

# Hong Kong Customs arrests seven directors and sole proprietors of restaurants suspected of supplying food with false trade descriptions

Hong Kong Customs earlier mounted a territory-wide operation against restaurants supplying food with false trade descriptions and arrested seven persons in different districts for suspected contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO), including five directors and two sole proprietors of the restaurants involved.

Customs earlier conducted spot checks and test purchases at various restaurants in the territory. During the operation, Customs officers test-purchased dishes claimed as "grouper" and "abalone" and sent samples to the Government Laboratory for examination.

Examination results confirmed that the fourteen dishes claimed as "grouper" and six dishes claimed as "abalone" test-purchased at seven restaurants were catfish and squid respectively, different from what had been declared.

After an investigation, Customs took enforcement action on March 27 and arrested six men and one woman, aged between 47 and 62, at the seven restaurants located in Sheung Shui, Tai Po, Kwai Chung, Yau Ma Tei, To Kwa Wan, Wan Chai and Quarry Bay. They are the directors or sole proprietors of the restaurants concerned.

Investigations of all cases are ongoing.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure products at reputable restaurants.

Under the TDO, any person who supplies goods with a false trade description in the course of trade or business, or is in possession of any goods for sale with a false trade description, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).

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## **Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (March 30), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 191 patients (96 male and 95 female, aged 3 to 77) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 554 patients under isolation currently. So far, 124 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infection have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

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## **Government welcomes appointment to Board of Financial Dispute Resolution Centre**

The Government today (March 30) welcomed the Financial Dispute Resolution Centre's (FDRC) new appointment of Professor Wong Kam-fai as a non-official Director to its Board. His term will be two years from March 31, 2020 to March 30, 2022.

"We welcome Professor Wong to the Board of the FDRC, and express our heartfelt thanks to the retiring Director Mr Philip Leung Kwong-hon for his contributions to the FDRC over the past six years," a Government spokesman said.

The FDRC administers in an independent and impartial manner a financial dispute resolution scheme. The scheme provides an alternative avenue which is independent and affordable for resolving monetary disputes between financial institutions and their customers primarily by way of "Mediation First, Arbitration Next". It is governed by a Board of Directors, comprising the non-official Chairman, four non-official members, one representative each from the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the Securities and Futures Commission, as well as the Chief

## Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (March 30) 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 March 22 to 28, two imported LD cases were reported:

1. A male patient, aged 87 with underlying illnesses, who stayed in Huizhou, Guangdong Province, during the entire incubation period; and
2. A male patient, aged 78 with underlying illnesses, who stayed in Meizhou, Guangdong Province, during the entire incubation period.

"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 March 28 this year, 33 LD cases had been reported. In 2019 and 2018, there were 105 cases each year.

"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 leading to stagnant water; 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 which 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.

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 ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) 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  $\mu\text{m}$  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.

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## Results of Estate Management Services Contractors Awards 2019 announced

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) announced today (March 30) the results of the Estate Management Services Contractors Awards (EMSC Awards) 2019 to give due recognition to the outstanding performance of services contractors in managing the HA's properties last year. The winning services contractors will be awarded trophies as commendation.

The estates managed by the winners of the Best Public Rental Housing Estate (Property Services) (Large Estate) award are Choi Yuen Estate, Cheung Ching Estate and Kwai Fong Estate while the estates managed by the winners of the Best Public Rental Housing Estate (Property Services) (Small Estate) award are Po Heung Estate, Cheung Lung Wai Estate and Sheung Lok Estate.

The HA holds the EMSC Awards annually and presents different awards. There are 43 awards under the EMSC Awards 2019, awarding to 14 property, cleansing and security services contractors and car park operators; seven estate managers; and 14 front-line staff (please see the attached table for details).

The award winners were determined based on the combined scores given by the assessment panel, the Housing Department's supervisory teams, the Management Assessment Scores, feedback from the Estate Management Advisory Committees and the results of random surveys conducted among residents.

The HA has a stringent tendering system and an effective contract management mechanism to ensure quality and reliable services. The HA considers it important to maintain close communication with the services contractors. Seminars are held regularly to foster good communication and exchanges of views as well as to provide opportunities for the services contractors with good performance to share their valuable experience.

Currently, the management of more than half of the HA's public rental housing estates is outsourced to property services agents, and many major maintenance tasks in HA estates are being carried out by contractors. By leveraging the private sector's resources and experience in managing private properties, the HA seeks to enhance the quality of management services for public housing estates and to provide a better living environment for its tenants.