

SFST continues San Francisco visit to forge financial collaboration (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, continued his visit to San Francisco, the United States, today (May 30, San Francisco time).

Mr Lau started the day by visiting Wells Fargo Innovation Labs, which comprises a team of product strategists, developers and project managers to enhance the banking services of Wells Fargo through innovative use of technologies for meeting customer needs.

Mr Lau met with its Head of Strategic Payment Solutions, Mr Ashish Sharma, and the R&D team experts to learn more about the bank's research projects and their application of financial technology (Fintech) for a better customer experience. Wells Fargo is one of the largest banks in the United States and was ranked 25th in the Fortune 500 in 2017.

Mr Lau then addressed a business luncheon hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco to promote Hong Kong as a premier global financial hub in Asia. He told the attending business leaders that Hong Kong has pledged to develop into a preferred listing platform for both initial public offerings and secondary listings.

He also highlighted Hong Kong's active role in enabling the financial services sector to capitalise on the vast opportunities presented by the global trend of green financing and the Belt and Road Initiative.

Later in the afternoon, Mr Lau visited the ClimateWorks Foundation and met with its Director of Sustainable Finance, Mr Ilmi Granoff, and Associate Director, Mr Tim Stumhofer. He briefed them on Hong Kong's commitment to develop into a regional hub for green finance and efforts in promoting the green bond market.

In the evening, Mr Lau attended a dinner with Directors of the Hong Kong Association of Northern California to learn more about the business environment in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Mr Lau will continue his visit to San Francisco tomorrow (May 31, San Francisco time) before arriving back in Hong Kong on June 2.



[LCSD launches new anti-touting measures](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (May 31) announced the implementation of two more new measures to combat touting activities.

Starting from June 20, members of the public will no longer be allowed to book the department's fee-charging leisure and sports facilities on behalf of another person using a copy of other's identity document at Leisure Link booking counters in leisure venues or District Leisure Services Offices. The new measure aims to prevent "queuing gangs" from abusing the existing arrangement. Hirers will have to produce their original identity documents when making a booking at any booking counter. They may also choose to use the Leisure Link e-Services System (LLES) or the self-service kiosks to book the facilities.

The department will also launch on the same day (June 20) the Turf Soccer Pitches Balloting Pilot Scheme in response to strong public demand for turf soccer pitches. Sessions at turf soccer pitches will be allocated by balloting while the remaining sessions will be available for booking after the deadline on a first-come, first-served basis, with a view to providing a fair and impartial booking mechanism.

Under the pilot scheme, registered Leisure Link patrons can submit their balloting applications for turf soccer pitches (except multi-purpose turf pitches) through the LLES. Patrons can enquire about sessions at turf soccer pitches available for balloting on the 15th day from the day of checking. They can then submit their balloting applications on the following day. For example, patrons can check on July 1 the sessions available at turf soccer pitches on July 15 through the LLES and then submit their balloting applications on July 2. Each Leisure Link patron can only apply for one session of turf soccer pitch on each balloting date. Sessions will be allocated by computer balloting on the day following the application deadline. Successful applicants will receive an email notification in the morning of the balloting day and should confirm the booking with payment through the LLES by the deadline (i.e. 11pm on the following day of balloting). Any sessions on hold without payment confirmation and other remaining sessions will be made available for booking after the deadline through various Leisure Link booking channels within 10 days on a first-come, first-served basis.

For the balloting procedures of the pilot scheme and information on the turf soccer pitches available for balloting, please visit the [LCSD webpage](#) or call the enquiry hotline at 2679 6822.

Members of the public who are interested in booking turf soccer pitches are urged to register as Leisure Link patrons as soon as possible. Applicants may register online, at Leisure Link Self-service Kiosks or in person at the Leisure Link Services Centre with their Hong Kong Identity Card. They may also apply by sending a completed application form by post or by fax. For detailed information, please visit the [LCSD webpage](#).

A spokesman for the LCSD said that the department will continue to monitor the situation and introduce more anti-touting measures when necessary.

Fixed penalties for traffic contraventions to increase tomorrow

A spokesman for the Transport and Housing Bureau today (May 31) reminded members of the public that the fixed penalties for five congestion-related

traffic contraventions under the Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance will be revised with effect from tomorrow (June 1).

The resolution to increase such fixed penalties was passed by the Legislative Council on January 17. The relevant traffic contraventions and the revised penalty charges are as follows:

Item	Traffic Contravention	Fixed Penalty Charge
1	Unlawfully entering box junction	Raised from \$320 to \$400
2	U-turn causing obstruction	
3	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	
4	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	
5	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	Raised from \$450 to \$560

The spokesman stressed that traffic congestion has been worsening in recent years and it is necessary to raise the fixed penalties for the congestion-related traffic contraventions to restore their deterrent effect. The Government will continue to study the timely increase of the fixed penalties for other congestion-related traffic contraventions.

Furthermore, all Magistrates' Courts will cease to collect penalties in relation to traffic contravention fixed penalty notices issued by the Hong Kong Police Force or the Housing Department on or after June 1. If the person concerned has not paid the fixed penalty before the prescribed deadline, or wishes to dispute the legal liability of the traffic contravention, court proceedings will commence. For all cases in which court proceedings have commenced, members of the public may continue to pay the penalties at the Magistrates' Courts concerned in accordance with the instructions of the courts.

"Members of the public can make penalty payments by means listed on the fixed penalty notices, including bank automated teller machines; PPS; the Internet; phone-banking services provided by banks; by post to PO Box No. 28000, Gloucester Road Post Office, Hong Kong; and at counters of post offices (other than mobile post offices) personally or by an agent," the spokesman said.

SFH speaks on increase of medical students

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at the Legislative Council Complex today (May 31):

Reporter: Professor, the Government has proceeded to increase the number of medical students. How many places will the Government increase?

Secretary for Food and Health: The Government has published the Report of Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development last year. In the report, it is stated that some healthcare professionals will be facing manpower shortage in terms of the demand of healthcare services in the coming years. Therefore, we have recommended an increase of the number of students in medical, nursing and dentistry as well as some other allied health professionals in the coming triennium. The final number will be announced by the Education Bureau. Of course, there are a number of factors we have to consider when deciding the number of places to be increased in the coming triennium. First of all, according to the report, we have a supply shortage. Secondly, the teaching facilities of the universities. So, in the recent Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary has already pledged resources for the three universities to build up more teaching facilities in preparation for the increase in the number of these healthcare professional students. Thirdly, the training curriculum of many of these healthcare professionals involves clinical practicum. Therefore, we also have to liaise with practicum sites, such as hospitals under the Hospital Authority, in order to provide adequate clinical education for all these students. All these factors have to be taken into consideration before we decide on the final number of students to be increased. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Schedule for issuing press releases on statistical data

Following is a reminder of the press releases on statistical data to be issued between June and August 2018. The schedule for issuing press releases on statistical data in 2018 was provided to the media in September 2017. No change has been made to the original schedule.

June 2018

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Date	Press Release
5	Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for first quarter 2018
11	Quarterly business receipts indices for service industries for first quarter 2018
11	Construction output statistics for first quarter 2018
11	Statistics on trade involving outward processing in the mainland of China for first quarter 2018
14	Index of industrial production and producer price index for the industrial sector for first quarter 2018
14	Gross National Income and external primary income flows for first quarter 2018
14	Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for April 2018
19	Unemployment and underemployment statistics for March – May 2018
19	Chain volume measures of Gross Domestic Product by economic activity for first quarter 2018
21	Consumer Price Index for May 2018
21	Employment and vacancies statistics for March 2018
22	Balance of Payments and International Investment Position statistics for first quarter 2018
26	External merchandise trade statistics for May 2018
26	Wage and payroll statistics for March 2018

July 2018

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Date	Press Release
3	Retail sales statistics for May 2018
19	Unemployment and underemployment statistics for April – June 2018
19	Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for May 2018
20	Business expectations for third quarter 2018
23	Consumer Price Index for June 2018
26	External merchandise trade statistics for June 2018

August 2018

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Date	Press Release
1	Retail sales statistics for June 2018
3	Restaurant receipts and purchases statistics for second quarter 2018
9	Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for June 2018
10	Gross Domestic Product for second quarter 2018: data

contained in the press release entitled "Economic Situation in the Second Quarter of 2018 and Latest GDP and Price Forecasts for 2018" issued by The Office of the Government Economist under the Financial Secretary's Office (Note)

14	Mid-year population for 2018
17	Unemployment and underemployment statistics for May – July 2018
21	Consumer Price Index for July 2018
27	External merchandise trade statistics for July 2018
30	Retail sales statistics for July 2018

Note: The Office of the Government Economist under the Financial Secretary's Office will issue a press release on the Half-yearly Economic Report 2018 and second update of the GDP and prices forecasts for 2018 as a whole. The GDP for the second quarter of 2018 will also be released there. No separate press release on the GDP for the second quarter of 2018 will be issued by the Census and Statistics Department on that day.

The schedule for regular press releases in the other months of 2018 can be downloaded from the website of the Census and Statistics Department (www.censtatd.gov.hk/press_release/index.jsp).