

## Exchange Fund Bills tender results

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

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:

Tender date	: August 19, 2024
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: M2407
Issue date	: August 20, 2024
Maturity date	: September 19, 2024
Amount applied	: HK\$1,800 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$600 MN
Average yield accepted	: 3.89 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 3.89 PCT
Pro rata ratio*	: About 100 PCT
Average tender yield	: 3.96 PCT

\*"Pro rata ratio" refers to the average percentage of allotment with respect to each tender participant's tendered amount at the "highest yield accepted" level.

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## Update on cluster of Candida auris cases in Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on Candida auris carrier cases, the spokesperson for Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital (HKBH) gave the following update today (August 19):

One more patient, a 86-year-old male in the medicine and geriatrics ward of HKBH, was confirmed to carry Candida auris without signs of infection. The patient was discharged earlier.

The hospital will continue the contact tracing investigation of close contacts of the patient in accordance with the prevailing guidelines. A series of enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted to prevent the spread of Candida auris:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. Enhanced patient and environmental screening procedures; and
3. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients.

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation. The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

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## **Fraudulent website and phishing emails related to Dah Sing Bank, 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 Dah Sing Bank, Limited relating to a fraudulent website and phishing emails, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the website or emails concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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## **Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 19) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From August 11 to 17, the CHP recorded two community-acquired LD cases:

1. A male patient, aged 59 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Wong Tai Sin District; and
2. A female patient, aged 78 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Sai Kung District.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of August 17, 68 LD cases had been recorded this year. In 2023 and 2022, there were 121 and 80 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

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â€‹The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the

manufacturer;

- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

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## Composite Interest Rate: End of July 2024

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (August 19) the composite interest rate at the end of July 2024 (Note 1).

The composite interest rate, which is a measure of the average cost of funds of banks, decreased by 4 basis points to 2.58 per cent at the end of July 2024, from 2.62 per cent at the end of June 2024 (see Chart 1 in the Annex). The decrease in composite interest rate mainly reflected the decrease in the weighted funding cost for deposits during the month (see Chart 2 in

the Annex) (Note 2).

The historical data of the composite interest rate from the end of the fourth quarter of 2003 to the end of July 2024 are available in the Monthly Statistical Bulletin on the HKMA website ([www.hkma.gov.hk](http://www.hkma.gov.hk)).

Note 1: The composite interest rate is a weighted average interest rate of all Hong Kong dollar interest-rate-sensitive liabilities, which include deposits from customers, amounts due to banks, negotiable certificates of deposit and other debt instruments, and all other liabilities that do not involve any formal payment of interest but the values of which are sensitive to interest rate movements (such as Hong Kong dollar non-interest bearing demand deposits) on the books of banks. Data from retail banks, which account for about 90 per cent of the total customers' deposits in the banking sector, are used in the calculation. It should be noted that the composite interest rate represents only average interest expenses. There are various other costs involved in the making of a loan, such as operating costs (e.g. staff and rental expenses), credit cost and hedging cost, which are not covered by the composite interest rate.

Note 2: Since June 2019, the composite interest rate and weighted deposit rate have been calculated based on the new local "Interest rate risk in the banking book" (IRRBB) framework. As such, these figures are not strictly comparable with those of previous months.