

Managers of unlicensed guesthouses convicted

Five women were fined from \$6,500 to \$9,000 at Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (September 5) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that in November last year and February this year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected five suspected unlicensed guesthouses on Portland Street, Nathan Road, Nelson Street, Jordan Road and To Kwa Wan Road in Kowloon. During the inspections, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented rooms in these guesthouses on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's records, these guesthouses did not possess licences under the Ordinance on the days of inspection. The women responsible for managing the premises were charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and will lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaeng@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website (www.hadla.gov.hk), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

HAD to open temporary night heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department will open 19 temporary night heat shelters tonight (September 5) for people in need of the service.

The shelters will be open from 10.30pm until 8am tomorrow.

For further information, please call the department's enquiries hotline before midnight on 2835 1473.

The 19 night heat shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall

3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex

2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre

Waiting Lobby, 3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall

Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –

Wan Chai Activities Centre

LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –

Hung Hom Community Hall

Multi-purpose Room, 1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices

42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –

Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre

71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –

Shek Kip Mei Community Hall

G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate

Nam Cheong Street, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –

Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre

Hall, G/F, 45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –

Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre

60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

Islands –

Tung Chung Community Hall

G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –
Kwai Shing Community Hall
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –
Cheung Wah Community Hall
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –
Hang Hau Community Hall
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –
Tai Po Community Centre
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –
Butterfly Bay Community Centre
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –
Long Ping Community Hall
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –
Tin Yiu Community Centre
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai

The temporary night heat shelters will resume their functions as either community centres or community halls in the daytime for hire by the local community and cannot continue to be open as heat shelters. People may choose to take refuge from the heat during the daytime in the common areas in any of the 21 designated community centres or community halls. Their opening hours are from 9am to 10pm. For addresses of the community centres or community halls, please browse the following webpage:

www.had.gov.hk/file_manager/en/documents/public_services/emergency_services/List_CH_CC_Day_E.pdf

Second round results of Public Policy Research Funding Scheme 2018-19 announced

The Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) announced today (September 5) the results of the second round applications to the Public Policy Research (PPR) Funding Scheme in 2018-19.

The PPR Funding Scheme aims to promote public policy research and provide evidence-based research to facilitate public policy discussion. Applications are accepted throughout the year. For the second round exercise in 2018-19, PICO received 26 applications. On the advice of an assessment panel, PICO has decided to support seven projects with a total funding of about \$4.7 million.

Applications to the PPR Funding Scheme are assessed by an assessment panel, chaired by and comprising experienced academics, who will take into account comments of reviewers who are academics and experts outside the panel in considering the applications. Each application is considered on its merits and relevance to public policy development in Hong Kong. A declaration of interests system is in place to ensure that the assessments are fair and impartial.

Details of the funded projects have been uploaded to PICO's website (www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS).

Hong Kong Customs strives to combat sale of suspected illicit TV set-top boxes

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (September 4) conducted an operation to combat the sale of suspected illicit TV set-top boxes and seized a total of 131 suspected illicit TV set-top boxes with an estimated market value of about \$100,000. Four persons were also arrested.

Customs has kept on conducting patrols against infringing activities in various districts in Hong Kong and found some shops selling suspected illicit TV set-top boxes which could be used to watch pay TV programmes for free by

means of bypassing copyright protection measures adopted by pay TV programme copyright owners.

After in-depth investigation with the assistance of copyright owners, Customs yesterday conducted an operation and raided three shops in Tsuen Wan where the suspected illicit TV set-top boxes were seized.

During the operation, Customs officers also arrested two men and two women, aged between 20 and 66. Two of them are shop owners while the other two are salespersons.

Investigation is ongoing. The arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs reminds traders that according to the Copyright Ordinance, a person commits an offence if the person sells or lets for hire a relevant device or provides relevant service for the purpose of a circumvention business. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for four years. Customs also reminds members of the public to watch pay TV programmes through legitimate means.

Customs will continue to step up street and Internet patrols to curb any form of infringing activity.

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

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, September 5, 2018 is 104.5 (up 0.2 against yesterday's index).