

# Update on dengue fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 2) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From July 26 to yesterday (August 1), the CHP recorded two imported DF cases; the patients had been to India and Indonesia respectively during the incubation periods.

As of yesterday, 40 cases of DF, including 37 imported and three local cases, had been recorded in 2024. In 2023, 62 imported cases of DF were recorded.

According to the World Health Organization, the global incidence of DF has markedly increased over the past two decades, posing a substantial public health challenge. In 2023, ongoing transmissions, combined with an unexpected spike in DF cases, had resulted in close to a historic high of over 6.5 million cases, and more than 7 300 dengue-related deaths reported in over 80 countries/territories. The latest surveillance data shows that there is an increase in DF cases noted in some places in Asia (such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) compared to the same period last year. Since the beginning of 2024, the Americas, including Brazil, Argentina and Peru, have recorded over 10 million cases, a record number. Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong, as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas, has been uploaded to the CHP website ([www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df\\_imported\\_cases\\_and\\_overseas\\_figures\\_eng.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf)).

"Apart from general measures, travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to a doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers, and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor

activities.

â€‹DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children\*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Reapply only when needed and follow the instructions.

\* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

â€‹The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

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## [Communications Authority grants consent to HKT to cease its 2G services](#)

The Office of the Communications Authority announced today (August 2) the Communications Authority (CA)'s decision to grant prior consent to Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited (HKT) for its application to cease the provision of second generation mobile (2G) services on November 8 this year.

Having considered various relevant factors, the CA approved the application pursuant to Special Condition 10.4 of HKT's Unified Carrier Licence. These include no further offering of 2G service plans by HKT to any customers, the very low proportion of customers affected (those who are still using 2G handsets/devices for connection to HKT's network), and HKT's provision of support services for the affected customers such as offers to replace handsets/devices. For customers who choose not to replace their handsets/devices, HKT has made reasonable service termination arrangements and provided them with sufficient advance notification and customer service support. Moreover, the CA has required HKT to maintain satisfactory 2G services until the scheduled service cessation date.

Affected customers may refer to the relevant [press release](#) issued by HKT today or contact HKT for details of the arrangements. They may also consider replacing their handsets/devices to experience better service quality and more advanced and diverse features provided by the newer generations of mobile services.

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## Provisional statistics of restaurant receipts and purchases for second quarter of 2024

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest provisional figures on restaurant receipts and purchases today (August 2).

The value of total receipts of the restaurants sector in the second quarter of 2024, provisionally estimated at \$26.9 billion, decreased by 2.1% over a year earlier. Over the same period, the provisional estimate of the value of total purchases by restaurants decreased by 4.0% to \$8.5 billion.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total restaurant receipts decreased by 4.6% in the second quarter of 2024 compared with a year earlier.

Analysed by type of restaurant and comparing the second quarter of 2024 with the second quarter of 2023, total receipts of Chinese restaurants decreased by 7.3% in value and 10.0% in volume. Total receipts of non-Chinese restaurants decreased by 3.0% in value and 4.6% in volume. Total receipts of fast food shops increased by 7.9% in value and 4.7% in volume. Total receipts of bars decreased by 6.7% in value and 9.7% in volume. As for miscellaneous eating and drinking places, total receipts increased by 0.3% in value, but decreased by 3.3% in volume.

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of total restaurant receipts decreased by 2.8% in value, but increased by 2.1% in volume in the second quarter of 2024 compared with the preceding quarter.

Comparing the first half of 2024 with the same period in 2023, total restaurant receipts increased by 0.1% in value but decreased by 2.7% in volume.

To facilitate further understanding of the short-term business performance of the restaurants sector, statistics in respect of the restaurant receipts and purchases in individual months of the reference quarter are also compiled.

Analysed by month, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total receipts of the restaurants sector decreased by 3.1%, 1.7% and 1.5% respectively in April, May and June 2024, compared with the corresponding months in 2023.

After discounting the effect of price changes, it was provisionally estimated that the volume of total restaurant receipts decreased by 5.7%, 4.3% and 3.8% respectively in April, May and June 2024, compared with the corresponding months in 2023.

#### Commentary

A Government spokesman said that the value of total restaurant receipts decreased by 2.1% in the second quarter of 2024 from a year earlier, amid the changing consumption patterns of visitors and residents. Yet, after discounting the effects of price changes and seasonal factors, total restaurant receipts bounced back by 2.1% over the preceding quarter in volume terms, indicating that the sector's performance has stabilised somewhat.

Looking ahead, the business performance of restaurants should still face pressure in the near term. Nonetheless, continued growth of the economy, rising employment earnings, and the SAR Government's strenuous efforts to promote a mega event economy and boost market sentiment would help support the business of restaurants.

#### Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures of restaurant receipts by type of restaurant and total purchases by the restaurants sector for the first quarter of 2024 as well as the provisional figures for the second quarter of 2024.

Table 2 and Table 3 present the revised value and volume indices respectively of restaurant receipts by type of restaurant for the first quarter of 2024 and the provisional indices for the second quarter of 2024.

Table 4 presents the year-on-year rate of change in total restaurant receipts in value and volume terms based on the original quarterly series, as well as the quarter-to-quarter rate of change based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The revised figures on restaurant receipts and purchases for the second quarter of 2024 (with breakdown by month) will be released through the website of C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode540.html](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode540.html)) and relevant publications of the Department from September 20, 2024.

The classification of restaurants follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Quarterly Survey of Restaurant Receipts and Purchases". Users can browse and download the

publication at the website of the C&SD  
([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080002&scode=540](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080002&scode=540)).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of C&SD (Tel: 3903 7401; e-mail: [qsr@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:qsr@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## **Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan**

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on August 1 to noon today (August 2), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 211 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" ([www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme\\_rafs/programme\\_rafs\\_fc\\_01\\_30\\_Nuclear\\_Event\\_and\\_Food\\_Safety.html](http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html)).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website ([www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological\\_testing/Radiological\\_Test.html](http://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html)).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website ([www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html](http://www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html)).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 73 067 samples of food imported from Japan (including 46 924 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 17 096 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

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## Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (August 2) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Nineteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), and 21 as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Repulse Bay Beach*
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Shek O Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	South Bay Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	St. Stephen's Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Kiu Tsui Beach	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Kwun Yam Beach	Trio Beach
Lido Beach*	Turtle Cove Beach
Lo So Shing Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach
Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*	Golden Beach*
Approach Beach	Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Big Wave Bay Beach*	Kadoorie Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Cafeteria New Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Cafeteria Old Beach	Pui O Beach*

Casam Beach*	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Castle Peak Beach	Silverstrand Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Ting Kau Beach*
Deep Water Bay Beach*	Tong Fuk Beach
Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach	

Compared with the grading released last week, Deep Water Bay Beach, Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach and Silverstrand Beach have been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality ([www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach)) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: [www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp](http://www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp)) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page ([www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast](http://www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast)) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Note 1: Lifesaving services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 21 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (\*) above, from June 1. Due to the damage caused to the footpaths leading to Chung Hom Kok Beach by landslides, the beach is temporarily closed until further notice. For details, please refer to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department's Special Announcement ([www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html](http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html)).

Note 2: This refers to Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach which is a non-gazetted beach that has no lifesaving service.