



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Saturday, December 22, 1973

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Release time: 3.00 p.m.

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SECRETARY FOR HOUSING DENOUNCES SHOPKEEPER INTIMIDATION

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Mr. Ian Lightbody, Secretary for Housing today (Saturday) denounced recent attempts to intimidate shop representatives who had discussed new shop tenancy terms with the Housing Department.

There had been several reports of intimidation since Friday when the new shop tenancy terms were announced, he said, and these had been brought to the attention of the Police for necessary action. Shop tenants who felt they were being threatened should inform the Police or Housing Department officers.

Mr. Lightbody said that during the two months since he met shop tenants' representatives the Housing Department had spared no effort to ascertain the views of shopkeepers both by direct contact and through the association set up to represent the shop tenants.

He went on: "As a result of these very useful meetings new shop tenancy terms have been worked out which I believe are very reasonable and should be acceptable to tenants."

Mr. Lightbody said that a group of shopkeepers had claimed that the new terms in some way threatened their continued security of tenure.

He stressed that this was completely unfounded; the Housing Authority had no intention of terminating any shop tenancies unless (as has always been the case) the tenant persistently disregarded the tenancy conditions. All co-operative shop tenants were completely secure in their tenancies. A proper agreement of the sort prepared is necessary to make clear the rights and delegations . . . . .

/The special .....

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The special concessions agreed for shop-keepers in Group B estates who had their tenancies before April 1, 1973 are:-

1. Security of Tenure

Tenancies will be for a fixed term of two years (during which shop rents will not be raised) and will be renewed automatically at the end of term provided there has not been a persistent or blatant breach of the agreement. However, shop tenants may opt for a monthly tenancy if they wish (although in law such terms give less security than a fixed term agreement).

2. Inheritance

The present shop tenant will be allowed to transfer his right to a member of his family, either in his life time or, on death.

3. Change of Trade

Tenants will be able to apply for a change of trade provided it meets with estate requirements and does not adversely affect the living environment of the estate.

4. Transfer of Shop Tenancy

Shopkeeper who held tenancies before April 1, 1973 will be allowed to assign the tenancy, but the transferee will have no such right. In the past they could only assign to authorised tenants but they would now be free to assign to anyone.

/"These arrangements .....

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"These arrangements," said Mr. Lightbody, "taken with the low rents payable compared with private sector shops, put Housing Authority shop tenants in a favourable position, and I am sure all tenants as well as the general public appreciate this.

"I see no grounds for any further change in the proposed terms" said Mr. Lightbody, "and I hope tenants will take advantage of the new deal and remove the uncertainty that now surrounds tenancy transfers. If shop tenants have any queries about the new terms the management staff at their estate will be ready at any time to give them further explanation and assistance."

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OVER 15 PER CENT ELECTRICITY SAVING

Aimed By Post Office

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Fuel economy officers have been appointed within the staff of the Post Office to ensure that savings in the use of electricity and fuel are made wherever possible in the department.

The officers are responsible for carrying out any economy measures in their offices or sections.

A set of guidelines has been drawn up to assist them in their task and the performance of each unit is monitored by comparing current monthly consumption with that of the corresponding month a year ago.

Among the measures being taken include the removal of non-essential lighting, re-arranging lighting in offices to achieve maximum economy, and the switching off at all times of spotlights over posting boxes in branch offices.

The use of mechanical appliances is also being restricted to the minimum to achieve the efficiency and output required.

The scheme was put into operation earlier this month as part of the government's overall plan to economise on the use of fuel, and at this stage it is too early to give positive figures. However, the Post Office estimates that the savings will be well in excess of the target of 10 to 15 per cent.

A similar system has also been adopted within the Fire Services Department where command fuel economy officers have been appointed to ensure that all personnel are fully aware of the reasons for increased economy and the methods of implementing fuel saving measures.

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In a general message to all command stations, the Director of Fire Services, Mr. A.E.H. Wood, said operational efficiency must not be impaired by the need to economise, but "inconvenience will not be considered an acceptable reason for failure to achieve the target percentage."

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FURTHER MEASURES TO CONTROL TRAFFIC IN CENTRAL DISTRICT

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The Commissioner for Transport has announced further measures to control and improve traffic in Central District.

With effect from Sunday (December 30), the loading and unloading of goods vehicles will be prohibited between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. and between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on parts of Connaught Road Central, Des Vœux Road Central, Queen's Road Central and on Chater Road.

At the same time Jubilee Street between Connaught Road Central and Queen's Road Central, will be re-routed southbound and Queen Victoria Street, between Connaught Road Central and Queen's Road Central will be re-routed northbound.

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BOTTLE OF BRANDY FROM MACAU

Concession Announced For Holidays

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The Director of Commerce and Industry announced today that passengers arriving from Macau during the two days following Christmas Day (i.e. December 26 and 27) may bring into Hong Kong free of duty one bottle of Portuguese brandy containing not more than one litre.

This is in lieu of the customary one quart bottle of grape wine at present allowed.

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REGULATIONS TO LIMIT EMISSION OF DUST OR GRIT FROM CHIMNEYS

To Come Into Effect In Ten Days

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The Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. David Lin, today reminded fuel users that the new set of regulations to limit the emission of dust or grit from industrial furnaces, ovens, flues and chimneys will become effective on January 1, 1974.

The new regulations - the Clean Air (Restriction and Measurement of Smoke Emission) Regulations 1973 - will apply to all premises where liquid oil, solid fuel, gas, electricity or other fuels are used which give rise to the emission of dust, grit or smoke.

Mr. Lin said: "If grit and dust emitted from any premises is found to be in excess of the statutory limit, the occupier will be liable to a fine of \$5,000 plus a daily fine of \$50 if the offence continues."

The regulations also stipulate that an occupier who is given 60 days' notice will have to install specified sampling points on his premises to enable officers from the Labour Department to take samples of dust or grit and to measure the density of smoke. The occupier will also have to ensure safe access to the sampling points and to keep them in good conditions.

Section five of the regulations forbids the use of liquid fuel, with a viscosity exceeding 120 seconds Redwood No. 1, unless the occupier has obtained prior permission from the Commissioner of Labour. "But permission would only be granted if the Commissioner is satisfied that the use of such fuel would not result in the emission of dark smoke," Mr. Lin said.

Mr. Lin added that most likely domestic premises and restaurants would not be affected by section five because the liquid fuels commonly used on such premises were kerosene, gas or diesel fuel oil, the viscosity of which was well below 120 seconds Redwood No. 1.

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TAXI WRITTEN TEST

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The Transport Department announced today that with effect from January 2, 1974, written tests for applicants for taxi driving licences will be conducted only in the examination hall of the Pui Ching Road Office.

At present, taxi written tests are held at both the Rumsey Street Licensing Office, Hong Kong, and the Pui Ching Road Office, Kowloon.

A spokesman for the department said: "In view of the limited testing space at the Rumsey Street Office, there is a delay of some five months for a Hong Kong applicant to be given a test.

"A new examination hall has been provided at the Pui Ching Road Office, capable of accommodating all the candidates currently tested in Hong Kong and Kowloon, plus an extra one third. By conducting all tests in Kowloon, more Hong Kong candidates can be accommodated, with a reduced waiting time."

The spokesman said that starting from the same day, all applications for taxi written test appointments will be accepted at the Pui Ching Road Office only.

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NEW MULTI-FIBRE TEXTILE AGREEMENT

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Mr. Bill Dorward, Deputy Director of Commerce and Industry, returned from Geneva last night after representing Hong Kong at talks by member nations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to establish a new multi-fibre textile agreement.

The new agreement will come into effect on January 1, 1974, for a four-year period. It replaces the existing Cotton Textile Arrangement which expires at the end of this year.

Commenting on the outcome, Mr. Dorward said that this represented the culmination of nearly two years' work on the part of the countries concerned. The main negotiations had been over the last eight months.

"If Hong Kong had its way," Mr. Dorward said, "there would be no such restraint arrangements on world trade in textiles. The choice lay, however, between the rule of law in this vital sector and a situation which some delegations in Geneva described as the law of the jungle.

"So we contributed our maximum efforts over the months to shaping the new rules to our best advantage. I like to think we have succeeded in many important respects. Certainly the new rules are much better for Hong Kong than those under the 11-year-old Cotton Textiles Arrangement which expires next week."

/The Hong Kong .....

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The Hong Kong delegation to the crucial three-week session which concluded on December 20 included Mr. G.L. Pearson, Counsellor for Hong Kong Affairs in Geneva; Mr. P.V. Dodge, Counsellor for Hong Kong Commercial Affairs in Brussels and Mr. P.K.Y. Tsao, of the Commerce and Industry Department.

Mr. Dorward paid tribute to the contribution made by the three members of the Textiles Advisory Board, Mr. B.J. Barlow, Mr. Jack Tang and Mr. Francis Tien, who accompanied the delegation.

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