

Airmail and Speedpost services to Ukraine temporarily suspended

Hongkong Post announced today (December 24) that, as advised by the postal administration of Ukraine, Ukraine has imposed an embargo on imports of mail. Consequently Hongkong Post has suspended airmail and Speedpost services to Ukraine with immediate effect until January 3, 2019.

Exchange Fund Bills Tender Results

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

Hong Kong Monetary Authority Exchange Fund Bills Tender Results

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|------------------------|---------------------|
| Tender date | : December 24, 2018 |
| Paper on offer | : EF Bills |
| Issue number | : Q1852 |
| Issue date | : December 27, 2018 |
| Maturity date | : March 27, 2019 |
| Amount applied | : HK\$77,360 MN |
| Amount allotted | : HK\$42,785 MN |
| Average yield accepted | : 1.94 PCT |
| Highest yield accepted | : 2.10 PCT |
| Pro rata ratio | : About 22 PCT |
| Average tender yield | : 2.02 PCT |

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|------------------------|---------------------|
| Tender date | : December 24, 2018 |
| Paper on offer | : EF Bills |
| Issue number | : H1881 |
| Issue date | : December 27, 2018 |
| Maturity date | : June 26, 2019 |
| Amount applied | : HK\$28,810 MN |
| Amount allotted | : HK\$9,000 MN |
| Average yield accepted | : 1.82 PCT |
| Highest yield accepted | : 1.86 PCT |
| Pro rata ratio | : About 9 PCT |
| Average tender yield | : 2.00 PCT |

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|------------------------|---------------------|
| Tender date | : December 24, 2018 |
| Paper on offer | : EF Bills |
| Issue number | : Y1898 |
| Issue date | : December 27, 2018 |
| Maturity date | : December 27, 2019 |
| Amount applied | : HK\$9,170 MN |
| Amount allotted | : HK\$2,100 MN |
| Average yield accepted | : 1.89 PCT |
| Highest yield accepted | : 1.92 PCT |
| Pro rata ratio | : About 85 PCT |
| Average tender yield | : 2.10 PCT |

Temporary suspension of Mobile Library 1, 5 and 8 services

Mobile Libraries 1, 5 and 8 will suspend services during designated periods in January and February next year for routine maintenance, a Leisure and Cultural Services Department spokesman announced today (December 24).

Mobile Library 1 will suspend services from January 2 to 12. The affected service points are Shek Lei (I) Estate in Kwai Chung, Ko Yee Estate in Yau Tong, Kai Ching Estate in Kowloon City, Tsui Chuk Garden in Wong Tai Sin, Whampoa Garden in Hung Hom, Riviera Gardens in Tsuen Wan and Park Island in Ma Wan. For enquiries about Mobile Library 1 services, please call 2414 3157.

Mobile Library 5 will suspend services from January 14 to 19. The affected service points are Hin Keng Estate, Kam Tai Court, Mei Tin Estate and Yan On Estate in Sha Tin; Kin Ming Estate, Yee Ming Estate and Mang Kung Uk Road in Sai Kung; and Fu Shin Estate and Fu Heng Estate in Tai Po. For enquiries about Mobile Library 5 services, please call 2696 5842.

Mobile Library 8 will suspend services from January 18 to 24. The affected service points are Choi Ying Estate in Kowloon Bay, Laguna City in Lam Tin, Po Tat Estate in Sau Mau Ping, Tai Hang Tung Estate on Tai Hang Tung Road and Laguna Verde in Hung Hom. For enquiries about Mobile Library 8 services, please call 2926 3055.

Readers are welcome to use other public libraries during the service suspension periods. They may also renew library materials by telephoning 2698 0002 or 2827 2833, or via www.hkpl.gov.hk.

EPD reminds recyclers that disposal licensing control and import/export permit control of waste regulated electrical equipment to start next Monday

Disposal licensing control, import and export control and disposal bans at designated waste disposal facilities of regulated electrical and electronic equipment (REE) (including waste air-conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors) under the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) will come into effect next Monday (December 31). The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (December 24) once again reminded the relevant practitioners in the recycling industry and second-hand shops to get themselves ready to avoid contravening the law.

Starting from December 31 this year, landfills and other designated waste disposal facilities (such as refuse transfer stations) will no longer receive and handle waste REE. Unless exempted, any person who is engaged in the storage, treatment, reprocessing or recycling (but not repair) of waste REE must obtain a waste disposal licence (e-WDL) issued by the EPD under the law. A permit issued by the EPD is also required for the import and export of waste REE.

Staff of the EPD recently paid another round of visits to recycling sites and reminded the trade that if they are uncertain whether an e-WDL can be obtained before December 31 this year, they must take immediate action to properly clear up and stop receiving waste REE, so as to avoid contravening the law.

An EPD spokesman stressed that there will be no grace period upon the commencement of relevant control measures on December 31 and the department will step up inspections and take enforcement action against non-compliant operations. Under the WDO, any person involved in the disposal (including storage) of REE without a licence, or the import or export of REE without a permit, is liable to a fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment upon first conviction.

The spokesman said that according to the WDO, the following operations are exempted from obtaining a waste disposal licence, but must still abide by all other environmental legislation and applicable legislation:

- (1) disposal of waste REE (that is not chemical waste) on land or premises with an area of not more than 100 m²;
- (2) storage of waste REE with a total volume of not more than 50 m³; or

(3) storage of waste REE on premises located inside a multi-storey building.

The EPD also appeals to those involved in the resale of second-hand REE to properly inspect and repair such appliances, and to ensure that they are operable and label them. Such appliances should also be properly packaged to avoid damage during storage or transportation. For details on how to distinguish between waste REE and second-hand REE, please refer to the EPD website: www.epd.gov.hk/epd/eng/2ndhandREE.

The Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment covering the REE came into effect on August 1 this year. With the commencement of relevant control measures under the WDO on December 31 this year, locally generated waste REE will be properly treated and recycled, and turned into resources. This will provide a long-term solution to potential land contamination and environmental problems arising from mishandling REE during delivery, storage and dismantling processes, marking another important milestone in Hong Kong's waste reduction and recycling efforts.

First successful prosecution of beauty parlour agent engaging in misleading omission commercial practice by hiding commercial intent

A male agent of a beauty parlour was sentenced to 160 hours of Community Service Order today (December 24) at Eastern Magistrates' Court for engaging in relation to a consumer in a commercial practice that is a misleading omission, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). He was also ordered to pay six victims \$238,698 in total in compensation. This is the first successful prosecution of a trader failed to identify commercial intent in selling beauty services.

Hong Kong Customs earlier received information alleging that a male agent of a beauty parlour was suspected of engaging in unfair trade practices in the sale of beauty services.

Investigation revealed that the agent of the beauty parlour approached consumers through the Internet and brought them to the branches of the beauty parlour in Mong Kok and Causeway Bay for beauty services. In the process, the agent hid his commercial intent, misled and lured six consumers into procuring beauty services at high cost.

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

Under the TD0, any trader who engages in a commercial practice that omits or hides material information or provides material information in a manner that is unclear, unintelligible, ambiguous or untimely, or fails to identify its commercial intent and as a result causes, or is likely to cause, an average consumer to make a transactional decision 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 TD0 to Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).