

**Response to the questions about the first round of the Anti-epidemic Fund, raised by Hon Fernando Cheung in his letter of 16 April to the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council**

**1. Regarding the measure to “support cleansing and security staff engaged by Government and Hong Kong Housing Authority service contractors in anti-epidemic efforts”, the contracts of some contractors ended on 31 March. Will the cleansing and security workers be provided with the allowance for February and March; and how shall they seek assistance from the Government if they do not receive the allowance?**

Under the said measure, a monthly allowance of \$1,000 will be provided to every eligible worker for no less than four months. According to the paper that we submitted to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in February, we aimed to effect payment of the first round of monthly allowance to the contractors by the end of March for them to pass on to their eligible employees.

Government departments have been in touch with their contractors that provided services in March, with a view to confirming the implementation details for transfer of the allowance. The vast majority of them have already entered into agreement, so that the departments can effect the relevant payments to the contractors, and for contractors to transfer the first round allowance to their eligible employees who were on duty in March.

The measure will be in place for no less than four months. In other words, the allowance will be provided to eligible workers on duty in March, April, May and June respectively. The allowance measure does not cover workers who were on duty in February.

Frontline workers are not required to submit any application to the Government for the allowance. They may direct enquiries to the contractors or relevant departments.

**3. Regarding the measure “Global procurement of personal protective equipment”, why has the procurement work of the Government been so slow, with only \$44 m payments made, i.e. 4.4% of the committed amount? What PPE has been procured and what is the quantity? What is the quantity of PPE allocated to individual government departments? Please provide the latest figures in table format.**

The Government Logistics Department (“GLD”) has been procuring personal protective equipment (“PPE”) since January. At the time, with the Anti-epidemic Fund (“AEF”) not yet established, GLD conducted the procurement by making use of the original financial resources in the 2019-20 financial year.

Following the establishment of the AEF, GLD has started to make use of the relevant funding to procure PPE since the 2020-21 financial year. As at 9 April 2020, GLD has paid \$44 million by drawing on the relevant funding of the AEF. Since GLD does not necessarily make full payment when placing orders, the cost of ordered items actually far exceed the payment made.

According to the paper that we submitted to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in February, GLD will exercise prudence and spend responsibly when drawing on the funding for PPE procurement. The ready availability of funding is of utmost importance to enable us to place orders quickly in the highly competitive global market.

With a sharp increase in global demand for PPE items, the HKSAR Government’s procurement work faces keen competition. To avoid undermining the bargaining power of GLD and other departments in the procurement of PPE items, the HKSAR Government considers that it is not appropriate at this stage to disclose more specific information such as the procurement quantity and usage by individual departments.

**Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (The Treasury Branch)  
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