

Legislative Council

Agenda

Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 11:00 am

I. Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

4 papers to be laid on the Table of the Council set out in **Appendix 1**

II. Questions

Members to ask 22 questions (6 for oral replies and 16 for written replies)

Questions for oral replies to be asked by

1. Hon Nixie LAM
(Improving the environment of the Tsuen Wan waterfront)
2. Hon Sunny TAN
(Export credit insurance services)
3. Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG
(Strengthening the cooperation with the Council after the improvement of the electoral system)
4. Hon NGAN Man-yu
(Health care vouchers)
5. Dr Hon Kennedy WONG
(Promoting the development of digital economy)
6. Hon CHAN Hak-kan
(Handling of waste styrofoam boxes)

Public officers to reply

Secretary for the Environment
Under Secretary for
Development

Secretary for Commerce and
Economic Development

Secretary for Constitutional
and Mainland Affairs

Secretary for Food and Health

Secretary for Innovation and
Technology
Under Secretary for Commerce
and Economic Development
Under Secretary for Financial
Services and the Treasury

Secretary for the Environment
Under Secretary for Food and
Health

Contents of 22 questions, Members to ask such questions and public officers to reply set out in **Appendix 2**

III. Government Bills

First Reading and Second Reading (debate to be adjourned)

1. Professional Accountants (Amendment) Bill 2022 : Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
2. Rural Representative Election (Amendment) Bill 2022 : Secretary for Home Affairs

IV. Members' Motions

1. **Proposed resolution to extend the period for amending subsidiary legislation (L.N. 49 and L.N. 50 of 2022)**
Mover : Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG
Wording of the motion : Appendix 3
2. **Motion on “Actively dovetailing with the Qianhai Plan to expedite the integration into the overall development of the country”**
Mover : Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-ki
Wording of the motion : Appendix 4
6 amendment movers : Hon CHAN Pui-leung, Dr Hon Stephen WONG, Hon LAM San-keung, Hon LAU Kwok-fan, Hon YIM Kong and Hon Tony TSE
(Amendments set out in LC Paper No. CB(3) 178/2022 issued on 29 March 2022)
Public officers to attend : Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
Under Secretary for Development
Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Under Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

3. Motion on “Formulating a comprehensive blueprint for industries to promote the industrial development of Hong Kong”

Mover : Hon Sunny TAN

Wording of the motion : **Appendix 5**

3 amendment movers : Dr Hon Stephen WONG, Hon Duncan CHIU and Hon Holden CHOW
(Amendments set out in LC Paper No. CB(3) 173/2022 issued on 25 March 2022)

Public officers to attend : Secretary for Innovation and Technology
Under Secretary for Innovation and Technology
Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Clerk to the Legislative Council

Council meeting of 18 May 2022

Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

Papers

1. Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation Annual Report 2021 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)
(to be presented by Financial Secretary)
2. Student Activities Support Fund Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (including Report of the Director of Audit)
(to be presented by Secretary for Education)
3. Language Fund Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (including Report of the Director of Audit)
(to be presented by Secretary for Education)
4. Report No. 7/2022 of the House Committee on Consideration of Subsidiary Legislation and Other Instruments
(to be presented by Hon Starry LEE, Chairman of the House Committee)

22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 18 May 2022

		Subject matters	Public officers to reply
Questions for oral replies			
1	Hon Nixie LAM	<u>Improving the environment of the Tsuen Wan waterfront</u>	Secretary for the Environment Under Secretary for Development
2	Hon Sunny TAN	<u>Export credit insurance services</u>	Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
3	Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG	<u>Strengthening the cooperation with the Council after the improvement of the electoral system</u>	Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
4	Hon NGAN Man-yu	<u>Health care vouchers</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
5	Dr Hon Kennedy WONG	<u>Promoting the development of digital economy</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
6	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	<u>Handling of waste styrofoam boxes</u>	Secretary for the Environment Under Secretary for Food and Health
Questions for written replies			
7	Hon LAM San-keung	<u>Ordinances or provisions enacted but not yet in operation</u>	Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
8	Hon Kenneth LAU	<u>The Putonghua proficiency of civil servants</u>	Secretary for the Civil Service
9	Hon Doreen KONG	<u>Management of Tenants Purchase Scheme estates</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
10	Hon CHAN Pui-leung	<u>Anti-epidemic Fund</u>	Financial Secretary
11	Hon Stanley LI	<u>Universal Accessibility Programme</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
12	Hon YIU Pak-leung	<u>Hire car permits</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
13	Hon Alice MAK	<u>Prevention and treatment of osteoporosis</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
14	Dr Hon TAN Yueheng	<u>Promoting liquidity of the stock market</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
15	Hon Steven HO	<u>Provision of storage areas for dragon boats</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
16	Prof Hon LAU Chi-pang	<u>Installation of countdown timers on pedestrian crossing lights</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
17	Hon KWOK Wai-keung	<u>Paid meal breaks for government employees</u>	Secretary for the Civil Service

18	Hon Edmund WONG	<u>Increasing resources for ambulance service</u>	Secretary for Security
19	Prof Hon Nelson LAM	<u>Work on preventing and fighting the epidemic for elderly persons</u>	Secretary for Labour and Welfare
20	Hon CHAN Han-pan	<u>Infection of and treatment for elderly persons amid the epidemic</u>	Secretary for Food and Health
21	Hon Andrew LAM	<u>Railway fare adjustments</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
22	Hon CHAN Hok-fung	<u>Eligibility review and oath-taking arrangements for public elections</u>	Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question 1
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Improving the environment of the Tsuen Wan waterfront

Hon Nixie LAM to ask:

While Phase 1 of the “Enhancement of the Tsuen Wan Waterfront project” (“the enhancement project”), implemented by the Government through the dedicated funding for harbourfront enhancement, was completed and opened to the public in April last year, the details of the project’s Phase 2 are not yet available. On the other hand, the seawater odour problem at the Tsuen Wan waterfront, which has been causing distress to the residents of Tsuen Wan West, remains unresolved. On improving the environment of the Tsuen Wan waterfront, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is learnt that the Harbourfront Commission once put forward proposals for improving the Tsuen Wan waterfront, including the provision of jogging trails, greening and covered leisure facilities, whether the Government has incorporated such proposals in its plans for the enhancement project in future; if so, of the details and the latest progress; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) of the latest schedules for the works projects for resolving the seawater odour problem at the above location; whether it will consider concurrently adopting the method of using oyster shells for purification of the seawater to help resolve the problem; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as it is learnt that the discharge of polluted water into the stormwater drainage system of the Tsuen Wan District is the cause of the seawater odour problem at the Tsuen Wan waterfront, whether the Government will establish comprehensive big data on sewage discharge in order to eradicate the problem by nipping the problem in the bud; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 2
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Export credit insurance services

Hon Sunny TAN to ask:

Some members of the industrial and commercial sectors such as the textiles and garment industry have relayed that when they export goods on credit payment terms, they need to take out export credit insurance (“ECI”) with insurance companies in the market or the Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation (“HKECIC”) against the risks of failing to recover the receivables arising from the temporary non-payment by non-local buyers. Nevertheless, in respect of the credit risks of Mainland private enterprises, assessments by insurance companies and HKECIC are generally too much on the high side, resulting in their declining to underwrite insurance policies or charging high insurance premiums. This has deterred micro-, small- and medium-enterprises (“MSMEs”) that wish to develop their markets on the Mainland from doing so. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows if HKECIC has considered collaborating with the authorities or financial and insurance companies on the Mainland to provide Hong Kong’s enterprises with more detailed risk management and credit risk assessment services in respect of Mainland buyers, so as to assist Hong Kong’s MSMEs in developing their markets on the Mainland; if HKECIC has, of the details (including the timetable); if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) given that online retailing has become a major sales channel for quite a number of enterprises at present, whether the authorities have considered keeping abreast of the times by introducing new ECI products for enterprises which engage in e-commerce and sell goods to Mainland buyers; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether the authorities have considered providing financial and policy support for HKECIC to assume more risks in respect of the ECI for Hong Kong’s enterprises exporting goods to Mainland buyers, thereby giving an impetus to Hong Kong’s industrial and commercial sectors for better grasping the opportunities brought about by the country’s economic development strategy on the domestic internal circulation of expanding domestic demand; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 3
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Strengthening the cooperation with the Council
after the improvement of the electoral system

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG to ask:

The current-term Legislative Council (“LegCo”) is the first LegCo formed after the improvement of the electoral system. The number of seats has increased by 20 from the previous term and an Election Committee constituency is newly added. Nearly 40 Members of LegCo are non-partisan. Some analyses have pointed out that the discussion atmosphere in LegCo has changed from one where two political camps were in confrontation with each other in the past to one where issues are examined in greater depth, with more refined proposals being put forward to the Government. In addition, the new Council structure and composition of Members have enabled reforms and government motions which are genuinely in the interest of the community at large to stand a better chance of gaining the support of the Council. In the past few months, the cross-party and multi-disciplinary collaboration among Members from different backgrounds on various livelihood issues has played a positive role in driving the Government to make policy improvements. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) since the commencement of the current term of LegCo, how the Government, under the new situation, makes good use of the new Council culture after the improvement of the electoral system to actively resolve some of the thorny livelihood issues for Hong Kong;
- (2) under the new situation, how the Government steps up its efforts on consulting and explaining to various sectors of the community and members of the public government policies, so as to boost the Government’s credibility and public support; and
- (3) under an executive-led political system, how the Government engages in healthy interaction with LegCo which focuses on the quality of deliberation and the standard of proposals, so that the governing team can embrace high quality proposals from Members as an integral part of its governance of Hong Kong?

Question 4
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Health care vouchers

Hon NGAN Man-yu to ask:

The Government currently provides, through the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme, subsidies for the elderly to choose private primary healthcare services in their neighbourhood that best suit their health needs. Quite a number of comments in society have pointed out that the Government should extend the scope of application of elderly health care vouchers (“HCVs”) and the age range of recipients, with a view to alleviating the pressure on the public healthcare system. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has considered extending the scope of application of HCVs to cover inpatient services, day surgery procedures, as well as healthcare services provided by the hospitals of Tier 3 Class A in Guangdong province and major hospitals and clinics in Macao, and allowing the elderly to use HCVs to buy or rent gerontechnology products and procure medical equipment (including hearing aids); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it has considered extending progressively the age range of voucher recipients to include younger people or even all adults and, through introducing a family health care voucher scheme under which \$1,000 will be injected annually into the voucher account of each non-elderly adult, allowing family members to use each other’s vouchers for preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative services, with a view to alleviating the burden of medical expenses on families; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it has considered introducing a child health care voucher scheme under which, for example, \$2,000 will be injected annually into the voucher account of each child; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 5
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Promoting the development of digital economy

Dr Hon Kennedy WONG to ask:

There are comments pointing out that digital economy has now become one of the key drivers for global economic growth. The country in particular attaches great importance to developing a digital economy and has elevated it to a national strategy, and it has promoted the development of digital economy at the national level. In contrast, Hong Kong is relatively lagging behind in this regard. Not only is the rate of adoption of digital economy low due to the community not attaching sufficient importance to it, but the Government also lacks promotion policies and specific deployment plans and has not invested additional resources to promote the development of relevant infrastructure, causing such development to remain on the low side. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the efforts made by the Government in recent years to promote the development of digital economy;
- (2) whether the Government has considered how it will strengthen cooperation with the Mainland authorities to jointly promote the development of digital economy; and
- (3) whether the Government will consider setting up a matching fund or enhancing relevant support measures, so as to support the enterprises concerned to expedite the construction of infrastructure essential to the development of digital economy, such as radio base stations for the fifth generation mobile communications network; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 6
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Handling of waste styrofoam boxes

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

It has been reported that due to the severe epidemic situation in Hong Kong, the Mainland authorities have, since early February this year, refused to take back the styrofoam boxes which have been used for carrying vegetables supplied to Hong Kong, in a bid to reduce the risk of spreading the epidemic. This has led to a phenomenon of “styrofoam box sieges” in many districts in Hong Kong, with the situation in markets being particularly severe, and caused problems of hygiene, street obstructions and fire hazards. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has estimated the current daily number of styrofoam boxes transported to Hong Kong along with vegetables supplied to Hong Kong, and whether it has assessed the pollution caused to the environment and the ocean by such styrofoam boxes; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) of the measures in place to handle the aforesaid substantially increased waste styrofoam boxes, and the current daily number of such waste styrofoam boxes handled by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department; whether the Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) has assisted in handling such waste styrofoam boxes; if so, of the details, and whether EPD will play a more active role in this; if EPD has not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as it is learnt that at present the Missing Link - Polyfoam Recycling Scheme funded by the Government and the Waste Plastics Recycling Pilot Scheme under EPD are far from adequate to recycle the aforesaid additional waste styrofoam boxes, whether the Government will support more recycling projects on local waste styrofoam boxes; if so, of the target recovery rate; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 7
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Ordinances or provisions enacted but not yet in operation

Hon LAM San-keung to ask:

Regarding those ordinances/provisions of ordinances which have been enacted by this Council but are not yet in operation due to various reasons (“such ordinances/provisions”), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the current number of such ordinances/provisions, and set out, by the year in which they were enacted, the titles of such ordinances/provisions as well as the reasons for their not having come into operation and the details thereof;
- (2) whether the Government has currently put in place a dedicated organization to urge the policy bureaux responsible for such ordinances/provisions to implement such ordinances/provisions as soon as possible;
- (3) whether it has plans to expedite the implementation of such ordinances/provisions; if so, of the details; and
- (4) whether a mechanism is currently in place to review if such ordinances/provisions should be implemented or repealed; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will study establishing such a mechanism?

Question 8
(For written reply)

(Translation)

The Putonghua proficiency of civil servants

Hon Kenneth LAU to ask:

The Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening Language and Writing Work in the New Era (“the Opinions”), which was issued at the end of last year by the General Office of the State Council, puts forward a goal of achieving a national Putonghua penetration rate of 85% by 2025. On the other hand, the Hong Kong SAR Government has indicated that its target is to develop and maintain a Civil Service that is proficient in both written Chinese and English as well as conversant in Cantonese, Putonghua and spoken English. Regarding the Putonghua proficiency of civil servants, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of Putonghua training programmes provided by the Government for civil servants and the number of participants, in each of the past five years; what measures are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of such training programmes;
- (2) whether it has assessed the current Putonghua proficiency of civil servants; if so, of the details and their proficiency as assessed; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) in view of the aforesaid goal put forward in the Opinions, whether the Government will include civil servants’ participation in Putonghua training and their Putonghua proficiency as assessed in the considerations for promotion of civil servants; if so, of the details; if not, how it ensures that civil servants are proficient in Putonghua in order to achieve that goal?

Question 9
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Management of Tenants Purchase Scheme estates

Hon Doreen KONG to ask:

It has been reported that a number of Tenants Purchase Scheme (“TPS”) estates are quite old, and most of them are even provided with shopping malls, car parks and communal facilities. Some owners are worried that they need to bear huge maintenance expenses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of TPS estates in respect of which major maintenance works are underway or are being planned, and the details; and
- (2) whether the Hong Kong Housing Authority received, in the past five years, cases of complaints from owners of TPS estates or disputes among them about the management of the owners’ corporations and the major maintenance works for the estates; if so, of the details?

Question 10
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Anti-epidemic Fund

Hon CHAN Pui-leung to ask:

To cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, the Government has introduced one after another six rounds of measures through the Anti-epidemic Fund (“AEF”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has assessed the overall effectiveness of AEF in coping with the epidemic;
- (2) whether it has reviewed what percentage of the funding allocated from AEF has been spent on the administrative costs involved in the implementation of various measures, and whether there is any waste of public money;
- (3) as it has been reported that in the past two years, the expenditure on frontline anti-epidemic efforts accounted for less than 10% of the funding allocated from AEF, and the additional funding received by the Hospital Authority was insufficient to cope with the epidemic, whether the Government has reviewed the effectiveness of AEF in enhancing the anti-epidemic capability of public hospitals; if so, of the details as well as the improvement measures in place; and
- (4) given that at present, the Government needs to apply to the Finance Committee of this Council from time to time for injection into AEF to introduce a new round of relief measures, whether the Government has considered establishing, under section 29 of the Public Finance Ordinance (Cap. 2), a fund with purposes same as those of AEF, so that the Government can transfer resources from the General Revenue Account to the newly established fund, thereby responding to the development of the epidemic more speedily?

Question 11
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Universal Accessibility Programme

Hon Stanley LI to ask:

It has been reported that the projects implemented under the “Universal Accessibility Programme” (“the Programme”) have been progressing at a slow pace, rendering such an initiative, which is well received by the public, unable to maximize its effectiveness. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is learnt that quite a number of projects under the Programme involve only the addition of lifts at suitable locations of existing footbridges or subways, but it takes an average of five years to complete such a project from investigation, design to works completion, of the Government’s ways to effectively shorten the time required to two to three years; and
- (2) given that as at February this year, the Highways Department (“HyD”) has only engaged three consultants to undertake the advance works of investigation and design for 129 projects, and 10 contractors to undertake the construction of 93 projects under the Programme, whether the Government has assessed if HyD has overly relied on these consultants and contractors to carry out the works, resulting in the slow progress of the projects; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether it will instruct HyD to engage more consultants and contractors to carry out the works, so as to maximize the effectiveness of the Programme?

Question 12
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Hire car permits

Hon YIU Pak-leung to ask:

Some members of the tourism industry have pointed out that as tourists place more emphasis on hygiene when travelling amid the epidemic, demands for services provided in the mode of family and smaller-size tours are expected to increase significantly. However, under the Road Traffic (Public Services Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374D), the numbers of hire car permits (“permits”) issued by the Government in respect of three types of hire car services, namely, (i) private, (ii) hotel and (iii) tour, are currently subject to the limits of just 1 500, 400 and 400 respectively, which can hardly meet market needs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications for each type of the aforesaid permits received and approved by the Government in each of the past three years (set out in a table);
- (2) of the justifications for the limit imposed on each type of the aforesaid permits, and whether a mechanism is in place whereby reviews will be conducted in the light of industry and market demands; and
- (3) as some members of the industry have relayed that the numbers of the three types of the aforesaid permits are insufficient to meet industry demands whilst the application thresholds are too high, whether the Government will consider raising the limits imposed on the numbers of such permits and lowering the application thresholds to facilitate the business operation of the tourism industry?

Question 13
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Prevention and treatment of osteoporosis

Hon Alice MAK to ask:

Regarding the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has compiled statistics on the number of new cases of Hong Kong females suffering from osteoporosis in each of the past five years; if so, of a breakdown by age group; if not, whether it will consider compiling such statistics starting from the current financial year; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (2) given that individual District Health Centres (“DHCs”) currently provide osteoporosis screening service for members of the public, of the service attendance and the expenditure involved so far; whether it will consider allocating additional resources to regularize the service (e.g. by incorporating clauses into the service contracts awarded in the current financial year for the operation of DHCs and DHC Expresses to require the inclusion of osteoporosis screening as a regular service item); if so, of the details (including the estimated expenditure); if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as it has been reported that there is a downward trend in the age of people suffering from osteoporosis in recent years, whether the Government and the Hospital Authority will consider allocating additional resources in the current financial year to step up efforts for osteoporosis prevention, screening and treatment at different levels as early as possible; if so, of the work plan and the estimated expenditure; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 14
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Promoting liquidity of the stock market

Dr Hon TAN Yueheng to ask:

Some financial institutions have estimated that China Concept Stock (“CCS”) companies that meet the requirements of secondary listing and return to Hong Kong may, by the end of 2024, bring about approximately HK\$200 billion of new financing needs. Some investors are concerned whether such situation will create pressure on the liquidity of the stock market in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has assessed the financing scope involved in the listing of the aforesaid CCS companies on their return to Hong Kong, as well as the impacts of which on the liquidity of the stock market;
- (2) of the specific plans and timetable for expanding the liquidity pool, including attracting more Mainland and international capital to flow into Hong Kong to promote liquidity of the market, thereby preparing well for the return of CCS companies of a certain scale; and
- (3) whether it has plans to review and update with Mainland regulatory bodies the contents of the Shanghai-Hong Kong Stock Connect and Shenzhen-Hong Kong Stock Connect, so as to further expand the investment coverage under these mechanisms, thereby increasing the liquidity of the stock market in Hong Kong; if so, of the specific propositions; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 15
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Provision of storage areas for dragon boats

Hon Steven HO to ask:

A number of fishermen associations and dragon boat clubs have relayed to me that the storage space for dragon boats currently provided by the Government is insufficient, and some dragon boats have been damaged due to prolonged exposure to the sun and rain and long-distance transportation, seriously affecting the holding of dragon boat activities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows, in each of the past five years around the territories, (i) the number of dragon boats and (ii) the number of storage spaces available for dragon boats, with a tabulated breakdown by District Council district;
- (2) whether it will review and improve the existing arrangements for assisting community groups in storing dragon boats, with a view to providing more suitable space for them to store dragon boats; if so, of the details (including the required land resources, staffing establishment and expenditure); if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether the Government currently provides any channels for members of the public to apply for space for storing dragon boats; if so, of the application procedure, and the assistance to be provided by the Government; and
- (4) as it is learnt that the shortage of storage space for dragon boats has resulted in some dragon boat clubs having to apply to the Home Affairs Department for renting venues for storing dragon boats, whether the Government will consider leasing the venues concerned to the relevant organizations at a low rent or even at no rent at all to help them reduce operating expenses, thereby encouraging the transmission of the traditional cultural activity of dragon boat racing?

Question 16
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Installation of countdown timers on pedestrian crossing lights

Prof Hon LAU Chi-pang to ask:

Some members of the public have pointed out that countdown timers (“timers”) have been installed on pedestrian crossing lights in quite a number of cities on the Mainland and in the Taiwan region as well as in the United States, Japan, etc. to help pedestrians decide if there is enough time for them to cross the road, and to help drivers who have stopped their vehicles and waited at a pedestrian crossing make early preparation for starting up their vehicles, thereby enhancing pedestrian safety and efficiency in road utilization. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of traffic accidents involving pedestrian casualty that happened at signalized pedestrian crossings in each of the past three years;
- (2) as the Government installed, in 2018, timers on pedestrian crossing lights at a number of locations in the territory for trial purpose, but it is learnt that it subsequently decided not to install such timers across the territory, of the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it will consider relaunching the test scheme for timers, and put such timers on trial use at more locations, so as to collect more data to assess if such timers should be installed across the territory; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 17
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Paid meal breaks for government employees

Hon KWOK Wai-keung to ask:

Regarding the arrangements for the provision of paid meal breaks by the Government for its employees, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the current number and percentage of government employees (including civil servants and full-time or part-time staff employed on non-civil service contract terms) who are not entitled to paid meal breaks, together with a breakdown by government department, mode of employment, grade, salary group, conditioned hours of work per week, and length of service;
- (2) of the respective numbers of Model Scale 1 (“MOD 1”) staff who were entitled and not entitled to paid meal breaks in each year since the completion of the review on the conditioned hours of work for MOD 1 Grades by the Civil Service Bureau in 2014, as well as the relevant percentages, together with a breakdown by government department; and
- (3) whether it has plans to review the conditioned hours of work of various grades, and provide paid meal breaks for all government employees, so as to resolve the problem of different pay for the same work; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Increasing resources for ambulance service

Hon Edmund WONG to ask:

During the period when the fifth wave of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic was extremely severe, the Hong Kong Fire Services Department (“FSD”) experienced a surge in the demand for ambulance service. However, as a result of absence from work of ambulancemen/ambulancewomen who had been infected with the disease and the shortage of ambulances, the performance of ambulance service fell far short of the performance pledge made. There are views pointing out that the Government needs to increase the manpower and equipment for ambulance service as well as increase the number of ambulances, so as to make preparations for the sixth wave of the epidemic or incidents of major public health crisis in case they emerge. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the current total number of ambulances in Hong Kong, with a breakdown by vehicle age; the number of ambulances, in each of the past six months, which could not attend to service calls due to damage, malfunctioning, regular examinations and maintenance, as well as the number of ambulances which could attend to service calls on average each day; whether it has plans to allocate additional resources to FSD for procuring additional ambulances and replacing ambulances which are relatively old; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (2) of the staffing establishment of the Outbreak Control and Response Team (“OCRT”) set up by FSD during the epidemic and the expenditure involved; whether FSD will consider including OCRT in the permanent establishment; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 19
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Work on preventing and fighting the epidemic for elderly persons

Prof Hon Nelson LAM to ask:

Amid the fifth wave of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, over 95% of the fatal cases have been elderly persons aged 60 or above, while residents in residential care homes for the elderly (“RCHEs”) and residential care homes for persons with disabilities have accounted for more than 50% of such fatal cases. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will regularly publish statistics related to (a) elderly persons aged 60 or above and (b) elderly persons living in RCHEs, including the respective numbers and percentages of (i) confirmed patients, (ii) fatal cases, (iii) those who have completed three doses of vaccination and (iv) those who are unvaccinated, so as to facilitate members of the public to grasp the relevant situations; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as there are views that the Government failed in the past two years to boost the vaccination rate of elderly persons by taking measures appropriate to the situations, and it even suspended early this year the service of sending outreach vaccination teams to residential care homes (“RCHs”) to administer vaccines, resulting in a loophole for epidemic prevention and deaths of the residents, whether the Government will formulate a long-term vaccination strategy and roadmap for elderly persons (especially those in RCHEs); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether the inter-departmental task force, set up earlier on by the Government to examine the capabilities of RCHs in fighting the epidemic, will put in place a contingency response mechanism to protect the life of elderly persons in RCHEs in case the sixth wave of the epidemic breaks out, including providing manpower support for those RCHEs which face manpower shortage due to their staff being infected, and providing safe isolation and holding facilities for elderly persons; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 20
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Infection of and treatment for elderly persons amid the epidemic

Hon CHAN Han-pan to ask:

Amid the fifth wave of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) epidemic, a large number of elderly persons (including quite a number of elderly persons living in residential care homes for the elderly (“RCHEs”)) have been infected or even died. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of elderly persons in RCHEs who were confirmed patients and forced into undergoing on-site isolation due to the shortage of beds at public hospitals since the outbreak of the fifth wave of the epidemic, as well as the number of RCHEs involved, and set out, by the names of such RCHEs in a table, their numbers and percentages of elderly persons who were confirmed patients;
- (2) of the total number of elderly persons who had been classified as close contacts of confirmed patients and admitted, between January and April this year, to some of the exhibition halls of the AsiaWorld-Expo (“AWE”) which were temporarily used as an anti-epidemic facility and managed by the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”), and set out in a table the monthly relevant bed occupancy rate and the number of elderly persons who became confirmed patients while undergoing quarantine (and among such cases, the numbers of those that were critical cases and death cases); the healthcare facilities to which these elderly confirmed patients were transferred and the procedure involved; the minimum and maximum numbers of days between such elderly persons proved to be confirmed patients to their being transferred to a healthcare facility, and the reasons for such different time spans; whether it will streamline the referral procedure involved as a preparation in case a new wave of epidemic breaks out;
- (3) of the total number of elderly persons who were confirmed patients and admitted, between January and April this year, to the community treatment facility set up in some of the exhibition halls of AWE and managed by the Hospital Authority, as well as their average length of stay and their conditions, and set out in a table the monthly relevant bed occupancy rate; among such elderly confirmed patients, the number of cases directly referred by the SWD-managed facility mentioned in (2) above and their conditions;

- (4) of the number of elderly confirmed patients who have experienced long-term after-effects (commonly known as “long COVID”) after their recovery, and the percentage of such number in the total number of long COVID patients; whether it will provide dedicated out-patient services (including Chinese medicine out-patient services) and rehabilitation services for this type of elderly persons; and
- (5) whether it will, in the near future, conduct a review on the anti-epidemic work targeting at elderly persons during the fifth wave of the epidemic, and adjust the relevant policies, as a preparation in case a new wave of epidemic breaks out; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 21
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Railway fare adjustments

Hon Andrew LAM to ask:

Under the Operating Agreement entered into between the Government and the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”), the next Fare Adjustment Mechanism (“FAM”) review will be completed by 2023. There are comments pointing out that as fare adjustments are made through a direct-drive formula under FAM, there have been occasions where MTRCL, despite recording a huge surplus, can still increase its fares, and this is not in line with the expectations of members of the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the fare revenue of MTRCL and its expenses directly relating to transport operations (including repair and maintenance, depreciation, as well as the amounts payable to the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation) in each financial year since the implementation of FAM (set out in a table);
- (2) how it ensures that Members of this Council can participate in the FAM review as early as possible in a substantive and meaningful way, such that the views on FAM expressed by members of the public can be reflected in a timely manner; and
- (3) whether it will take the opportunity of the FAM review to comprehensively examine the financial position and operation model of MTRCL, with a view to improving the service performance of railways which constitute the backbone of the traffic system, and enabling railways to better tie in with the comprehensive traffic and transport development strategy; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 22
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Eligibility review and oath-taking arrangements for public elections

Hon CHAN Hok-fung to ask:

At present, there are discrepancies in the arrangements for eligibility review of candidates and statutory oath-taking for elected candidates among different types of public elections. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that in accordance with the “Decision of the National People’s Congress on Improving the Electoral System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” announced by the National People’s Congress on 11 March 2021, the eligibility of candidates for the Election Committee Members, the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) Members shall be subject to the assessment and validation of the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, whether the Government will, by way of local legislation, require all candidates of public elections to first go through the eligibility review procedure; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) given the Government’s proposal that Rural Representatives-elect be required to take a written oath before holding office, and that such an arrangement is different from the oath-taking arrangements for elected candidates of the LegCo and District Council elections, of the detailed justifications for that, and whether it has assessed if such an arrangement is sufficient to reflect the solemnity of oath-taking;
- (3) whether it has studied if other jurisdictions have adopted written oath as a form of statutory oath-taking for elected candidates of public elections; if it has studied, of the details; and
- (4) with regard to public elections overseen by the Electoral Affairs Commission, if any elected candidate fails to fulfil the statutory oath-taking requirements and is thus disqualified from holding office, whether the Government will recover from the person concerned all payments, such as remuneration and allowances, that he/she has received after being elected; if not, of the reasons for that?

Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance

Resolution

(Under section 34(4) of the Interpretation and
General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1))

Resolved that in relation to the —

- (a) Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 49 of 2022; and
- (b) Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 50 of 2022,

and laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 27 April 2022, the period for amending subsidiary legislation referred to in section 34(2) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1) be extended under section 34(4) of that Ordinance to the meeting of 15 June 2022.

(Translation)

**Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok's motion on
“Actively dovetailing with the Qianhai Plan to expedite the integration into
the overall development of the country”**

Wording of the Motion

That the country has promulgated earlier the Plan for Comprehensive Deepening Reform and Opening Up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone (‘Qianhai Plan’), which brings unprecedented development opportunities to Hong Kong; in this connection, this Council urges the SAR Government to actively dovetail with the Qianhai Plan by setting up a high-level dedicated structure to formulate a comprehensive strategy with new thinking and new vision, with a view to expediting the integration of Hong Kong into the overall development of the country; the SAR Government should also allocate more resources to areas where we enjoy advantages, and discuss, together with Hong Kong’s relevant professional sectors, with Mainland government departments and counterparts to further relax the operation restrictions and requirements for Hong Kong professional services sectors to enter the Mainland market, so as to promote the diversified development of Hong Kong professional services sectors in the Mainland, thereby providing more employment and business start-up opportunities for new generations.

(Translation)

**Hon Sunny TAN's motion on
“Formulating a comprehensive blueprint for industries
to promote the industrial development of Hong Kong”**

Wording of the Motion

That as Hong Kong industries have been giving impetus to the economic boom in Hong Kong since 1960s and 1970s, and have been one of the key pillars for the economic development of Hong Kong, various trades enjoy a prominent status in the world, and ‘Made in Hong Kong’ products have gained considerable international recognition and support over the years; with the rapid development of industries and technologies around the world, the integrated development of industries and innovation and technology (‘I&T’) has become a dominant global trend, and a number of regions, countries or cities have adopted proactive and aggressive strategies, formulated comprehensive and long-term blueprints for industrial development, as well as enhanced their tax policies and business environment, with a view to seizing a share of the global market; given that the National 14th Five-Year Plan has brought golden development opportunities to Hong Kong industries, and the country has positioned Hong Kong as an international I&T hub in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (‘GBA’), there are absolutely good prospects for Hong Kong industries; the SAR Government must seize the opportunities to facilitate the integration of research and development (‘R&D’) with industrial technologies, expedite the building up of a talent pool and the promotion of cooperation among the Government, industry, academia and research sectors to commercialize R&D results, promote the active participation of traditional and emerging industries in the development of GBA, Qianhai, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Belt and Road Initiative, thereby integrating into the national development, making contributions towards the country’s ‘domestic and international dual circulation’, ushering in a new era for Hong Kong industries, and changing the perception that ‘industries are declining’; the 2021 Policy Address has put forth the reorganization of the government structure, proposing to rename the Innovation and Technology Bureau as the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau; in this connection, this Council urges the new Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau to introduce a series of policy measures to promote the industrial development of Hong Kong, including:

- (1) formulating a comprehensive and forward-looking blueprint for industrial development to promote the industrial development of Hong

Kong and proactively integrate into the national development from a holistic perspective;

- (2) enhancing various funding schemes for industries and I&T, as well as the relevant policies on land, talent, taxation, laws and regulations, etc., and actively promoting and supporting upstream, midstream and downstream industries, including the development of R&D, application as well as manufacturing and production service;
- (3) enhancing the re-industrialization policy to support, in addition to emerging industries adopting smart production, the regional industry chain of traditional industries for re-industrialization;
- (4) strengthening the support for Hong Kong-invested enterprises' R&D and production activities outside Hong Kong, continuing to remove various policy restrictions of 'money cannot cross the river' and 'money cannot cross the boundary', so as to enhance competitiveness in respect of their development in the industry chain in Asia;
- (5) further fine-tuning the definition and connotation of 'Made in Hong Kong', which should widely cover products with R&D, design, and/or product management by Hong Kong-invested manufacturing enterprises, and contain a wide range of 'Made by Hong Kong' products originating from the wisdom and craftsmanship of Hong Kong;
- (6) stepping up efforts in supporting and promoting local designs and brands, enhancing the status of 'Made in Hong Kong', and promoting 'Made in Hong Kong' in the Mainland and international markets;
- (7) further enhancing the measures on export credit insurance to promote Hong Kong enterprises' proactive integration into the national development; and
- (8) actively promoting a more active role for Hong Kong in 'GBA standards', formulating, in collaboration with GBA, standards that are suitable for promotion internationally, building GBA into a 'standards formulation and management centre' in the Asia-Pacific region, and establishing systems for mutual recognition and coordination in testing standards, trademark registration and protection of intellectual property rights for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao.