

Transport Department approves second round of applications under Labour Importation Scheme for Transport Sector – public light bus/coach trade

The approval process for the second round of applications under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector – Public Light Bus/Coach Trade has been completed. The Transport Department (TD) issued letters today (July 4) to all applicants on the application results.

The application period for the second round applications under the Scheme was from March 25 to April 26. A total of 129 applications, covering public light bus drivers and coach drivers, were received within the application period, involving 1 473 labour importation quotas. Subsequently, four applications were withdrawn.

After assessment by an interdepartmental liaison group (ILG) comprising representatives from the Transport and Logistics Bureau, the Labour Department and the TD, all 125 applications were found eligible. After considering the recommendation of the ILG, the Commissioner for Transport approved the 125 applications. Since the number of eligible quotas being applied for in the second round exceeded the total number of quotas available for allocation (i.e. 849 remaining quotas in total), the quotas were allocated on a pro-rata basis to the eligible applicants.

A total of seven applications failed to meet the manning ratio requirement of full-time local staff and imported labour, and the number of eligible quotas being applied for under the applications concerned were adjusted downwards correspondingly. The consolidated results of the second round of applications are in the Annex.

A stakeholder consultative group, comprising the TD, relevant transport trades and labour representatives, has been set up. The TD has been maintaining close liaison and exchanging views with the consultative group on the implementation of the Scheme. The TD will also provide appropriate assistance to successful applicants in order to ensure their understanding of and compliance with the relevant requirements of the Scheme.

A spokesman for the TD said, "Over 80 per cent of the imported labour in the first round of applications have arrived in Hong Kong and started to perform driving duties after obtaining relevant driving licences and completing route training. We hope that the imported labour approved in the second round will receive training in Hong Kong soon, with a view to obtaining the respective driving licences and commencing their duties, so as to further alleviate the acute manpower shortage of public light bus/coach trade, and maintain the reliability of public transport services. The TD will continue to listen to the views of the consultative group on matters relating

to the Scheme and closely monitor its implementation."

The Chief Executive in Council endorsed in June 2023 the introduction of the Scheme to, on the prerequisite of safeguarding the employment of local labour, suitably allow the public light bus/coach trade to apply for the importation of labour to fill vacancies for drivers with a quota ceiling of 1 700. A total of 969 quotas were approved in the first round of applications in September last year, of which 118 quotas not used by the applicants after six months have been carried forward to the second round for allocation.