

Credit card lending survey results for first quarter 2018

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority published today (May 16) the credit card lending survey results for the first quarter of 2018.

Total card receivables decreased by 8.1% in the first quarter to HK\$120.7 billion at end-March 2018, after an increase of 10.8% in the previous quarter that was mainly contributed by festive spending and the payment of salaries tax using credit cards.

The combined delinquent and rescheduled ratio edged up to 0.33% at end-March 2018 from 0.31% at the previous quarter-end.

The charge-off amount increased slightly by HK\$5 million during the quarter to HK\$517 million, while the quarterly charge-off ratio remained stable at 0.41%.

Extra shows for six International Arts Carnival programmes (with photos)

Additional performances of six programmes at the International Arts Carnival (IAC) have been scheduled in response to overwhelming public demand. The programmes are the ballet "Hansel & Gretel", the physical theatre show "Air Play", the multimedia circus theatre production "Bedtime Stories", the magic theatre work "SNAP", the circus and music theatre show "Carrousel des Moutons" and the multimedia shadow puppet theatre production "Mulan". Details of the extra shows are as follows:

1. "Hansel & Gretel" by the Scottish Ballet (UK)

Date and time: July 7 (Saturday), 3pm

Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre

Prices: \$160, \$220, \$280, \$380, \$480

2. "Air Play" by Acrobuffos (US)

Date and time: July 22 (Sunday), 11am

Venue: Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium

Prices: \$140, \$200, \$260

3. "SNAP" by Gruejarm Production (Korea)

Date and time: July 28 (Saturday), 3pm

Venue: Sha Tin Town Hall Auditorium

Prices: \$160, \$240, \$320

4. "Bedtime Stories" by Upswing (UK)

Dates and times: July 31 to August 2 (Tuesday to Thursday), 7.30pm
August 3 (Friday), 3pm

Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Studio Theatre

Prices: \$200, \$280, \$680 (family package)

5. "Carrousel des Moutons" by d'irque & fien (Belgium)

Date and time: August 11 (Saturday), 5pm

Venue: Hong Kong City Hall Theatre

Prices: \$140, \$200, \$260

Date and time: August 12 (Sunday), 8pm

Venue: Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium

Prices: \$140, \$200, \$260

6. "Mulan" by Shanghai Puppet Theatre

Date and time: August 12 (Sunday), 8pm

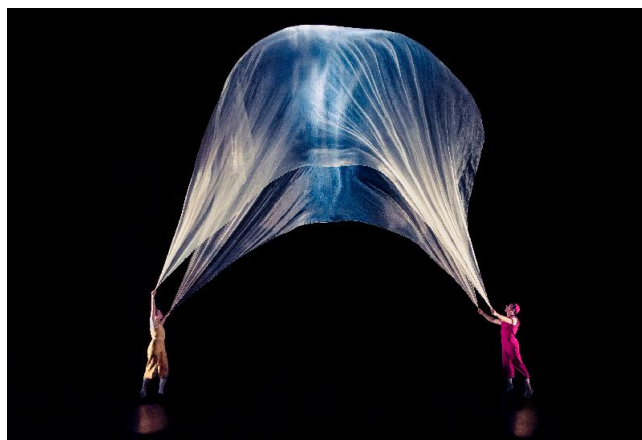
Venue: North District Town Hall Auditorium

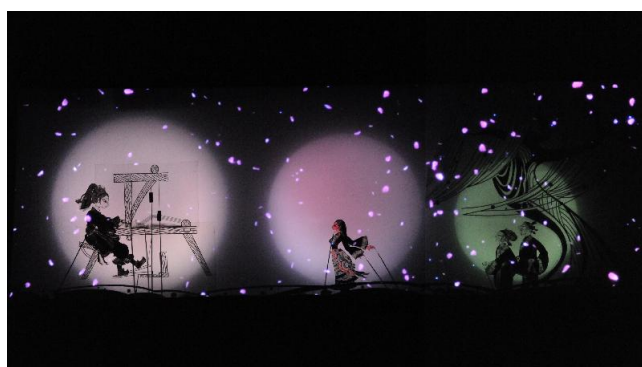
Prices: \$140, \$200

Tickets for these additional performances will be available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk) from May 18 onwards. For credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999.

For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2370 1044, or refer to the IAC programme brochure or visit www.hkiac.gov.hk.

The IAC, organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, will run from July 6 to August 12 and feature a variety of events for family entertainment.





Government welcomes passage of amendment bill to implement concessionary tax measures

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, welcomed the passage of the Inland Revenue (Amendment) Bill 2018 by the Legislative Council today (May 16).

The new Ordinance gives effect to the concessionary tax measures proposed in the 2018-19 Budget. These include one-off measures to reduce salaries tax, tax under personal assessment and profits tax for the year of assessment 2017/18 by 75 per cent, subject to a ceiling of \$30,000 per case. The new Ordinance also gives effect to the concessionary tax measures relating to salaries tax and tax under personal assessment, starting from the year of assessment 2018/19. Details are as follows:

Salaries Tax and Tax under Personal Assessment	(Adjusted) Level
Tax bands (increased from 4 to 5)	\$50,000
Marginal tax rates	2%/6%/10%/14%/17%

Child allowance	\$120,000
Dependent Parent/Grandparent Allowance	
Parent/Grandparent aged 60 or above	\$50,000
Parent/Grandparent aged between 55 and 59	\$25,000
Deduction ceiling for elderly residential care expenses	\$100,000
Personal disability allowance (New)	\$75,000

Mr Lau said, "We believe the concessionary tax measures can relieve the tax burden of taxpayers, allowing them to share the fruits of our economic success. With the passage of the Bill by the Legislative Council today, the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) will implement the one-off tax reduction in this year's tax bills."

The one-off tax reduction will be reflected in taxpayers' final tax payable for the year of assessment 2017/18. Application is not required for the one-off tax reduction. Moreover, the IRD will apply the concessionary tax measures when calculating the provisional tax for the year of assessment 2018/19.

[SFH to attend 71st World Health Assembly in Geneva](#)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, will depart for London, the United Kingdom (UK), tonight (May 16) to meet healthcare professionals there and attend the 71st World Health Assembly (WHA) of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Professor Chan will attend the 71st WHA on May 21 (Geneva time) as a member of the People's Republic of China delegation. The agenda of this year's assembly will cover a wide range of issues with public health importance requiring global attention and concerted efforts from all member states. Among others, a number of strategic priority matters will be discussed in the meeting, including public health preparedness and response, health and environment and climate change, prevention and control of non-communicable disease, ending tuberculosis and global shortage of, and access to, medicines and vaccines.

Professor Chan will also take the opportunity to exchange views on healthcare-related issues with top health officials of other member states.

The WHA is the decision-making body of the WHO. It is attended by delegations from all WHO member states and focuses on a specific health agenda. The main functions of the WHA are to determine the policies of the Organization, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the

proposed programme budget.

Before attending the WHA, Professor Chan will visit London on May 17 and 18 to learn more about the latest developments in genomics and mental health services there.

During her two-day visit in London, Professor Chan will visit Rethink Mental Illness and Mind UK – two charities focused on mental health that have been promoting destigmatisation under the large-scale Time to Change programme in recent years. In addition, she will meet professionals of Genomics England, which is a company wholly owned by the UK Department of Health and Social Care and was set up to deliver the 100,000 Genomes Project.

Professor Chan will also attend a round table discussion at Chatham House.

Before leaving London, she will host a reception for Hong Kong students studying in the UK and Hong Kong young professionals working in the UK. She will introduce to the young people job opportunities and career prospects of the healthcare sector in Hong Kong.

The Director of Health, Dr Constance Chan, will accompany Professor Chan on the visit.

Professor Chan will depart Geneva in the morning on May 23 and arrive in Hong Kong on May 24. The Under Secretary for Food and Health, Dr Chui Tak-yi, will be the Acting Secretary for Food and Health during her absence.

Survey on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises' Credit Conditions for first quarter 2018

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) published today (May 16) the results of Survey on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)' Credit Conditions for the first quarter of 2018.

Regarding SMEs' perception of banks' credit approval stance relative to 6 months ago, 77% of respondents perceived similar or easier credit approval stance in the first quarter of 2018, broadly similar to the result of the previous quarter (Chart 1 in the Annex). Some 23% of respondents perceived more difficult credit approval stance in the first quarter of 2018, as compared to 24% in the previous quarter.

Of those respondents with existing credit lines, 88% reported that banks' stance on existing credit lines was easier or unchanged in the first quarter of 2018, largely similar to the result of the previous quarter (Chart 2 in the Annex). The proportion of respondents reporting easier banks' stance declined to 14% from 22% in the survey of the previous quarter. Some 12% of respondents reported tightened banks' stance in the first quarter of 2018, slightly down from 13% in the previous quarter.

The Survey also gauged the results of new credit applications from SMEs. Some 2.9% of respondents reported that they had applied for new bank credit during the first quarter of 2018. Of those with known application outcomes, 91% reported fully or partially successful applications, with the proportion of respondents reporting fully successful applications decreasing to 50% from 70% in the survey of the previous quarter (Chart 3 in the Annex). The proportion of respondents reporting unsuccessful application increased from 4% to 9%. It should be noted that owing to a small sample size (i.e. 2.9% of surveyed SMEs), the results of new credit applications from SMEs could be prone to large fluctuations. Care should be taken when interpreting the survey results.

About Survey on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises' Credit Conditions

In light of the importance of SMEs to the Hong Kong economy and concerns about potential funding difficulties facing SMEs over the past few years, the HKMA has appointed the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) to carry out this Survey, starting from the third quarter of 2016. This Survey is conducted on a quarterly basis, covering some 2 500 SMEs from different economic sectors each time. The results of this Survey can help monitor the development of SMEs' access to bank credit from the demand-side perspective.

The results of this Survey should be interpreted with caution. Similar to other opinion surveys, views collected in this Survey may be affected by changes in sentiment due to idiosyncratic events occurring during the time of conducting the Survey, which can make the results more prone to fluctuations. Readers are advised to interpret the results together with other economic and financial information. In addition, views collected are limited to the expected direction of periodic changes (e.g. "tighter", "similar" or "easier") but not the magnitude of difficulties.

Detailed tables and technical information of this Survey are published in the website of the HKPC (smecc.hkpc.org).