

For information

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON DEVELOPMENT

**Revision of Fee for Granting or Renewal of
Licence to Excavate and Search for Antiquities
under the Antiquities (Excavation and Search) Regulations (Cap. 53A)**

PURPOSE

This paper outlines the Government's proposal to revise the fee for granting or renewal of licence to excavate and search for antiquities prescribed in the Antiquities (Excavation and Search) Regulations (Cap. 53A) (the "Regulations") under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap. 53) (the "Ordinance"), which does not have direct impact on people's livelihood or general business activities.

THE PROPOSAL

2. Under section 13 of the Ordinance, a licence may be granted to a person if the Antiquities Authority (i.e. the Secretary for Development) is satisfied that the applicant has had sufficient scientific training or experience to enable him to carry out the excavation and search satisfactorily. Besides, the applicant should have at his disposal sufficient staff and financial or other resources to enable him to carry out the excavation and search satisfactorily; and he is able to conduct or arrange for a proper scientific study of any antiquities discovered as a result of the excavation and search. In accordance with the Regulations, which set out the procedures through which an application for a licence to excavate and search for antiquities should be lodged, a fee shall be payable upon the grant or renewal of a licence. The licence fee was first introduced in 1976 and was last revised to \$320 in 1995.

3. The Antiquities and Monuments Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, as the executive arm of the Antiquities Authority,

recently conducted a review of the licence fee at the 2015-16 price level. The review shows that the cost recovery rate at the existing fee level is only 12.7%. In line with the Government's "user pays" principle under which fees charged by the Government should in general be set at levels sufficient to recover the full cost of providing the services, it is proposed to increase the licence fee from \$320 to \$2,520. When the proposed fee revision is implemented, the cost recovery rate will become 99.92%. We will revise the fee once the legislative amendment procedures are completed.

EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

4. The Government will continue to enhance efficiency and streamline procedures so as to contain the costs of granting or renewal of the licence.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATION

5. When the proposed fee revision is implemented, the estimated increase in revenue is about \$35,200 per annum.

WAY FORWARD

6. Members are invited to note the proposed fee revision as set out in paragraph 3 above. We will proceed with the necessary legislative amendments to implement the adjustment.

Development Bureau
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
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