

# Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, July 18, 2019 is 105 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

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## Air Quality Health Index will remain higher than normal today and tomorrow

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has recorded higher than normal pollution levels. At 2pm today (July 18), the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) at Tung Chung Air Quality Monitoring station reached 10+, corresponding to the "Serious" health risk category. According to the EPD's forecast, it is expected that the AQHI will remain higher than normal today and tomorrow.

Under the influence of the outer subsiding air of Tropical Cyclone Danas and the area of low pressure over the northeastern part of the South China Sea, the weather in Hong Kong today is hazy with sunny periods and light to moderate westerly winds. Hong Kong is being affected by an air mass with higher background pollutant concentrations. Higher than normal levels of ozone and particulates have been recorded in the territory since this morning. The sunshine enhances photochemical smog activity and the formation of ozone and fine particulates, resulting in high pollution in the Pearl River Delta region. The high level of ozone has promoted the formation of nitrogen dioxide, particularly in parts of the urban areas and at the roadside.

According to the Hong Kong Observatory, the area of low pressure over the northeastern part of the South China Sea will move towards the vicinity of Taiwan, and will bring unsettled weather to the coast of southeastern China in the next couple of days. It is expected that pollution levels will be improved by then.

With a health risk category in the "Very High" range or above, children, the elderly and persons with existing heart or respiratory illnesses are advised to reduce physical exertion and outdoor activities to a minimum or avoid such activities. The general public is advised to reduce, or reduce to a minimum, outdoor physical exertion, and to reduce time staying outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. As health effects of air pollutants may vary for individuals, persons who are in doubt or experience discomfort should seek advice from health-care professionals. The public may visit the Centre for Health Protection's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/460/3557.html)) for more information on health effects of air pollution and relevant health advice.

The Education Bureau (EDB) urges all schools to visit the EDB's website for appropriate measures to safeguard students' health and take note of changes in the index. The relevant hyperlink is as follows:  
[www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/admin/about-activities/sch-activities-guidelines/index.html).

When the AQHI is at the "Very High" level, employers of outdoor workers performing heavy manual work are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees such as reducing outdoor physical exertion and the time of their stay outdoors, especially in areas with heavy traffic. At the "Serious" level, employers of all outdoor workers are advised to assess the risk of outdoor work and take appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of their employees.

Members of the public can check the current AQHI readings at the EPD's website ([www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html](http://www.aqhi.gov.hk/en.html)) or by calling the hotline at 2827 8541.

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## **OGCIO clarifies online rumour**

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) noticed that an image captured from a TV news clip may mislead viewers to believe that the technology shown is one of the functions of smart lampposts.

The OGCI0 today (July 18) clarified that the image in question featured technology that is used to count the number of people at a given location. This technology was showcased at the Smart Government Pavilion at the International ICT Expo this April, and is not related to the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts pilot scheme. The OGCI0 reiterated that the lampposts will not employ this technology and do not carry any facial recognition function.

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## **Results of targeted surveillance on Salmonella in ready-to-eat food all satisfactory**

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 18) announced the results of a recently completed targeted food surveillance project on Salmonella in ready-to-eat food. All samples passed the test.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "A total of 300 ready-to-eat food samples were collected from different retailers (including online retailers) and food factories for testing of Salmonella this year. The samples included dishes containing eggs, poultry and their products."

Salmonella can be found in eggs and food of animal origin. There is a risk of contracting salmonellosis if a person consumes undercooked food of animal origin, eggs or egg products, or food cross-contaminated with Salmonella.

Salmonella infection may cause fever and gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. The effects on infants, young children, the elderly and patients with a weak immune system can be more severe and sometimes may even lead to death.

Despite the fact that the test results of the samples were all satisfactory, the spokesman reminded the trade and the public not to take the risk lightly. They should maintain good personal and food hygiene to safeguard food safety. For example, they should cook meat, poultry and eggs thoroughly to ensure the juices of the meat are not red, blood is not visible when cooked meat is cut and the egg yolk and white are firm. They should consume cooked food as soon as possible to avoid keeping it at room temperature for a long time. Food manufacturers should take adequate measures to eliminate Salmonella in food during the food production process, and prevent re-contamination of food such as cross-contamination by raw ingredients with Salmonella. Moreover, they may consider choosing pasteurised egg products or dried egg powder to prepare dishes not requiring heat treatment, in particular ready-to-eat desserts.

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## [Labour Department investigates fatal work accident in Tai Po](#)

The Labour Department (LD) is investigating a fatal work accident that occurred in Tai Po this morning (July 18) in which a worker died.

The LD immediately deployed staff to the scene upon receiving a report of the accident, and is now conducting an investigation to look into its cause.