

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, September 13, 2018 is 104.3 (down 0.4 against yesterday's index).

Shek O Beach temporarily closed

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (September 13) that Shek O Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island, is temporarily closed until further notice for maintenance of the shark prevention net. The red flag has been hoisted at the beach. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach. The red flag was hoisted earlier due to big waves.

LD invites entries for 20th Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme

Members of the construction industry are invited to enrol in the Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme 2018/2019, which was launched today (September 13) by the Labour Department (LD) together with 15 co-organisers including the Occupational Safety and Health Council, the Development Bureau, the Hong Kong Housing Authority and various organisations from the construction industry.

An LD spokesman said, "The scheme, rolled out in 1999, aims to raise the occupational safety and health (OSH) awareness of relevant stakeholders, foster a positive safety culture, encourage the adoption of safe work practices, and award contractors, site personnel and front-line workers in the construction industry for their good OSH performance.

"With the concerted efforts of stakeholders over the years, there has been notable continual improvement in the safety performance of the local

construction industry in recent years. The number of industrial accidents and the accident rate per 1 000 workers in the construction industry were reduced from 14 078 and 198.4 in 1999 to 3 902 and 32.9 in 2017, representing significant drops of 72.3 per cent and 83.4 per cent respectively."

The spokesman added, "However, there's no room for complacency. We must continue to improve. The construction industry is a high-risk industry, with the accident figure being the second highest among all industries behind the food and beverage services industry. In 2017, 35.2 per cent of industrial accidents and 75.9 per cent of fatal cases occurred on construction sites, accounting for the bulk of industrial fatalities."

To keep stakeholders in the construction industry alert to work safety to further reduce the accident toll, the department has again worked with the Occupational Safety and Health Council, the Development Bureau, the Hong Kong Housing Authority, the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board, the Construction Industry Council, the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board, the Hong Kong Housing Society, the Hong Kong Construction Association, the Hong Kong General Building Contractors Association, the Hong Kong Construction Sub-contractors Association, the Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors Limited, the Minor Works Contractor Association, the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies, the Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees General Union and the Federation of Hong Kong Electrical and Mechanical Industries Trade Unions to launch the scheme this year.

All construction contractors, sub-contractors and site personnel in Hong Kong are invited to compete for the awards, provided they have no records of serious or fatal accidents and have not received any suspension notices served by the LD in the 12 months preceding the enrolment deadline.

The scheme is divided into three main categories: Construction Sites, Safety Teams and Safe Workers. Entries for the Construction Sites category will be divided into eight sub-categories, namely Building Sites (Public Sector); Building Sites (Private Sector); Civil Engineering Sites; Renovation and Maintenance Works; Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works; Building Sites – Sub-contractors; Civil Engineering Sites – Sub-contractors; and Renovation and Maintenance Works – Sub-contractors.

For each of the eight sub-categories under the Construction Sites category, and the Safety Teams category, there will be a gold prize, a silver prize, a bronze prize and a meritorious prize. For the Safe Workers category, each Safe Worker will be presented with a cash coupon, a certificate and a badge.

In addition, every eligible entry in the Construction Sites category can automatically compete for the Outstanding Performance in Work-at-height Safety prize in its respective sub-category, which is to encourage contractors to take more effective safety measures for work-at-height activities, and recognise their outstanding safety performance in that area.

A new award, namely the Most Active Participating Construction Sites,

has been introduced this year to engage principal contractors to encourage their sub-contractors' participation in the competition. The award will be available in three sub-categories under the Construction Sites category, namely Building Sites (Public Sector), Building Sites (Private Sector) and Civil Engineering Sites. It will be presented to the principal contractors with the highest number of sub-contractor contestants in each sub-category with good safety performance. In addition, the eligibility for the Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works sub-category has also been relaxed to encourage contractors in that sub-category to participate in the competition.

To encourage participation from the industry, certificates of good performance will be awarded to entries in each sub-category other than Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works under the Construction Sites category and the Safety Teams category which have undergone the final assessment but failed to win any prizes, provided that their performance reaches the standard set by the judging panel. For entries in the Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works sub-category similarly failing to get any prizes, cash coupons in addition to certificates of appreciation will be given to encourage participation of small and medium-sized contractors engaged in renovation and maintenance works.

The closing date for entries for the Construction Sites and Safety Teams categories is October 3. The assessment criteria will cover various aspects concerning the physical site conditions and the safety management systems. Selection of Safe Workers will be conducted when the assessment teams are performing physical site assessments. The assessment this year will focus on work at height/work above ground, scaffolding, confined space, lifting appliance and lifting operations, and electrical installation and application. The results will be announced in March next year.

Enrolment forms with entry requirements can be obtained from offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the LD (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/tele/od.htm). They can also be downloaded from the LD's website (www.labour.gov.hk). Enquiries can be made on 2852 3565.

In addition, the scheme will feature a number of promotional activities, including a safety quiz competition to enhance the OSH awareness of the industry and the public. The quiz competition is divided into Individual and Group categories. Citizens aged 15 or above and construction-related organisations are welcome to join. Enrolment will start on October 4, from which application forms can be obtained from offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch or downloaded from the LD's website. The deadline for enrolment is October 31.

Announcement by Independent Review Committee on Hong Kong's Franchised Bus Service on Typhoon and Rainstorm Warning Arrangements for Hearings

The following is issued on behalf of the Independent Review Committee on Hong Kong's Franchised Bus Service (the Committee):

Unless directed otherwise by the Committee, the following arrangements for the scheduled hearings to receive oral evidence from invited parties will be adopted if Tropical Cyclone Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is hoisted or cancelled:

1. If the signal is lowered or cancelled before or at 6am, the hearing will be held at the scheduled time in the morning.
2. If the signal is lowered or cancelled between 6am and 11am, the scheduled hearing will be held at 2.30pm in the afternoon.
3. If the signal is lowered or cancelled after 11am or remains in force throughout the hearing day, no hearing will be held for that day.
4. If the signal is hoisted during a hearing session, the hearing will be adjourned immediately.

When Tropical Cyclone Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is hoisted or cancelled, any public announcement by the Committee on the hearing arrangements will be issued via the Government's Information Services Department and available on the Government's Press Releases webpage as well as the Committee's website for public access. In addition, announcements about the adjournment of the hearing will be made on radio and television.

If any scheduled hearing is cancelled or adjourned, the Committee will announce the arrangements for resuming the hearing and inform the parties concerned separately.

For enquiries, please contact the Secretariat of the Committee at 2867 5324.

SEN attends C40 Steering Committee meeting and Cities4Climate conference (with photos)

The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, today (September 12, San Francisco time) attended the Cities4Climate conference, an affiliate event of the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS), in San Francisco, the United States. At the session entitled "In Conversation: Where Equity Meets Sustainability", Mr Wong introduced Hong Kong's work in combating climate change, including the challenges faced in the city's compact environment and the opportunities arising from it.

Before attending the conference, Mr Wong participated in the Steering Committee meeting of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group to update mayors and officials of other cities on the latest developments of climate actions in Hong Kong.

In the afternoon, Mr Wong was interviewed by the media to explain Hong Kong's work on combating climate change and promoting green buildings.

Afterwards, he attended two receptions hosted by the GCAS Chinese delegation and Bloomberg Philanthropies respectively.

Mr Wong will participate in the opening plenary of the GCAS tomorrow morning (September 13, San Francisco time).



