

Legislative Council Panel on Development

**Motion on “Establishment of the Urban Forestry Support Fund”
Passed at its Meeting on 28 May 2019**

Our response to the motion passed by the Legislative Council Panel on Development at its meeting on 28 May 2019 is set out below.

2. Under the existing policy, every year before the onset of wet season, government departments will conduct risk assessments for trees in areas with high pedestrian and traffic flow in accordance with the “Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement” issued by the Development Bureau, and will implement necessary tree care and risk mitigation measures to maintain tree health and reduce the risk of tree failures. For trees of public concern, i.e. Old and Valuable Trees, stonewall trees and trees diagnosed with Brown Root Rot Disease, departments will step up inspections to at least once every half year.
3. Inspection officers are required to sign on their assessment reports after inspections for record. For each tree failure incident, the department responsible will submit a tree failure report and analyse the cause of failure. If negligence is involved, enforcement action against the contractor will be taken according to the terms of contract.
4. To uplift the quality of arboriculture and horticulture practitioners and industry standard, and to continuously improve the work outcome of tree management, we have been working with the Qualifications Framework Secretariat of the Education Bureau since 2016 to assist the arboriculture and horticulture industry in formulating the “Specification of Competency Standards” (SCS), which is expected to be completed in late 2019.
5. In the 2018 Policy Agenda, the Government proposed to study the introduction of a registration system for tree management personnel. We will use the SCS as the basis for the introduction of the registration system, and are now consulting the industry on various possible options. We will continue to consider the merits and drawbacks of legislation in light of prevailing circumstances.

**Development Bureau
June 2019**