

LegCo Finance Committee meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Finance Committee (FC) originally scheduled at 3pm tomorrow (January 4) in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex will start at 3.15pm (or an earlier time between 3pm and 3.15pm). If the preceding House Committee meeting ends before 3pm, the FC meeting will start at 3pm.

Land Registry releases statistics for December 2018

The Land Registry today (January 3) released its statistics for December 2018.

Land registration

* The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in December was 3,038 (-23.1 per cent compared with November and -57.6 per cent compared with December 2017)

* The 12-month moving average for December was 6,599 (5.0 per cent below the 12-month moving average for November and 5.5 per cent below that for December 2017)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in December was \$43.0 billion (-0.6 per cent compared with November and -50.3 per cent compared with December 2017)

* Among the sale and purchase agreements, 2,060 were for residential units (-21.8 per cent compared with November and -61.4 per cent compared with December 2017)

* The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$24.1 billion (-7.5 per cent compared with November and -53.7 per cent compared with December 2017)

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 December was 352,901 (-20.4 per cent compared with November and -7.8 per cent compared with December 2017)

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

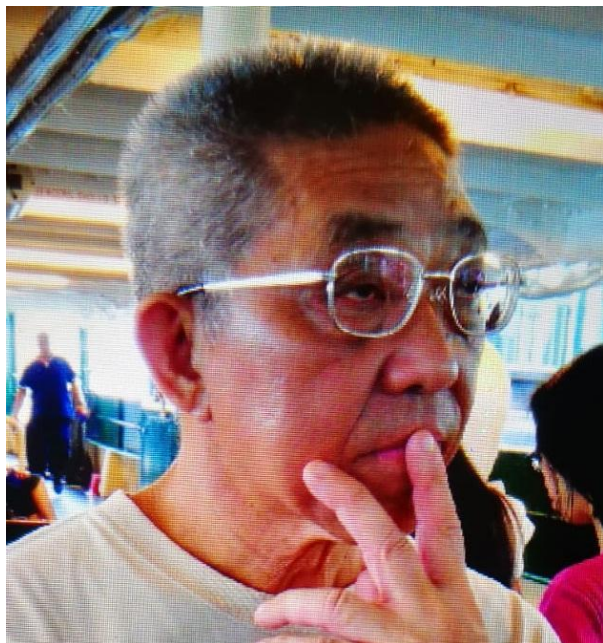
[Appeal for information on missing man in Wong Tai Sin \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (January 3) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Wong Tai Sin.

Wong Yim-shing, aged 65, went missing after he was last seen on Fung Tak Road yesterday (January 2) afternoon. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.6 metres tall, 63 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a round face with yellow complexion and short straight grey hair. He was last seen wearing gold-rimmed glasses, a grey jacket, a green long-sleeved T-shirt, dark trousers and dark slippers.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Kowloon East on 3661 0316 or 9020 2746 or email to rmpu-ke-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



Over 650 datasets to be released in first year of government open data plans

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer announced today (January 3) that over 80 government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) had published their first annual open data plans before the end of 2018. Over 650 new datasets will be released in 2019 via the Public Sector Information (PSI) Portal (data.gov.hk) for free viewing and use by the public.

In her first Policy Address, the Chief Executive outlined eight major areas for innovation and technology development. One of these areas is opening up government data to provide raw materials for technology research, innovation and smart city development. The Steering Committee on Innovation and Technology personally chaired by the Chief Executive subsequently firmed up in September 2018 a new policy on opening up government data. The Government Chief Information Officer, Mr Victor Lam, said, "Under the new policy, B/Ds should endeavour to release their data for free public use on the PSI Portal, unless there are justifiable reasons such as involvement of personal privacy. B/Ds should also explore with public and commercial organisations to come up with measures in opening up data with a high degree of public interest."

Open data provides raw materials for technology research and city innovation. Members of the public can browse, download, distribute, reproduce, print and hyperlink all datasets disseminated via the PSI Portal free of charge, for both commercial and non-commercial uses.

"Over 650 new datasets will be opened up in the first year. By the end of 2019, the number of datasets on the PSI Portal will be increased from around 3 300 to close to 4 000 in total, an increase of about 20 per cent," Mr Lam added.

The new datasets cover different areas, including data related to the economy and livelihood, real-time meteorological data, geospatial data, digital maps that can facilitate smart city development, and data that can enhance city management.

To enhance the usability of data, all datasets on the PSI Portal follow international practices and are released in machine-readable formats commonly used by the industry, such as JSON, XML and CSV. The datasets are also annotated with appropriate data descriptions for easy understanding by the public and facilitating search through search engines. Other measures include retaining historical data, encouraging B/Ds to provide geospatial data, providing more Application Programming Interfaces and updating data in a timely manner.

A dedicated feedback form has been provided on the websites of B/Ds and the PSI Portal to allow the public to provide comments and suggestions at any time on the annual open data plans and applications of data.

The annual open data plans of B/Ds can be found on their respective websites and a full list of the plans is available on the PSI Portal.

HA to consider Budget for 2019-20

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

The Finance Committee (FC) of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) held a meeting today (January 3) on the HA's proposed budgets and forecasts for the period 2018-19 to 2022-23. After the meeting, the FC Chairman, Professor Chan Ka-lok, said, "The HA is projected to have the necessary financial resources to meet its recurrent expenditure and implement its current public housing construction programme and maintenance programme in the budget and forecast period."

On the basis of the prevailing assumptions, the cash and investment balance of the HA is projected to decrease slightly from about \$45 billion at the beginning of April 2018 to about \$41 billion by the end of March 2023.

"If and when there are changes to any of the assumptions, the projected financial position will be different. In the face of the upcoming uncertainties, the HA will have to remain vigilant and exercise prudent

financial control, to ensure that public funds will continue to be used in the most cost-effective manner. According to the established mechanism, the HA will conduct the annual rolling five-year budgeting process and assess its financial position and future funding requirements," Professor Chan added.

Based on the Long Term Housing Strategy Annual Progress Report 2018 announced by the Government last month, the public housing supply target for the 10-year period from 2019-20 to 2028-29 will be 315 000 units, which represents an increase of 35 000 flats compared to the public housing supply target announced in 2017. The relevant financial implications will be reflected in the annual rolling five-year budgets as appropriate.

To achieve the public housing supply target, the Government stands ready to increase spending on public housing and has set aside about \$82.4 billion as the Housing Reserve to provide financial support to the HA.

Today, the FC endorsed the Revised Budget for 2018-19 and the Proposed Budget for 2019-20. The FC has also noted the Financial Forecasts for 2020-21 to 2022-23.

The HA meeting will examine the Budget on January 25.