

Hong Kong Customs publicises Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Regulatory Regime at precious stone exhibition (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs will set up a booth at the Hong Kong International Diamond, Gem & Pearl Show, to be held at AsiaWorld-Expo from tomorrow (February 27) for five consecutive days, to publicise the Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Regulatory Regime, and will provide on-site counter services to assist non-Hong Kong dealers in submitting a cash transaction report during their participation in the exhibition.

According to the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance (Cap. 615), the Regime has come into effect since April 1, 2023. Any person who is seeking to carry out a business of dealing in precious metals and stones, and engage in any transaction(s) (whether making or receiving a payment) with a total value at or above HK\$120,000 in Hong Kong is required to register with Hong Kong Customs and fulfil his/her anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing statutory obligations as appropriate.

In particular, with the expiry of the transitional period, all dealers who submit their applications for registration from January 1, 2024, onwards must successfully obtain relevant registration before they can carry out any cash or non-cash transaction(s) with a total value at or above HK\$120,000.

For non-Hong Kong dealers fulfilling the prescribed conditions (including those who come to Hong Kong to participate in exhibitions), although they are exempt from registration, they are required to submit to Hong Kong Customs a cash transaction report for any cash transaction(s) (whether making or receiving a payment) with a total value at or above HK\$120,000 carried out in Hong Kong within one day after the transaction, or before the dealer or the person acting on behalf of the dealer leaves Hong Kong, whichever is earlier.

Non-Hong Kong dealers can make an online submission of a cash transaction report via the Regime's webpage at www.drs.customs.gov.hk by accessing the Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Registration System. They can also download the related form at www.drs.customs.gov.hk/download/drsform/CED418_Form%20Cash%20transaction%20report.pdf and then submit the report in person at Hong Kong Customs' booth in the exhibition.

Hong Kong Customs' booth (Booth 5-M04) is located at Hall 5 of AsiaWorld-Expo and will be open from 10.30am to 6.30pm on February 27, from 10am to 6.30pm between February 28 and March 1, and from 10am to 5.30pm on March 2.

Dealers can visit the website (www.customs.gov.hk/en/service-enforcement-information/anti-money-laundering/supervision-of-dealers-in-precious-metals-and-ston/index.html) for more information about the Regime.



[Civil Service College and Peking University's joint programme holds lecture on "International Strategy and National Defence Policy" \(with photos\)](#)

The Civil Service College (CSC), in collaboration with the Institute for Hong Kong and Macau Studies, Peking University, launched an in-depth programme on "one country, two systems" and contemporary China. As part of the programme, a lecture on the topic of "International Strategy and National Defence Policy" was delivered by the President of the Peking University's Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Professor Yu Tiejun, at the CSC today (February 26).

Addressing the lecture, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung, said that Hong Kong plays a critical role in the country's foreign strategy, bearing a significant responsibility in safeguarding national security. The legislation for Article 23 of the Basic Law, which is to be completed within this year, along with the Hong Kong National Security Law, will together establish a robust defence for national security. This will further strengthen the foundation for the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems", ensuring that Hong Kong continues to thrive as an attractive and competitive international city. As the backbone of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, civil servants must actively support the HKSAR Government in fulfilling its constitutional duty, improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security, so as to safeguard national sovereignty, security, and development interests in the face of a complex global environment.

Around 70 civil servants at the rank of Directorate Pay Scale Point 1 and 2 attended the in-depth programme. In addition, about 100 politically appointed officials and other directorate officers enrolled and sat in on the lecture via video conferencing.

The programme was organised to further strengthen training for senior officials and directorate civil servants. It consists of 12 monthly lectures covering a wide range of topics, such as the Communist Party of China and contemporary China, socialism with Chinese characteristics, the theory and practice of "one country, two systems", as well as developments in contemporary Chinese society, economy, national defence, technology, and more. Distinguished scholars from the Mainland will deliver the programme and engage in in-depth discussions with participants.



[Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (February 26) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From February 18 to 24, two LD cases were reported:

1. A male patient, aged 61 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Eastern District and was classified as a community-acquired case; and
2. A male patient, aged 55 with underlying illnesses, who had been to the United Arab Emirates during the incubation period and was classified as an imported case.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of February 24, eight LD cases had been reported this year. In 2023 and 2022, there were 121 and 80 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

â€‹The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the

manufacturer;

- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres (μm) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2 μm filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
 1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
 2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
 3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
 4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
 5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

[Transcript of remarks by SFST at media session \(with photo/video\)](#)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui; the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Mr Eddie Yue; and the Chief Executive Officer of the Securities and Futures Commission, Ms Julia Leung, met the media at the Central Government Offices today (February 26). Following is the transcript of remarks by Mr Hui:

Reporter: Mr Hui, what topics did the meeting cover? And did Mr Xia (Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office of the Communist Party of China

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 February 23 to noon today (February 26), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 234 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past three days (including last Saturday and Sunday). 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 150 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 32 517 samples of food imported from Japan (including 21 806 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 9 174 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.