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AG adopts recommendations to bolster briefing out system

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The Legal Department will set up Selection Boards, with participation by a representative of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), to decide on the briefing out of cases to outside counsel.

There will be improved record-keeping of recommendations and decisions, and there will be finer distinction between the different categories of counsel on the briefing-out lists, as well as a more structured procedure for removing any names from the lists.

These and other recommendations are made in a report by a Working Party appointed by the Attorney General, Mr Jeremy Mathews, to review the department's briefing out system.

The Attorney General has accepted the recommendations which are being implemented. Some are already in place and others will be so within the coming month.

Commenting on the work of the Working Party today (Friday), Mr Mathews said it represented the first comprehensive and detailed review of the briefing out system

He reiterated the department's continuing commitment to briefing out. "Our commitment has been amply demonstrated by the setting up of this high level and widely representative Working Party under the chairmanship of the Director of Public Prosecutions," he said.

Members of the Working Party were drawn from the Finance Branch, Treasury, the Efficiency Unit, the Corruption Prevention Department of ICAC, and the Civil, Prosecution and Administration Divisions of the Legal Department.

Members also included two representatives each from the Bar Association and the Law Society representing the criminal and civil law side of the two branches of the profession.

"The Working Party adopted accountability as an important measure against which they have set their recommendations," Mr Mathews said.

It has made a number of recommendations to improve the accountability and transparency of the briefing out system. This will ensure that the system meets the expectations of the Hong Kong public and is in line with the Government's striving for more accountable and transparent government, he added.

Mr Mathews explained that the creation of Selection Boards in both the Prosecutions Division and Civil Division of the department that is now implemented would help ensure greater accountability and transparency. "Everyone will know who is involved in the decision-making process," he said.

The Selection Boards will be responsible for advising the Division Head on the selection of counsel for briefing out. It will also advise him on the terms and conditions of appointment.

All decisions will be recorded in the minutes of the Boards to ensure that there will always be a record of what was agreed. This will ensure that checks can be made, either by the staff in the Legal Department or by the Director of Audit.

Furthermore, the Prosecutions Division Selection Board, with an ICAC representative in attendance, will decide upon the removal of a person from the standard briefing out lists.

Anyone who receives a notice of intended removal will be advised why it is so intended and will be given 14 days to make representations.

There will be lists for the three levels of court, the Magistrates' Court, the District Court and the High Court. For each court there will be two lists, depending on the nature or complexity of the case concerned.

Once included in one of the standard briefing out lists of the Prosecutions Division, selection for briefs is by rotation through the list.

In the Civil Division, where briefing out a case is likely to cost less than \$1 million, a shorter, but no less rigorous selection process will be used. It will still be the Crown Solicitor deciding on cases on advice from his senior staff but without the need in every case to convene a formal meeting.

The Attorney General emphasised that financial control was a major concern for the Working Party.

"The report shows that there have been in place for some time mechanisms to ensure that the question of cost is properly considered in the administration and operation of the briefing out system.

"However, and I think this shows the value of the review, the Working Party has recommended a number of improvements to the system which I intend to have implemented in full," he said.

One of these recommendations is for the role of the department's Chambers Manager to be enhanced.

"The Chambers Manager is an administrator, not a lawyer. His role will be to check that the system recommended by the Working Party is being implemented. He will also ensure that all financial implications are taken account of when decisions on briefing out are being made," Mr Mathews said.

The Attorney General noted that he was very satisfied with the recommendations of the Working Party, and expressed his thanks to all the members who worked so hard to produce the report.

End

Steering Group on Long Term Housing Strategy review

* * * * *

The Secretary for Housing, Mr Dominic S W Wong, announced today (Friday) that he has set up a Steering Group to assist him in carrying out a comprehensive review of the Long Term Housing Strategy, as previously indicated in the 1995 Policy Address and in Mr Wong's speech in the Legislative Council on November 2, 1995.

"This exercise involves a review of all major aspects of housing policy," Mr Wong explained.

"Our aim is to consider what changes in current policies are required to meet our basic housing objectives, in the light of the changing needs of the community.

"We will examine the current public housing policies and practices. We will also consider what further measures, if any, should be taken to facilitate and stimulate the production of private housing, and to assist genuine first-time home buyers.

"The conclusions will enable us to set housing production targets for both public and private housing for the period up to April 2006.

"We aim to complete the review by the middle of this year, and then issue a public consultation document setting out our main conclusions and recommendations."

Mr Wong said he had set up a Steering Group, chaired by himself, to "give focus and direction to this important review".

The members include people with relevant expertise from the public and private sectors. They include two government officials, the Chairman of the Housing Authority, the Executive Director of the Housing Society, three businessmen, a banker, an economist and an academic -

Ms Rosanna Wong, Chairman of Housing Authority
Mr Victor So, Executive Director of Housing Society
Mr Fung Tung, Director of Housing
Mr K Y Tang, Government Economist
Mr K Y Yeung (businessman)
Mr Wan Man-yee (businessman)
Mr Barry Cheung (businessman)
Mr Anthony Wong Kin-kwan (banker)
Mr Kwok Kwok-chuen (economist)
Mr Lau Kwok-yu, Associate Professor (academic)

"All members of the Steering Group have been appointed in their personal capacities," Mr Wong said, "They do not represent, any particular organisations or interests."

Mr Wong added that the public would have an opportunity to comment once the review has been completed. "We will issue a public consultation document setting out our main conclusions and recommendations."

Mr Wong said that in the meantime anyone might forward views to the Housing Branch. "We would be happy to receive submissions at this stage. The views will be carefully considered in our review."

In November and December 1995, the Secretary for Housing already held a series of meetings with LegCo members to listen to their views on areas for attention in the review.

End

Hu Fa-kuang appointed ACC Chairman

* * * * *

The Government announced today (Friday) the appointment of Mr Hu Fa-kuang as the Chairman of the Consultative Committee on the New Airport and Related Projects (ACC) on January 3, 1996.

Fifty-four other members have also been re-appointed to the Committee for the new term expiring on October 31, 1997.

The ACC was set up in 1991 pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Construction of the New Airport in Hong Kong and Related Questions signed by the British and Chinese Governments.

Its purpose is to provide a forum in which community views on the development of the new airport and related projects can be discussed and brought to the attention of the Government.

Mr Hu has been an active member of the ACC since 1991 and during the last term was the convenor of the ACC Traffic and Transport Sub-committee as well as the Ad Hoc Study Group on the Airport Corporation/Authority Bill. Having served on the Legislative Council, Urban Council, Land Development Corporation, and the Housing Authority since the 1970s, Mr Hu has a long and impressive record of public service. He is currently a member of the Aviation Advisory Board.

The Director of the New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office, Mr Billy Lam, said: "Since its establishment in 1991, the committee, with membership drawn from a wide cross section of the community, has given much valuable advice to the Government on matters related to the Airport Core Programme. The Government will continue to provide the ACC with information on project progress, financing and cost in a timely manner, and listen to the reasonable views and proposals of the members of the ACC."

The ACC members are:

1. Mr Hu Fa-kuang (Chairman)
2. Mr Payson Cha Mou-sing
3. Mr Steven Chan Hung-kwan
4. Dr Thomas Chan Man-hung
5. Mrs Ena Chan Yuen Yin-hung
6. Mr Chau How-chen
7. Mr Cheng Hon-Kwan
8. Mr Christopher Cheng Wai-chee
9. Mr Cheng Yiu-tong

10. Mr Anthony Cheung Bing-leung
11. Mr Carlos Cheung Hon-kau
12. Mr Francis Cheung King-fung
13. Mr Linus Cheung Wing-lam
14. Prof Cheung Yau-kai
15. Mr Chow Chun-fai
16. Mr Raymond Choy Wai-shek
17. Mr David Chu Yu-lin
18. Mr Fan Sai-yee
19. Mr Ian Fok Chun-wan
20. Mr William Fung Kwok-lun
21. Mr Fung Shiu-wing
22. Mr Simon Hau Suk-kei
23. Dr Raymond Ho Chung-tai
24. Mr Ho King-on
25. Mr Kan Fook-yee
26. Mr Stanley Ko Kam-chuen
27. Mr Thomas Kwok Ping-kwong
28. Mr Daniel Lam Wai-keung
29. Mr Ambrose Lau Hon-chuen
30. Mr Lau Kong-wah
31. Mr Edmond Lau Ting-chung
32. Mr Dennis Lau Wing-kwong
33. Mrs Angelina Lee Pui-ling
34. Mr Leung Kwong-cheong
35. Mr Victor Li Tzar-kuoi
36. Mr David Austin Morris
37. Mr Robert Ng Chee-siong
38. Prof Poon Chung-kwong
39. Mr Pun Kwok-wa
40. Mr Heinz A Rust
41. Dr Shao You-bao
42. Mr Shiu Sin-por
43. Dr Victor Sit Fung-shuen
44. Mr M K Tan
45. Dr Tsang Shu-ki
46. Dr Laurie Wan Sek-luen
47. Dr Wang Liang-huew
48. Dr Owen Wong Hong-hin
49. Mr David Wong Shou-yeh
50. Mr Harold Wu
51. Dr Philip Wu Po-him
52. Mr Gordon Wu Ying-sheng
53. Dr Geoffrey Yeh Meou-tsen
54. Prof Yeung Yue-man
55. Mr Yip Wah

The brief bio-data on Mr Hu is -

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Expire</u>
Urban Council	Member	1.4.197	31.3.1984
Transport Advisory Committee	Member	1.7.1980	31.3.1986
Transport Tribunal	Chairman	1.6.1981	31.3.1987
Law Reform Commission of HK	Member	15.4.1980	14.6.1987
Legislative Council	Member	1.9.1979	31.8.1988
Council for Recreation and Sports	Chairman	29.11.1985	31.10.1989
Statistics Advisory Board	Member	1.2.1980	31.5.1990
Managing Board, Land Development Corporation	Chairman	15.1.1988	14.1.1992
Hong Kong Housing Authority	Member	1.4.1978	31.3.1994
HKHA, Special Committee on Clearance of Kowloon Walled City	Chairman	15.1.1987	31.3.1994
Consultative Committee on New Airport and Related Projects	Member	1.11.1991	31.10.1995
Aviation Advisory Board	Member	1.3.1994	28.2.1996

End

Arts Development Council members appointed for new term

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The Government announced today (Friday) the re-appointment of Sir Joseph Hotung as the Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council for another year from January 1, 1996.

Sir Joseph has been the chairman of the council since its establishment as a non-statutory Working Group in 1993. However, due to his other commitments, he will not be able to serve as the chairman of the council for more than one year.

The Deputy to the Governor, Mrs Anson Chan, was delighted that despite his heavy commitments, Sir Joseph had agreed to serve a further year, thus providing continuity of leadership to the council as it entered into its next phase of development.

She thanked him and other council members for their dedication, time and significant contribution to furthering the cause of the arts for the benefit of the community in Hong Kong over the past two-and-a-half years.

During this period, the council has made a successful transition from a Working Group to a non-statutory advisory body and, since June 1, 1995, into an independent statutory body with executive powers and its own directly recruited secretariat. It has also drafted its first five-year strategic plan, which was submitted to the Government for consideration in December 1995.

A serving member, Mr Vincent Chow Wing-shing, has been appointed as vice-chairman. Mr Chow, who was made an MBE in the 1996 New Year's Honours List, has a distinguished record of public service, both as a former member of the Urban Council and on various arts bodies.

Mr Chow, together with the following 15 non-official members, have been appointed for a period of two years from January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1997. There are also four ex-officio members.

The non-official members are -

Mr Gordon Chan Ka-seung
Dr Chan Wing-wah
Mr Chang Cheuk-cheung
Mr Darwin Chen
Mr Cheung Ping-kuen
Mr Benny Chia
Mr David Eldon
Ms Barbara Fei

Mr Lam Hon-kin
Mr Lee Kin-chun
Mr Lo King-man
Dr Vicki Ooi Cheng-har
Mr Willy Tsao Sing-yuen
Ms Liza Wang
Mrs Cissy Pao Watari

The ex-officio members are -

The Chairman of the Regional Council or his representative
The Chairman of the Urban Council or his representative
The Secretary for Recreation and Culture or his representative
The Director of Education or his representative

The non-official members are all interested in the arts and between them have a wide range of experience of value to the work of the Council. They include persons experienced in literary arts, music, dance, drama, traditional performances, film arts, arts administration, arts education and arts criticism as well as persons with management and other skills.

A spokesman for the Recreation and Culture Branch said many of the persons appointed were nominated by those organisations which had sought specification as the representatives of their respective arts categories for consideration by the Governor.

However problems arose in the case of the visual arts because the body specified to represent it was unable to retain the support of a wide cross section of the persons and organisations active in that field.

"Therefore, the Governor has revoked the specification of the Hong Kong Visual Arts Joint Conference as a nominating organisation.

"Nevertheless, he has decided to give another opportunity to the visual arts sector to nominate a representative by February 12, 1996 for his consideration for appointment as a member of the council.

"Organisations in the visual arts sector will be contacted by the Recreation and Culture Branch and invited to a briefing on the details of the new arrangements next week," the spokesman added.

End

Surveillance on obscene and indecent articles be stepped up

* * * * *

1995 was an eventful year for the Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority (TELA), the Commissioner for Television and Entertainment Licensing, Mr P T Cheung, said today (Friday).

He said that during the year, TELA in its capacity as the executive arm of the Broadcasting Authority, organised a mid-term review of Commercial Radio Hong Kong, completed the licence renewal exercise for ATV and TVB, and introduced new codes of practice aimed at improving the services of the licensees.

Through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, Radio Television Hong Kong also voluntarily committed itself to meeting programme standards set by the Broadcasting Authority in the same manner as other broadcasting licensees.

Mr Cheung was speaking at a press conference reviewing TELA's work in the year 1995.

On film censorship, in November 1995, the film classification system was further refined by introducing two sub-divisions, Category IIA (not suitable for children) and Category IIB (not suitable for young persons and children). By the same exercise, advertising materials for Category III films such as posters and newspaper advertisements are now subject to prior approval by TELA, which is to address a prevalent public concern.

In October 1995, legislative amendments to the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance came into effect which require indecent publications to be identified as such and be displayed in wrappers with a warning notice. Such articles must not be sold to persons under the age of 18. The penalties for contravention of these requirements have been substantially increased.

Mr Cheung stressed that TELA was no regulator of public morals. "It merely blows the whistle when something appears to be going wrong," he said.

"For example, complaints against broadcasting stations are processed by TELA for consideration of the Broadcasting Authority. In respect of film censorship, the commissioner's decisions are subject to review by an independent board.

"For the control of obscene and indecent articles, the powers to classify articles are with the Obscene Articles Tribunal which is a court of law," he added.

Asked how TELA could keep pace with the sentiments of the public, Mr Cheung made mention of TELA's extensive network of public advisers (300 for film censorship, 600 for television monitoring) and periodic public opinion surveys.

Looking into 1996, Mr Cheung envisaged heavy involvement by TELA in the mid-term review of the satellite TV licence held by Hutchvision as well as the mid-term review of Metro Broadcast.

Regarding the control of obscene and indecent articles, he expressed concern over the recent trend of some Chinese newspapers carrying in their inside pages stories with a pornographic overtone.

He said TELA would step up surveillance and bring cases to the Obscene Articles Tribunal, while keeping close watch over whether such actions are achieving sufficient deterrent effect.

"However, TELA will never win the battle without the active help of our citizens. I urge members of the public to be more forthcoming in making their views known.

"My staff will also be ready to go to organisations, institutions and schools to explain the work of TELA and obtain feedback from the community," Mr Cheung concluded.

End

Mai Po Restricted Area extended

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The boundary of the restricted area of Mai Po Marshes will be extended to cover the inter-tidal mud flats and shallow waters of Inner Deep Bay to provide additional protection to Mai Po.

The extension was made under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Amendment of Sixth Schedule) Order 1996 gazetted today (Friday).

A spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department said the Mai Po Marshes and the adjacent Inner Deep Bay, mainly an area of inter-tidal mud flats, were the most important wetland in Hong Kong because of the extensive mangroves and a rich diversity of wildlife it supported.

It is also a "refuelling" station for thousands of migratory birds.

"In view of this importance, the Mai Po Marshes was listed in 1975 as a Restricted Area under the Wild Birds and Wild Mammals Protection Ordinance, which restricted access to such areas to public officers and people with a permit granted by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries," he said.

The Wild Birds and Wild Mammals Protection Ordinance was subsequently replaced by the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance in 1976 with Mai Po listed in it.

The spokesman said Hong Kong was obligated under the Ramsar Convention to protect Mai Po and the wildlife there. The inclusion of the mud flats into the Mai Po Restricted Area would give the necessary protection to the area's wild life, especially the waterfowl which depended on the Mai Po Marshes and the mud flats for feeding and resting.

He added that the extension of the restricted area to cover the mud flats would not result in any change to the present land use situation.

The Director of Agriculture and Fisheries will continue to issue permits to oyster farmers, fish farmers and villagers who require access to the extended area.

Public consultation was carried out between the end of 1993 and early 1994. The proposal received strong support from environmental groups and in-principle support from the New Territories Heung Yee Kuk. Site visit was also arranged for the Yuen Long District Board and other local representatives to further understand the extension.

The plan showing the amended boundary has been deposited in the Land Registry for public inspection and copies are also available at all District Offices in the New Territories.

The amended boundary will come into effect on February 15, 1996.

End

Regulations on seafarers' welfare gazetted

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The Government continues an exercise to localise certain United Kingdom legislation relating to the health, safety and welfare of seafarers, a spokesman for the Marine Department said today (Friday).

For administrative convenience, a total of 28 sets of regulations or rules have been divided into three batches for tabling at the Legislative Council. The first and second batches of a total of 19 sets of regulations were gazetted on December 22, 1995 and December 29, 1995 respectively. The remaining nine sets of regulations or rules made under the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) Ordinance and the Fee (Amendment) Regulation made under the Merchant Shipping Ordinance are published in the Government Gazette today.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulation requires the master and the chief engineer of all seagoing Hong Kong ships and other seagoing ships when in the waters of Hong Kong to ensure that the watchkeeping arrangements for navigational and engine room watches are adequate.

The standards to be observed are set out in the two schedules to the regulation and may be amended by the Director of Marine from time to time.

The regulation stipulates that the master shall ensure that an effective watch is kept while the ship is in port, especially when the ship carries a hazardous cargo, and the employer to ensure that the ship carries sufficient qualified officers to maintain a safe watch.

It provides that an authorised person may inspect any ship for the purpose of verifying that officers on board are properly certificated and are able to maintain a safe watch.

There is no significant change from the existing regulations except that the exemption of application for pleasure craft has been removed.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Employment Registration Books) Regulation specifies the particulars which are to appear in the employment registration books, and requires holders of employment registration books to produce the registration books to authorised persons to enable entries or alterations to be made.

The regulation requires the master of a ship or other person in possession of an employment registration book of a seafarer who is not present when he is discharged or who has died or is left behind in any country to deliver it to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office.

It requires any seafarer who is the holder of an employment registration book but who was not entitled to the issue of it, or whose name has been removed from the register of seafarers, or whose registration has been suspended, or any other person having possession of an employment registration book without lawful authority, to surrender it to the Superintendent.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Engine Room Watch Ratings) Regulation provides that it is an offence for an employer to fail to ensure that sufficient qualified ratings are carried to enable the master and the chief engineer to perform their duties, and it is also an offence for the master or the chief engineer to permit an unqualified rating to form part of an engine room watch.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Navigational Watch Ratings) Regulation applies to all seagoing Hong Kong ships over 200 gross registered tons other than fishing vessels. It provides that only ratings who are qualified or are trained under qualified supervision may form part of a navigational watch. The qualifications for a navigational watch rating are set out in Schedule 1 to the Regulation.

Under the regulation it is an offence for an employer to fail to ensure that sufficient qualified ratings are carried to enable the master to perform his duties, and it is an offence for the master to permit an unqualified rating to form part of a navigational watch.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Medical Stores) Regulation requires every Hong Kong registered ship to carry medicines and other medical stores appropriate to the type and length of voyage, and the geographical area into which it is proposed to trade in accordance with the standards, package, labelling and storage of the medical stores prescribed therein.

The Medicines and medical stores are required to bear a label indicating the date after which the contents should not be used, and shall be replaced as soon as possible after the expiry date and in any event within three months.

A ship may be inspected and detained if the requirements of the regulation are not met.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certificates of Competency as A.B.) Rules specify the qualifications for the issue of a certificate of competency as A.B. (Able seaman/rating), the requirements to be complied with by an applicant for the examination, the qualifying sea service for the granting of a certificate of competency as A.B., and the extent to which the period of qualifying sea service may be reduced in the case of the persons who have undergone a course of pre-sea training at a nautical training school.

The rules also contain the provisions for the verification of qualifications, by the examiners, appeal from the decisions of the examiners, re-issue of the certificate in case of lost.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certificates of Proficiency in Survival Craft) Rules prescribe the requirements for the issue of the certificates, the qualifications for examination and the granting of the certificates.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Conduct of Inquiries) Rules prescribe the procedures to be followed at any inquiry into the fitness or conduct of an officer, and at any re-hearing of such an inquiry. Notice of the inquiry must be served by the Seafarers' Authority on the officer concerned and the inquiry is to be held in public.

The person appointed to hear the inquiry should be assisted by one or more assessors. He is required to announce his decision in public at the end of the inquiry or as soon as possible thereafter and to make a report to the Seafarers' Authority. An assessor may sign the report with or without reservations.

The Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Fees) Regulation incorporates 132 fee items which are now stipulated under other pieces of Merchant Shipping legislation.

It also introduces 10 new fee items. Section 133 of the Seafarers Ordinance provides that the fee level of a service shall not be limited by reference to the costs incurred in providing that service. In setting the fee level, the Government adopted a global costing approach.

The proposed fee revisions will only affect about 40 shipping companies and around 2,000 Hong Kong foreign-going seafarers.

The extent that they will be affected should be minimal as most of the fee items in this regulation are to be revised by 10 per cent only to bring them in line with the 1995-96 price level.

The proposed fees are only adequate to recover about 22 per cent of the total cost incurred in providing the service.

The Merchant Shipping (Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 1996 provides that the fee level of a service shall not be limited to the cost incurred in providing that service.

There are altogether 21 fee items and the last revision took place on August 23, 1994 based on the global costing approach.

To revise these fee items to 1995-96 price level, an increase of 10 per cent is proposed.

The proposed fee revisions will affect only those seafarers who are required to serve on local craft. The impact will not be significant as all the fee items in this Amendment Regulation are to be revised by only 10 per cent to bring them in line with the 1995-96 price level.

The proposed fees are only adequate to recover about 41 per cent of the total cost incurred in providing the services.

The spokesman said measures had been taken to improve the efficiency of both the Examination Section and the Mercantile Marine Office & Seamen Recruitment Office of the Marine Department by re-deployment of staff and streamlining of working procedures: rescheduling of duties, computerisation of various seamen's records and examination data, simplification of application and reporting procedures.

"New operational guidelines and procedures are in hand for the further reduction of time in the processing of examination applications and issuing of certificates," he added.

End

Amendments to Strategic Commodities Control List gazetted

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Legislative amendments to reflect the updated international controls on strategic commodities were gazetted today (Friday).

The amendments were contained in the Import and Export (Strategic Commodities) Regulations (Amendment of Schedule 1) Order 1996.

A spokesman for the Trade Department said the amendments to Schedule 1 of the Regulations aimed to reflect the updated international controls on the Munitions List and Industrial List, as well as controls on goods of non-proliferation concern goods specified by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NNPT).

No change has been made to Schedules 2, 3 and 4 of the regulations which cover respectively articles-in-transit, end-use control and specified activities in relation to the articles specified in Schedule 3, he said.

The amendment order will be table at the Legislative Council next Wednesday (January 10). It will come into force at a date to be appointed by the Director-General of Trade by notice in the Government Gazette if the Legislative Council raises no objection to the amendments after 28 days.

The import and export of strategic commodities are subject to licensing control by the Director-General of Trade.

"The purpose of licensing control is to monitor and control the flow of strategic commodities to prevent Hong Kong from being used as a conduit for the proliferation of weapons," said the spokesman.

He added that any person who imported or exported an article specified in the Schedules without a valid licence was liable to an unlimited fine and imprisonment for seven years if convicted.

Copies of the amendment order are available for sale at the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, Low Block, ground floor, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Enquiries on the amendments can be made to the Strategic Commodities Section, Trade Department, 5th floor, Trade Department Tower, 700 Nathan Road, Mong Kok, Kowloon or by telephoning 2398 5581 or 2398 5572.

The department will also inform traders of details of the amended schedules by circular and seminar.

End

Fee revision for some Companies Registry services

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The fees payable to the Registrar of Companies for a number of services will be revised with effect from March 1, 1996.

The revision, published in the Government Gazette today (Friday), includes fees covering a wide range of services provided by the Companies Registry in relation to the registration and incorporation of companies, limited partnerships and trust companies.

It also includes services relating to the filing of returns and documents, and searches for information about companies and directors.

Explaining the fee revision, a government spokesman said the average 9.2 per cent increase was in line with the increase in costs for the year. These fees were last revised in August 1994.

Fees to be revised are those payable to the Registrar of Companies under the Companies Ordinance (Amendment of Eighth Schedule) Order 1996; Companies Ordinance (Fee for Taking Affidavit, Affirmation or Declaration) (Amendment) Notice 1996; Limited Partnerships Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule) Order 1996; and Trustee Ordinance (Amendment of First Schedule) Notice 1996.

The spokesman added that three new fee items would also be introduced to streamline and rationalise procedures.

"One of these is a further tier of late payment charges applicable when annual returns are delivered to the Registrar of Companies more than nine months after their due date," he said.

"At the same time, in order to improve efficiency, certain minor filing fees will no longer be charged separately but will be subsumed under the general fee for annual returns."

The second item, the spokesman said, was for the existing fee for the incorporation of a new company to be split into an element payable for lodging an application and an element payable upon completion of the procedures.

"The second part of the new fee will be refunded if the application is not successful," he said.

The third item was a similar division of the fee for applying to change a company's name, into a lodgement fee and a fee upon successful completion of the procedures, the spokesman said.

"The non-refundable element for lodging an application was proposed following a review of procedures by the Efficiency Unit," he said.

"The Efficiency Unit pointed out that the registry is required to carry out a considerable amount of processing whether or not an application is ultimately successful. The non-refundable element is to cover this processing work," he added.

The spokesman said the Companies Registry was continually seeking to upgrade and develop its services and facilities.

"Over the year, the registry has instituted a number of new and improved services," he said.

"These include the introduction of a computerised index of documents held by the registry, an index of all the directorships held by directors of listed companies, customer service counters and touch-screen information systems, refurbished premises, on-line receipting of documents and 50 computer terminals for searching of information."

As a trading fund, the Companies Registry is required to provide an efficient and effective service while meeting the cost of the services that it provides from the income it receives.

The registry has budgeted for this relatively modest increase in fees to enable it to continue with its programme of developments and improvements in technology and services.

End

Temporary closure of Queen's Pier

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The Marine Department announced today (Friday) that all the landing steps of Queen's Pier in Central will be temporarily closed for maritime traffic from 4.30 pm to 5.30 pm on Monday (January 8) to facilitate the Ceremonial Opening of the 1996 Legal Year at Edinburgh Place.

No vessel will be allowed to berth at any of the landing steps of Queen's Pier during the closure period.

Small craft owners and operators are advised to use other public landing facilities within the period.

There are public landing steps along the waterfronts at Sheung Wan and Wan Chai. Across the harbour, there are public landing steps at Kowloon Public Pier, and along the Tsim Sha Tsui East promenade.

End

Spectacular action as Stonecutters opens to public

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Ships, helicopters and assault craft will feature in spectacular action displays when the Royal Navy and Hong Kong's own soldiers, the Hong Kong Military Service Corps, open the gates of Stonecutters Island at the end of this month.

For the second time since the Navy moved from Central and the "island" itself was joined to the mainland, the two branches of the Armed Services will be mounting a weekend-long programme of public events on January 27 (Saturday) and January 28 (Sunday).

Highlights of the two-day programme will be action displays in the basin of HMS Tamar. In addition, a full shore programme will include arena demonstrations by motor-cycle and dog display teams together with traditional dragon and lion dances as well as music staged by the Pipes and Drums of 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles.

The last Open Days weekend was staged two years ago.

The Open Days weekend is being staged firstly to raise money for the Locally Enlisted Personnel Trust, the charity set up by the British Forces to provide funds for Hong Kong Chinese ex-members of the British Garrison who may find themselves in need or distress after 1997, and secondly to allow the public access to the military and to show them some of its work.

Also open to the public during the Open Days will be a large number of souvenir shops, games stalls and military displays, some of which will provide opportunities to examine and handle selected items of military equipment.

Admission to Stonecutters Island during the Open Days will be by tickets, which will be on sale as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Star Ferry Concourse</u>
January 6 - 14	Central & Tsim Sha Tsui
<u>Date</u>	<u>MTR Station</u>
January 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 & 21	Tsim Sha Tsui, Tsuen Wan, Kowloon Tong, Kwun Tong, Central and Tai Koo
January 7, 14 & 21	Mong Kok

End

Amendment to Draft Ting Kok Outline Zoning Plan

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The Town Planning Board today (Friday) announced an amendment to the draft Ting Kok Outline Zoning Plan.

The amendment is to rezone an area to the west of Ting Kok village in Tai Po, with an area of 0.33 hectares, from "Agriculture" to "Residential (Group C)" in response to a rezoning request previously approved by the board.

The amendment plan (No. S/NE-TK2) is now available for public inspection until January 26, 1996 at:

- * Planning Department,
16th floor, Murray Building,
Garden Road, Central,
Hong Kong;
- * Sha Tin and North East District Planning Office,
ground floor, Sha Tin Government Offices,
6 Tung Lo Wan Hill Road, Sha Tin,
New Territories; and
- * Tai Po District Office,
Tai Po Government Offices Building,
Ting Kok Road, Tai Po,
New Territories.

Any person affected by the amendment plan may submit written objections to the Secretary of the Town Planning Board, c/o Planning Department, 13th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong on or before January 26, 1996.

Copies of the draft plan are available for sale at the Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong and the Kowloon Map Sales Office, ground floor, 382 Nathan Road, Kowloon.

End

Government land for sale by tender

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The Lands Department is inviting tenders for the sale of a piece of Government land in Kwai Chung, New Territories.

The site, located in Kwai Fuk Road, Kwai Chung, has an area of about 16,960 square metres. It is intended for use as industrial or godown and public vehicle park including spaces for container vehicles.

The closing date for submission of tender is noon on Friday, February 2, 1996.

Tender form, Tender Notice and Conditions may be obtained from the Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road and the District Lands Offices/Kowloon, Yau Ma Tei Car Park Building, 10th floor, 250 Shanghai Street, Kowloon. Tender documents will also be available at the District Lands Offices of Sha Tin, Tai Po, North, Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing, Tuen Mun, Sai Kung and Islands.

End

Tenders invited for skills opportunity school in Fanling

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The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for the construction of a skills opportunity school in Area 18 in Fanling.

The works will involve the construction of a six-storey 15-classroom skills opportunity school with a total floor area of about 6,300 square metres together with associated drainage and external works.

Forms of tender and further particulars may be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board. They must be placed in the Government Secretariat Tender box in the lift lobby, lower ground floor, Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong before noon on Friday, February 2, 1996.

Late tenders will not be accepted.

End

Tenders invited for new Auxiliary Police Headquarters

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The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for the construction of a new Auxiliary Police Headquarters at Wang Chiu Road in Kowloon Bay.

The works will involve the construction of a five-storey complex for the headquarters, a single-storey services building, as well as drainage and external works.

Forms of tender and further particulars may be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board. They must be placed in the Government Secretariat Tender Box in the lift lobby, lower ground floor, Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong before noon on Friday, January 26, 1996.

Late tenders will not be accepted.

End

Social welfare facilities building in Aberdeen

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The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for the construction of a social welfare facilities building at Yue Kwong Road in Aberdeen.

The works will involve the construction of a seven-storey social welfare facilities building with a total floor area of about 11,000 square metres together with drainage and ancillary external works.

Forms of tender and further particulars may be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board. They must be placed in the Government Secretariat Tender Box in the lift lobby, lower ground floor, Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong before noon on Friday, February 2, 1996.

Late tenders will not be accepted.

End

Pier extension at north-east Lantau

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The Government intends to reconstruct and extend a pier within an area of about 3,300 square metres of foreshore and sea-bed at Tso Wan in north-east Lantau.

The pier, to be extended southwards, will measure 18 metres long and four metres wide.

Construction work will commence in March 1996 and be completed in mid-1996.

The extent of the area affected is contained in a notice published in the Government Gazette today (Friday).

Any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and seabed involved may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands, second floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong on or before Tuesday, March 5, 1996.

Such notices of objection should describe the interest, right or easement of the objector and the manner in which he alleges he will be affected.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with related plans can be seen on notice boards posted near the site.

The plan can also be seen at the Lands Department Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong (where copies can be purchased on order) and the Tsuen Wan District Office, first floor, Tsuen Wan Station Multi-storey Carpark Building, 174-208 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories.

End

Dredging for outfall channel in Tung Chung

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The Government intends to construct a drainage channel discharging into Tung Chung Wan at Lantau.

The works will involve dredging within an area of about 41,300 square metres of foreshore and sea-bed in Tung Chung Wan for the channel outfall. Construction work will commence next month for completion in August 1998.

The extent of the area affected is contained in a notice published in the Government Gazette today (Friday).

Any person who considers that his interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and seabed involved may submit a written claim to the Director of Lands, second floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong on or before January 5, 1997.

The submission should state the sum of money he is willing to accept in full and final settlement of his claim and the particulars to substantiate the claim.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with its related plans can be seen on notice boards at the Tung Chung Rural Committee Office, Ma Wan Chung in Tung Chung; the Tai O Rural Committee Office; Lung Tseng Tau Village; Wong Ka Wai Village; Sheung Ling Pei Village; Ha Ling Pei Village; Fui Yiu Ha Village; Wong Nai Uk Village; and Sha Tsui Tau in Tung Chung.

It can also be seen at the Lands Department Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong (where copies can be purchased on order); the Islands District Office, 20th floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central Hong Kong; the Mui Wo Sub-office of the Islands District Office, ground floor, Mui Wo Government Offices, 2 Ngan Kwong Wan Road, Mui Wo, Lantau Island; and the New Airport Section (New Territories Office), Lands Department, 22nd floor, Tsuen Wan Government Offices, 388 Sai Lau Kok Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories.

End

Road works being planned for Ma On Shan

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The Territory Development Department is planning a series of road works in Ma On Shan to provide access to development sites in Areas 77 and 86B there.

The proposed road works, which are part of the continuing development programme for Ma On Shan, will involve the construction of about 3.5 kilometres of carriageways, a bridge, footpaths, cycle tracks, a subway, a lorry park and a bicycle park, as well as construction of slopes and drainage network.

A notice of the proposed works was gazetted today (Friday).

The plan and scheme showing the proposed works can be seen at the Public Enquiry Service Centre of the Central and Western District Office, the Sha Tin District Lands Office and the Sha Tin District Office.

Any person wishing to object to the proposal may write to the Secretary for Transport, Central Government Offices, East Wing, second floor, Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong no later than March 3, 1996, describing his interest and the manner in which he will be affected.

End

Works to implement comprehensive development on Ma Wan

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The Government intends to carry out works on Ma Wan Island as part of a plan to implement comprehensive development there.

The works will involve sea-bed dredging, the construction of a drainage outfall and a pier to provide two berths for passenger ferries, construction of a seawall and small-scale reclamation for a ferry terminal building.

The proposed plan and the area of the foreshore and seabed affected are contained in a notice published in the Government Gazette today (Friday).

Any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and sea-bed involved may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands on or before March 5, 1996.

Such notice of objection should describe the interest, right or easement of the objector and the manner in which he alleges he will be affected.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with its related plans can be seen on notice boards posted near the site.

The plan can also be seen at the Lands Department Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong (where copies can be purchased on order) and the Tsuen Wan District Office, first floor, Tsuen Wan station Multi-storey Carpark Building, 174-208 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	1,274	0930	+736
Closing balance in the account	2,221	1000	+736
Change attributable to :		1100	+736
Money market activity	+681	1200	+736
LAF today	+266	1500	+686
		1600	+681

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 123.2 *+0.0* 5.1.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.38	2 years	2711	5.60	100.40	5.44
1 month	5.40	3 years	3810	6.15	101.47	5.65
3 months	5.39	5 years	5012	6.38	101.65	6.08
6 months	5.39	7 years	7211	6.82	102.88	6.40
12 months	5.38	5 years	M502	7.30	103.99	6.43

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$15,599 million

Closed January 5, 1996

End