

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, December 30, 2019 is 106.1 (down 0.2 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, December 28, 2019 was 106.3 (down 0.1 against last Friday's index).

“Aberdeen – Cheung Chau” ferry service to cease operation on January 1

The Transport Department (TD) today (December 30) announced that the ferry service between Aberdeen and Cheung Chau will cease operation from January 1, 2020.

A spokesman for the TD explained, "The Government understands that outlying island ferry services provide indispensable external links for residents, yet the business environment has been very difficult. Hence, the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address proposes to provide 14 outlying island ferry routes (including the "Aberdeen – Cheung Chau" ferry route) (Note 1) with Special Helping Measures in order to enhance the financial viability of the ferry services, and to launch a new Vessel Subsidy Scheme to replace the fleets of 11 ferry routes (including the "Aberdeen – Cheung Chau" ferry route) (Note 2) and introduce greener vessels."

The spokesman said, "After receiving the operator Maris Ferry Service Limited's notification of terminating the ferry service because of an operating deficit, the TD invited interested parties for Expression of Interest (EOI) in operating the "Aberdeen – Cheung Chau" ferry service twice in October and December this year respectively in order to continue operating the ferry service. As the TD did not receive any EOI submission in the first invitation for EOI, the TD relaxed the requirements for the frequency and the carrying capacity of the vessel as well as shortened the operating hours in the invitation document of the second invitation for EOI. The relaxation was aimed at reducing the operating costs to attract interested parties to operate the ferry service. By the close of the second invitation for EOI on December 23, the TD did not receive any EOI submission. However, any ferry operator interested in operating the ferry service in the future is welcome to submit an application to the TD. The TD will consider the application in accordance with the established procedures (including invitations to interested parties for EOI).

After cessation of the ferry service, the affected passengers may take the "Central – Cheung Chau" outlying island ferry service. The TD has been

monitoring passenger demand and observed that the carrying capacity currently provided by the "Central – Cheung Chau" ferry route can meet passenger demand.

The ferry operator has already put up notices at ferry piers and on board ferries to inform passengers of the service termination. The TD will closely monitor passenger demand after the service termination and will discuss with the ferry operator of the "Central – Cheung Chau" outlying island ferry route about enhancing the level of service, if necessary.

Note 1: These 14 routes are "Central – Cheung Chau", "Inter-islands" (plying between Peng Chau, Mui Wo, Chi Ma Wan and Cheung Chau), "Central – Mui Wo", "Central – Peng Chau", "Central – Yung Shue Wan", "Central – Sok Kwu Wan", "Aberdeen – Cheung Chau", "Aberdeen – Yung Shue Wan via Pak Kok Tsuen", "Aberdeen – Sok Kwu Wan via Mo Tat", "Tuen Mun – Tung Chung – Sha Lo Wan – Tai O", "Discovery Bay – Mui Wo", "Ma Wan – Central", "Ma Wan – Tsuen Wan" and "Central – Discovery Bay".

Note 2: These 11 routes are "Central – Cheung Chau", "Inter-islands" (plying between Peng Chau, Mui Wo, Chi Ma Wan and Cheung Chau), "Central – Mui Wo", "Central – Peng Chau", "Central – Yung Shue Wan", "Central – Sok Kwu Wan", "Aberdeen – Cheung Chau", "Aberdeen – Yung Shue Wan via Pak Kok Tsuen", "Aberdeen – Sok Kwu Wan via Mo Tat", "Tuen Mun – Tung Chung – Sha Lo Wan – Tai O" and "Discovery Bay – Mui Wo".

[LCSD urges public to keep venues clean during New Year's Eve](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (December 30) appealed to members of the public to keep venues clean and mind their safety while celebrating New Year's Eve.

The LCSD will work with other government departments to implement a series of measures on New Year's Eve to maintain cleanliness and safety at LCSD venues including Tamar Park, Central and Western District Promenade (Central Section), Hong Kong Cultural Centre (HKCC) Piazza, Salisbury Garden, Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade, the Avenue of Stars, Middle Road Children's Playground, Tsim Sha Tsui East Waterfront Podium Garden and Urban Council Centenary Garden, where large crowds are expected to participate in countdown and celebration activities.

An LCSD spokesman said, "Our staff, together with law enforcement teams of relevant departments, will step up patrols and take action against littering, illegal hawking and vandalism of public property.

"People are urged to keep places clean and tidy while celebrating New Year's Eve. Defacing and damaging public property is prohibited at all venues. People should take away all their belongings when departing the venues and should not leave trash behind. Those who litter will be liable to a fine of \$1,500.

"In crowded areas, people should remain calm and be mindful of their own safety," he added.

The public announcement systems at the HKCC will also broadcast anti-littering and crowd management messages in Cantonese, Putonghua and English on a regular basis during the holiday.

[Appeal for information on missing woman in Aberdeen \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (December 30) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Aberdeen.

Chan Tsz-wa, aged 32, went missing after she left her residence in Wah Fu Estate on December 26 afternoon. Her family made a report to Police on the same day.

She is about 1.5 metres tall, 55 kilograms in weight and of medium build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and long straight black hair. She was last seen wearing a pair of rimless glasses, a grey jacket, grey trousers, white shoes and carrying a black rucksack and a green recycle bag.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Hong Kong Island on 2860 1040, 9886 0034 or email to rmpu-hki@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



Special traffic and transport arrangements for New Year's Eve

The Transport Department (TD) today (December 30) reminded the public to take note of the special traffic and transport arrangements to be implemented on New Year's Eve (December 31) to facilitate holiday celebrations. Members of the public are advised to make use of public transport services as far as possible.

Depending on the crowd situation, road closures and traffic diversions will be implemented in phases from 2pm on New Year's Eve in Central, Wan Chai North and Causeway Bay. There will also be road closure arrangements in the vicinity of Victoria Park for the Hong Kong Brands and Products Expo. Roads in the vicinity of the main shopping and entertainment areas are expected to be busier than usual before the holiday.

The MTR Island Line, Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line, Tseung Kwan O Line, Tung Chung Line, East Rail Line (except to Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau), Ma On Shan Line, West Rail Line, South Island Line and Light Rail Routes 505, 507, 610, 614P, 615P, 706 and 751 will operate around the clock on December 31.

Some bus and minibus services will be extended or augmented on New Year's Eve. Hong Kong Tramways and the Central to Mid-Levels escalator and walkway system will also provide extended services. In addition, the ferry service between Central and Tsim Sha Tsui will be extended.

The public are advised to make use of public transport and avoid driving to busy areas. If driving is necessary, motorists are advised to drive with care and patience and should be aware that on-street parking spaces will be

suspended due to road closures and traffic diversion arrangements. Pedestrians are advised walk on the pavement, pay attention to road safety, be considerate and patient, observe traffic lights and follow advice or instructions given by the Police.

The TD reminds the public that many public transport passengers are expected to travel via the land boundary control points during the holiday period. Cross-boundary passengers are advised to plan their journeys in advance and consider making their journeys during non-peak hours. As the waiting time for public transport services may be longer than usual if traffic is busy at the control points, passengers should remain orderly and heed advice from police on site and staff of the public transport service operators concerned.

The TD and the Police will closely monitor local and cross-boundary traffic during the holidays and take appropriate action as necessary.

Details of the special traffic and transport arrangements on New Year's Eve will be available at the department's website (www.td.gov.hk).