

# Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) released today (May 14) the key analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund at the end of April 2019.

Foreign assets, representing the external assets of the Exchange Fund, decreased during the month by HK\$10.5 billion to HK\$3,592.8 billion.

The Monetary Base, comprising Certificates of Indebtedness, Government-issued currency notes and coins in circulation, the balance of the banking system and Exchange Fund Bills and Notes issued, amounted to HK\$1,630.0 billion.

Claims on the private sector in Hong Kong amounted to HK\$276.1 billion.

The analytical accounts of the Exchange Fund are released in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) and are referred to as the Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank under SDDS (Annex).

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At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of May 2019, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

May 7 (Issued)	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
May 14	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
May 31	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity

## **Cluster of Parainfluenza cases at Caritas Medical Centre**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

“The spokesperson for Caritas Medical Centre made the following announcement today (May 14):

“Four patients aged eight to 13 with a history of chronic illnesses residing in the Paediatric Developmental Disabilities Unit of Caritas Medical Centre have presented with respiratory symptoms since May 10. Appropriate viral tests were arranged for the patients and the test results of all four patients were positive for Parainfluenza Virus Type 3. The patients are being treated under isolation and are in a stable condition.

“The hospital has informed the relatives of the patients about the situation. Infection control measures at the ward have been enhanced. All other patients and staff in the ward are under close surveillance.

“The hospital has reported the cases to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow up. The hospital will continue closely monitoring the situation on the ward.

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## **Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme – temporary special arrangement for expired subsidy**

The Transport Department (TD) today (May 14) reminded members of the public who have yet to claim the public transport fare subsidy for the month of January 2019 under the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme (the Subsidy Scheme) that they can collect it through the various existing subsidy collection channels provided under the Subsidy Scheme until tomorrow (May 15).

"To cater for those who may not have been able to claim the subsidy

during the first three-month collection period, the Government has introduced an interim special arrangement whereby members of the public may apply, within one month from the day after tomorrow (i.e. from May 16 to June 15), to register for claiming for late collection of their expired subsidy by calling the Scheme hotline (2969 5500). Under normal circumstances, the customer service representatives manning the hotline will be able to confirm at once whether or not there is uncollected subsidy, and if so the relevant subsidy amount. Upon confirmation of the application, the uncollected subsidy can be collected through various subsidy collection channels from the 16th day of the month following the date of the application and will be valid for collection within a further three-month period thereafter. Any further late applications beyond June 15 will not be accepted," the TD spokesman said.

The service hours of the Scheme hotline are from 9am to 9pm on Mondays to Fridays and from 9 am to 6pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Members of the public applying for claiming the expired subsidy can press "1" and "0" after choosing the language on the Scheme hotline to be connected to the customer service representatives directly for the application.

As at May 12, about 330 000 commuters, or 14 per cent of those eligible under the Subsidy Scheme, have yet to collect their subsidy for the month of January.

"Having regard to the fact that the Scheme is still at its early stage of implementation, the special arrangement for the late subsidy collection will be extended to cover those commuters who may not be able to collect their subsidy for the months of February and March by the end of the respective three-month periods. Notwithstanding that, members of the public who have yet to collect their subsidy for the months of February and March are advised to collect the subsidy through the established collection channels as soon as possible before June 16 and July 16 respectively," the spokesman said.

Commuters may check their record of public transport expenses and subsidy amount through the website of the Subsidy Scheme ([www.ptfss.gov.hk](http://www.ptfss.gov.hk)), the Octopus App and the Scheme hotline. For enquires about the details of the Subsidy Scheme, please browse through the website of the Subsidy Scheme or call 1823.

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## **Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (May 14) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-

made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From May 5 to 11, one community-acquired LD case was reported. The male patient, aged 55 with good past health, lives at 6 Carnarvon Road, Tsim Sha Tsui.

"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 May 11, 23 LD cases had been reported in 2019. In 2018 and 2017, there were 105 and 72 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 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 get 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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## Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, May 14, 2019 is 105 (up 0.5 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, May 11, 2019 is 104.5 (up 0.1 against last Friday's index).