

Land Registry releases statistics for July

The Land Registry today (August 2) released its statistics for July 2019.

Land registration

- * The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in July was 6,380 (+2.7 per cent compared with June but -24.6 per cent compared with July 2018)
- * The 12-month moving average for July was 6,144 (2.7 per cent below the 12-month moving average for June and 18.8 per cent below that for July 2018)
- * The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in July was \$54.0 billion (+0.3 per cent compared with June but -45.7 per cent compared with July 2018)
- * Among the sale and purchase agreements, 4,805 were for residential units (+3.8 per cent compared with June but -21.1 per cent compared with July 2018)
- * The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$44.1 billion (-2.8 per cent compared with June and -32.4 per cent compared with July 2018)

Statistics on sales of residential units do not include sale and purchase agreements relating to sales of units under the Home Ownership Scheme, the Private Sector Participation Scheme and the Tenants Purchase Scheme unless the premium of the unit concerned has been paid after the sale restriction period.

Figures on sale and purchase agreements received for the past 12 months, the year-on-year rate of change and breakdown figures on residential sales have also been released.

As deeds may not be lodged with the Land Registry until up to 30 days after the transaction, these statistics generally relate to land transactions in the previous month.

Land search

- * The number of searches of land registers made by the public in July was 459,753 (+6.4 per cent compared with June but -4.9 per cent compared with July 2018)

The statistics cover searches made at the counter, through the self-service terminals and via the Integrated Registration Information System

Twenty-eight immigration offenders arrested

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted a territory-wide anti-illegal worker operation codenamed "Twilight" on July 29 and 30 and August 1. A total of 17 illegal workers, four suspected employers and seven overstayers were arrested.

During the operation, ImmD Task Force officers raided 27 target locations including companies, garbage collection points, a hostel, a park, restaurants and a shop. The illegal workers comprised 10 men and seven women, aged 29 to 59. Among them, one man was a holder of a recognisance form, which prohibits him from taking any employment. In addition, three men and one woman were suspected of using and being in possession of forged Hong Kong identity cards and one woman was suspected of using a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Meanwhile, three men and one woman, aged 33 to 68, were suspected of employing the illegal workers. Furthermore, seven female overstayers, aged 28 to 49, were also arrested.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases. It is an offence to use or possess a forged Hong Kong identity card or a Hong Kong identity card related to another person. Offenders are liable to prosecution and a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an

immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct an initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

[Appeal for information on missing girl in Chai Wan \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (August 2) appealed to the public for information on a girl who went missing in Chai Wan.

Tsui Ching-tung, aged 15, went missing after she was last seen on Holy Cross Path on July 6 morning. Her social worker made a report to Police on July 8.

She is about 1.65 metres tall, 47 kilograms in weight and of thin build. She has a pointed face with yellow complexion and long black hair. She was last seen wearing a black short-sleeved top and black trousers.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing girl or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Kowloon East on 3661 0316 or 9886 0060 or email to rmpu-ke-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



Several beaches reopened

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 2) that the shark prevention nets at Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach, Lido Beach, Casam Beach, Approach Beach, Hoi Mei Wan Beach, Ting Kau Beach and Anglers' Beach in Tsuen Wan District have been repaired and the beaches have been reopened.

The beaches were temporarily closed earlier for maintenance work on the shark prevention nets.

An exceptionally hot and cloudy July

With a warmer than normal sea surface temperature over the northern part of the South China Sea, July 2019 was much hotter than usual in Hong Kong. The monthly mean minimum temperature of 27.7 degrees and the monthly mean temperature of 29.5 degrees were 0.9 degree and 0.7 degree above the corresponding normal and respectively the highest and joint sixth highest on

record for July. The month was also cloudier than usual. The monthly mean amount of cloud was 79 per cent, about 10 per cent above the normal figure of 69 per cent and the joint fifth highest on record for July. The duration of bright sunshine in the month was only 150.5 hours, about 29 per cent below the normal figure of 212.0 hours, making it the seventh lowest on record for July. The monthly rainfall was 328.5 millimetres, about 13 per cent below the normal figure of 376.5 millimetres. The accumulated rainfall recorded in the first seven months of the year was 1437.9 millimetres, slightly lower than the normal figure of 1473.3 millimetres for the same period.

Under the influence of an area of low pressure over the northern part of the South China Sea, there were sunny periods and showers as well as isolated thunderstorms on the first day of the month. Meanwhile, an area of low pressure developed into a tropical depression on July 2 and was named Mun. It moved generally westward across Hainan Island and entered Beibu Wan on July 3. Mun made landfall over the northern part of Vietnam and weakened into an area of low pressure inland on July 4. Under the influence of the rainbands associated with Mun, it was cloudy with occasional heavy showers and thunderstorms from July 2 to 4. More than 100 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over most parts of the territory in these three days.

With the prevalence of a southwesterly airstream, the weather of Hong Kong was a mixture of sunshine and showers from July 5 to 9. Under the influence of a trough of low pressure, local weather became showery with a few thunderstorms on July 10 and 11. More than 60 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over Lantau Island and parts of the New Territories in these two days.

Under the dominance of an anticyclone aloft southeastern China, local weather turned fine and progressively became very hot with a few showers from July 12 to 18. With plenty of sunshine and light winds, the maximum temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory soared to 35.0 degrees on July 18, the highest of the month. The oppressive heat also triggered thundery showers that evening. While the weather remained very hot with sunny intervals on the morning of July 19, high temperature again triggered heavy showers and squally thunderstorms that afternoon. More than 30 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over many places, with rainfall exceeding 50 millimetres over the western part of the New Territories. A trough of low pressure continued to bring showery weather with localised heavy rain to Hong Kong on July 20 and 21. During these two days, more than 40 millimetres of rainfall were recorded over North District, Sai Kung and Southern District, and rainfall even exceeded 100 millimetres over Sha Tau Kok.

Affected by an upper-air disturbance, the weather of Hong Kong was a mixture of sunshine and showers from July 22 to 24. With the strengthening of the anticyclone aloft southeastern China, local weather became generally fine and very hot apart from isolated showers over the next three days. As the anticyclone aloft weakened, it was mainly cloudy with a few showers and thunderstorms on July 28 and 29. An area of low pressure developed into a tropical cyclone over the northern part of the South China Sea on July 30 and was named Wipha. With Wipha moving towards Hainan Island, local weather

deteriorated gradually and became windy with outbreaks of squally heavy showers and thunderstorms on the last two days of the month. The outer rainbands associated with Wipha brought more than 100 millimetres of rainfall to most parts of the territory on July 31. The rainfall over Tseung Kwan O, Wong Tai Sin and Tai Wai even exceeded 200 millimetres. In the midst of the downpour, the temperature at the Hong Kong Observatory dropped to a minimum of 24.5 degrees on July 31, the lowest of the month.

Four tropical cyclones occurred over the South China Sea and the western North Pacific in July 2019.

Details of the issuance and cancellation of various warnings/signals in July are summarised in Table 1. Monthly meteorological figures and departures from normal for July are tabulated in Table 2.