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**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**Information note prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 12 February 2019**

**Registration of fishing vessels under  
the Fisheries Protection Ordinance**

To help bring the local fisheries industry back to a sustainable path, the Administration imposed a ban on trawling in Hong Kong waters with effect from 31 December 2012, followed by amendments to the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) to implement a series of complementary fisheries management measures to regulate fishing activities. One of the measures introduced was to limit the entry of new fishing vessels into the local fisheries industry by introducing a registration system to maintain an appropriate level of fishing effort in Hong Kong waters whereby owners of local fishing vessels were required to apply to the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation ("DAFC"), the designated authority, between 15 June 2012 and 14 June 2013 for registration if their vessels were to be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters.

2. Fishing vessel owners fulfilling the following criteria could apply for registration of their vessels:
- (a) the vessel was designed and equipped to be used primarily for fishing;
  - (b) the vessel possessed, on 15 June 2012, a valid operating licence issued by the Marine Department ("MD"); or
  - (c) if the vessel was acquired or constructed after 15 June 2012, its owner must possess (i) an Approval-in-Principle Letter issued by MD to acquire or construct the vessel (which was valid on 15 June 2012) and (ii) a valid operating licence issued by MD by the time of application for registration.

3. According to the information on the website of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the registration will remain valid throughout the life span of the vessel and no renewal of registration will be required. DAFC will issue a Certificate of Registration of Local Fishing Vessel ("the Certificate") to the owner of a registered vessel. DAFC may also approve an application for change of ownership of a registered vessel or replacement of a registered vessel by a new one, provided that the engine power of the vessel does not exceed that of the replaced vessel. Any person who engages in fishing in Hong Kong waters with the use or aid of the registered vessel (or any of its ancillary vessels) shall carry out fishing activities in accordance with the particulars and conditions specified in the Certificate in terms of engine power, maximum number of ancillary vessels, fishing methods, fishing gears, fishing area and fishing period. DAFC will keep a complete register of all registered vessels, which is available for public inspection. According to information provided by the Administration to the Finance Committee in April 2018, the number of registered fishing vessels in 2017 was 4 133.

4. The Administration will consult members on its proposed amendments to the Fisheries Protection Ordinance in relation to the registration system of fishing vessels at the meeting on 12 February 2019.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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