

[Phishing emails related to Bank of China \(Hong Kong\) Limited](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited relating to phishing emails, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the emails concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

[Effective Exchange Rate Index](#)

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, February 19, 2024 is 105.1 (same as last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, February 17, 2024 was 105.1 (down 0.1 against last Friday's index).

[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 February 16 to noon today (February 19), 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).

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 31 145 samples of food imported from Japan (including 20 894 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 8 822 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

[Import of poultry meat and products](#)

from areas in US suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 19) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Miami-Dade County of the State of Florida, Delta County of the State of Colorado and Lenoir County of the State of North Carolina in the United States (US), the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 37 770 tonnes of chilled and frozen poultry meat and about 83.84 million poultry eggs from the US last year.

"The CFS has contacted the American authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the WOAH and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Queue ticketing system for driving licensing-related services to be implemented at TD's Licensing Offices from March 13

The Transport Department (TD) said today (February 19) that the trial queue ticketing system for driving licensing-related services implemented at the Kowloon Licensing Office will be extended to the Licensing Offices in Admiralty, Sha Tin and Kwun Tong from March 13.

A spokesman for the TD said, "For driving licensing services and driving test applications processing over the counter, if no prior appointment has been made online or by phone, applicants are required to obtain a same-day queue ticket on-site before using the counter services. A total of 980 same-day queue tickets will be distributed on every working day among the four Licensing Offices at 9am and 2pm. Details are at the Annex. There is no need for same-day queue ticket holders to stay and wait at the Licensing Offices. They can check the latest queue ticket numbers being distributed and called at the Licensing Offices by scanning the QR code on the ticket or via the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk/qts), return to the Licensing Office in a timely

manner and follow the instructions of staff to join a designated queue for counter services."

Apart from replacing the walk-in counter services by the same-day queue tickets, all service arrangements regarding driving licensing-related services of the Licensing Offices remain unchanged. The Licensing Offices will continue to provide counter services to members of the public who have made a prior appointment online or by phone. The TD will closely monitor the implementation of the queue ticketing system for driving licensing-related services. Depending on the experience and feedback after the implementation, and the service demand of the public upon the introduction of the electronic vehicle licence initiative later, the TD will consider the feasibility of extending the queue ticketing system to vehicle licensing-related services.

The TD spokesman said, "The TD expects that the waiting environment of the Licensing Offices will be improved after the implementation of the queue ticketing system for driving licensing-related services (include applications for driving tests). Those who are unable to get a queue ticket or do not have an appointment can submit their driving licensing-related applications through non-counter channels, such as online or drop-in boxes.

"The TD has all along encouraged members of the public to use online licensing services as far as possible, allowing them to submit applications anytime and anywhere without the need to attend and queue at the Licensing Offices in person for processing of applications. Upon receiving a duly completed application, the TD in general completes processing within 10 working days and sends the licences/permits to the applicants by registered mail. To cope with the anticipated increase in the number of applications received online or through drop-in box, the TD will strengthen its manpower to process."

Since September 2022, the TD has been extending its online services in phases to cover applications for learner's driving licences, probationary driving licences, full driving licences, driving instructor's licences, applications for duplicates of driving licences/driving instructor's licences, and also international driving permits. Members of the public who have registered for "iAM Smart+", which comes with a digital signing function, or are holding a valid personal e-Certificate, can submit applications online for the above various driving licences through the website: www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/drivinglicense/onlineservices.htm. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has set up mobile registration teams at Licensing Offices to help members of the public register for "iAM Smart+".

To avoid unnecessary delays, applicants should allow sufficient time and submit applications for the required licences/permits as early as possible. Regarding the renewal of a full driving licence, the TD will send a "Full Driving Licence Renewal Notice cum Application Form" (TD578) to licence holders about three months before expiry of their licences, which includes a renewal password for online application and serves as a reminder to them to renew their full driving licences in a timely manner. Licence holders can use

the renewal password to apply online for renewing full driving licences after completing the relevant online form.

Apart from online applications, members of the public can also submit their applications through drop-in boxes or by post. The TD advises applicants to make appointments online for counter services before the expiry of their licences through the website www.gov.hk/en/residents/transport/drivinglicense/abs.htm or by calling 3763 8080. To bring greater convenience to applicants, the appointment booking for TD Licensing Office counter services has been extended to applications for a Certificate of Driving Licence Particulars and change of personal particulars (for driving licence holders only).