

**Legislative Council Panel on Development**  
**Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(03)**  
**Urban Forestry Management Work in Hong Kong**

Regarding the questions about the captioned paper from Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen to the Chairman of the Panel on Development dated 26 May 2021, the response from the Administration is as follows:

**Arrangement for Landscape Architect Grade Officer to undertake the post of the Head of Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (“H/GLTMS”)**

2. If the Legislative Council approves the proposal to regrade two one-rank grade directorate posts of the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (“GLTMS”) of the Development Bureau (“DEVB”) to multi-disciplinary (“MD”) directorate posts, the post of the H/GLTMS (D2) is to be filled by an officer from any five grades of Engineer, Forestry Officer, Geotechnical Engineer, Landscape Architect and Leisure Services Manager. Under the existing mechanism, as the highest rank of the Landscape Architect grade is D1, the Landscape Architect grade will nominate and recommend suitable candidate through a selection board to fill the D2 post. The candidate so identified, if any, will be selected together with candidates identified by the other four grades. If the recommended officer selected is an officer from the Landscape Architect grade, the officer will fill the post by acting arrangement, but he/she will not be promoted in the original grade. The experience gained by the officer in the MD post will however broaden his/her horizons, and help him/her to cope with future work challenges. We will undertake timely review of the promotion mechanism of relevant grades based on actual needs and industry development.

**The Inspection Squad**

3. As there are numerous trees in Hong Kong and their geographical distribution is wide, for trees on government land, the Government adopts an “integrated approach” in conserving and managing our tree assets, under which departments responsible for maintaining the government facilities or land allocated to them are responsible for inspecting and taking care of the trees thereon according to relevant requirements and guidelines. This approach allows departments to carry out appropriate routine tree maintenance having regard to the specific characteristics and locations of the trees. To strengthen the tree inspection work being carried out by tree management departments, the GLTMS established a

dedicated Inspection Squad in October 2019, which aims to adopt a systematic approach to randomly check and audit the tree inspection reports completed by the tree management departments as well as proactively inspect trees in areas of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow. In 2020-21, the Inspection Squad has inspected trees maintained by various core tree management departments in 126 spots of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow. The numbers of site inspections in the 18 districts are set out below:

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of site inspections</b>
Central and Western District	6
Eastern District	7
Southern District	6
Wan Chai District	6
Kowloon City District	9
Kwun Tong District	9
Sham Shui Po District	8
Wong Tai Sin District	6
Yau Tsim Mong District	6
Islands District	6
Kwai Tsing District	6
North District	9
Sai Kung District	6
Sha Tin District	9
Tai Po District	5
Tsuen Wan District	7
Tuen Mun District	6
Yuen Long District	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>

4. The dedicated Inspection Squad has achieved the target of inspections at the above 126 spots of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow, instructed departments to take follow-up actions on about 200 problematic trees, representing about 5% of all the inspected trees, and the necessary risk mitigation measures have been completed. The patrol mechanism has operated smoothly and achieved the expected outcome of tree management and protecting public safety.

### **Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel**

5. DEVB rolled out the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel on 1 December 2020. As at end-April 2021, we have received 336 applications for registration as tree management personnel. Among the 271

processed applications, 185 applicants have successfully registered as tree management personnel. The remaining applications are being processed. The numbers of approved registered personnel types are set out below:

<b>Personnel Type</b>	<b>Approved Case</b>
Arborists	68
Tree Risk Assessors	140
Tree Work Supervisors	121
Tree Climbers	34
Chainsaw Operators	54

Note : Each applicant can apply for registration of more than one personnel type.

6. As the provision of new government works and maintenance contracts will require contractors to engage registered tree management personnel, we believe that the number of applicants will increase progressively. We will also encourage private property owners and private property management companies to engage registered tree management personnel to handle tree maintenance work. We will continue to monitor the registration figures and adopt appropriate measures to encourage in-service practitioners to apply for registration to become registered tree management personnel, including promulgation of the application strategy on the scheme’s website to facilitate the registration applications smoothly; introduction of the registration scheme in our regular workshops and forums on tree maintenance works with private property owners and private property management companies; and collaborate with the industry stakeholders of the Arboriculture and Horticulture Industry Development Advisory Committee to enhance publicity and promotion of the registration scheme.

### **Enforcement Actions against Government Contractors for Non-Compliance of Tree Maintenance Requirements**

7. Contractors engaged by government tree management departments are mainly required to undertake tree risk assessment, tree risk mitigation measures (e.g. tree pruning and removal) and tree maintenance work. In the past 5 years, figures on enforcement actions taken by core tree management departments against contractors for non-compliance of contract requirements, including issuance of warning letters, default notices and deduction of contract payments, are set out below:

	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
<b>Number of warning letter</b>	205	399	620	206	156
<b>Number of default notice</b>	54	17	113	123	164
<b>Deduction of contract payment (\$)</b>	231,127	87,854	466,589	1,241,175	756,413

**Development Bureau  
June 2021**