

Hong Kong Immigration Department wins Radiant Pioneer Award (with photo)

The Smart Departure, a self-service departure for visitors to Hong Kong, of the Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) has won the Radiant Pioneer Award from the Asia Pacific Smart Card Association (APSCA). The Award aims to recognise pioneering applications of smart technology in public sector identity schemes for the provision of quality services to visitors. The trophy was received during a presentation ceremony yesterday (December 12) at the 5th Border Management and Identity Conference in Bangkok, Thailand.

ImmD first launched the Smart Departure at Hong Kong International Airport on October 10, 2017, and the service was extended to other control points on December 18, 2017. By employing face recognition technology for identity verification, Smart Departure facilitates self-service departure for eligible visitors without the need of prior enrolment. It has been providing greater travel convenience for visitors while enhancing the effectiveness of immigration control.

ImmD extends its gratitude to APSCA for presenting the award to the Smart Departure and its recognition for the innovation of ImmD. In the future, ImmD will continue its efforts on introducing state of the art technologies and providing quality services to passengers.



Sample of frozen ling fillet detected with mercury exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (December 13) that a sample of frozen ling fillet imported from New Zealand was found to contain a metal contaminant, mercury, at a level exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the abovementioned sample at import level for testing under its routine Food Surveillance

Programme. The test result showed that it contained mercury at a level of 2.84 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 0.5 ppm."

The spokesman said the CFS had informed the importer concerned of the irregularity and is tracing the source and distribution of the affected product.

"Mercury may affect the nervous system, particularly the developing brain. At high levels, mercury can affect foetal brain development, and affect vision, hearing, muscle co-ordination and memory in adults. Furthermore, as some international organisations such as the World Health Organization have pointed out, consuming predatory fish species is the main source of mercury intake for human beings. The report of the CFS' Total Diet Study has also pointed out that large fish or predatory fish species may contain high mercury levels (for example, tuna, alfonso, shark, swordfish, marlin, orange roughy and king mackerel). Hence, groups particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of mercury, such as pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and young children, should opt for fish that are smaller in size for consumption and avoid consumption of the above-mentioned types of fish which may contain high mercury levels to minimise the health risk posed to the foetus, infants and young children by excessive exposure to metal contaminants in food," he added.

According to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations (Cap 132V), any person who sells food with metallic contamination above the legal limit may be prosecuted and is liable upon conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

"People are advised to maintain a balanced and varied diet. To avoid health risks posed by excessive intake of metallic contaminants, pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and young children should avoid eating large or predatory fish," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.

Labour Department investigates fatal work accident in Sham Shui Po

The Labour Department (LD) is investigating a fatal work accident at Un Chau Street in Sham Shui Po this afternoon (December 13), in which a man died.

The LD has immediately deployed staff to the scene upon receiving a report of the accident, and is now conducting an investigation to look into its cause.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected dangerous drugs (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (December 12) seized about 3.8 kilograms of suspected heroin and 6 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine with an estimated total market value of about \$5.9 million at Hong Kong International Airport.

A male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yesterday afternoon. Upon examination of the luggage of the male passenger, the suspected heroin and the suspected methamphetamine were found inside. The man was then arrested.

The arrested man, aged 23, has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. He will appear at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (December 14).

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

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



First successful prosecution of beauty parlour female staff member engaging

in bait and switch practice

A female staff member of a beauty parlour was sentenced to 120 hours of community service today (December 13) at Eastern Magistrates' Courts for engaging in a bait and switch commercial practice, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). This is the first successful prosecution against the beauty service industry involving the practice of bait and switch.

Hong Kong Customs earlier received information alleging that a female staff member of a beauty parlour was suspected of engaging in unfair trade practices in the sale of beauty treatment services.

After investigation, it was found that the beauty parlour had sold online a beauty treatment service at a specified price. Later when a consumer approached the beauty parlour with the voucher purchased online to redeem the beauty treatment, the female staff member promoted other beauty treatments to the consumer and refused to provide the beauty treatment service specified on the voucher.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TDO and consumers to procure services at reputable shops.

Under the TDO, any trader who offers a service for purchase at a specified price but subsequently, with the intention of promoting a different service, refuses to deliver the service within a reasonable time commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

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