

## Composite interest rate: End of October 2018

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (November 19) the composite interest rate at the end of October 2018.\*

The composite interest rate, which is a measure of the average cost of funds of banks, increased by 1 basis point to 0.77% at the end of October 2018, from 0.76% at the end of September 2018 (see Chart 1 in the Annex). The rise in composite interest rate reflected increases in the weighted funding cost for deposits 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 October 2018 are available in the Monthly Statistical Bulletin on the HKMA website ([www.hkma.gov.hk](http://www.hkma.gov.hk)). The next data release is scheduled for December 19, 2018 and will provide the composite interest rate at the end of November 2018.

\* 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% 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.

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## Government engages public in formulating recommendations for new Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan

The Labour and Welfare Bureau today (November 19) announced that the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC) will launch the second stage (Formulation of Recommendations Stage) of the public consultation exercise to seek views from members of the public on the formulation of a new Hong Kong

Rehabilitation Programme Plan (RPP) through a series of public engagement activities.

With the assistance of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Consulting Team, the RAC has completed the first stage (Scoping Stage) of the public consultation exercise to collect stakeholders' opinions for defining the scope of the new RPP. More than 1 000 persons participated in the public consultation exercise and 70 written submissions were received by the Consulting Team during the period. The Report on Scoping Stage prepared by the Consulting Team has been uploaded to its website ([www.rs.polyu.edu.hk/rpp](http://www.rs.polyu.edu.hk/rpp)) for public viewing.

A spokesman for the Labour and Welfare Bureau said, "The Consulting Team will hold four public consultation sessions in early December 2018 and 15 seminars in the first quarter of 2019 to collect views from stakeholders for the priority issues. The five Task Forces under the RAC will also host separate stakeholder meetings, with a view to mapping out the strategic directions and recommendations."

The arrangements of the four public consultation sessions under the Formulation of Recommendations Stage are set out as follows:

<b>Session</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Session One Kowloon (Note 1)	December 5, 2018 (Wednesday) 3pm to 5.30pm	Hall, 1/F, Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre, 60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei
Session Two New Territories West (Note 2)	December 7, 2018 (Friday) 3pm to 5.30pm	Hall, Princess Alexandra Community Centre, 60 Tai Ho Road, Tsuen Wan
Session Three New Territories East (Note 2)	December 12, 2018 (Wednesday) 10am to 12.30pm	Hall, Hang Hau Community Hall, G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex, 38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O
Session Four Hong Kong Island (Note 2)	December 15, 2018 (Saturday) 7.30pm to 10pm	Hall, 1/F, Duke of Windsor Social Service Building, 15 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai

Note 1: To be conducted in Cantonese, with Hong Kong sign language interpretation and Cantonese and English simultaneous interpretation.

Note 2: To be conducted in Cantonese, with Hong Kong sign language interpretation.

The public consultation period of the Formulation of Recommendations Stage will commence on December 5, 2018, and last until April 4, 2019. Members of the public are welcome to express their views. Please visit the Consulting Team's website ([www.rs.polyu.edu.hk/rpp](http://www.rs.polyu.edu.hk/rpp)) for registration arrangements of the public consultation sessions, details of the seminars and methods for submitting views. Members of the public who have any views or

enquiries may send email to the Consulting Team ([rs.rpp@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:rs.rpp@polyu.edu.hk)).

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## October's monthly ovitrap index for Aedes albopictus drops further

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (November 19) that the monthly territory-wide ovitrap index for *Aedes albopictus* dropped further, from 6 per cent in September to 2.2 per cent in October, indicating that the infestation of *Aedes albopictus* in the areas surveyed was not extensive. The FEHD reminded the public to keep on implementing effective measures against mosquitoes even winter is approaching.

"*Aedes albopictus* is a kind of mosquito that can transmit dengue fever (DF) and Zika virus. In view of the 29 local DF cases recorded in Hong Kong so far this year, and that DF is also highly prevalent in neighbouring areas, as well as the relatively high temperature of autumn and winter in Hong Kong which is favourable for mosquito breeding, the public must remain vigilant and work with the Government to continue to carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures," an FEHD spokesman said.

Among the 57 areas surveyed last month, positive ovitrap indices were recorded in 38 areas, ranging from 0.9 per cent to 8.8 per cent, with the highest in Ma On Shan. As for the port areas, the monthly ovitrap index for *Aedes albopictus* for October fell to 0.2 per cent from 1.4 per cent in September.

"The FEHD and relevant government departments will continue to intensify their mosquito preventive and control work covering areas under their purview and strengthen publicity and education campaigns. The FEHD has launched a special territory-wide thematic mosquito prevention and control operation on October 29, which will continue in the winter season and last till January 11, 2019. Relevant departments have also participated in the operation. The district offices of the FEHD will target areas which have drawn particular concern, such as single-block buildings, village houses, construction sites, areas previously detected with local DF cases and container terminals and cargo working areas in port areas, to intensify mosquito prevention and control work throughout winter. Closely following the thematic operation, the year-end clean-up operation will commence on January 11, 2019, during which mosquito control work will also be enhanced."

In addition, the FEHD set up four Pest Control Inspection Teams in May last year to step up inspection of construction sites and enforcement action against mosquito breeding. This year, as of November 18, the FEHD has instituted 191 prosecutions for mosquito breeding found in relevant premises

under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), comprising 182 cases involving construction sites and nine cases involving other premises.

In order to keep the public abreast of the latest situation of mosquito infestation and assist them to take timely mosquito prevention and control measures, the FEHD is releasing additional results of the Area Ovitrap Index (AOI) for *Aedes albopictus* at two more stages every month, before the announcement of the monthly AOI and the monthly ovitrap index for *Aedes albopictus*. The FEHD will follow the established practice of notifying relevant government departments of the aforementioned indices so that they can carry out targeted mosquito prevention and control work promptly to strengthen the anti-mosquito efforts.

The spokesman added that as *Aedes albopictus* breeds in small water bodies, members of the public should continue to carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures, including inspecting their homes and surroundings to remove potential breeding grounds, scrubbing vases and pot plant saucers at least once a week, properly disposing of containers such as soft drink cans and lunch boxes, and drilling large holes in unused tyres. He also advised the public and estate management bodies to keep drains free of blockage and fill up all depressions to prevent puddles from forming. They should also scrub all drains and surface sewers with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any mosquito eggs.

In addition, rural areas and the vicinity of shrubby areas are the natural habitats for mosquitoes, other insects and animals. Members of the public living in rural areas may install mosquito screens on windows and doors if necessary. Those staying in the natural environment should follow appropriate personal protective measures against mosquitoes, such as avoiding staying in the vicinity of shrubby areas for a long time, wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and applying DEET-containing insect repellent. Members of the public are reminded to make reports to the government departments via 1823 if mosquito problems are detected.

The spokesman reiterated that effective mosquito control requires the sustained effort of all parties concerned. The community must work together with the Government to carry out effective mosquito control measures.

The ovitrap index is divided into four levels, reflecting the infestation level of *Aedes albopictus*. Level 1 (< 5 per cent) indicates that infestation of the mosquito is not extensive in the area surveyed. Level 2 (5 per cent – < 20 per cent) indicates that infestation of the mosquito is slightly more extensive in the area surveyed. Level 3 (20 per cent – < 40 per cent) indicates that infestation of the mosquito exceeds one-fifth of the area surveyed. Level 4 ( $\geq$  40 per cent) indicates that almost half of the surveyed area is infested with the mosquito. The Government will step up the scale of anti-mosquito operations according to the level of infestation as well as reports from front-line staff and the public.

As *Aedes albopictus* can transmit DF and Zika virus, oviposition traps

are set in 57 areas in Hong Kong for monitoring the breeding of *Aedes albopictus*, which is only one of the mosquito species commonly found in Hong Kong and is active only in the daytime. The index does not capture the activity of *Aedes albopictus* outside the 57 areas and it also does not measure the prevalence of other kinds of mosquitoes.

The ovitrap indices for *Aedes albopictus* in different areas and information on mosquito prevention and control measures are available on the department website at [www.fehd.gov.hk](http://www.fehd.gov.hk).

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, November 19, 2018 is 105.6 (up 0.1 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, November 17, 2018 was 105.5 (down 0.2 against last Friday's index).

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## **Temporary closure of Kwu Tung Grass Soccer Pitch**

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (November 19) that Kwu Tung Grass Soccer Pitch in North District will be temporarily closed from November 21 to December 4 for turf maintenance works. During the closure period, the public may use the similar facility at Fanling Recreation Ground in the same district.

For the most up-to-date closure schedules of the above leisure and sports facility, the public may refer to the notices at the venue or contact venue staff directly.