

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on July 4 to noon today (July 5), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 225 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan"

(www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 65 089 samples of food imported from Japan (including 41 907 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 15 692 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Monetary Authority takes disciplinary action against DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited for contraventions of Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 5) that it had completed an investigation and disciplinary proceedings for DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited (DBSHK) under the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance (Chapter 615 of the Laws of Hong Kong) (AMLO) (Note 1). The Monetary Authority (MA) has imposed a pecuniary penalty of HK\$10,000,000 against DBSHK for contraventions of the AMLO.

The disciplinary action (Note 2) follows an investigation by the HKMA on DBSHK's systems and controls for compliance with the AMLO. The control deficiencies identified in the investigation relate to DBSHK's failure to continuously monitor business relationships and conduct enhanced due diligence in high risk situations during various periods between April 2012 and April 2019, as well as its failure to keep records in respect of some of the customers. DBSHK also failed to maintain effective procedures for carrying out its duties under the AMLO in relation to the aforementioned control deficiencies during this period.

In deciding the disciplinary action, the MA has taken into account all relevant circumstances and factors, including the following:

- (a) the seriousness of the investigation findings;
- (b) the need to send a clear deterrent message to the industry about the importance of effective controls and procedures to address money laundering and terrorist financing risks;
- (c) remedial actions have been taken to address the deficiencies identified and efforts have been made to improve the bank's anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism controls; and
- (d) DBSHK has no previous disciplinary record in relation to the AMLO and cooperated with the HKMA during the investigation and enforcement proceedings.

The Executive Director (Enforcement and AML) of the HKMA, Mr Raymond Chan, said, "The HKMA requires banks to put in place effective customer due diligence measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. These measures should be subject to regular review to ensure that they remain effective."

Note 1: Prior to March 1, 2018, the short title of Chapter 615 of the Laws of Hong Kong was the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing (Financial Institutions) Ordinance.

Note 2: The disciplinary action is taken under section 21 of the AMLO. The AMLO imposes customer due diligence and record-keeping requirements on specified financial institutions, including Authorized Institutions, and designated non-financial businesses and professions. As regards Authorized Institutions, the MA is the relevant authority under the AMLO.

[Hong Kong's latest foreign currency reserve assets figures released](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 5) that the official foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong amounted to US\$416.3 billion as at the end of June 2024 (end-May 2024: US\$417.2 billion) (Annex).

Including unsettled foreign exchange contracts, the foreign currency reserve assets of Hong Kong at the end of June 2024 amounted to US\$416.0 billion (end-May 2024: US\$417.0 billion).

The total foreign currency reserve assets of US\$416.3 billion represent over five times the currency in circulation or about 39 per cent of Hong Kong dollar M3.

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of July 2024, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

July 5	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
July 12	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)

July 31	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
July 31	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, July 5, 2024 is 106.6 (down 0.2 against yesterday's index).

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (July 5) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Fifteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 15 as Fair (Grade 2), and 10 as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Chung Hom Kok Beach	Lo So Shing Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Middle Bay Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach*	Repulse Bay Beach*
Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach	South Bay Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	St Stephen's Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Trio Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach*	Pui O Beach*
Cafeteria New Beach	Shek O Beach*
Casam Beach*	Silverstrand Beach*
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*

Clear Water Bay First Beach	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Hoi Mei Wan Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Lower Cheung Sha Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*	

Grade 3 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*	Golden Beach*
Approach Beach	Kadoorie Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Lido Beach*
Cafeteria Old Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Castle Peak Beach	Ting Kau Beach*

Compared with the grading released last week, Clear Water Bay Second Beach has been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 1, and Big Wave Bay Beach, Cafeteria New Beach, Casam Beach and Hoi Mei Wan Beach from Grade 3 to Grade 2. Tong Fuk Beach has been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2, and Kadoorie Beach and Silver Mine Bay Beach from Grade 2 to Grade 3.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Note 1: Lifesaving services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 21 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (*) above, from June 1. Due to the damage caused to the footpaths leading to Chung Hom Kok Beach by landslides, the beach is temporarily closed until further notice.

For details, please refer to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department's Special Announcement (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html).

Note 2: This refers to Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach which is a non-gazetted beach that has no lifesaving service.