



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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POLICE PLEDGE FOR BETTER SERVICE

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THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE WILL STRIVE TO RESPOND TO ALL REAL EMERGENCY 999 CALLS WITHIN AN AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME OF NINE MINUTES IN HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, AND 15 MINUTES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

CHIEF STAFF OFFICER, POLICE PUBLIC RELATIONS BRANCH, MR ERIC LOCKEYEAR MADE THIS PLEDGE AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (MONDAY).

"THE RESPONSE TIME IS MEASURED FROM THE TIME A REPORT IS RECEIVED AT THE REGIONAL COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTRE (RCCC) 999 CONSOLE UNTIL A POLICE OFFICER ARRIVES AT THE SCENE.

"REAL EMERGENCY IS ONE WHERE IT IS CONSIDERED THAT A DELAYED RESPONSE WOULD POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO LIFE, PROPERTY OR THE PUBLIC PEACE," MR LOCKEYEAR SAID.

UP TO THE END OF NOVEMBER, THE POLICE HAVE THIS YEAR RECORDED 318,042 CALLS TO THE THREE RCCCs, GIVING AN AVERAGE OF 953 CALLS A DAY.

THIS IS ALREADY A ONE PER CENT INCREASE OVER THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CALLS RECEIVED IN THE WHOLE OF LAST YEAR.

THE POLICE ALSO MADE A PLEDGE ON THE TIME ONE WILL NEED TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF NO CRIMINAL CONVICTION (CNCC).

"CERTIFICATES OF CNCC ISSUED BY THE FORCE SOLELY IN CONNECTION WITH A PERSON'S APPLICATION FOR A VISA TO VISIT OR RESIDE IN ANOTHER COUNTRY WILL BE PROVIDED WITHIN FOUR CALENDAR WEEKS AFTER AN APPLICATION IS LODGED," MR LOCKEYEAR SAID.

THESE PLEDGES BY THE POLICE ARE IN LINE WITH A GOVERNMENT SCHEME LAUNCHED IN OCTOBER WITH A VIEW TO UPGRADING THE ADMINISTRATION'S SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.

"THE OBJECTIVE OF OUR PLEDGE IS TO IMPROVE THE SERVICES WE DELIVER TO THE PUBLIC BY ENHANCING OPENNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY AS WELL AS BY DEVELOPING A CLIENT-BASED CULTURE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

"THROUGH THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGES, THE PUBLIC WILL KNOW WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE, WHAT STANDARDS HAVE BEEN SET, WHETHER SUCH STANDARDS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED, AND WHAT TO DO WHEN THEY ARE NOT," MR LOCKEYEAR SAID.

THESE STANDARDS WOULD BE MONITORED INTERNALLY, AND THE RESULTS OF WHICH WOULD BE PUBLISHED ANNUALLY, HE ADDED.

A TOTAL OF 500,000 COPIES OF A LEAFLET IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE OUTLINING THE POLICE'S PLEDGES, WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM TODAY FROM ALL POLICE REPORT ROOMS, NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE OFFICES, POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICES, AND THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION DISTRICT OFFICES.

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STATEMENT ON TRANSPORT PROJECTS

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IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ENQUIRIES, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID IT IS INCORRECT TO SUGGEST THAT MAJOR TRANSPORT PROJECTS HAVE BEEN HELD UP BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT ON THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME (ACP).

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF MAJOR NON-ACP TRANSPORT PROJECTS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION, INCLUDING THE FINAL STAGE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD, THE YUEN LONG-TUEN MUN EASTERN CORRIDOR, AND THE YUEN LONG SOUTHERN BYPASS.

"PLANNING AND DESIGN ARE ALSO IN HAND FOR MAJOR IMPROVEMENT OF LUNG CHEUNG ROAD AND CHING CHEUNG ROAD, WHICH PROVIDES THE MAIN ROAD LINK BETWEEN EAST AND WEST KOWLOON, AND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HUNG HOM BYPASS WHICH WILL IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW IN SOUTH KOWLOON.

"CLEARLY, IT IS NOT FAIR TO SAY THAT THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE HAVE BEEN IGNORED BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT ON THE ACP.

"MOREOVER, ONE SHOULD NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING, AND WEST KOWLOON EXPRESSWAY WERE ALREADY CONSIDERED OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY PROJECTS PRIOR TO THE DECISION TO RELOCATE THE AIRPORT AND THEY WILL BENEFIT HONG KONG AS A WHOLE. ALSO, THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING WILL RELIEVE CONGESTION AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR SECURITY ANNOUNCED

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THE GOVERNMENT TODAY (MONDAY) ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF MR KEN WOODHOUSE AS DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR SECURITY TO SUCCEED MR IAN STRACHAN.

MR WOODHOUSE ASSUMES OFFICE TODAY.

THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF MR WOODHOUSE:

AGED 48, MR WOODHOUSE JOINED THE CIVIL SERVICE AS AN ENGINEER IN 1973. HE WAS SECONDED TO THE THEN ENVIRONMENT BRANCH IN 1978 AND BECAME SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN 1980. HE WAS PROMOTED TO ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER STAFF GRADE C IN 1983 AND BECAME ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES IN 1984. MORE RECENTLY HE WAS SECRETARY-GENERAL OF STANDING COMMISSION ON DISCIPLINED SERVICES IN 1989 AND WAS COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS BEFORE HE ASSUMED THIS NEW POST AS DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR SECURITY.

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INTER-DEPARTMENTAL EFFORTS ON MANHOLE WORK SAFETY

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS IMPLEMENTED A STRATEGY TO STEP UP CONTROL MEASURES ON MANHOLE WORKS TO FURTHER PROTECT WORKERS FROM POTENTIAL HAZARDS.

THE STRATEGY, MAPPED OUT IN THE WAKE OF FATAL ACCIDENTS INSIDE SEWAGE MANHOLES IN JULY THIS YEAR, WAS RECENTLY ENDORSED BY AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP.

THE WORKING GROUP COMPRISED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE WORKS BRANCH, THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT AND THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

A LABOUR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (MONDAY) THAT THE FOLLOWING APPROACHES HAD BEEN ADOPTED:

- \* THE WORKS BRANCH IS PREPARING A GENERAL CONSTRUCTION SITE SAFETY MANUAL INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR A SAFETY PLAN FOR EACH WORKS CONTRACT;
- \* DETAILED SAFETY SPECIFICATIONS WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO THE CONTRACT CONDITIONS FOR FUTURE CONTRACTS WHICH INCLUDE:
  - (i) COMPULSORY WEARING OF APPROVED BREATHING APPARATUS FOR WORKS INVOLVING THE CONNECTION OF NEW DRAINAGE SYSTEMS TO OLD, AND
  - (ii) NOTIFICATION OF DRAINAGE WORKS BY THE CONTRACTOR WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE WORK COMMENCEMENT DATE, INCLUDING TIME AND LOCATION, TO FACILITATE INSPECTIONS BY SITE STAFF;
- \* APPROVED DRAINAGE CONTRACTORS ARE REMINDED THAT THE POWER TO STOP WORK UNDER THE GENERAL CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT CAN BE INVOKED AT ANY TIME IF DANGEROUS PRACTICES ARE PERSISTING;
- \* THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS PREPARING A SAFETY MANUAL WHICH INCLUDES THE SAFETY OF WORKING IN MANHOLES/CONFINED SPACES;
- \* A GENERAL SAFETY CHECKLIST, COMPILED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND ENDORSED BY THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT, IS AVAILABLE TO HELP CONTRACTORS AND SITE STAFF TO MAKE CHECKS ON WORK OF THIS NATURE; AND
- \* THE WORKS BRANCH, THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT AND THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL STEP UP THEIR CO-OPERATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT. FLAGRANT OFFENDERS WILL BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY AND LEGAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST THEM.

EFFORTS HAVE ALSO BEEN MADE BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT TO AROUSE EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' ATTENTION TO THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY WHEN WORKING IN CONFINED SPACES.

/THESE INCLUDED .....

THESE INCLUDED THE LAUNCHING OF INCREASED PUBLICITY, SEMINARS, A SPECIAL INSPECTION CAMPAIGN AND THE ISSUE OF WARNING LETTERS TO INDIVIDUAL DRAINAGE CONTRACTORS, THE SPOKESMAN NOTED.

HE REMINDED EMPLOYERS OF THEIR STATUTORY OBLIGATION, UNDER THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (CONFINED SPACE) REGULATIONS AND THE GENERAL DUTIES PROVISIONS OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE, TO ENSURE WORKERS' SAFETY IN CONFINED SPACES AND THAT WORKERS SHOULD CO-OPERATE WITH EMPLOYERS TO TAKE NECESSARY SAFETY PRECAUTIONS.

"FACTORY INSPECTORS WILL SPARE NO EFFORTS TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS WHO FAIL TO OBSERVE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS ON WORKS IN CONFINED SPACES," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE ALSO SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S INDUSTRIAL SAFETY TRAINING CENTRE (ISTC) PROVIDED REGULAR TRAINING COURSES AND PUBLICATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE AT THE ISTC ON THE 13TH FLOOR, HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL, HONG KONG OR ON TEL 852 3562.

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MORE FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

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A SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN TODAY (MONDAY) APPEALED TO COUPLES TO JOIN THE TEAM OF FOSTER PARENTS.

"WHILE PEOPLE ARE CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS, THERE ARE CHILDREN IN NEED OF PARENTAL LOVE AND CARE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

FOSTER CARE IS A FORM OF NON-INSTITUTIONAL RESIDENTIAL CHILD-CARE SERVICE WHICH AIMS TO PROVIDE A TEMPORARY ALTERNATIVE FAMILY FOR ORPHANS OR CHILDREN WHO LACK ADEQUATE FAMILY CARE BECAUSE OF NEGLECT, ILLNESS OF PARENTS OR OTHER SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

THROUGH FOSTERING, CHILDREN CAN GROW UNDER A PROPER FAMILY SETTING AND ENJOY HAPPY CHILDHOOD, HE ADDED.

"FOSTER PARENTS CAN, ON THE ONE HAND, SERVE THE COMMUNITY AND ON THE OTHER, POLISH THEIR PARENTHOOD SKILLS," HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, THE CENTRAL FOSTER CARE UNIT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, TOGETHER WITH A NUMBER OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, WILL HOLD A FOSTER FAMILIES SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATION CEREMONY EARLY NEXT MONTH.

AT THE CEREMONY, 40 COUPLES WHO ARE FOSTER PARENTS FOR MORE THAN FIVE OR 10 YEARS, WILL RECEIVE A SERVICE AWARD IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR SERVICES TO THE NEEDY CHILDREN, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY CLINIC SERVICE

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EIGHT GENERAL OUT-PATIENT CLINICS WILL REMAIN OPEN BETWEEN 9 AM TO 1 PM ON DECEMBER 26, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ANNOUNCED TODAY (MONDAY).

THEY ARE THE VIOLET PEEL HEALTH CENTRE AND SHAU KEI WAN JOCKEY CLUB CLINIC ON HONG KONG ISLAND; THE KWUN TONG JOCKEY CLUB HEALTH CENTRE, ROBERT BLACK HEALTH CENTRE AND YAU MA TEI JOCKEY CLUB CLINIC IN KOWLOON; THE LADY TRENCH POLYCLINIC, SHEK WU HUI JOCKEY CLUB CLINIC AND YUEN LONG JOCKEY CLUB HEALTH CENTRE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WILL BE NO HOLIDAY CLINIC SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS DAY (DECEMBER 25).

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SUN ECLIPSE ON CHRISTMAS EVE

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A SPOKESMAN FOR THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY SAID A PARTIAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN WOULD OCCUR ON THURSDAY (DECEMBER 24).

THE ECLIPSE WILL BEGIN BEFORE SUNRISE IN HONG KONG AND END AT 7.07 AM.

"AS ONLY 0.1 PER CENT OF THE SUN WILL BE ECLIPSED, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS TO OBSERVE THE EVENT," HE SAID.

DETAILS OF THE EVENT ARE:

\* MAGNITUDE OF THE ECLIPSE: 0.001, THAT IS, 0.1 PER CENT OF THE SUN'S DIAMETER WILL BE OBSCURED BY THE MOON AT THE TIME OF MAXIMUM ECLIPSE;

* HONG KONG TIME -----	AZIMUTH DIRECTION -----
SUNRISE 0700	(
MAXIMUM ECLIPSE 0705	( EAST-SOUTHEAST
ECLIPSE ENDS 0707	(

THE SPOKESMAN ADVISED RESIDENTS NOT TO SEE THE SUN DIRECTLY WITHOUT FULL PROTECTIVE MEASURES BECAUSE OF THE BLINDING INTENSITY OF ITS RAYS.

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WATER STORAGE FIGURE

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STORAGE IN HONG KONG'S RESERVOIRS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 58 PER CENT OF CAPACITY OR 339.657 MILLION CUBIC METRES.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE RESERVOIRS CONTAINED 190.632 MILLION CUBIC METRES OF WATER, REPRESENTING 32.5 PER CENT OF CAPACITY.

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