

[EPD successfully intercepts case of illegal import of waste plastics by sea \(with photos\)](#)

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) successfully intercepted earlier a case of illegally imported regulated waste plastics from Germany at the COSCO-HIT Container Terminals. The importer involved, namely CK Environmental Technology Limited, was convicted and fined a total of \$5,800 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (May 3) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO).

Concern about transboundary movement of waste plastics has been growing in international society and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (BC), which regulates the global transboundary movements of waste plastics, adopted an amendment passed at the Conference of the Parties in May 2019, regulating the transboundary movement of designated types of waste plastics from January 1, 2021, including mixed, contaminated waste plastics or those not able to be recovered in an environmentally sound manner (together regarded as "regulated waste plastics"). Following amendments to the BC, the EPD enhanced the import and export control of waste plastics in Hong Kong from January 1, 2021, through the WDO. Any person who imports, exports or re-exports regulated waste plastics into, from or via Hong Kong must apply for the relevant waste import/export permit in accordance with the WDO or obtain consent from the EPD in advance. As for importing, exporting or re-exporting non-regulated waste plastics into, from or via Hong Kong, a declaration form and relevant documents should be submitted to the EPD in advance for record purposes. This is to prove that the planned transboundary movement of waste plastics is not subject to the control under the BC.

In October 2021, the EPD investigated and identified a suspicious case claiming to import recycled waste plastics, and thus jointly intercepted the container concerned with the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED), and found about 20 tonnes of mixed waste plastics belonging to the category of regulated waste plastics. As no import/export permit nor consent had been obtained from the EPD for the intercepted regulated waste plastics, the EPD immediately repatriated all the waste plastics to the place of origin and notified the local enforcement authorities concerned about the return shipments for their follow-up. The EPD also instituted prosecution against the importer involved under the WDO.

A spokesman for the EPD said that waste mixed with a large amount of different types of waste plastics will affect the recycling process and the quality of recyclables. Waste generated during the recycling process would take up the limited landfill space in Hong Kong. Improper handling of the waste would also pollute the environment. The EPD will continue to enhance the intelligence exchange and risk analysis with overseas enforcement

authorities, and work with the C&ED to inspect suspicious containers to combat such illegal import activities involving regulated waste plastics.

The spokesman reminded importers and exporters of the waste recycling trade not to illegally import (including import into or transshipment through Hong Kong) or export regulated waste plastics. According to the WDO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. For subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The EPD has issued guidelines on the import and export control of waste plastics for reference of members of the public and the trade. The guidelines can be downloaded from the EPD's website:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/sites/default/files/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/files/WastePlastics_Guidelines_eng.pdf.



[Appeal for information on missing woman in Tin Sum \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (May 3) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Tin Sum.

Evi Noviyanti, aged 28, went missing after she left her residence in Mei Tin Estate on May 1 afternoon. Her employer made a report to Police on the same day.

She is about 1.5 metres tall, 69 kilograms in weight and of fat build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and long black hair. She was last seen wearing a blue sweater, a white T-shirt, black trousers and white sport shoes.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories

South on 3661 1174 or 6674 8459 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



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Survey on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)' Credit Conditions for First Quarter 2022

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) published today (May 3) the results of Survey on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)' Credit Conditions for the first quarter of 2022.

Regarding SMEs' perception of banks' credit approval stance relative to six months ago, excluding respondents who answered "no idea/don't know", 75 per cent perceived similar or easier credit approval stance in the first quarter of 2022, compared with 87 per cent in the previous quarter. 25 per cent perceived more difficult credit approval stance, compared with 13 per cent in the previous quarter (Chart 1 in the Annex). The perception of more difficult credit approval stance may not necessarily reflect actual difficulties faced by SMEs in obtaining bank credit as the perception could be affected by a number of factors, such as media/news reports, business conditions and opinions of relatives and friends.

Of respondents with existing credit lines, 92 per cent reported that banks' stance on existing credit lines was easier or unchanged in the first quarter of 2022, compared with 95 per cent in the previous quarter (Chart 2 in the Annex). 8 per cent of the respondents reported tighter banks' stance on existing credit lines, compared with 5 per cent in the previous quarter. In this survey, tighter stance on existing credit lines denotes a range of

possible measures or arrangements, such as reducing unused and used credit lines, raising the interest rate, imposing additional collateral requirements, or shortening loan tenor. Therefore, respondents' indication of banks' stance on existing credit lines may not directly reflect banks' supply of credit to SMEs.

The survey also gauged the results of new credit applications from SMEs. 6 per cent of the respondents reported that they had applied for new bank credit during the first quarter of 2022. Among the respondents who had already known their application outcomes, 87 per cent reported fully or partially successful applications, compared with 92 per cent in the previous quarter (Chart 3 in the Annex). 13 per cent reported unsuccessful applications, compared with 8 per cent in the previous quarter.

Owing to small sample sizes of SMEs with existing credit lines (24 per cent of surveyed SMEs) and with new credit applications (6 per cent of surveyed SMEs) during the quarter, the results could be prone to large fluctuations, and hence should be interpreted with care.

About Survey on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)' Credit Conditions

In light of the importance of SMEs to the Hong Kong economy and concerns about potential funding difficulties facing SMEs over the past few years, the HKMA has appointed the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) to carry out this survey, starting from the third quarter of 2016. This survey is conducted on a quarterly basis, covering about 2 500 SMEs from different economic sectors each time. The results of this survey can help monitor the development of SMEs' access to bank credit from a demand-side perspective.

The results of this survey should be interpreted with caution. Similar to other opinion surveys, views collected in this survey may be affected by changes in sentiment due to idiosyncratic events that occurred over the survey period, which can make the results prone to fluctuations. Readers are advised to interpret the results together with other economic and financial information. In addition, views collected are limited to the expected direction of inter-quarter changes (e.g. "tighter", "no change" or "easier") without providing information about the magnitude of these changes.

Detailed tables and technical information of this survey are published on the website of the HKPC (smecc.hkpc.org).

Public hospitals resume special visiting arrangement in phases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for the Hospital Authority (HA) announced today (May 3) that 26 public hospitals will resume special visiting arrangement in non-acute wards and units starting from Friday (May 6) (See details in the Appendix).

The HA spokesperson said, "The HA understands the wish of relatives to visit patients. Having considered the latest stabilised epidemic situation, the HA has decided to resume the special visiting arrangement in phases. The first phase will cover the non-acute wards and units of 26 hospitals."

One to two visits by one registered visitor will be arranged for each patient every week, with a one hour duration for each visit. Changing of visitors is not allowed within the visit. Hospital staff will contact relatives for appointments. Relatives are not required to call the hospital for booking. Visitors must have completed two doses of COVID-19 vaccination for at least 14 days, and provide either a nucleic acid test negative result obtained within 48 hours or a rapid antigen test negative result obtained within 24 hours.

Visitors who recovered from COVID-19 within three months (starting from the 14th day after receiving confirmation of infection) will be exempted from both the testing and vaccination requirements. Visitors are required to provide proof of infection and recovery to healthcare workers. Moreover, visitors need to complete the health declaration form found in the HA webpage or the mobile app "HA Go" 24 hours before the visit and show the QR code generated by the system to ward staff.

All visitors entering public hospitals are required to comply with infection control measures, such as wearing surgical masks, temperature checking and filling in health declaration forms. Moreover, visitors are also required to observe the requirement of the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code when entering public hospitals.

The HA spokesperson added, "The HA will review the arrangement with due consideration to the latest epidemic situation and will further extend the arrangement to other hospitals and wards if the situation allows. The HA hopes that the community can understand that visiting arrangements can only be made with certain restrictions under the current epidemic situation. Other hospitals and wards will continue to facilitate compassionate visiting arrangements or video visiting as far as practicable."