

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, July 31, 2018 is 103.9 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

CFS announces food safety report for June

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 31) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 14 100 food samples tested were satisfactory except for 18 samples. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.9 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1 700 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, some 4 200 samples were taken for chemical tests and the remaining 8 200 (including about 7 500 taken from food imported from Japan) were collected to test radiation levels.

The microbiological tests covered pathogens and hygienic indicators, while the chemical tests included pesticides, preservatives, metallic contaminants, colouring matters, veterinary drug residues and others.

The samples comprised about 3 900 samples of vegetables and fruit and their products; 600 samples of meat and poultry and their products; 1 800 samples of aquatic and related products; 1 200 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; 1 000 samples of cereals, grains and their products; and 5 600 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The 18 unsatisfactory samples comprised seven vegetable samples detected with pesticide residues exceeding the legal limits; a vegetable sample and two dried mushroom samples detected with excessive cadmium; two anchovy fillet samples detected with histamine; a chilled goose sample and a frozen tiger prawn sample detected with veterinary drug residues; a fresh beef sample found to contain sulphur dioxide; a honey sample found to contain a trace amount of an antibiotic; a packed milk drink sample found to contain excessive *Bacillus cereus*; and a fried pad thai noodle sample found to contain excessive coagulase-positive staphylococci organisms.

The CFS has taken follow-up action on the unsatisfactory samples, including informing the vendors concerned of the test results, instructing them to stop selling the affected food items and tracing the sources of the

food items in question.

Since the Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap 132CM) came into effect on August 1, 2014, as of June 30 this year, the CFS has taken over 147 400 food samples at the import, wholesale and retail levels for testing for pesticide residues. The overall unsatisfactory rate is less than 0.2 per cent.

The spokesman added that excessive pesticide residues in food may arise from the trade not observing Good Agricultural Practice, e.g. using excessive pesticides and/or not allowing sufficient time for pesticides to decompose before harvesting. The maximum residue limits (MRLs) of pesticide residues in food set in the Regulation are not safety indicators. They are the maximum concentrations of pesticide residues to be permitted in a food commodity under Good Agricultural Practice when applying pesticides. In this connection, consumption of food with pesticide residues higher than the MRLs will not necessarily lead to any adverse health effects.

Histamine is commonly found in certain kinds of fish such as tuna, sardine, mackerel and anchovy, as a result of bacterial spoilage. Consumption of fish containing high levels of histamine can cause food-borne intoxication. Symptoms of histamine poisoning include tingling and burning sensation around the mouth, facial flushing and sweating, nausea, vomiting, headache, palpitations, dizziness and rash. The onset of intoxication symptoms is within a few hours after consumption and these symptoms will normally disappear in 12 hours without long-term effect.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to ensure that food for sale is fit for human consumption and meets legal requirements. Consumers should patronise reliable shops when buying food and maintain a balanced diet to minimise food risks.

Waste collector convicted for second time for collecting waste vehicle batteries without license

An unlicensed waste collector again illegally collected waste vehicle batteries, which are classified as chemical waste. He was convicted at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (July 31) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) and the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation and was fined a total of \$17,000. This collector was also convicted in March this year for illegal collection of waste vehicle batteries and fined \$11,000.

During an enforcement operation in January this year, staff of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) intercepted a light goods vehicle at Tung Fat Square in Tai Po and found some 40 waste vehicle batteries in the vehicle. After investigation by the department, it was confirmed that the person involved in the case was not a licensed chemical waste collector and that he had illegally collected waste lead-acid batteries (WLABs) from nearby vehicle repair workshops. After investigation, the EPD prosecuted the collector under the WDO and the Regulation.

The EPD spokesman said that WLABs contain sulphuric acid and lead, while waste lubricating oil contains mineral oil, and these are classified as chemical waste. Improper handling or disposal will pollute the environment and pose risks to public health.

The spokesman reminded those who provide vehicle battery replacement or vehicle repair services that they should register with the EPD as chemical waste producers in accordance with the Regulation, and should hire a licensed chemical waste collector to properly collect and handle WLABs, waste lubricating oil and more. For replacement of vehicle batteries or lubricating oil, vehicle owners should engage the services of registered vehicle repair workshops or companies.

Under the WDO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. For subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.

Members of the public may visit the EPD's website for more information about the control of chemical waste: www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/guide_cwc.html.

[Auction of personalised vehicle registration marks on September 8](#)

The Transport Department (TD) today (July 31) announced that the next auction of personalised vehicle registration marks (PVRMs) will be held on September 8 (Saturday), at Meeting Room S421, L4, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 210 approved PVRMs will be put up for public auction. A list of the marks was posted on the department's website, www.td.gov.hk, today," a department spokesman said.

The reserve price of all these marks is \$5,000. Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$5,000 should also participate in the bidding (including the

first bid at the reserve price). Otherwise, the PVRM concerned may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

- (i) Paddle bidding will be used at this auction;
- (ii) The display of a PVRM on a motor vehicle should be in compliance with the requirements stipulated in Schedule 4 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations;
- (iii) Any change to the arrangement of letters, numerals and blank spaces of a PVRM, i.e. single and two rows as auctioned, will not be allowed;
- (iv) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through the Easy Pay System (EPS), or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM immediately after the bidding of the PVRM concerned. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted. For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed; and
- (v) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the PVRM to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the PVRM within 12 months, allocation of the PVRM will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

"Upon completion of the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM, the purchaser will be issued a receipt and a Certificate of Allocation of Personalised Registration Mark. The Certificate of Allocation will serve to prove the holdership of the PVRM. Potential buyers of vehicles bearing a PVRM should check the Certificate of Allocation with the sellers and pay attention to the details therein. For transfer of vehicle ownership, this certificate together with other required documents should be sent to the TD for processing," the spokesman said.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of PVRM, which is available at the department's licensing offices or can be downloaded from its website, www.td.gov.hk.

[Police apply technology to combat](#)

traffic offences

Police will implement a territory-wide trial scheme for six months to tackle traffic congestion related offences with the use of technology from tomorrow (August 1).

The territory-wide trial scheme came after a two-month pilot trial in Kowloon East and New Territories North Regions in December 2017 and January 2018 respectively, during which mobile video teams were deployed to conduct operations against congestion related traffic offences with video recordings captured. A total of 540 fixed penalty tickets were issued during the pilot scheme.

After a review of the pilot scheme, the Police decided to extend it to a territory-wide trial starting from August 1. The trial will be conducted by uniformed officers in public places, who will use video cameras to record details of congestion related offences. The video footage will be securely stored and disposed of in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

The Police will continue to take stringent enforcement actions against illegal acts which cause serious obstruction and endanger road safety.