

FATF and APG praised the work of HKMA and banking sector in combating money laundering and terrorist financing risks

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

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), the global standard-setter and regional body for anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) respectively, published today (September 4) the Mutual Evaluation Report on Hong Kong's AML/CFT regime. Hong Kong's AML/CFT regime is assessed to be compliant and effective overall, making it the first jurisdiction in the Asia-Pacific region to have achieved an overall compliant result in the current round of FATF evaluation.

The Report recognises the risk-based supervision[1] by the HKMA, which is in line with international standards and practices, and makes a strong contribution to the overall effectiveness of Hong Kong's AML/CFT regime. The Report also commends the good ML/TF risk understanding of the HKMA as well as banks, with the robust and risk-sensitive supervisory approach and implementation of preventive measures which are commensurate with the highest risk level as assessed for the banking sector amongst others.

The positive assessment reflects the HKMA's sustained commitment to working closely together with the banking sector and various stakeholders in managing the high ML/TF risks in relation to Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre[2], in which the banking sector plays an important gatekeeper role. The Report also recommends areas for further work which will help focus efforts over the coming few years. The HKMA will continue to work closely with the banking and stored value facility (SVF) sectors to follow up as appropriate. In particular, actions have already been taken in areas such as publication of the updated ML/TF Risk Assessment for the SVF sector in July 2019.

The Deputy Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Arthur Yuen, said, "The FATF report is a welcome endorsement that the HKMA's risk-based AML/CFT supervision is effective and in line with international standards. The positive assessment results reflect strong commitment of resources and the amount of work over a number of years by the Hong Kong banking sector and the HKMA. We will work closely with the industry and various stakeholders to sustain the efforts in meeting international standards and addressing ML/TF risks as they evolve in the years to come."

The Report can be found at www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/mutualevaluations/documents/mer-hong-kong-2019

[.html](#) .

[1] More information on the HKMA's risk-based AML/CFT supervision can be found at SPM: AML-1 "Supervisory Approach on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism" for AIs and Circular on "Policy and Supervisory Approach on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism" for SVF licensees.

[2] See Hong Kong's ML/TF Risk Assessment Report published in April 2018.