

## **Employment agency and its directors cum salespersons convicted of applying false trade description to employment agency service**

An employment agency and two of its directors cum salespersons were convicted of having applied a false trade description to the employment agency service offered to be supplied to a consumer, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). The employment agency was convicted at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts and fined \$5,000 today (April 18). The two directors cum salespersons were each fined \$5,000 and ordered to pay the victim \$9,980 in compensation at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts on March 22.

Hong Kong Customs earlier received information alleging that two directors cum salespersons, one male and one female, of an employment agency had made a false claim to a customer on its licence status in the provision of employment agency service.

After investigation, it was revealed that the employment agency was not a licensed employment agency.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TDO, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service supplied to a consumer commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).

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## **Unemployment and underemployment statistics for January – March 2019**

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for January – March 2019) released today (April 18) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 2.8% in January – March 2019, same as that in December 2018 – February 2019. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.0% in the two periods.

Comparing January – March 2019 with December 2018 – February 2019, movements in the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) in different industry sectors varied, with a relatively notable increase observed in the foundation and superstructure works of the construction sector. Movements in the underemployment rates in different industry sectors also varied, but were generally small in magnitude.

Total employment decreased by around 6 300 from 3 866 700 in December 2018 – February 2019 to 3 860 400 in January – March 2019. Over the same period, the labour force increased by around 1 600 from 3 969 200 to 3 970 800.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 7 900 from 102 500 in December 2018 – February 2019 to 110 400 in January – March 2019. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons decreased by around 1 400 from 40 300 to 38 900.

#### Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, said, "The labour market stayed tight in January – March 2019, with the unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) and the underemployment rate staying unchanged at 2.8% and 1.0% respectively."

"As to individual sectors, a noticeable increase in unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) was observed in the foundation and superstructure works of the construction sector when compared with the preceding three-month period (December 2018 – February 2019). On a year-on-year comparison, the unemployment situation improved in many major service sectors, notably in the retail, accommodation and food services sector on the back of sustained expansion in inbound tourism."

Looking ahead, Dr Law said, "The labour market is expected to remain largely stable in the near term. The Government will stay vigilant to how the evolving external uncertainties will affect the labour market going forward."

He noted that the Labour Department (LD) organises experience sharing sessions on employment of elderly persons and invites representatives of the Hong Kong Federation of Insurers to brief employers on matters relating to the taking out of employees' compensation insurance policies for elderly employees. LD also stages large-scale thematic job fairs targeted at middle-aged and elderly job seekers and organises district-based job fairs on part-time employment at job centres to meet the needs of some elderly persons who are more interested in taking up part-time jobs.

On large-scale job fairs, LD will co-organise the Hong Kong International Airport Career Expo 2019 with the Airport Authority Hong Kong from May 31 to June 2 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Ample vacancies involving the aviation industry and airport operation will be provided. LD will also organise the Kowloon East Job Fair from June 20 to 21

at the Yau Tong Community Hall and about 50 employers will participate.

#### Further information

The unemployment and underemployment statistics were compiled from the findings of the continuous General Household Survey.

The survey for January – March 2019 covered a sample of some 25 000 households or 74 000 persons, selected in accordance with a scientifically designed sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong.

Data on labour force characteristics were obtained from the survey by interviewing each member aged 15 or over in the sampled households.

In the survey, the definitions used in measuring unemployment and underemployment follow closely those recommended by the International Labour Organization.

Detailed analysis of labour force characteristics is given in the "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey" which is published four times a year. The latest issue of the publication contains statistics for the quarter October – December 2018 while the next issue covering the quarter January – March 2019 will be available by end May 2019. Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001)).

For enquiries about labour force statistics, please contact the Household Statistics Analysis Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2887 5508 or email: [ghs@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:ghs@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## [Temporary traffic arrangements at Kai Tak Tunnel and East Kowloon Way from this Saturday](#)

The Transport Department (TD) today (April 18) reminded members of the public that to facilitate urgent road repair work, the following temporary traffic arrangements will be implemented at the Kai Tak Tunnel and the East Kowloon Way from this Saturday (April 20) to next Monday (April 22):

Date	Time	Temporary Traffic Arrangements
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April 20 (Saturday)	8am to 5pm daily	The slow lane of a section of the East Kowloon Way eastbound between Kowloon City Road and the Kai Tak Tunnel eastbound portal will be temporarily closed to all vehicular traffic. The fast lane of the East Kowloon Way eastbound will remain open during the maintenance works. The two-lane traffic of the Kai Tak Tunnel eastbound will also be maintained.
April 21 and 22 (Sunday and Monday)		The fast lane of the westbound tube of the Kai Tak Tunnel and a section of the fast lane of the East Kowloon Way between San Shan Road and Chi Kiang Street will be temporarily closed. Motorists can still use the slow lane heading for Kowloon Central.

Due to the lane closure, the TD anticipates that the traffic along the Kai Tak Tunnel and the East Kowloon Way will be relatively busy during the above period. Motorists passing through the road section concerned should exercise tolerance and patience and drive with utmost care. Appropriate traffic signs will be erected on-site to guide motorists.

The TD and the Police will closely monitor the traffic situation and implement appropriate measures whenever necessary. Members of the public are advised to stay alert to the latest traffic news on radio and television.

Details of the temporary traffic arrangements are now available on the TD's website ([www.td.gov.hk](http://www.td.gov.hk)).

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## [Fraudulent website related to The Bank of East Asia, Limited](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Bank of East Asia, Limited on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on [the HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, April 18, 2019 is 103.2 (same as yesterday's index).