

# Update for merchant shipping safety regulation proposed

The Government proposes to amend the Merchant Shipping (Safety) (IMSBC Code) Regulation to incorporate the latest requirements of the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) into local legislation.

A spokesman for the Transport and Housing Bureau today (March 22) said, "The IMSBC Code requires shippers to inform the ship master, prior to loading solid bulk cargoes onto a ship, whether the cargo being carried is harmful to the marine environment in accordance with the criteria set out at Annex V to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships. As the provision of such information has been exempted in the existing Regulation, there is a need to amend the Regulation to remove such exemption in order to implement the IMO's requirement."

The Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development and the Hong Kong Fleet Operation Advisory Committee of the Marine Department have been consulted on the legislative proposal. Members supported the proposal.

The proposed legislative amendment was gazetted today and will be tabled at the Legislative Council on March 27 for negative vetting.