

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illegally imported live birds \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized 60 suspected illegally imported live birds, including 20 live birds suspected to be endangered species, with an estimated market value of about \$600 at Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point on February 2.

During Customs clearance for a 29-year-old incoming male passenger in the afternoon on February 2, the batch of live birds were found in two plastic bags he carried.

The case was handed over to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for follow-up investigation.

Under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting an endangered species without a licence is liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years.

Under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Regulations, it is an offence to import any bird unless it is accompanied by a valid health certificate. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$25,000.

Members of the public may report any suspected activities of illegal import of live birds to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Employer fined for late payment of wages

Happy Strong Corporation Limited was prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for failing to pay three employees' wages, totalling about \$70,000, within seven days after the expiry of the wage period as required by the Employment Ordinance (EO). The employer was fined \$54,000 after pleading guilty at Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (February 4).

"The ruling helps disseminate a strong message to all employers that they have to pay wages to employees within the time limit stipulated in the EO," an LD spokesman said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will continue to make dedicated efforts in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

Refund arrangements for e-Payment service at government tolled roads and tunnels

The Transport Department (TD) today (February 4) said that since the implementation of the "stop-and-go" e-Payment service at government tolled roads and tunnels, a small number of motorists using Octopus cards to pay tolls at the manual toll booths had experienced faults in the "Toll Paid" notification in which the e-Payment system did not indicate a successful transaction. As a result, the motorists concerned were asked to pay the toll in cash instead. However, after checking the records, it was found that these Octopus transactions had been successfully completed, resulting in duplicated toll payments by the motorists concerned. With modification of the e-Payment system software, the technical issue has now been fixed.

Having verified the relevant records, 30 transactions were found to be affected up to December 31, 2018, amounting to a total of \$337.

The TD has arranged for refunds through Octopus Cards Limited. The card holders concerned can receive the refund through the channels below, effective from 10am on February 5, 2019:

(i) Near Field Communication (NFC)-enabled Android mobile devices or iOS mobile devices paired up with Octopus Mobile Reader, with the Octopus App installed; or

(ii) Octopus Service Points at the designated MTR stations or shopping malls (please browse Octopus website www.octopus.com.hk or call the Octopus customer service hotline 2266 2222 for the locations).

All the card numbers of the affected Octopus cards and the government tolled roads and tunnels concerned have been uploaded to the TD website (www.td.gov.hk) for public reference.

If there are further and similar refund cases in the future, the card number of affected Octopus cards will be uploaded to the following TD website:
www.td.gov.hk/en/transport_in_hong_kong/tunnels_and_bridges/toll_rates_of_road_tunnels_and_lantau_link/stop_and_go_e_payment_service/index.html

For queries, please call 1823 or the respective hotlines of the tolled road and tunnels.

Public urged to keep venues clean during fireworks display

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (February 4) appealed to members of the public to keep places clean and mind their safety while watching the Lunar New Year Fireworks Display on February 6 (the second day of the Lunar New Year).

The LCSD, together with the law enforcement teams of other relevant departments, will strengthen patrols at LCSD venues where large crowds are expected. Measures will be stepped up to tackle littering, illegal hawking and vandalism.

These venues include the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Piazza, Salisbury Garden, the Avenue of Stars, Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade, Urban Council Centenary Garden, Middle Road Children's Playground, Tsim Sha Tsui East Waterfront Podium Garden, Hung Hom Promenade and Kai Tak Cruise Terminal Park along the Kowloon waterfront, as well as Tamar Park and Central and Western District Promenade (Central Section) on the waterfront of Hong Kong Island.

A spokesman for the LCSD urged members of the public to take their belongings with them when leaving the venues and not to leave trash behind.

He said that littering offenders will be subject to a fixed penalty of \$1,500. Publicity materials reminding members of the public to keep places clean will be displayed at the venues while additional cleaning staff and security guards will also be deployed.

The spokesman also reminded people that the above-mentioned venues will be very crowded during the fireworks display. Visitors are advised to exercise tolerance and patience and take special care of their safety. They should pay attention to crowd management measures and take heed of police instructions, he added.

[Land Registry releases statistics for January](#)

The Land Registry today (February 4) released its statistics for January 2019.

Land registration

* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in January was 5,589 (+84.0 per cent compared with December 2018 but -22.6 per cent compared with January 2018)

* The 12-month moving average for January was 6,463 (2.1 per cent below the 12-month moving average for December 2018 and 9.6 per cent below that for January 2018)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in January was \$72.0 billion (+67.2 per cent compared with December 2018 and +5.1 per cent compared with January 2018)

* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 4,543 were for residential units (+120.5 per cent compared with December 2018 but -13.8 per cent compared with January 2018)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$44.9 billion (+86.6 per cent compared with December 2018 but -9.8 per cent compared with January 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 January was 423,818 (+20.1 per cent compared with December 2018 but -11.1 per cent compared with January 2018)

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