

Employer fined for late payment of wages

X-Spatial Media Technology Limited was prosecuted by the Labour Department (LD) for failing to pay seven employees' wages, totaling about \$334,000, within seven days after the expiry of the wage period as required by the Employment Ordinance (EO). The employer was fined \$169,000 after pleading guilty at Shatin Magistrates' Courts today (May 3).

"The ruling helps disseminate a strong message to all employers that they have to pay wages to employees within the time limit stipulated in the EO," an LD spokesman said.

"The LD will not tolerate these offences and will spare no effort in enforcing the law and safeguarding employees' statutory rights," the spokesman added.

Land Registry releases statistics for April

The Land Registry today (May 3) released its statistics for April 2019.

Land registration

* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in April was 9,911 (+54.2 per cent compared with March 2019 and +13.4 per cent compared with April 2018)

* The 12-month moving average for April was 6,357 (1.5 per cent above the 12-month moving average for March 2019 and 11.5 per cent below that for April 2018)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in April was \$86.9 billion (+64.5 per cent compared with March 2019 and +11.6 per cent compared with April 2018)

* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 7,822 were for residential units (+49.5 per cent compared with March 2019 and +17.7 per cent compared with April 2018)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$70.1 billion (+52.8 per cent compared with March 2019

and +13.4 per cent compared with April 2018)

Statistics on sales of residential units do not include sale and purchase agreements relating to sales of units under the Home Ownership Scheme, the Private Sector Participation Scheme and the Tenants Purchase Scheme unless the premium of the unit concerned has been paid after the sale restriction period.

Figures on sale and purchase agreements received for the past 12 months, the year-on-year rate of change and breakdown figures on residential sales have also been released.

As deeds may not be lodged with the Land Registry until up to 30 days after the transaction, these statistics generally relate to land transactions in the previous month.

Land search

* The number of searches of land registers made by the public in April was 444,632 (-4.6 per cent compared with March 2019 and +0.1 per cent compared with April 2018)

The statistics cover searches made at the counter, through the self-service terminals and via the Integrated Registration Information System Online Services.

[Flexible and multiple pathways available for secondary school graduates \(with photos\)](#)

The Chairman of the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education, Professor Anthony Cheung, officiated at the opening ceremony of the Information Expo on Multiple Pathways 2019 today (May 3). Secondary school graduates are encouraged to consider various pathways in accordance with their interests and abilities.

The Government strives to provide flexible and diverse pathways with multiple entry and exit points to secondary school graduates. Apart from undergraduate programmes, there are other options such as sub-degree programmes (including Higher Diploma and Associate Degree programmes) and Diploma Yi Jin programmes.

Students may also consider different levels of programmes

under vocational and professional education and training (VPET), which covers programmes up to undergraduate level. VPET has been playing a pivotal role in broadening the learning opportunities for secondary school leavers and in-service personnel as well as nurturing the requisite human capital to support Hong Kong's development.

For the 2019/20 academic year, it is estimated that there are about 54 000 full-time locally-accredited post-secondary places to be provided by various institutions, comprising 24 000 undergraduate places and 30 000 sub-degree places. Some institutions also provide Diploma Yi Jin and other education programmes. Hence, there will be sufficient places for eligible students to pursue their studies in Hong Kong.

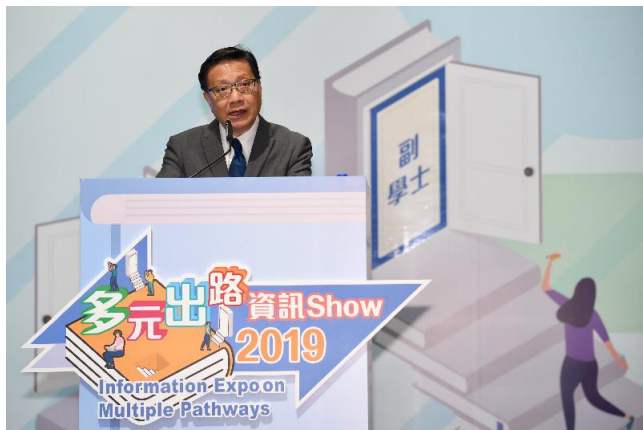
Organised by the Education Bureau, the Info Expo is held from 10am to 6pm today and tomorrow (May 3 and 4) at Rotunda 2 of the Kowloonbay International Trade & Exhibition Centre. Admission is free.

There are more than 30 exhibition booths providing information on locally-accredited post-secondary programmes (including programmes eligible for government subsidy schemes as well as VPET programmes) and the Diploma Yi Jin programme. Hok Yau Club, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups and the Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association also offer career guidance services on the spot.

Booths are also set up to provide information on two government subsidy schemes for students pursuing self-financing programmes, namely the Study Subsidy Schemes for Designated Professions/Sector (SSSDP) and Non-means-tested Subsidy Scheme for Self-financing Undergraduate Studies in Hong Kong (NMTSS). In the 2019/20 academic year, the scope of SSSDP will be expanded to include sub-degree programmes. It will cover a total of 66 undergraduate and sub-degree programmes involving about 5 000 subsidised intake places, with an annual subsidy of up to \$72,800. NMTSS will continue to cover eligible full-time self-financing locally-accredited undergraduate and top-up degree programmes offered by eligible institutions. A non-means-tested annual subsidy of \$31,300 will be provided to eligible Hong Kong students.

Useful tools and platforms, including the Information Portal for Accredited Post-secondary Programmes, the Electronic Advance Application System for Post-secondary Programmes, e-Navigator, the Concourse for Self-financing Post-secondary Education and the Qualifications Framework are also demonstrated at the Expo to assist students to plan for further studies.

Apart from information booths, there are also talks and sharing sessions on multiple pathways for secondary school graduates and preparation and strategies for articulation to post-secondary education. Industry and institution representatives will also provide first-hand information about relevant programmes and careers in the industries concerned.



Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected ketamine and makes 10-year record seizure of suspected ecstasy (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized about two kilograms of suspected ketamine and about 7 000 tablets of ecstasy with an estimated market value of about \$1.9 million at Hong Kong International Airport on March 16 and March 22 respectively. In terms of the number of tablets seized, this is the department's largest seizure of suspected ecstasy in the past 10 years.

On March 16, Customs officers inspected an air consignment from Germany and found about two kilograms of suspected ketamine inside. Customs officers then inspected another air consignment from Germany on March 22 and found about 7 000 tablets of ecstasy. The consignments were destined for a commercial premises in Tsim Sha Tsui and Mongkok respectively.

After follow-up investigation, Customs officers yesterday (May 2) arrested a 56-year-old man and a 30-year-old woman in Tsim Sha Tsui.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will maintain close contact with Hong Kong Post and the logistics industries to step up action against drug trafficking through postal parcel or express courier channels.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to the Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



Collection period of subsidy of Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme for January to end on May 15

â€‹The Transport Department (TD) today (May 3) reminded members of the public that the collection period of the subsidy for January under the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme (the Subsidy Scheme) will end on May 15.

"Commuters could collect the subsidy for January since February 16. As the subsidy for each month is valid for collection within the next three months, the collection period of the subsidy for January will end on May 15. As at April 30, there are about 350 000 commuters who have not collected their subsidy for January," the TD spokesman said.

The spokesman added that starting from May, the total amount of the subsidy and the number of beneficiaries in the previous month will be announced on the website of the Subsidy Scheme (www.ptfss.gov.hk) on the 15th of each month.

Commuters may check their record of public transport expenses and subsidy amount through the website of the Subsidy Scheme, the Octopus App and the hotline of the Subsidy Scheme (2969 5500). For enquires about the details of the Subsidy Scheme, please browse through the website of the Subsidy Scheme or call 1823.