

TAC briefed on recommended measures to enhance safety of franchised buses and taxi service quality

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was briefed today (July 31) by the Government on the recommended measures to further enhance the safety of franchised buses (FBs) and taxi service quality.

Following the fatal traffic accident involving an FB on Tai Po Road in February 2018, the Transport Department (TD) set up a Working Group which comprises members from all FB operators and the major bus manufacturers to study possible measures to further enhance FB safety.

The TAC Chairman, Mr Larry Kwok, said "Members noted that under the recommendations of the Working Group, all new double-decker buses procured by all FB operators from July 2018 onwards will have an Electronic Stability Control system and a Speed Limiting Retarder incorporated with a view to enhancing driving safety. All passenger seats of all new buses ordered from July 2018 onwards will also have seat belts installed so as to give extra protection to passengers."

The TAC also noted that FB operators will conduct testing and technical assessment on the feasibility of installing the above-mentioned devices in existing buses and other technological devices. Meanwhile, the TD will prepare a practice note on the training framework to align the bus captain training arrangements of the FB operators.

"Members of the TAC welcome the recommended measures to further enhance the safety of FBs with a view to sustaining safe and reliable FB services in Hong Kong," Mr Kwok said.

As for enhancing taxi service quality, the TAC welcomed various proposed measures for enhancing taxi service quality taken forward by the Government and the trade in concerted efforts, which include updating the taxi service standards and guidelines, enhancing the training courses on in-service taxi drivers' service quality, and reviewing the existing sanctions for various taxi malpractices.

"Members are concerned that the complaint figures in relation to taxi service have remained high and welcome the Government's proposal to implement a two-tier penalty system for the six offences of a more serious nature, including overcharging, refusal to hire, not using the most direct practicable route, soliciting and defacing, damaging or altering of taximeters, as well as to introduce a Taxi Driver-Offence Points System. These measures will help strengthen the overall deterrent effect, so as to enhance taxi service quality," Mr Kwok added.

SCS visits Tai Po District (with photo)

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, today (July 31) visited Tai Po District, touring a sports centre and meeting with young people who are participating in a social start-up programme and electronic sports (e-sports) training. He also met with members of the Tai Po District Council (TPDC) to learn more about the district's development and needs.

Accompanied by the Chairman of the TPDC, Mr Cheung Hok-ming; the Vice-chairperson of the TPDC, Ms Wong Pik-kiu; and the District Officer (Tai Po), Ms Andy Lui, Mr Law met with TPDC members and exchanged views on issues of concern.

Mr Law then toured sports facilities and watched various sports classes at the Tai Po Sports Association Li Fook Lam Indoor Sports Centre. He said he was pleased to learn that the centre has been providing a variety of sports and recreational activities for residents, in order to assist them in nurturing the good habit of doing exercise.

Mr Law also visited the office of the Tai Po District Youth Outreaching Social Work Team. He chatted with young people who are participating in programmes of social-tech incubation and youth entrepreneurship as well as e-sports to listen to them talk about their learning experiences. The incubation programme aims to inspire young people to take advantage of innovative technology and creativity to resolve social issues, and to diversify the pathways for young people by facilitating life planning that keeps abreast of the advancement in technology and innovation. Trainees under the e-sports programme will acquire knowledge on the filming, editing and broadcasting of gaming competitions.

Mr Law said, "These aspiring young people have set their sights on a goal and are striding towards it.

"Recently I have met with tertiary students joining the Government's summer internship schemes and was pleased to learn that most of them had started life planning at an early stage and are equipping themselves for the paths they choose.

"Young people are the future of Hong Kong. The Government will strive to do its best in youth development work by addressing their concerns about education, career pursuit and home ownership, and encouraging their participation in politics as well as public policy discussion and debate, so as to support them in realising their potential."



Views sought on proposed arrangement on reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters between Hong Kong and the Mainland

The Department of Justice (DoJ) today (July 31) issued a consultation paper on the proposed arrangement between Hong Kong and the Mainland on reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters (Proposed Arrangement). Members of the community, including the legal profession, business organisations and other interested parties, are invited to submit their views on the Proposed Arrangement on or before September 24.

A spokesman for the DoJ said, "The Proposed Arrangement seeks to provide a mechanism for reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments (REJ) between the two places in a wider range of civil and commercial matters, reducing the need for re-litigation and offering better protection to the parties' rights."

Hong Kong has so far concluded five arrangements with the Mainland concerning various aspects of mutual legal assistance in civil and commercial matters. Two of these arrangements provide for REJ between the two places in civil and commercial matters.

The first REJ arrangement, signed in 2006, applies to money judgments made by the courts of either side where the parties to a commercial contract have agreed in writing that the court of one side will have exclusive jurisdiction to determine a dispute arising from that contract (Choice of Court Arrangement). The second arrangement, signed last year, provides for REJ in matrimonial or family matters (Matrimonial Arrangement).

Given the specific scope of application of these two Arrangements, they are not able to fully address the need for a comprehensive REJ mechanism arising from the increasingly close interaction and co-operation between the two places in terms of trade and economic activities as well as social interactions. The Proposed Arrangement will provide a more comprehensive legal framework for REJ with the Mainland covering civil and commercial judgments beyond the scope of application of the Choice of Court Arrangement and the Matrimonial Arrangement.

The Proposed Arrangement will set out the scope of application, requirements for reciprocal recognition and enforcement, grounds for refusal and the relevant procedural matters. The DoJ invites views and comments on various aspects of the Proposed Arrangement as well as its relationship with the Choice of Court Arrangement.

All views should be submitted on or before September 24, 2018, to the China Law Unit of the Legal Policy Division of the DoJ by mail (5/F, East Wing, Justice Place, 18 Lower Albert Road, Central, Hong Kong), by fax (3918 4799) or by email (rej@doj.gov.hk).

The consultation paper can be accessed on the DoJ's website (www.doj.gov.hk/eng/public/2018ConsultationPaper_LPD.html).

Monetary statistics for June 2018

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

According to statistics published today (July 31) by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, total deposits with authorised institutions edged down by 0.2 per cent in June 2018. Hong Kong-dollar deposits decreased by 0.2 per cent during the month, as the decline in demand and savings deposits exceeded the increase in time deposits. Overall foreign-currency deposits edged down by 0.3 per cent in June. Renminbi deposits in Hong Kong declined by 2.7 per cent to RMB584.5 billion at the end of June. The total remittance of renminbi for cross-border trade settlement amounted to RMB345.7 billion in June, compared with RMB341.6 billion in May.

Total loans and advances rose by 0.9 per cent in June. The loan growth in June 2018 was partly driven by initial public offering (IPO) loans (around HK\$15.3 billion) at end-June. Loan growth in June would have been 0.7 per cent if the IPO loans at end-June were excluded. Among the total, loans for use in Hong Kong (including trade finance) picked up by 1.3 per cent from a month ago while loans for use outside Hong Kong edged down by 0.1 per cent. The Hong Kong-dollar loan-to-deposit ratio went up to 85.4% at the end of June from 83.9 per cent at the end of May, as Hong Kong-dollar loans expanded while Hong Kong-dollar deposits declined.

In the second quarter of 2018, loans for use in Hong Kong (including trade finance) grew by 1.7 per cent following growth of 3.6 per cent in the previous quarter. Analysed by economic use, the increase in loans during the second quarter was mainly driven by loans to financial concerns, loans to manufacturing and residential mortgage loans.

On a seasonally-adjusted basis, Hong Kong-dollar M1 declined by 2.7 per cent in June but expanded by 8.6% year-on-year. Seasonally unadjusted Hong Kong-dollar M3 edged down by 0.2 per cent during the month but rose by 6.3 per cent from a year earlier.

HAD to open temporary night heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department will open 18 temporary night heat shelters tonight (July 31) 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 18 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/Wan Chai –
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

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.