

Expansion of e-Stamping services to cover instruments related to stock transactions

The Stamp Duty (Specification of Instruments) (Amendment) Notice 2019 will be gazetted on July 5. It seeks to expand e-Stamping services to cover instruments related to stock transactions with effect from December 16, 2019.

Currently, e-Stamping services are restricted to instruments related to property transactions, namely agreements for sale, assignments and tenancy agreements in general. In order to expand the e-Stamping services to cover instruments related to stock transactions, the Government proposes to amend the Stamp Duty (Specification of Instruments) Notice (Cap 117 sub. leg. B) to allow applications for stamping of the contract notes and instruments of transfer of Hong Kong stock to be made by the public without presenting the original instruments. Upon receipt of the application and payment of stamp duty the system will generate stamp certificates electronically, thereby fulfilling the stamping requirement.

"The proposal will help minimise the risk of losing or damaging the instruments and enhance convenience to applicants, who can submit electronic applications for stamping of instruments related to stock transactions anytime and anywhere," a Government spokesman said.

At present, the stamping arrangements for off-exchange stock transactions are processed manually. After the implementation of the new arrangement, the public may choose to complete the stamping procedures electronically. For on-exchange stock transactions, the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited will continue to collect the stamp duty on behalf of the Collector of Stamp Revenue.

The Amendment Notice will be tabled at the Legislative Council at the first meeting of the 2019/20 legislative session for negative vetting. The proposed effective date for the Amendment Notice will be December 16, 2019, and the e-Stamping services will be expanded to cover instruments related to stock transactions with effect from the same date.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, July 3, 2019 is 105.2 (up 0.2 against yesterday's index).

Phishing emails related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on phishing emails, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on [the HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the emails concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the emails should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

Land Registry releases statistics for June

The Land Registry today (July 3) released its statistics for June 2019.

Land registration

* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in June was 6 211 (-40.0 per cent compared with May and -32.9 per cent compared with June 2018)

* The 12-month moving average for June was 6 317 (3.9 per cent below the 12-month moving average for May and 13.7 per cent below that for June 2018)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in June was \$53.8 billion (-40.4 per cent compared with May and -33.4 per cent compared with June 2018)

* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 4 627 were for residential units (-43.6 per cent compared with May and -31.1 per cent compared with June 2018)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$45.3 billion (-42.2 per cent compared with May and -33.4 per cent compared with June 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 June was 432 182 (-13.1 per cent compared with May and -5.9 per cent compared with June 2018)

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

Results of targeted surveillance on *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in ready-to-eat food all satisfactory

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 3) announced the results of a recently completed targeted food surveillance project on *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in ready-to-eat food. All samples passed the test.

A total of 300 samples of ready-to-eat food, including cooked seafood such as fish, crustaceans and shellfish and raw foods such as raw oysters, sashimi and sushi, were collected from different retailers, including online retailers and food factories, for testing for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* this year.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "*Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, a common

bacterium that can cause food poisoning, is naturally present in seawater and often found in seafood. Food poisoning caused by this pathogenic bacterium is usually associated with consumption of undercooked or raw seafood, in particular shellfish, or improperly handled food that is contaminated with bacteria."

Common symptoms of food poisoning caused by *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, including diarrhoea, vomiting, mild fever and abdominal pain, usually occur within one or two days after consumption of contaminated food. Recovery is usually within a few days. Nonetheless, children, the elderly, pregnant women and those with a weaker immune system are more likely to develop severe symptoms.

The spokesman said, "Despite the fact that the test results of the samples were all satisfactory, the trade and the public should not take the risk lightly. To prevent food poisoning caused by *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, the food trade should be reminded that raw oysters, sashimi and sushi sold on the premises should be separated from other food and kept in a refrigerator at a temperature between 0 and 4 degrees Celsius. To avoid cross contamination, raw food should be prepared only at specified areas in a food preparation room. Exclusive cutting boards and knives should be used and the utensils should be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly before handling different types of raw food. Cooking aquatic products thoroughly is the only way to prevent diseases caused by harmful microorganisms and parasites. Overproduction should also be avoided as the quality of food may be affected when the production capacity is overlooked."

The spokesman reminded consumers to patronise hygienic and reliable licensed food premises and consume ready-to-eat food as soon as possible after purchase. The elderly, children, pregnant women and those with a weaker immune system should avoid consuming high-risk food, including inadequately cooked food.