up a phishing website). The Government will closely monitor the progress of the LRC's study as well as its final recommendations, and review the legislation in due course.

Red flags hoisted at Shek O Beach and Pui O 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 (June 26) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, and Pui O Beach in Islands District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley today (June 26). The arrangements will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

The following road closure and traffic diversions will be implemented from 6pm onwards:

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the slip road leading to Aberdeen Tunnel will be closed, except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

— Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the slip road leading to Aberdeen Tunnel will be re-routed one way northbound;
— Traffic along eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
— Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
— Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road, except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel;
— Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and
— Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements before the conclusion of race meeting

The following road closure and traffic diversions will be implemented from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

1. Road closure

— The slip road connecting Wong Nai Chung Road and Aberdeen Tunnel;
— Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the slip road connecting Wong Nai Chung Road and Aberdeen Tunnel;
— Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and Parsee Cemetery;
— Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East; and
— Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of Hong Kong Jockey Club will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

— Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
— Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East,

U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
– Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
– Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;
– Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
– Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

     Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

– Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
– Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
– Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
– Canal Road East; and
– The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

     Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

     Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

     Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

[CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot](#)

[weather](#)

   The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (June 26) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

   "The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

   "Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

   "Infants and children, the elderly, pregnant women, those with chronic illnesses such as heart disease or high blood pressure, outdoor/manual workers, and individuals who are overweight are more vulnerable to heat stroke. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

   The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion can place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or the late afternoon, if possible;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation;
- Do not stay inside a parked vehicle; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day if feasible. If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable. Start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Move to a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

   â€‹The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index is high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear long-sleeved and loose-fitting clothes;
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 15, preferably higher. Reapply every two hours if you

stay out in the sun, and after swimming, sweating or towelling off; and

- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

â€‹If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

â€‹The public may obtain more information from the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather report and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.