

The Government's statement in relation to the Central Military Dock

The Government issued a statement today (June 29) on matters in relation to the Central Military Dock (Military Dock).

According to the Exchange of Notes between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the United Kingdom on the arrangements for the future use of military sites in Hong Kong (Exchange of Notes), the Military Dock is one of the five military buildings/fixed facilities which should be re-provisioned for the Hong Kong Garrison of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (the Garrison) by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSAR Government). The Exchange of Notes entered into force on November 11, 1994, and the Military Dock is the only outstanding military facility in the Exchange of Notes which has yet to be handed over to the Garrison. The Government has the responsibility to hand over the Dock to the Garrison as soon as possible for defense purpose.

The Government has in the past explained to the public the background concerning the Military Dock on various occasions. In fact, in the past years, the Hong Kong community had ample discussion on the reclamation works, the construction of the Military Dock and the amendments to the statutory plan. Following the statutory procedures, the Town Planning Board received public representations and comments and had fully considered these public opinions and other relevant factors on the relevant plan, and decided not to make any amendments to the relevant draft plan. The relevant plan was subsequently approved by the Chief Executive in Council. The amendments to the relevant subsidiary legislation related to the Military Dock have received the support of the Panel on Security of the Legislative Council in April 2019 and were discussed at the relevant subcommittee formed for scrutinising the subsidiary legislation.

The amendments to the relevant subsidiary legislation came into operation on June 29. The Military Dock has become a "protected place" under the Protected Places (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 260). Protected place is different from other places in the sense that the place and the property in or upon there can enjoy protection as provided under that Ordinance. Pursuant to the Ordinance, any person entering the protected place without proper authority, or having acted illegally or otherwise without proper authority within such place is subject to arrest. Any person who resists or obstructs an authorized guard or a police in the discharge of his duties or in effecting arrest; or being a person who is unauthorized to enter a protected place fails to leave the immediate vicinity thereof when requested to do so by an authorized guard or a member of the police force, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine at level 1 (i.e. \$2,000) and to imprisonment for 6 months.

Besides, the four buildings on the Military Dock have been specified as "closed area". No person shall enter into a closed area without the permits

issued by the authority under section 37 or permission granted under section 38A of the Public Order Ordinance (Cap. 245). Entering closed area without permit shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine at level 2 (i.e. \$5,000) and to imprisonment for 2 years.

The Government emphasises that, the relevant legislation has come into effect today and the public should observe the law. The public should not enter the Dock area without authorisation. The HKSAR Government will hand over the Dock to the Garrison after completion of all necessary works. Military Dock is a military facility which will be managed by the Garrison after being handed over. The Garrison will in future consider, under the condition that the defence functions will not be affected, opening the movable gates enclosing the dock to allow members of the public to enter the non-closed area part of the dock for passage.