

CE to visit Beijing

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, will depart for Beijing on April 24 to attend the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition.

The theme of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation this year is "Belt and Road Cooperation, Shaping a Brighter Shared Future". Mrs Lam will lead a delegation comprising members of various sectors in Hong Kong including the political, business, professional services and innovation and technology sectors, as well as academics and people involved in public and community services, to attend the forum. She will participate and deliver opening keynote addresses in the thematic forums on financial connectivity and regional co-operation on April 25, and will attend the opening ceremony and the high-level meeting on April 26.

Mrs Lam will depart for the Yanqing district on April 28 to attend the opening ceremony and related events of the 2019 Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition. During her stay in Beijing, she will also visit the All-China Women's Federation on April 27 as invited to exchange views with relevant leaders.

Mrs Lam will return to Hong Kong on April 29. During her absence, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, will be Acting Chief Executive.

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (April 18) released the latest grading of water quality at 38 gazetted beaches that are open for swimming and one non-gazetted beach (i.e. Discovery Bay*).

Thirty beaches were rated as good (grade 1), eight as fair (grade 2) and one as poor (grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cafeteria New Beach	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Pui O Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach	Repulse Bay Beach

Deep Water Bay Beach
Discovery Bay
Golden Beach
Hap Mun Bay Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach
Kadoorie Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach
Kwun Yam Beach
Lido Beach
Lo So Shing Beach

Shek O Beach
Silver Mine Bay Beach
Silverstrand Beach
South Bay Beach
St Stephen's Beach
Stanley Main Beach
Tong Fuk Beach
Trio Beach
Turtle Cove Beach
Upper Cheung Sha Beach

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach
Approach Beach
Big Wave Bay Beach
Butterfly Beach

Cafeteria Old Beach
Casam Beach
Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Ting Kau Beach

Grade 3 beach is:

Castle Peak Beach

* Discovery Bay is a non-gazetted beach without lifeguard service.

Compared with the grading released last week, Kadoorie Beach and Silverstrand Beach have been upgraded from grade 2 to grade 1. Cafeteria Old Beach has been changed from grade 1 to grade 2; Castle Peak Beach from grade 2 to grade 3.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a storm or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. Latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the department's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

[HK SAR delegation to participate at second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation](#)

The second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation will be held in Beijing from April 25 to 27. The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, will lead a high-level Hong Kong Special Administrative Region delegation to participate at the Forum.

Under the theme of "Belt and Road Cooperation, Shaping a Brighter Shared Future", the Forum aims to bring about high quality Belt and Road cooperation. Development policy co-ordination, infrastructure connectivity, sustainable development and other topics of common interest will be discussed. Twelve thematic forums will be held, focusing on policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-to-people connectivity, think-tank exchanges, clean silk road, digital silk road, green silk road, silk road of innovation, regional cooperation, and economic and trade cooperation zone promotion.

The Hong Kong delegation comprises senior government officials and members from various sectors of Hong Kong, including the political, business, professional services, innovation and technology sectors, and academia as well as public and community services. They will participate at thematic forums and the CEO conference on April 25, and the opening ceremony and high-level meeting on April 26.

Official members of the delegation include the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC; the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau; and the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip. The delegation list is available in the Annex.

"The Government attaches great importance to the work in taking forward the Belt and Road Initiative. Hong Kong's participation at the Forum will enhance our role and position as the prime platform and a key link for the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as foster our integration into the overall development of the country," Mrs Lam said.

"I look forward to our delegates sharing with other Forum participants and the international community on Hong Kong's contributions in respect of promoting global connectivity and win-win development, and having proactive interactive exchanges on Hong Kong's work in the Belt and Road," she added.

Mrs Lam will deliver the opening keynote address at the thematic forums

on financial connectivity and regional cooperation, with the latter dedicated session on Hong Kong themed "Belt and Road: Hong Kong IN". The session will be moderated by the Chairman of the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited, Mrs Laura M Cha. Six Hong Kong delegates, from the finance, legal and dispute resolution, business and commerce, risk management, infrastructure and cultural sectors, will have an in-depth discussions on how Belt and Road related countries and regions may leverage Hong Kong's professional services and international connections in participating in the Initiative and pursuing regional co-operation.

Composite Interest Rate: End of March 2019

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (April 18) the composite interest rate at the end of March 2019.*

The composite interest rate, which is a measure of the average cost of funds of banks, increased by 2 basis points to 0.82 per cent at the end of March 2019, from 0.80 per cent at the end of February 2019 (see Chart 1 in the Annex). The increase in composite interest rate reflected increases in the weighted funding cost for both deposits and interbank funds during the month (see Chart 2 in the Annex).

The historical data of the composite interest rate from the end of the fourth quarter of 2003 to the end of March 2019 are available in the Monthly Statistical Bulletin on the HKMA website (www.hkma.gov.hk). The next data release is scheduled for May 17, 2019 and will provide the composite interest rate at the end of April 2019.

* The composite interest rate is a weighted average interest rate of all Hong Kong dollar interest bearing liabilities, which include deposits from customers, amounts due to banks, negotiable certificates of deposit and other debt instruments, and Hong Kong dollar non-interest bearing demand deposits on the books of banks. Data from retail banks, which account for about 90 per cent of the total customers' deposits in the banking sector, are used in the calculation. It should be noted that the composite interest rate represents only average interest expenses. There are various other costs involved in the making of a loan, such as operating costs (e.g. staff and rental expenses), credit cost and hedging cost, which are not covered by the composite interest rate.

Senior appointments (with photos)

The Government announced today (April 18) the following senior appointments:

(a) Ms Maisie Cheng Mei-sze, Director of Marine, will take up the post of Permanent Secretary for the Environment/Director of Environmental Protection on May 2, 2019; and

(b) Miss Agnes Wong Tin-yu, Director-General of Communications, will take up the post of Director of Marine on May 14, 2019.

Commenting on the appointments of Ms Cheng and Miss Wong, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, said, "The two appointees are seasoned Administrative Officers with proven leadership and management skills. I have every confidence that they will continue to serve the community with professionalism in their new capacities."

Brief biographical notes of the two officers are set out below:

Ms Maisie Cheng Mei-sze

Ms Cheng joined the Administrative Service in September 1987 and rose to the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade A in April 2015. She has served in various bureaux and departments, including the former Survey Office, the former Transport Branch, the former Civil Service Branch, the former City and New Territories Administration, the former University and Polytechnic Grants Committee Secretariat, the former Financial Services Branch, the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority, the Executive Council Secretariat, the former Economic Development and Labour Bureau and the former Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority. She was Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) from February 2010 to June 2012 and Director of Government Logistics from January 2013 to September 2015, and has been serving as Director of Marine since September 2015.

Miss Agnes Wong Tin-yu

Miss Wong joined the Administrative Service in November 1989 and rose to the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 in April 2014. She has served in various bureaux and departments, including the former City and New Territories Administration, the former Chief Secretary's Office, the former Trade Department, the former Industry Department, the Innovation and Technology Commission, the Civil Service Bureau and the Home Affairs Department. She was Deputy Director of Administration from June 2008 to October 2012 and Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)/Deputy Director of Housing (Strategy) from October 2012 to August 2017, and has been

serving as Director-General of Communications since August 2017.

