

Fire and Ambulance Services Academy marks new era of fire and ambulance training

The Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung, today (March 16) officiated at the Opening Ceremony of the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy and "Metropolitan Symposium on Emergency Response". The Academy marks a new era in the training development of the Fire Services Department (FSD).

Other officiating guests are the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie Lam; the Secretary for Security, Mr Lai Tung-kwok; the Permanent Secretary for Security, Mr Joshua Law; the Director of Fire Services, Mr Lai Man-hin; the Deputy Director of Fire Services, Mr Li Kin-yat; and the Commandant of the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy, Mr Ngai Tak-yung.

The Academy covers an area of 158 000 square metres, and provides 526 residential training places for both newly recruited and serving fire and ambulance personnel. The diversified and advanced simulation training facilities of the Academy enhance FSD personnel's professional knowledge and rescue techniques in handling incidents involving railway, tunnel, vessel, aircraft and fueling facility. The specialised training facilities for high angle rescue, urban search and rescue and compartment fire behavior training strengthen the FSD personnel's capability of tackling large-scale incidents. In addition, fire and ambulance personnel will have more opportunities to be trained together, hence improving their response and coordination capability in emergencies.

After the opening ceremony, the Chief Executive and other officiating guests toured around the training facilities of the Academy and watched demonstrations of various training.

The ceremony today also kicked off the three-day "Metropolitan Symposium on Emergency Response". The Symposium is jointly organised by the FSD, the Institution of Fire Engineers (Hong Kong Branch) and the Ambulance Service Institute (Hong Kong Branch) with the theme of "Passing on Expertise", which emphasises on the importance of training for new generations of emergency service providers.

The Symposium also seeks to foster greater understanding of the approach, skills and best practices adopted by emergency service providers throughout the world, so that they can respond to disasters more effectively and become more resilient to disasters. About 250 fire and ambulance service professionals from 14

countries and regions participate in the Symposium for in-depth discussions and experience sharing on emergency response approach, firefighting technology and emergency ambulance service.

Ends/Wednesday, March 16, 2016

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Speech by CE at opening ceremony for Fire and Ambulance Services Academy and
Metropolitan Symposium on Emergency Response (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung, at the opening ceremony for the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy and the Metropolitan Symposium on Emergency Response this morning (March 16):

Director, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It's a great pleasure to be here with you this morning, to celebrate the opening of the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy of the Fire Services Department.

I know one thing, and I have had over the years many encounters with Hong Kong firemen and ambulancemen in action: I can tell you from experience that if there is a crisis in the offing, or an emergency unfolding, Hong Kong people are in the right place and with the right helping hands - some of the world's finest, and bravest, emergency services professionals.

It is hard to think of a more selfless profession than yours. In the event of fire, typhoon, flood or any other disaster, I can only imagine what it takes to overcome the basic human instinct of self-protection - to face, rather than flee from danger, in order to rescue those in peril. So thank you for your dedication and your selfless service.

For almost half a century, the Fire Services Training Centre in Pat Heung has served Hong Kong well. Given the growing density and complexity of our city, given the rise of extreme weather in recent years, and given the higher expectation of our society, firefighting and rescue operations have become more complicated and more challenging.

That is why the Government invests in a new campus - to provide comprehensive and sophisticated training for our fire and ambulance professionals. To ensure that the people of Hong Kong continue to receive superior emergency services protection.

The Fire and Ambulance Services Academy does that and more. Covering an

area of 158 000 square metres, the new Academy provides some 500 residential training places for fire and ambulance personnel.

The Academy's state-of-the-art simulation facilities offer unparalleled training in handling railway, tunnel, vessel and aircraft incidents. The Swift Water Simulator, which simulates different scenarios in swift water channels, is 90 metres in length and the largest in Asia. The Academy also provides specialised training in high-angle rescue, urban search and compartment fire behaviour.

Fire and ambulance personnel will have more opportunities to be trained together in the Academy. This encourages team building, fosters collaboration, and creates better synergy in responding to emergencies.

I am grateful to all those who have contributed to the development of the Academy, all those who have heightened Hong Kong's readiness to tackle disasters, emergencies and all manner of accidents.

Two months ago, with the temperature hitting the lowest in nearly 60 years, more than 100 people - runners in a cross-country race and a good many frost chasers - were stranded on Tai Mo Shan, Hong Kong's highest peak. They were unprepared for the freezing temperature, battering wind and, at times, heavy rain.

I must thank our dedicated rescuers, for battling through the frozen roads and hillsides, and for bringing the stranded and injured to safety, expeditiously and professionally.

It is no easy task to deal with unusual situations and unpredictable risks. Alongside training, professional exchanges are paramount to better preparation for emergency conditions. I am pleased to welcome notable speakers and participants from 11 countries, including those from the Mainland of China, Southeast Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States, for the three-day Metropolitan Symposium on Emergency Response.

The Symposium brings together experts from around the world, and offers the latest information on emergency response strategies and technology. Professionals will also have opportunities to share experience and discuss further collaboration. And that, I am confident, will continue long into the future.

May I wish you all a rewarding Symposium, and our visitors a very enjoyable stay in Hong Kong.

Thank you.

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The Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung (centre), speaks at the opening ceremony for the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy and the Metropolitan Symposium on Emergency Response today (March 16). Next to him are the Director of Fire Services, Mr Lai Man-hin (left), and the Deputy Director of Fire Services, Mr Li Kin-yat (right).



Mr Leung (right), Mr Lai (centre) and Mr Li (left) at the plaque unveiling ceremony.



Mr Leung (first left) and other guests tour the academy and learn about its facilities.



Mr Leung (first left) and other guests tour the academy and learn about its facilities.



Mr Leung (first right) and other guests tour the academy in an open-top bus and learn about its facilities.



Mr Leung (second left) and other guests tour the academy and learn about its facilities.