

SHA inspects transportation of first batch of Olympic Equestrian horses (with photos/video)

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The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, today (July 26) inspected the arrangements for transporting the first batch of Olympic Equestrian horses to the stables at the Olympic Equestrian Venue in Sha Tin after their arrival in Hong Kong.

Transportation of horses is highly professional work. Mr Tsang said he was delighted with today's smooth process, including quarantine checks, transportation, and immigration and customs procedures for accompanying personnel.

He said, "The smooth operation this morning demonstrates the prudent and careful preparatory work done by various Government departments and relevant organisations, such as the Equestrian Company, the Hong Kong Jockey Club and the Airport Authority."

He said that there was a record number of horses participating in the Olympic Equestrian Events in Hong Kong, with about 220 horses, together with over 200 athletes, from some 40 countries/regions.

"The safety of the horses and their welfare is one of the HKSAR Government's top priorities. It is also a great challenge for us.

"I am confident that transportation of other horses in the coming few days will also be carried out smoothly and safely, given the experience this morning, to enable the horses to compete in their best condition," he added.

A total of 32 horses arrived in Hong Kong today. Upon their arrival on three separate flights, they were immediately transported to the stables in the Sha Tin venue from the airport. The horses came from seven countries: Belgium, Denmark, Korea, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Canada and Germany.

After observing the operation at Sha Tin stables, Mr Tsang visited the Hong Kong Olympic Village at the Royal Park Hotel in Sha Tin to see for himself the first day's operations.

Ends/Saturday, July 26, 2008

