

## [Amendment Regulation to tighten vehicle emission standards gazetted](#)

The Air Pollution Control (Vehicle Design Standards) (Emission) (Amendment) Regulation 2020 was gazetted today (April 24).

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department said that the Amendment Regulation is to tighten the emission standards for first-registered motorcycles to Euro 4 from October 1, 2020, and light buses with a design weight of more than 3.5 tonnes and buses with a design weight of not more than 9 tonnes to Euro VI On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) Phase C from March 1, 2021.

"To improve roadside air quality and protect public health, our standing policy is to tighten the emission standards of first-registered motor vehicles, with reference to international developments and the supply of compliant vehicles to Hong Kong," the spokesman added.

Compared with their Euro V counterparts, Euro VI heavy duty diesel vehicles (including light buses with a design weight of more than 3.5 tonnes and buses with a design weight of not more than 9 tonnes) emit about 80 per cent less nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and 50 per cent less respirable suspended particulates.

In addition, Euro 4 petrol motorcycles emit about 50 per cent less total hydrocarbons (including volatile organic compounds (VOC)) and about 60 per cent less NO<sub>x</sub> from tailpipes in comparison with their Euro 3 counterparts. Control on evaporative emissions of VOC and requirements for the OBD system are also incorporated into Euro 4 standards to further reduce their emissions.

"The Amendment Regulation will help further reduce the emissions of motor vehicles and improve roadside air quality," he said.

The Amendment Regulation will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on April 29. Subject to the approval of the Council, the Amendment Regulation will come into operation on October 1, 2020.

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## [Turnip pudding sample found to contain excessive Bacillus cereus](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 24) announced that a turnip pudding sample was

detected to contain an excessive amount of Bacillus cereus, a pathogen. The CFS is following up on the case.

A CFS spokesman said, "Following up on a food complaint, the CFS collected the abovementioned sample from a retail shop in Wong Tai Sin for testing. The test result showed that the sample contained Bacillus cereus at a level of 140 000 per gram. Under the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains Bacillus cereus at a level of more than 100 000 per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory."

The spokesman said that the CFS had informed the vendor concerned of the unsatisfactory test result, instructed the vendor to stop selling the affected product immediately and conducted an investigation at the production plant. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the vendor and production plant, and requested them to review and improve the food production and storage process and carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

According to Section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), all food available for sale in Hong Kong, locally produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

Bacillus cereus is commonly found in the environment. Unhygienic conditions in food processing and storage may give rise to its growth. Consuming food contaminated with excessive Bacillus cereus or its heat-stable toxins may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting and diarrhoea.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action in order to safeguard public health and food safety.

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## **Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (April 24), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 19 patients (14 male and five female, aged 13 to 88) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 331 patients under isolation currently. So far, 725 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infection have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

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## **Business expectations for second quarter of 2020**

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (April 24) the results of the Quarterly Business Tendency Survey for the second quarter (Q2) of 2020.

### Business situation

For all surveyed sectors taken together, the proportion of respondents expecting their business situation to be worse (44%) in Q2 2020 over Q1 2020 is significantly higher than that expecting it to be better (7%).

When compared with the results of the Q1 2020 survey round, the proportion of respondents expecting a worse business situation in Q2 2020 as compared with the preceding quarter has increased to 44%, against the corresponding proportion of 31% in Q1 2020.

Analysed by sector, respondents in all of the surveyed sectors expect their business situation to be worse on balance in Q2 2020 as compared with Q1 2020. In particular, significantly more respondents in the accommodation and food services; transportation, storage and courier services; import/export trade and wholesale; retail; professional and business services; financing and insurance; and real estate sectors expect their business situation to be worse in Q2 2020 as compared with Q1 2020, relative to those expecting a better business situation.

It should be noted that the results of the survey should be interpreted with care. In this type of survey on expectations, the views collected in the survey are affected by the events in the community occurring around the time of enumeration, and it is difficult to establish precisely the extent to which respondents' perception of the future accords with the underlying trends. The enumeration period for this survey round was from March 3, 2020 to April 17, 2020.

### Volume of business/output

Respondents in almost all of the surveyed sectors expect their volume of business/output to decrease on balance in Q2 2020 as compared with Q1 2020. In particular, significantly more respondents in the accommodation and food services; retail; financing and insurance; import/export trade and wholesale;

transportation, storage and courier services; professional and business services; and real estate sectors expect their volume of business/sales to decrease in Q2 2020 over Q1 2020. On the other hand, slightly more respondents in the information and communications sector expect their volume of business to increase, as compared to those expecting it to decrease.

#### Employment

Respondents in all of the surveyed sectors expect their employment to remain broadly unchanged or to decrease on balance in Q2 2020 as compared with Q1 2020. In particular, significantly more respondents in the accommodation and food services; and retail sectors expect their employment to decrease in Q2 2020 over Q1 2020.

#### Selling price/service charge

Respondents in all of the surveyed sectors expect their selling prices/service charges to remain broadly unchanged or to go down on balance in Q2 2020 as compared with Q1 2020. In particular, significantly more respondents in the construction; and accommodation and food services sectors expect their tender prices/selling prices/services charges to go down in Q2 2020 over Q1 2020.

#### Commentary

A government spokesman said that the severe economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic weighed heavily on the business sentiment among large enterprises. The latest survey indicated that the overall net balance of expected change in business situation was the lowest since the first quarter of 2009, while hiring sentiment was weak across sectors.

The spokesman added that to preserve the vitality of the economy, the Government has rolled out relief measures of unprecedented scale, including the two rounds of measures under the Anti-epidemic Fund and the one-off measures in the 2020-21 Budget totalling \$287.5 billion (around 10% of GDP). The Government will implement the relief measures at full steam to achieve the effect of safeguarding jobs and supporting enterprises, and will monitor the economic and employment situation closely.

#### Further information

The survey gathers views on short-term business performance from the senior management of about 560 prominent establishments in various sectors in Hong Kong with a view to providing a quick reference, with minimum time lag, for predicting the short-term future economic performance of the local economy.

The survey covers 10 major sectors in Hong Kong, namely manufacturing; construction; import/export trade and wholesale; retail; accommodation and food services (mainly covering services rendered by hotels and restaurants); transportation, storage and courier services; information and communications;

financing and insurance; real estate; and professional and business services sectors.

Views collected in the survey refer only to those of respondents on their own establishments rather than those on the respective sectors they are engaged in, and are limited to the expected direction of quarter-to-quarter change (e.g. "up", "same" or "down") but not the magnitude of change. In collecting views on the quarter-to-quarter changes, if the variable in question is subject to seasonal variations, respondents are asked to provide the expected changes after excluding the normal seasonal variations.

Survey results are generally presented as "net balance", i.e. the difference between the percentage of respondents choosing "up" and that choosing "down". The percentage distribution of respondents among various response categories (e.g. "up", "same" and "down") reflects how varied their business expectations are. The "net balance", with its appropriate sign, indicates the direction of expected change in the variable concerned. A positive sign indicates a likely upward trend while a negative sign indicates a likely downward trend. However, the magnitude of the "net balance" reflects only the prevalence of optimism or pessimism, but not the magnitude of expected change, since information relating to such magnitude is not collected in the survey.

Furthermore, owing to sample size constraint, care should be taken in interpreting survey results involving a small percentage (e.g. less than 10%) of respondents in individual sectors.

Chart 1 shows the views on expected changes in business situation for the period Q2 2019 to Q2 2020.

Table 1 shows the net balances of views on expectations in respect of different variables for Q2 2020.

The survey results are published in greater detail in the "Report on Quarterly Business Tendency Survey, Q2 2020". Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp300.jsp?productCode=B1110008](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp300.jsp?productCode=B1110008)).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Business Expectation Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7263 or email: [business-prospects@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:business-prospects@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## **[Granting of banking licence to China](#)**

# Guangfa Bank Co Ltd

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority announced today (April 24) that the Monetary Authority has granted a banking licence to China Guangfa Bank Co Ltd (CGB) under the Banking Ordinance. CGB is incorporated in the Mainland China. The granting of this banking licence takes effect today.

After the granting of a banking licence to CGB, the number of licensed banks in Hong Kong is 163.