

Extension of e-Channel service to foreign domestic helpers, non-local students and imported workers

The Immigration Department (ImmD) announced today (July 20) that the e-Channel service will be extended to foreign domestic helpers, non-local students and imported workers with effect from tomorrow (July 21).

The above categories of Hong Kong residents aged 11 or above holding smart identity cards may use the Contactless e-Channel service by simply downloading the ImmD's Contactless e-Channels mobile application free of charge for enrolment using a smart phone with biometric authentication technology. Upon completion of the enrolment, they can use the encrypted QR code generated from the Contactless e-Channel mobile application or their smart identity cards to enter the e-Channel, which will then be used in conjunction with facial recognition technology to verify their identity for automated immigration clearance. For arrival clearance, a landing slip stipulating the condition and limit of stay of the Hong Kong resident will be printed by the e-Channel. After collecting the landing slip, the gate doors will open and the immigration clearance will be completed.

An ImmD spokesman said all Hong Kong residents aged 11 or above will be able to use the e-Channel service at all control points. The ImmD is committed to providing quality services to the public. By expanding the scope of the e-Channel service, more Hong Kong residents can enjoy the convenient and fast automated immigration clearance service.

For details of the e-Channel service, please visit the ImmD website www.immd.gov.hk. For enquiries, please call the enquiry hotline at 2824 6111, fax to 2877 7711 or send an email to enquiry@immd.gov.hk.

Consumer Price Indices for June 2023

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (July 20) the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures for June 2023. According to the Composite CPI, overall consumer prices rose by 1.9% in June 2023 over the same month a year earlier, slightly smaller than the corresponding increase (2.0%) in May 2023. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rate of increase in the Composite CPI (i.e. the underlying inflation rate) in June 2023 was 1.7%, also slightly smaller than that in May 2023 (1.8%).

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the average monthly rate of increase in the Composite CPI for the 3-month period ending June 2023 was 0.1%, the same as that for the 3-month period ending May 2023. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the corresponding rates of increase were 0.1% and 0.2%.

Analysed by sub-index, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.1%, 1.9% and 1.8% respectively in June 2023, as compared to 2.2%, 1.9% and 2.0% respectively in May 2023. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 1.8%, 1.6% and 1.6% respectively in June 2023, as compared to 1.9%, 1.6% and 1.8% respectively in May 2023.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, for the 3-month period ending June 2023, the average monthly rates of increase in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were all 0.1%. The corresponding rates of increase for the 3-month period ending May 2023 were 0.1%, 0.1% and 0.2% respectively. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the average monthly rates of increase in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) for the 3-month period ending June 2023 were all 0.1%, and the corresponding rates of increase for the 3-month period ending May 2023 were all 0.2%.

Amongst the various components of the Composite CPI, year-on-year increases in prices were recorded in June 2023 for alcoholic drinks and tobacco (18.7%), electricity, gas and water (13.3%), clothing and footwear (5.7%), meals out and takeaway food (3.9%), miscellaneous services (2.5%), miscellaneous goods (2.3%), transport (1.3%), housing (0.6%), and basic food (0.1%).

On the other hand, year-on-year decrease in the component of the Composite CPI was recorded in June 2023 for durable goods (-3.7%).

For the first half of 2023 as a whole, the Composite CPI rose by 2.0% over a year earlier. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.1%, 1.9% and 2.0% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.8%, 1.9%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively.

In the second quarter of 2023, the Composite CPI rose by 2.0% over a year earlier, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) rose by 2.2%, 1.9% and 2.0% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.7%, 1.9%, 1.6% and 1.7% respectively.

For the 12 months ending June 2023, the Composite CPI was on average 2.1% higher than that in the preceding 12-month period. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.5%, 1.9% and 2.0% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.8%, 1.9%, 1.7% and 1.9% respectively.

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that the underlying consumer price inflation remained moderate in June. Prices of energy-related items as a whole continued to increase sharply year-on-year, and those of clothing and footwear as well as meals out and takeaway food rose visibly. Price pressures on other major components remained broadly in check.

Looking ahead, overall inflation should stay moderate in the near term. External price pressures may recede further. While domestic business cost could face some upward pressures alongside the economic recovery, it is likely to remain largely moderate in the near term. The Government will continue to monitor the situation.

Further information

The CPIs and year-on-year rates of change at section level for June 2023 are shown in Table 1. The time series on the year-on-year rates of change in the CPIs before and after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures are shown in Table 2. For discerning the latest trend in consumer prices, it is also useful to look at the changes in the seasonally adjusted CPIs. The corresponding time series on the average monthly rates of change during the latest 3 months for the seasonally adjusted CPIs are shown in Table 3. The rates of change in the original and the seasonally adjusted Composite CPI and the underlying inflation rate are presented graphically in Chart 1.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Monthly Report on the Consumer Price Index". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1060001&scode=270).

For enquiries about the CPIs, please contact the Consumer Price Index Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7374 or email: cpi@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Composite Interest Rate: End of June 2023](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 20) the composite interest rate at the end of June 2023 (Note 1).

The composite interest rate, which is a measure of the average cost of funds of banks, increased by 15 basis points to 2.35 per cent at the end of June 2023, from 2.20 per cent at the end of May 2023 (see Chart 1 in the

Annex). The increase in composite interest rate reflected increases in the weighted funding cost for deposits and interbank funds during the month (see Chart 2 in the Annex) (Note 2).

The historical data of the composite interest rate from the end of the fourth quarter of 2003 to the end of June 2023 are available in the Monthly Statistical Bulletin on the HKMA website (www.hkma.gov.hk).

Note 1: The composite interest rate is a weighted average interest rate of all Hong Kong dollar interest-rate-sensitive liabilities, which include deposits from customers, amounts due to banks, negotiable certificates of deposit and other debt instruments, and all other liabilities that do not involve any formal payment of interest but the values of which are sensitive to interest rate movements (such as Hong Kong dollar non-interest bearing demand deposits) on the books of banks. Data from retail banks, which account for about 90 per cent 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.

Note 2: Since June 2019, the composite interest rate and weighted deposit rate have been calculated based on the new local "Interest rate risk in the banking book" (IRRBB) framework. As such, these figures are not strictly comparable with those of previous months.

[Special announcement on fire in Yuen Long](#)

Attention TV and radio duty announcers:

Please broadcast the following special announcement as soon as possible, and repeat it at suitable intervals:

A fire broke out at a warehouse at Pak Sha Shan Road, Yuen Long, at 14.43pm today (July 20). The Fire Services Department is conducting a firefighting operation.

Members of the public who are being affected by the smoke and an unusual odour carried by the wind are advised to close their doors and windows and stay calm.

Special traffic arrangements at Cross-Harbour Tunnel

Police will implement special traffic arrangements to facilitate the implementation of the HKeToll, a free-flow tolling service, at the Cross-Harbour Tunnel on July 23 (Sunday).

A. Road closure

Slow lane of westbound Cheong Wan Road Flyover between Hung Hom Station Podium and Science Museum Road will be closed from 00.30am to 5.30am.

The following roads will be closed from 1am to 4am:

- Slow lane from the exit of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel (Kowloon bound) to the Cross-Harbour Tunnel Toll Plaza; and
- Some of the toll booth lanes of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel Toll Plaza (Kowloon bound).

The bus-only lane at the Cross-Harbour Tunnel Toll Plaza (Kowloon bound) will be rescinded from 1am to 4am. Vehicles using AutoToll from the tunnel tube of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel (Kowloon bound) to Tsim Sha Tsui and Kwai Chung will be diverted to use the above rescinded section of bus-only lane and AutoToll lane.

The following roads will be closed from 2am to 4am:

- Some of the traffic lanes of Hong Chong Road near the Cross-Harbour Tunnel Toll Plaza (Hong Kong bound); and
- Some of the toll booth lanes of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel Toll Plaza (Hong Kong bound).

Some of the traffic lanes of eastbound Gloucester Road near Wan Chai Sports Ground will be closed from 3am to 4am.

The Cross-Harbour Tunnel and all slip roads leading to the Cross-Harbour Tunnel will be closed from 4am to 5am.

B. Traffic diversions

The following traffic diversions will be implemented from 4am to 5am:

- Traffic along southbound Princess Margaret Road heading for Hong Kong are advised to divert via southbound Chatham Road South, eastbound Cheong Wan Road, northbound Hong Chong Road, eastbound Chatham Road North, eastbound East Kowloon Corridor, eastbound Kai Tak Tunnel and eastbound Kwun Tong

Bypass to use the Eastern Harbour Crossing; or divert via southbound Chatham Road South, westbound Austin Road, Lin Cheung Road and southbound West Kowloon Highway to use the Western Harbour Crossing; or divert via southbound Hung Hom Bypass, westbound Salisbury Road, northbound Kowloon Park Drive, westbound Austin Road West, Lin Cheung Road and southbound West Kowloon Highway to use the Western Harbour Crossing;

– Traffic along westbound Chatham Road North heading for Hong Kong are advised to divert via Chatham Road South, westbound Gascoigne Road, westbound West Kowloon Corridor, Ferry Street, westbound Cherry Street, Lin Cheung Road and southbound West Kowloon Highway to use the Western Harbour Crossing;

– Traffic along eastbound Chatham Road South heading for Hong Kong are advised to divert via eastbound Chatham Road North, eastbound East Kowloon Corridor, eastbound Kai Tak Tunnel and eastbound Kwun Tong Bypass to use the Eastern Harbour Crossing;

– Traffic along northbound Hong Chong Road heading for Hong Kong are advised to divert via eastbound Chatham Road North, eastbound East Kowloon Corridor, eastbound Kai Tak Tunnel and eastbound Kwun Tong Bypass to use the Eastern Harbour Crossing; or divert via Chatham Road South, westbound Gascoigne Road, westbound West Kowloon Corridor, Ferry Street, westbound Cherry Street, Lin Cheung Road and southbound West Kowloon Highway to use the Western Harbour Crossing;

– Traffic along eastbound Gloucester Road heading for Kowloon are advised to divert via northbound Marsh Road, Hung Hing Road Flyover, eastbound Victoria Park Road and eastbound Island Eastern Corridor to use the Eastern Harbour Crossing; or divert via northbound Marsh Road, westbound Hung Hing Road, westbound Lung Wo Road, westbound Man Cheung Street and westbound Connaught Road Central Flyover to the Western Harbour Crossing;

– Traffic along northbound Canal Road Flyover heading for Kowloon are advised to divert via Wan Chai Interchange, Hung Hing Road Flyover, eastbound Victoria Park Road and eastbound Island Eastern Corridor to the Eastern Harbour Crossing; or divert via Wan Chai Interchange, westbound Gloucester Road, westbound Harcourt Road and westbound Connaught Road Central Flyover to the Western Harbour Crossing;

– Traffic along westbound Gloucester Road heading for Kowloon are advised to divert via Tonnochy Road Flyover, northbound Tonnochy Road, eastbound Hung Hing Road, eastbound Hung Hing Road Flyover, eastbound Victoria Park Road and eastbound Island Eastern Corridor to the Eastern Harbour Crossing; or divert via westbound Harcourt Road and westbound Connaught Road Central Flyover to the Western Harbour Crossing; and

– Traffic along southbound Hung Hing Road heading for Kowloon via bus-only lane are advised to divert via Wan Shing Street, Hung Hing Road Flyover, eastbound Victoria Park Road and eastbound Island Eastern Corridor to the Eastern Harbour Crossing; or divert via Wan Shing Street, westbound Hung Hing Road, westbound Lung Wo Road, westbound Man Cheung Street and westbound Connaught Road Central Flyover to the Western Harbour Crossing.

Actual implementation of the traffic arrangements will be made depending on traffic conditions in the area. Members of the public are urged to take heed of instructions of police at scene.