

The Launch of Faster Payment System

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced the launch of the Faster Payment System (FPS) today (September 17).

The FPS is one of the seven initiatives announced by the HKMA in September 2017 for preparing Hong Kong to move into a new era of Smart Banking. The FPS operates on a round-the-clock basis and connects banks and stored-value facility (SVF) operators on the same platform. It enables the public to transfer funds anytime, anywhere, across different banks or SVFs with funds available almost immediately. Fund transfer will become very user-friendly with the use of mobile number or email address as account proxy for the payee. In addition to the Hong Kong Dollar (HKD), the FPS also supports Renminbi (RMB) payments.

The Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Norman Chan, said, "The FPS is a unique platform as it supports instant payments in the HKD and the RMB with the use of mobile phone numbers, email addresses or Quick Response codes (QR code), and achieves full connectivity among banks and SVF accounts. It makes retail fund transfers and payments much quicker and easier. The launch of the FPS signifies the payment system, which forms the core part of the Hong Kong's financial infrastructure, will enter into a new era. While it will bring new opportunities to the retail payment industry, it will also promote innovation in financial technology, providing greater convenience and new experience to the public."

Starting from today, the public can make use of the mobile app of participating banks and SVFs to register their mobile phone number or email address with the FPS as an account proxy for receiving funds. And from September 30, the public can make transfers or receive funds using the FPS. Currently, a total of 21 banks (including most retail banks) and 10 SVFs in Hong Kong have participated in the system to provide FPS services for their customers at launch (see Annex for the list).

Similar to the HKD Clearing House Automated Transfer System (CHATS) and RMB CHATS, the HKD FPS and RMB FPS are subject to the HKMA's oversight under the Payment Systems and Stored Value Facilities Ordinance (PSSVFO). The PSSVFO also provides statutory backing to the finality of settlement for transactions made through the HKD FPS and RMB FPS by protecting the settlement finality from insolvency laws or any other laws.

In addition, to promote the adoption of QR code payments in Hong Kong, the HKMA announced the Common QR Code Standard for Retail Payments in Hong Kong together with the launch of an associated mobile application tool. A free mobile application tool, namely "Hong Kong Common QR Code" (HKQR), is released today, which can be used for converting multiple QR codes from different payment service providers into a single, combined QR code. This

would facilitate merchants, especially small and medium enterprises, in using a single QR code to accept different payment schemes, instead of displaying multiple QR codes to their customers. The HKQR mobile application is available for download from Google Play Store and Apple App Store from today.

The public may contact their banks or SVF operators for more details of the FPS service as well as the common QR code. More information of the FPS and the Common QR Code can be found in the website www.hkma.gov.hk/fps.