

# Land Registry releases statistics for June

The Land Registry today (July 3) released its statistics for June 2024.

## Land registration

- \* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in June was 5 245 (-28.7 per cent compared with May 2024 but +9.8 per cent compared with June 2023)
- \* The 12-month moving average for June was 4 859 (0.8 per cent above the 12-month moving average for May 2024 but 5.4 per cent below that for June 2023)
- \* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements of building units in June was \$41.1 billion (-34.0 per cent compared with May 2024 but +3.6 per cent compared with June 2023)
- \* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 3 856 were for residential units (-30.5 per cent compared with May 2024 but +6.7 per cent compared with June 2023)
- \* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$34.5 billion (-35.4 per cent compared with May 2024 but +2.6 per cent compared with June 2023)

Statistics on sales of residential units do not include sale and purchase agreements relating to sales of units under the Home Ownership Scheme, the Private Sector Participation Scheme, the Tenants Purchase Scheme, etc, unless the premium of the unit concerned has been paid after the sale restriction period.

Figures on sale and purchase agreements received for the past 12 months, the year-on-year rate of change and breakdown figures on residential sales have also been released.

As deeds may not be lodged with the Land Registry until up to 30 days after the transaction, these statistics generally relate to land transactions in the previous month.

## Land search

- \* The number of searches of land registers made by the public in June was 356 843 (-11.9 per cent compared with May 2024 and -9.3 per cent compared with June 2023)

The statistics cover searches made at the counter, through the self-service terminals and via the Integrated Registration Information System Online Services.

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## A hot and cloudier June

June 2024 was characterised by generally cloudier and showery weather during the first half of the month. With the subtropical ridge over the western North Pacific extending westwards and covering southeastern China, local weather became generally fine with high temperatures in the second half of the month, including nine consecutive very hot days from June 20 to 28, one of the longest on record for June. Overall, the month was cloudier than usual. The mean amount of cloud in the month was 86 per cent, 9 per cent above the normal of 77 per cent. The duration of bright sunshine in the month was 116.3 hours, about 19 per cent below the normal figure of 144.3 hours. The month was also hotter than usual with the mean temperature of 28.8 degrees, 0.5 degrees above the normal of 28.3 degrees. With five out of the six months warmer than usual, the first half of 2024 was abnormally warm. The mean minimum temperature of 21.4 degrees, the mean temperature of 23.3 degrees and the mean maximum temperature of 25.8 degrees were respectively the highest, one of the highest and the second highest on record for the same period. Despite the generally cloudier and showery conditions for the first half of June, the monthly rainfall was 281.3 millimetres, about 43 per cent below the normal of 491.5 millimetres in June. The accumulated rainfall recorded in the first six months of the year was 863.4 millimetres, about 20 per cent below the normal figure of 1 082.5 millimetres for the same period.

Tropical storm Maliksi made landfall over Yangjiang, Guangdong, on the early morning of June 1. It then moved across inland Guangdong and weakened progressively into an area of low pressure in the evening. The outer rainbands of Maliksi brought heavy squally showers to Hong Kong on June 1. More than 30 millimetres of rainfall were generally recorded over the territory and rainfall even exceeded 80 millimetres over Tsuen Wan and Sha Tin. Affected by a southwesterly airstream, there were sunny periods and a few showers on June 2.

A trough of low pressure lingering over the northwestern part of the South China Sea brought a few showers to Hong Kong from June 3 to 7. It was also windier on June 3 and 4 under the influence of a strong easterly airstream. Under the rain, temperatures at the Observatory dropped to a minimum of 22.9 degrees on June 4, the lowest of the month. With the trough of low pressure edging closer to the Pearl River Estuary, the showers over Hong Kong became heavier with a few thunderstorms on June 8 and 9. More than 50 millimetres of rainfall were generally recorded over most parts of the territory, and rainfall even exceeded 100 millimetres over parts of Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan and Sai Kung Districts on these two days.

Under the influence of a southerly airstream, the weather of Hong Kong was a mixture of sunny intervals, showers and thunderstorms from June 10 to 13. There were heavy showers over Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing Districts on the morning of June 11 and more than 70 millimetres of rainfall were recorded

over these districts. With the settling in of an active southwest monsoon, the weather deteriorated with heavy rain episodes from June 14 to 16. More than 80 millimetres of rainfall were generally recorded over most parts of the territory, and rainfall even exceeded 200 millimetres over parts of North, Tai Po and Tsuen Wan Districts on these three days. The heavy rain on June 14 necessitated the issuance of the Red Rainstorm Warning. More than 4 000 strokes of cloud-to-ground lightning were recorded within Hong Kong on that day. The Observatory issued the Amber Rainstorm Warning three times on June 15. Violent gusts exceeding 110 kilometres per hour were once recorded at Lau Fau Shan in that afternoon.

With the subtropical ridge over the western North Pacific gradually extending westwards, the weather improved from June 17 to 19 with sunny intervals. Meanwhile, there were still a few showers and isolated thunderstorms over Hong Kong under the influence of a southerly airstream. Under the dominance of a subtropical ridge, apart from a few showers and isolated thunderstorms, local weather was very hot with sunny periods during the day from June 20 to 28. The daily maximum temperature of 34.0 degrees and daily mean temperature of 30.8 degrees on June 21 were both one of the highest on record for the Summer Solstice. Moreover, the daily minimum temperature of 29.5 degrees on June 22 was one of the highest on record for June. With plenty of sunshine, the temperatures at the Observatory rose to a maximum of 34.4 degrees on the afternoon of June 27, the highest of the month. A waterspout was also spotted over the seas west of Hong Kong Island on the afternoon of June 28. Affected by the tropical disturbance over the northeastern part of the South China Sea and the subsequent southwesterly airstream, local weather was a mixture of sunny intervals, showers and squally thunderstorms on the last two days of the month. The showers were particularly heavy over parts of Tsuen Wan and Sai Kung Districts, with more than 60 millimetres of rainfall recorded on these two days.

One tropical cyclone occurred over the South China Sea and the western North Pacific in June 2024.

Details of issuance and cancellation of various warnings/signals in the month are summarised in Table 1. Monthly meteorological figures and departures from normal for June are tabulated in Table 2.

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## **Government to move resolution to resume collection of Hotel Accommodation Tax**

The Government served a notice to the Legislative Council today (July 3) to move a resolution under the Hotel Accommodation Tax Ordinance (Cap. 348)

(HATO) to resume the collection of hotel accommodation tax (HAT).

Under the HATO, the HAT is imposed on hotel and guesthouse accommodation, and is levied on the accommodation charges payable by guests to hotel or guesthouse proprietors at a rate specified in the Schedule to the HATO. Since July 1, 2008, the HAT tax rate has been reduced from 3 per cent to 0 per cent.

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Financial Secretary proposed to resume the collection of the HAT at a rate of 3 per cent with effect from January 1, 2025, as part of the comprehensive fiscal consolidation programme to restore fiscal balance in a few years' time. The HAT will bring an estimated annual revenue of about \$1.1 billion to the Government, providing a stable source of revenue without affecting members of the general public. The HAT to be collected only accounts for less than 1 per cent of the spending by overnight visitors in Hong Kong and will not affect visitors' choice of Hong Kong as a travel destination or their spending sentiment in Hong Kong.

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury will move the relevant resolution pursuant to section 3(2) of the HATO at the Legislative Council on October 23. The resolution will be published in the Gazette on October 25.

Since the announcement of the proposal to resume the collection of the HAT in the 2024-25 Budget, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) have been actively reaching out to the hotel and guesthouse industry to facilitate them in understanding the operational arrangements regarding the collection of the HAT and in preparing for compliance. The IRD has also been providing assistance by organising briefings for industry practitioners, disseminating relevant information via letters and its website, as well as setting up a dedicated enquiry hotline and a dedicated helpdesk at the Inland Revenue Centre.

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## **LCQ5: Ancillary transport facilities for hospitals at Kai Tak Development Area**

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Hoi-yan and a reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (July 3):

Question:

Some healthcare personnel have relayed to me that there is no rail station in the vicinity of the Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH), and

this, coupled with inadequate provision of public transport services and road planning issues, etc., has caused inconvenience to patients and their families as well as healthcare personnel. Moreover, with the construction of the New Acute Hospital in Kai Tak (the Kai Tak Hospital), which is adjacent to HKCH and due to complete in 2026, there will be a further increase in the pressure on traffic within the area by then. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has conducted assessment on the impact of the inadequate ancillary transport facilities and road planning issues relating to HKCH as well as the completion of the Kai Tak Hospital on traffic in the vicinity, and formulated corresponding traffic enhancement and road planning proposals; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) of the construction progress of the Central Kowloon Route and Trunk Road T2, and whether the projects can respectively be completed in 2025 and 2026 as scheduled; apart from the operation of two new franchised bus routes, whether the Government has any other proposal at this stage to alleviate the traffic issues arising from the commissioning of the Kai Tak Hospital; and

(3) as the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) indicated in May this year that regarding the proposal to extend the Smart and Green Mass Transit System in Kai Tak to the Kai Tak Hospital, CEDD would need to conduct further studies to explore the technical feasibility of the proposal, whether the Government will complete the studies before the commissioning of the Kai Tak Hospital; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Health Bureau, Highways Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department and Transport Department (TD), my reply to the question raised by the Hon Chan Hoi-yan is as follows:

(1) To tie in with the traffic arrangements for the Kai Tak Development Area (KTDA), the Government has provided additional trunk roads in the overall transport planning, including the Central Kowloon Route (CKR) linking West Kowloon with the KTDA, and the Trunk Road T2 and Cha Kwo Ling Tunnel connecting the CKR with the Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel, which are expected to be commissioned in 2025 and 2026 respectively. The Government has also constructed new roads and widened existing roads in the KTDA, enabling vehicles to have direct access to the Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH) and the New Acute Hospital (NAH) through Shing Fung Road or Cheung Yip Street.

The road network in the KTDA, which has been largely completed, is adequate for meeting the traffic needs arising from the existing and future developments in the area. Currently, the overall traffic is generally smooth in the KTDA. The Government will continue to monitor the traffic conditions in the area and consider making improvements when necessary.

Moreover, the Government and the Hospital Authority (HA) have conducted a number of traffic impact assessments for the KTDA and NAH. The assessment results show that there will be an increase in traffic flow on the roads leading to the hospital during the construction and operation of the hospitals. Nevertheless, the total traffic flow after the increase will not exceed the capacity of the traffic network in the area even during the peak periods.

As for public transport services, following the established practice for other new developments and infrastructure projects, the TD has been maintaining close liaison with the relevant departments on the HKCH and NAH, with a view to planning in advance the provision of appropriate public transport services to meet passengers' needs, having regard to the progress and anticipated completion dates of the two projects.

There are currently four franchised bus routes and five green minibus (GMB) routes serving the HKCH, connecting the hospital with districts such as Kwun Tong, Kowloon City, Mong Kok and Tsim Sha Tsui, as well as nearby MTR stations including Kai Tak Station, Sung Wong Toi Station, To Kwa Wan Station, Kowloon Bay Station, Ngau Tau Kok Station, Kwun Tong Station, etc. The TD has also planned to introduce an additional bus route that will pass through the areas of To Kwa Wan and Hung Hom, and extend a bus route that runs through Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po and Cheung Sha Wan this year to serve the area of the HKCH. Moreover, the TD is considering introducing an additional GMB Supplementary Route No. 88A running to/from Wong Tai Sin to facilitate local residents' visits to the HKCH. Upon commissioning of the NAH, the TD and operators will make arrangements for the above franchised bus and GMB routes to call at the hospital, providing convenience to its visitors.

Meanwhile, the HKCH has arranged to provide its staff with free of charge employees' service operated by non-franchised buses running to/from the MTR Kowloon Bay Station, Ngau Tau Kok Station and Kai Tak Station. Apart from the above public transport services, Rehabus operators also provide services for mobility impaired persons commuting between MTR stations and the HKCH.

The TD will continue to closely monitor the progress of the NAH project and the development of the area, with a view to adjusting or enhancing the local public transport services when necessary to meet passengers' demand. The HA will also continue to maintain communication with other relevant departments in a bid to further improve the road traffic network and transport system in the vicinity of the NAH.

(2) The Government is pressing ahead with the CKR project as well as the Trunk Road T2 and Cha Kwo Ling Tunnel project. The target commissioning of the two projects in 2025 and 2026 respectively remain unchanged.

The overall progress of the two projects is satisfactory. On the CKR, the structural works for most of the tunnels, slip roads and tunnel buildings have been completed while the associated electrical and mechanical works are in full swing. It is on target to be commissioned in 2025. On Trunk Road T2

and Cha Kwo Ling Tunnel, the construction of the two tunnel tubes is underway while the works for the two ventilation buildings and ancillary facilities are also progressing steadily. Based on the current progress, the project will be able to cope with the anticipated completion of the NAH in 2026 and its traffic needs.

Upon completion of the works, the journey time from Yau Ma Tei Interchange to Kai Tak Interchange during peak hours can be significantly reduced from about 30 minutes to about five minutes.

(3) One of the stations of the Smart and Green Mass Transit System in Kai Tak is proposed to be located in the residential area of the former runway area, which is about 500 metres in walking distance from the HKCH and NAH. The alignment, if extended to both hospitals, will be constrained by the existing or planned development sites in the residential area of the former runway area, while the residential buildings there are densely built without sufficient space for the proposed System to pass through. The proposal will also have considerable impact on the project's implementation, operational efficiency and overall cost-effectiveness and its feasibility is yet to be established.

The Government will invite suppliers and operators of relevant systems to submit Expression of Interest in the second half of this year to exchange views on the feasibility of extending or adjusting the alignment of the System. We will also request the consultant to make reference to the views of suppliers and operators when reviewing the overall feasibility of the proposed provision of a station at the NAH during the investigation stage. We will strive to invite tenders for the project in 2026 with an aim to awarding the contract in 2027. We will complete the review before commencing the tendering exercise.

Thank you, President.

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## **Two owners convicted of overcharging subdivided unit tenant for water**

Two co-owners of a subdivided flat on Wing Lung Street, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon, were convicted today (July 3) of overcharging their subdivided unit (SDU) tenant for water, in contravention of regulation 47 of the Waterworks Regulations. The two co-owners each pleaded guilty to eight counts (i.e. total 16 counts) of offences at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts and were fined \$1,000 for each contravention for a total fine of \$16,000.

This is the 20th similar conviction case since the first conviction in June 2022, with associated fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$16,000. This is also the fourth case convicted after enactment of the Waterworks (Amendment)

Ordinance 2024 (the amended WWO) on April 19, 2024.

A spokesman for the Water Supplies Department (WSD) said that the amended WWO strengthened the power of the Water Authority in evidence collection and information disclosure during the investigation of suspected cases of overcharging for water. The Water Authority can request the landlords, their agents, etc, to provide the tenancy agreement, receipt or payment record for water charges. Failure to comply with such a request can be an offence and the offender is liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and a further fine of a maximum \$1,000 for each day the offence continues. It is anticipated that there will be more prosecution cases. The maximum penalty for overcharging SDU tenants for water has been raised to \$25,000 so as to deter this illegal act. Moreover, providing false or misleading information to the Water Authority is also an offence with a maximum penalty of a \$25,000 fine and six months' imprisonment.

The WSD spokesman strongly appealed to landlords to apply for installation of separate water meters for their SDUs, which can greatly reduce the risk of contravening the amended WWO. The water fee deposit and the charge for providing a meter for each separate water meter installed under the Scheme for Installation of Separate Water Meters for Subdivided Units will be waived. Individual water bills will be provided for each water meter account. The first 12 cubic metres of water are free at four-month intervals. SDU tenants can contact the WSD to raise their request for separate water meters. Upon receiving such requests, the WSD will contact their landlords for installation of the separate meters. If the landlords refuse, the WSD may require landlords to provide information on the recovery of water charges from their tenants for suspected overcharging cases. Details of the scheme can be obtained from the WSD website ([www.wsd.gov.hk/en/customer-services/application-for-water-supply/pilot-scheme-for-installation-of-separate-water-me/index.html](http://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/customer-services/application-for-water-supply/pilot-scheme-for-installation-of-separate-water-me/index.html)).

The WSD encourages the public to report any illegal act of overcharging SDU tenants for water for follow-up and investigation by the department. The public can call the WSD Hotline 3468 4963 or WhatsApp 5665 5517 to apply for installation of separate water meters for SDUs. The WhatsApp hotline also handles matters relating to water overcharging in SDUs. Alternatively, the public can call the WSD Customer Enquiry Hotline 2824 5000 to report water overcharge cases. After calling the hotline and choosing a language, they can press "7" for reporting to staff directly.