

## Transcript of remarks by CE at media session at Queen Elizabeth Hospital after visiting injured persons of No. 3 alarm fire in Jordan (with photos/video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session at Queen Elizabeth Hospital today (April 10) with the Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, and the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, after visiting the injured persons of the No. 3 alarm fire in Jordan:

Reporter: There have been large fires in the past two days. How will the Government enhance safety regulations and rescue efforts? Firefighters found a lot of blockading objects on the first floor. How will authorities deal with buildings that do not comply with mandatory building inspections? Will there be more inspections or stricter penalties put in place? Thank you.

Chief Executive: First of all, in respect of our response to actual fire incidents, I think the professional departments, including the Fire Services Department and the supporting departments, are all very professional and they are very good at providing immediate response and rescue actions. In respect of ensuring general fire safety, we have, of course, a system in ensuring aged buildings, when their safety standard need to be upgraded, there is a system for the Fire Services Department to demand for extra installation for fire safety, and that is done through directions. Of course, there will be penalties for those who do not comply with the directions.

In regard to ensuring fire safety, there are regular inspection visits by the Fire Services Department and the Buildings Department. When we have identified fire hazards, the Fire Services Department can issue notice to demand measures to reduce the fire risk, and the person concerned has to comply with the requirements. Failing that, there will be legal actions. Of course, there is a general upgrading of fire standard to ensure that for buildings where we think the fire standard needs to be improved, we have the power to demand them to do the necessary work. The Security Bureau is also examining how this law can be further enhanced so that when there are people who are not being co-operative, not complying with the requirements, whether it is possible for the Government to take over the (fire safety improvement) works, and then require the people concerned to pay for the actual expenses for the works. This is an area that the Security Bureau is examining actively, and we will listen to public opinions and do some consultation in due course.

But as a whole, we are of course, very serious about fire safety as we

can see any incident of fire can so quickly get out of control. I thank the Fire Services Department for doing their professional job so devotedly, and their standard and knowledge are up to an international standard. As you can see in this case, the fire was under control within an hour. But of course, all fires are dangerous. So we must do our best to ensure that the best fire safety standard is maintained, ensuring that we all live in a safe environment. Thank you very much.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

