

LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Non-accountable Subsidy for Local Pleasure Vessels
Let for Holding Social Gatherings**

Purpose

Members are invited to note this paper which sets out details about the Government's provision of a one-off non-accountable subsidy of \$40,000 for local pleasure vessels let for holding social gatherings.

Background

2. In view of the latest development of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Secretary for Food and Health has issued multiple directions since 20 November 2020 to require the closure of premises that are let for holding social gatherings (commonly known as party room) from 22 November 2020 to 20 January 2021. In this regard, the Government will once again implement the Subsidy Scheme for Beauty Parlours, Massage Establishments and Party Rooms under the Anti-epidemic Fund to provide relief to eligible operators affected by the pandemic and various anti-epidemic measures introduced by the Government.

3. Local pleasure vessels let for hire or reward (pleasure vessels let for hire) are also covered by the above Subsidy Scheme for Beauty Parlours, Massage Establishments and Party Rooms. Pleasure vessels let for hire which held a valid certificate of survey or certificate of inspection and a valid operating licence on the specified date, or within a specified period subject to certain conditions, are also eligible for a one-off non-accountable subsidy of \$40,000. Details are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Vessels Eligible for the Subsidy

4. As all pleasure vessels let for hire which held a valid certificate of survey or certificate of inspection and a valid operating licence on 21 November 2020 must cease operations starting from 22 November 2020, they are eligible for a one-off non-accountable subsidy of \$40,000.

5. We understand that, due to the pandemic, certain vessel owners could have had difficulties arranging the surveys required for the renewal of their vessel's certificate of survey or certificate of inspection and operating licence in time leading to their expiry on or before 21 November 2020. In view of the special circumstances, a vessel will also be considered eligible for the one-off non-accountable subsidy of \$40,000 if the shipowner concerned can provide documents to prove that the vessel held a valid certificate of survey or certificate of inspection and a valid operating licence between 21 October and 20 November 2020 (both dates inclusive), and has its certificate of survey or certificate of inspection and operating licence successfully renewed on or before 21 December 2020.

Form of Subsidy Provision

6. **Shipowners are not required to submit applications** for the above non-accountable subsidy. The Marine Department ("MD") will identify vessels which are eligible for the subsidy concerned through its computer system. If necessary, the Marine Department ("MD") will ask shipowners to provide further information in accordance with their circumstances to verify their vessel's eligibility for the subsidy concerned. It is expected that MD will notify eligible shipowners in writing by the end of January 2021, and will request verification of information from them at the same time including the name and address of the payee (including the shipowner or his/her authorized representative). Upon receipt of confirmation of the payees' particulars from the shipowners concerned, MD will grant each of these shipowners (or the shipowner's authorized representative) the non-accountable subsidy **in the form of a crossed cheque by post.**

7. As to the eligibility of local pleasure vessels for the subsidy concerned, the MD's decision shall be final.

Marine Department
15 January 2021