



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
NT Land Exchange Entitlements (Redemption) Bill gazetted .....	1
Residential mortgage survey results for April .....	2
Promotion of administrative grade officers announced .....	7
Appointment of High Court Judge .....	8
Yeung Hoi-keung's case being considered .....	8
Residential Care Homes Regulation amendment gazetted .....	9
Fees and charges for trade licences to be revised .....	9
Procedures of compensation claim explained .....	12
Animals and plants fees revised .....	13
Licensing fees on animals and birds to be increased .....	14
Minimum credit rating to qualify for tax concession .....	15
Bridging course for students .....	16
Provisional statistics of retail sales for March .....	17

/Sewage facilities .....

**Contents**

**Page No.**

Sewage facilities to be upgraded .....	20
Wong Tai Sin stairway covers completed .....	21
Draft So Kwun Wat development plan approved .....	21
Prequalification invited for Heritage Museum project .....	22
Vigorous training for proficient fire-fighters .....	23
Fresh water cut in Central .....	23
Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations .....	24

NT Land Exchange Entitlements (Redemption) Bill gazetted

\* \* \* \* \*

The Government gazetted today (Friday) the New Territories Land Exchange Entitlements (Redemption) Bill which seeks to make land exchange entitlements, commonly known as Letters A/B, redeemable for cash only rather than land after a date to be appointed by the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands.

All other rights against the Government in respect of a land exchange entitlement will be extinguished after the appointed date.

Under the Bill, an owner of a land exchange entitlement may lodge his claim for payment of redemption money with the Director of Lands.

Redemption money will be payable by the Director to the owner in proportion to his share in the legal ownership of the land exchange entitlement, at the rates set out in the Schedule to the Bill. Any redemption money payable will bear interest from the commencement date of the proposed legislation until the date of payment.

A government spokesman said: "The Letters A/B will not become valueless after the enactment of the proposed legislation, but will be assigned a cash value which will be maintained in real terms. The Bill will be introduced into the Legislative Council on June 5, 1996.

Over the years, about 95 per cent of all the Letters A/B have been redeemed by the Government. It is the Government's intention to redeem all the outstanding Letters A/B as soon as possible.

Sufficient land has been made available in the 1996/97 Land Disposal Programme to absorb all the known commitments. The proposed legislation is therefore intended mainly to deal with those Letters A/B the ownership of which cannot be traced and which are, in any case, likely to exist in such small packets as to make it difficult for their holders to bid in the Letter A/B tenders.

Letters A/B were issued between 1960 and 1983 to landowners in the New Territories whose land was required for development.

Letters A were issued if the land was surrendered to Government before notices of resumption were issued. Letters B were issued if the land was surrendered to Government after notices of resumption had been issued.

Letters A/B holders were entitled to exchange their entitlements, as an alternative to cash compensation, for building land.

End

### Residential mortgage survey results for April

\*\*\*\*\*

Residential mortgage loans for the purchase of properties in Hong Kong continued to grow at a rapid pace in April, according to the results of the latest monthly survey conducted by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA).

The latest figures show that the total amount of outstanding mortgage lending by the 33 institutions in the survey increased by 1.6% (the same rate of growth as in March and February) to \$289.6 billion. The growth rate is slightly above the monthly average of 1.5% over the last twelve months.

"The sustained growth of residential mortgage lending in April reflected the continued upturn of activity in the residential mortgage market," said the Deputy Chief Executive (Banking) of HKMA, Mr David Carse.

The annualised rate of growth in lending over the last three months increased to 19.8% from 18% in the three-month period to March. The 12-month average of outstanding loans showed an annualised growth rate of 17.7%, compared with 18.4% in March. The amount of new loans approved but not yet drawn increased by \$0.2 billion (2.4%) to \$7.8 billion in April.

"These figures, and the continued active residential property market in April, suggest that outstanding loans will continue to grow at a rapid rate in May," said Mr Carse.

HKMA released for the first time information on residential mortgage loans associated with co-financing schemes and the breakdown of new loans by age of property.

The amount of residential mortgage loans associated with co-financing schemes accounted for only 2.3% of total mortgage lending of the 33 surveyed institutions. Of the \$12.6 billion new loans approved during April, about 86% were accounted for by property aged 15 years or below.

Lending for the purchase of properties in China increased by 0.8% to \$5.5 billion in April.

Gross loans made in April decreased both in number (to 300 from 342) and in amount (to \$143 million from \$154 million). New loans approved in April decreased in number (to 286 from 363) but increased in amount (to \$198 million from \$153 million).

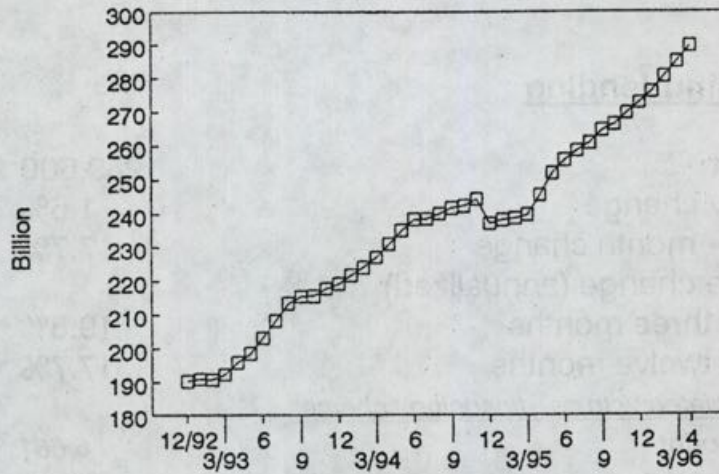
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Chart A

**RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOANS IN HONG KONG  
(33 institutions)**

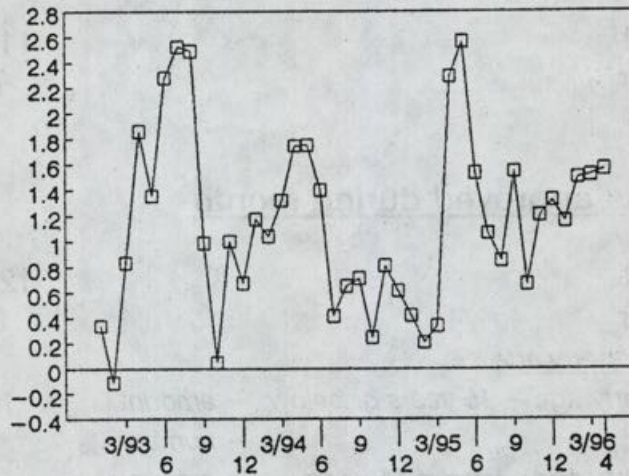
Outstanding balance at end of month



A1

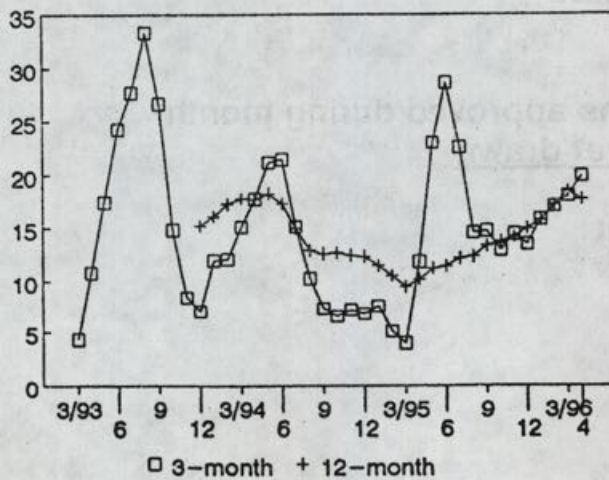
Remarks : The significant fall of outstanding balance in December 1994 was due to the effect of reclassification, securitization and sale of loans by some institutions.

Monthly growth rate



A2

3-month and 12-month moving average growth rate on annualised basis



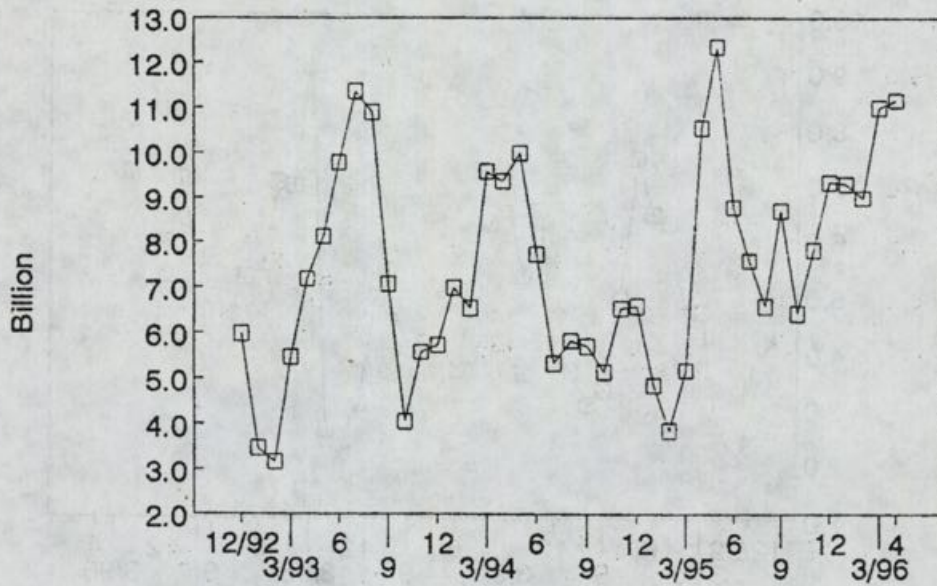
A3

□ 3-month + 12-month

RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOANS IN HONG KONG  
(33 institutions)

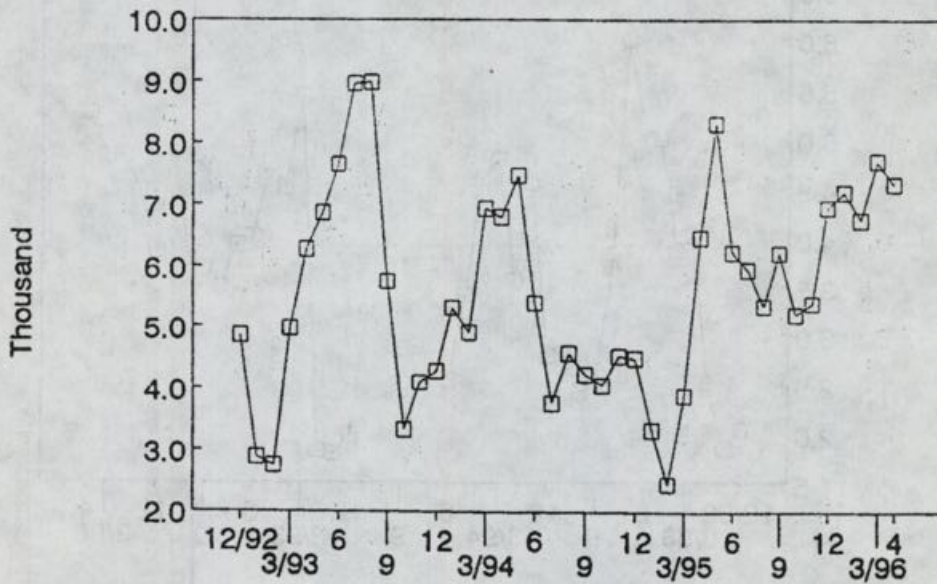
GROSS LOANS MADE DURING THE MONTH

Amount



B1

Number of accounts

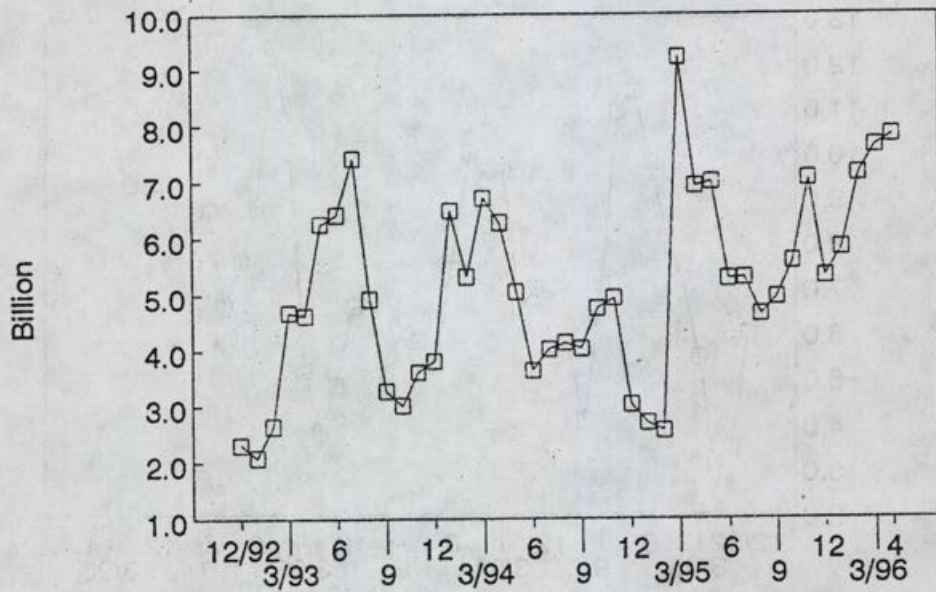


B2

**RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOANS IN HONG KONG  
(33 institutions)**

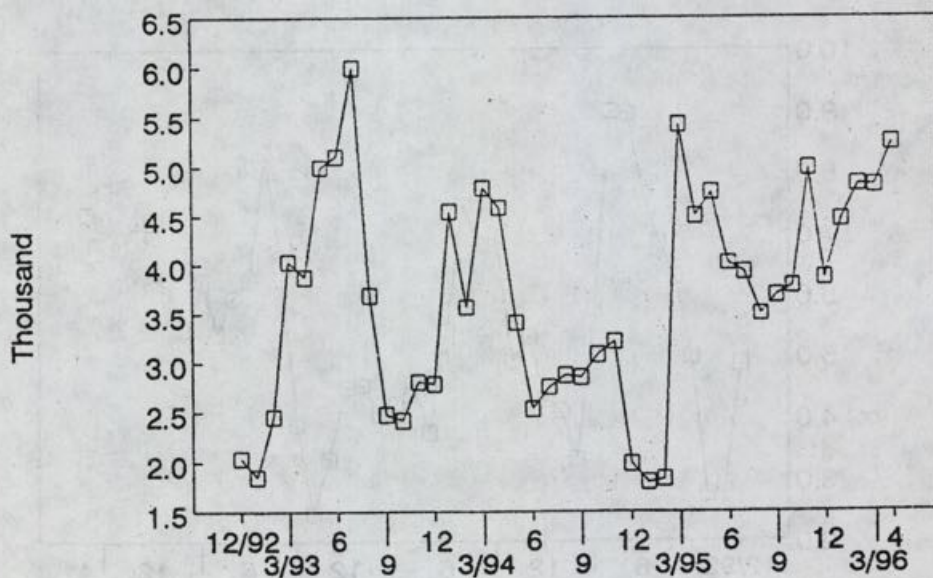
**NEW LOANS APPROVED BUT NOT YET DRAWN**

Amount



C1

Number of accounts



C2

Promotion of administrative grade officers announced

\*\*\*\*\*

The Government today (Friday) announced the substantive promotion of 28 officers to Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) and 25 officers to Senior Administrative Officer (SAO) in the Administrative Service with effect from April 1.

Handing out the promotion letters this morning, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr W K Lam, said he was delighted to see the promotion on this occasion of a total of 53 capable officers who had the ability and commitment to serve the community.

"These officers have amply demonstrated their merits and have good potentials for further advancement. They will be a great asset to the civil service through the transition and beyond," he said.

Mr Lam noted that Staff Grade C was the first directorate rank in the Administrative Service and was therefore a particularly important step in an officer's career.

"Officers at this rank typically occupy posts of Principal Assistant Secretary in the Government Secretariat, District Officer, or Assistant Director in a department. In these capacities, they contribute significantly to the smooth running of the Government.

"The SAO rank is also a relatively senior level in the civil service, and officers in this rank are entrusted with a wide range of policy and management responsibilities," he said.

The average age of the AOSGC promotees is 36 and the average age of the SAO promotees is 31.

End

Appointment of High Court Judge

\* \* \* \* \*

The Judiciary announced the appointment of Mrs Justice Verina Saeeda Bokhary as the Judge of the High Court which took effect today (Friday).

Mrs Justice Bokhary was a District Judge before her appointment to the High Court.

Mrs Justice Bokhary was born in Hong Kong in 1950. She studied law at the Council of Legal Education in London from 1967 to 1970 and was called to the Bar in England in 1971. Between 1972 and 1976, she worked as a Legal Assistant in the Customs and Excise of the United Kingdom. After returning to Hong Kong in 1976, she joined the then UMELCO (the Unofficial Members of the Executive and Legislative Councils) as Legal Officer until 1978. Since then she had been in private practice. In 1985, she was appointed as a Magistrate of the Hong Kong Judiciary. She was appointed as an Adjudicator and District Judge in 1987 and 1989 respectively. Since August 1994, she has been appointed as Deputy Judge of the High Court on a number of occasions.

Mrs Bokhary is married and has three daughters.

End

Yeung Hoi-keung's case being considered

\* \* \* \* \*

A social Welfare Department spokesman said today (Friday) that a two-man board of the Criminal and Law Enforcement Injuries Compensation Scheme had met this afternoon to consider the case of Mr Yeung Hoi-keung. This consideration was at Mr Yeung's request.

The spokesman said the Board was reconsidering the case in the light of the award made recently to Mr Yeung under the provisions of the Criminal Proceedings Ordinance.

In accordance with the normal practice, the Board's decision will not be known straight away.

End

Residential Care Homes Regulation amendment gazetted

\* \* \* \* \*

An amendment regulation, which seeks to change the office of an appeal board set up under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance, was published in the government gazette today (Friday).

Under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) (Appeal Board) (Amendment) Regulation 1996, a new section is added to specify that any notice, statement or other document required to be lodged with the Chairman of the Appeal Board shall be sent by registered post to the Chairman at the office of the Secretary for Health and Welfare.

An amendment is also made to note (2) in Form 1 under the Schedule to the Regulation to the effect that the form should be lodged with the Chairman of the Appeal Board at the office of the Secretary for Health and Welfare instead of at the office of the Registrar, Supreme Court.

The amended regulation, which will come into operation on July 5, will facilitate a more effective and smooth operation of the Appeal Board with the administrative support provided by the Health and Welfare Branch.

Elderly home operators are required to apply for a licence or a certificate of exemption from the Director of Social Welfare under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance.

Under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) (Appeal Board) Regulation, home operators who are dissatisfied with the decisions of the Director of Social Welfare in respect of their applications for licences or certificates of exemption may lodge an appeal to the Appeal Board.

End

Fees and charges for trade licences to be revised

\* \* \* \* \*

Fees and charges in respect of applications for textile licences, certificates of origin and certain other trade documents and related services will be revised by about 9 per cent under the Import and Export (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations 1996 which were published in the Government Gazette today (Friday).

All revised fees and charges will come into effect on July 5, except for the revised annual fee for factory registration which will come into force on August 1, and those for Generalised Preference Certificates and Certificates of Origin which will be effective as from January 2 next year.

Announcing this, a spokesman for the Trade Department said the revision of fees and charges was necessary to recover the cost.

He said: "It is Government policy that the fees and charges should recover the full cost of providing a service and that a comprehensive costing exercise should be conducted once every four years.

"In the interim years, fee reviews should be conducted annually to reflect inflation as measured by the movement of the Government Consumption Expenditure Deflator. The revised fees and charges are determined in line with this policy."

The spokesman said the measure of inflation for Government expenditure had worked out to be 9 per cent this year and the revised fees were arrived at by applying the 9 per cent factor with some of the figures rounded up or down for the convenience of collection or affixing stamps with appropriate denominations.

"The Textiles Advisory Board and the Trade Advisory Board have been consulted. The Textiles Advisory Board has raised no objection to the new fees. One member of the Trade Advisory Board is concerned about the proposed new fees in respect of Certificate of Origin," he added.

The revised scale of fees to be implemented with effect from July 5, 1996 (unless otherwise specified) are as follows:-

Fees		
Type of Application	Current	Revised
Application for issue of textiles export licence - non-restrained items (Form 4)	\$48	\$52
Application for issue of textiles export licence - restrained items (Form 5)	\$185	\$202
Annual fee for registration of companies for textiles control purposes	\$1,470	\$1,600
Application for transfer of quota	\$240	\$262
Application for swing of quota	\$215	\$235
Application for free quota export authorisation	\$435	\$475
Application for textiles import licence (Form 7)	\$34	\$37

Application for licence issued under the Special Export and Import Licensing  
(Textiles) Scheme for piece-knitted garments:

a) Export Licence - restrained items (Form 8)	\$185	\$202
b) Special export licence - non-restrained items (Forms 8a and 8d)	\$50	\$54
c) Special import licence - non-restrained items (Forms 8b, 8c and 8e)	\$36	\$40
Official signature fees charged for the issue of certified true copies (CTC) of licence and certificates	\$258	\$280
Annual fee for Textiles Trader Registration	\$2,420	\$2,640
Delivery verification certificate	\$174	\$190
International import certificate	\$56	\$61
Landing certificate	\$330	\$360
Signature fees for certifying copy of trade declarations and cargo manifests	\$210	\$229
Provision of official records of statistical data derived or extracted from import and export manifests	\$13 (per page)	\$14 (per page)
Annual fee for factory registration (effective from August 1, 1996)	\$2,575	\$2,807
Certificate of Origin (CO) other than Generalised Preference Certificate (effective from January 2, 1997)	\$137	\$149
Generalised Preference Certificate (Form A)(effective from January 2, 1997)	\$278	\$303

End

### Procedures of compensation claim explained

\* \* \* \* \*

In response to press enquiries on the court case involving former worker Ng Kwok-wing, a Labour Department spokesman said today (Friday) that soon after Mr Ng was injured at work on October 17, 1990, the department had been in close contacts with the Legal Aid Department (LAD).

Mr Ng had applied for legal aid to claim damages through the court two weeks after his injury.

"We were later informed that Mr Ng was provided with legal aid in late March 1991," the spokesman said.

Under current practice, the Labour Department arranges a medical board to assess the injury condition of an injured worker after his or her sick leave expires and the worker's condition has been stabilised. Mr Ng was given two-year sick leave by medical practitioners. The sick leave period concluded in early December 1992.

A medical board was then arranged by the department and completed the relevant assessments on Mr Ng's injuries on February 8, 1993. The assessment results showed that he sustained a 100 per cent permanent incapacity.

In March 1993, the results were forwarded to LAD for further action after the completion of relevant documentation.

"There is a standing agreement between the Labour Department and LAD that for every case in which an injured employee is assessed by the Ordinary Assessment Board as having a five per cent or more permanent incapacity, the Labour Department would explain to him his rights to claim damages at common law and refer his case to LAD for assistance," he said.

An injured employee may however indicate to the Labour Department his wish to claim common law damages even before an assessment of his permanent incapacity is completed.

"It is up to the injured employee to decide on the circumstances of his case as to whether he would wish to claim damages for employer's negligence through the common law," the spokesman added.

He said injured employees wishing to claim damages for employer's negligence could approach LAD direct or request the Labour Department to refer their cases to LAD. A claim for damages should be lodged in court within three years from the date of accident.

"Our referrals to LAD could be issued in one or two days," he said.

The spokesman also said the Labour Department would study the relevant judgment of the Court on this case and would examine the present procedures carefully together with LAD with a view to introducing improvements where necessary.

End

#### Animals and plants fees revised

\* \* \* \* \*

Fees for impounding stray animals under the Pounds Ordinance, licensing services under the Animals and Plants (Protection of Endangered Species) Ordinance, examination of plants and quarantine, maintenance and treatment of plants and soil under the Plant (Importation and Pest Control) Ordinance are to be increased with effect from July 5, 1996.

The new fees are set out in the Pounds Fees (Amendment) Regulation 1996, the Animals and Plants (Protection of Endangered Species) Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 4) Order 1996 and the Plant (Importation and Pest Control ) (Fees) (Amendment) Regulation 1996, which are gazetted today (Friday).

The revised fees will apply to impounding of stray animals except dogs; issue, renewal and extension of the import, export and possession licences for endangered species; examination of plants, issue of phytosanitary certificates and the maintenance and treatment of plants and soil under quarantine.

A spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department said that the fees were last revised in 1995 and that the current increase for all of the fees is about nine per cent, based on the movement of the Government Consumption Expenditure Deflator. The spokesman said that the increase will maintain the real value of the fees.

End

Licensing fees on animals and birds to be increased

\* \* \* \* \*

Fees for licensing services under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance will be increased from July 5.

The revised fees are set out in the following regulations:

- \* Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Amendment) Regulation 1996
- \* Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Animal Traders) (Amendment) Regulation 1996
- \* Dairies (Amendment) Regulation 1996
- \* Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Exhibitions) (Amendment) Regulation 1996
- \* Public Health (Animals) (Boarding Establishment) (Amendment) Regulation 1996
- \* Public Health (Animals) (Riding Establishment) (Amendment) Regulation 1996

The revised fees will apply to permits to remove animals or birds destined for Hong Kong and other places via Hong Kong from a vessel or aircraft; use of a depot to house animals; a licence to carry on business as an animal trader and keep animals for commercial purposes; a licence to maintain a dairy; a licence to exhibit animals or birds commercially on a permanent or temporary basis and licences to operate an animal boarding or riding establishment.

A spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department said in general, the fees were set at levels sufficient to recover the full costs of providing the services. The fees for use of a depot to house cattle and the fee for a temporary exhibition permit achieve partial cost recovery.

The fees were last revised in 1995 and that the current increase for all of the fees is about 9 per cent, based on the movement of the Government Consumption Expenditure Deflator, the spokesman said.

The increase will maintain the real value of the fees, the spokesman added.

End

Minimum credit rating to qualify for tax concession

\* \* \* \* \*

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (Friday) announced that the minimum credit rating requirements for debt securities issued in Hong Kong to be eligible for the profits tax concession scheme are for the time being as follows:

<u>Recognised rating agency</u>	<u>Minimum rating required</u>
IBCA	BBB-
JBRI	BBB+
Moody's	Baa3
S&P's	BBB-

"These standards will enable debt securities with an investment grade rating to qualify for the tax concession," a spokesman of HKMA said.

Under the profits tax concession scheme, the interest income and trading profits derived from eligible debt securities will enjoy a concessionary tax rate equal to 50 per cent of the profits tax rate.

The scheme applies to new debt issues, regardless of their currency denomination.

To be eligible, a debt issue should have at all times a credit rating assigned by a recognised rating agency which is not lower than the minimum standards specified by HKMA. The HKMA reserves the right to make adjustment to these standards from time to time.

In addition to the rating requirement, a debt issue has to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- (i) the entire issue is lodged with and cleared by the Central Moneymarkets Unit operated by HKMA;
- (ii) original maturity of not less than 5 years;

- (iii) minimum denomination of \$500,000 or its equivalent in a foreign currency; and
- (iv) issued to the public in Hong Kong.

The profits tax concession scheme, which comes into effect today with the gazettal of the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (No 3) Ordinance 1996, was announced by the Financial Secretary in his Budget Speech on March 6.

The objective of the scheme is to promote further development of Hong Kong's debt market by encouraging the issue of long-term debt instruments in Hong Kong

End

#### Bridging course for students

\* \* \* \* \*

A six-week bridging course for students who wish to transfer from a grammar to a prevocational school will start in July.

The course is organised for students who have completed Secondary 1 in a grammar school but wish to continue studies in Secondary 2 in a prevocational school this September.

An Education Officer, Mr K L Chan, said the course provides theoretical and practical training in metalwork, electrical studies and technical drawing. The course is free of charge.

Mr Chan said the bridging course was arranged following a recommendation by the Education Commission in its report no. 4 on the needs of students in grammar schools who, after the first year, found themselves losing interest in the more academic approach and wish to learn more practical subjects.

The Commission recommended that a bridging course should include workshop training to help students of grammar schools adjust to the more practical content of the curriculum and gain a minimum level of practical proficiency required in prevocational schools.

The bridging course will be held at the following two centres with a total enrolment of 120 students:

- \* Bishop Hall Memorial Prevocational School  
82 Hiu Kwong Street  
Sau Mau Ping  
Kowloon
  
- \* Cotton Spinners Association Prevocational School  
350 Kwai Shing Circuit  
Kwai Chung  
New Territories

Mr. Chan said students were required to pass a test at the end of the six-week bridging course for admission to a prevocational school.

Secondary 1 students of grammar schools who wish to enrol in the course may obtain application forms from their own schools. Completed forms should reach the relevant prevocational schools on or before June 14, 1996.

Enquiries should be directed to the Education Department's Prevocational Schools Unit on 2892 6315 or 2892 6318.

End

#### Provisional statistics of retail sales for March

\* \* \* \* \*

The value of total retail sales in March 1996, estimated at \$17.7 billion, increased by 7% when compared with March 1995, according to the provisional figures released today (Friday) by the Census and Statistics Department.

After discounting the effect of price changes over the period, total retail sales showed a small increase of 0.4% in volume.

Compared with a year ago, sales of motor vehicles increased by 11% in value and 9% in volume, after having registered decreases for 12 consecutive months.

Concurrently, sales of a number of commodities also recorded increases in both value and volume terms. These included clothing and footwear (17% in value and 8% in volume); miscellaneous consumer goods (9% in value and 4% in volume); and supermarkets (9% in value and 1% in volume).

Meanwhile, sales of food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco and sales in department stores both went up by 7% in value, albeit having virtually no change in volume.

On the other hand, sales of consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles and fuels rose by 2% and 3% in value respectively but declined by 1% and 2% in volume respectively. Sales of jewellery, watches and clocks and valuable gifts went down by 3% in value and 8% in volume.

Compared with February 1996 (but bearing in mind that this comparison is affected by seasonal factors), total retail sales in March 1996 decreased by 4% in both value and volume. Comparing the period from January to March 1996 with the same period in 1995, total retail sales rose by 5% in value, but dropped by 1% in volume.

The volume of retail sales is derived from the value of retail sales after adjusting for price changes. The relevant components of the Consumer Price Index are used as deflators. Table 1 presents the revised total retail sales figure for February 1996 and the provisional figure for March 1996.

Table 2 shows the value and volume indices of retail sales in March 1995, February and March 1996 for all retail outlets and by type of retail outlet, with average retail sales from October 1989 to September 1990 taken as 100.

Comparisons of the March 1996 results with those for February 1996 and those for March 1995, as well as comparison of retail sales in the period from January to March of 1996 with the same period in 1995 are also given.

The report containing the analysis of the March 1996 results is now on sale at \$4 per copy at the Government Publications Centre, Queensway Government Offices, ground floor, Low Block, 66 Queensway; and the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

Enquiries about the survey results may be directed to the Wholesale and Retail Trade Statistics Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2802 1258.

**TABLE 1 : TOTAL RETAIL SALES**

Total Retail Sales for March 1996 (Provisional Figure) = HK\$17,682.3 million  
for February 1996 (Revised Figure) = HK\$18,481.9 million

**TABLE 2 : VALUE AND VOLUME INDICES OF RETAIL SALES FOR MARCH 1995, FEBRUARY AND MARCH 1996**

(Monthly average of Oct 89 - Sept 90 = 100)

Type of Outlet	Type of Index	Index Number			% Change		
		March 1995 (Revised figures)	February 1996 (Revised figures)	March 1996 (Provisional figures)	Mar 1996 compared with Feb 1996	Mar 1996 compared with Mar 1995	Jan - Mar 1996 compared with Jan - Mar 1995
<b>(A) FOR ALL RETAIL OUTLETS</b>		(Point)	(Point)	(Point)	(%)	(%)	(%)
	Value	176.6	196.8	188.3	-4.3	+6.6	+5.4
	Volume	136.6	143.1	137.2	-4.1	+0.4	-0.5
<b>(B) BY TYPE OF RETAIL OUTLETS</b>							
Food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (other than supermarkets)	Value	134.5	146.9	144.3	-1.8	+7.3	+7.5
	Volume	97.7	99.0	98.2	-0.7	+0.5	+3.0
Supermarkets $\phi$	Value	156.5	198.6	170.1	-14.3	+8.7	+9.2
	Volume	105.6	127.0	106.3	-16.2	+0.7	+1.2
Fuels	Value	145.4	136.8	149.9	+9.6	+3.1	+7.5
	Volume	95.1	87.1	92.9	+6.6	-2.3	+0.7
Clothing, footwear and allied products	Value	238.7	298.0	278.7	-6.5	+16.8	+16.3
	Volume	166.0	191.3	179.5	-6.2	+8.1	+6.8
Consumer durable goods	Value	154.9	155.7	162.3	+4.2	+4.8	-9.6
	Volume	127.3	126.9	129.3	+1.9	+1.6	-9.5
- Motor vehicles and parts	Value	118.9	103.5	132.4	+27.9	+11.3	-32.8
	Volume	79.9	68.0	87.0	+28.0	+9.0	-34.6
- Consumer durable goods other than motor vehicles and parts	Value	180.9	193.5	184.0	-4.9	+1.7	+6.2
	Volume	161.7	169.5	159.9	-5.6	-1.1	+3.5
Department stores	Value	145.2	199.9	155.3	-22.3	+7.0	+5.9
	Volume	104.5	135.1	104.7	-22.5	+0.2	-1.5
Jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts	Value	210.9	209.3	204.5	-2.3	-3.1	+1.4
	Volume	199.3	185.4	183.9	-0.8	-7.8	-4.4
Other consumer goods not elsewhere classified	Value	218.5	219.9	237.5	+8.0	+8.7	+11.0
	Volume	166.7	161.4	173.6	+7.5	+4.2	+6.2

NOTE :  $\phi$  Not including supermarkets operating in department stores.  
The underlined figures were rounded up to 5.

Sewage facilities to be upgraded

\* \* \* \* \*

The Drainage Services Department is inviting tenders for civil works for Central and Wan Chai East Pumping Stations and Screening Plants.

A spokesman for the department said that works would involve construction of a sewage pumping station and improvements to existing screening plant in Central.

"It will also involve construction of a sewage pumping station and a screening plant in Wan Chai.

"The purpose of the works is to upgrade the existing sewage screening plants in Central and Wan Chai districts in order to ensure that the screening plants have sufficient capacity to cater for additional flows which will be delivered to them during their design life," he said.

Construction will commence in October this year and scheduled for completion in two years.

Details of the tender invitation are contained in the Government Gazette published today (Friday).

Forms of tender and further particulars may be obtained from Maunsell Consultants Asia Limited, Room 601, World Commerce Centre, Harbour City, 11 Canton Road, Kowloon.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board. They must be placed in the Government Secretariat Tender Box at the lift lobby, lower ground floor, Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong before noon on Friday, June 28, 1996.

Late tenders will not be accepted.

End

### Wong Tai Sin stairway covers completed

\*\*\*\*\*

Residents of Wong Tai Sin will be shielded from the sun and rain when the construction of covers for a stairway linking Chuk Yuen Road and Chui Chuk Street is completed today (Friday).

About 13,000 residents living in Tsui Chuk Garden and Pang Ching Court will directly benefit from the project as the stairway - 44 metres in length - is the main access to the bus stops along Chuk Yuen Road for the residents.

Works for this \$1 million project began in February last year as part of the district-based Urban Environmental Improvement (UEI) scheme under the Home Affairs Department (HAD).

Since 1994, HAD has been implementing projects under the scheme to improve the quality of life in the community. They included improvement works for local roads and paths, amenity planting and other environmental projects identified and endorsed by the district boards.

A total of 24 UEI projects costing over \$8 million have been undertaken by HAD's Urban Works Section in 1994-95 and 1995-96.

In 1996-97, \$5 million will be allocated for 12 UEI projects and \$8 million for other minor environmental improvement projects in urban districts.

The acting Director of Home Affairs, Mr Dominic Law, the Wong Tai Sin District Officer, Mr Richard Luk, and the Wong Tai Sin District Board Chairman, Mr Chan Kam-man, will officiate at a completion ceremony for the stairway covers tonight. Note to Editors:

End

### Draft So Kwun Wat development plan approved

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The Governor-in-Council has approved the draft So Kwun Wat Development Permission Area (DPA) plan, a spokesman for the Town Planning Board said today (Friday).

"The plan will establish a statutory land use framework to provide guidance for planning and to facilitate development control within the So Kwun Wat area in Tuen Mun. "A draft statutory outline zoning plan is being prepared and will be published to replace the approved DPA plan," he said.

The approved plan (No DPA/TM-SKW/2) is available for public inspection during normal office hours at:

- \* Planning Department,  
16th floor, Murray Building,  
Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong;
- \* Tuen Mun and Yuen Long District Planning Office,  
Level 11, Metroplaza Tower 1,  
223 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Fong,  
New Territories; and
- \* Tuen Mun District Office,  
second floor, Tuen Mun Government Offices,  
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories.

Copies of the plan are on sale at the Survey and Mapping Office, Lands Department, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong, and the Kowloon Map Sales Office, ground floor, 382 Nathan Road, Kowloon.

End

Prequalification invited for Heritage Museum project

\* \* \* \* \*

The Architectural Services Department is inviting approved contractors to participate in a prequalification exercise for the construction of the Regional Council Heritage Museum in Area 25, Sha Tin. The project comprises the construction of a six-storey museum complex of Chinese courtyard style with a total gross floor area of over 30,000 square metres.

Works are expected to commence in October for completion in March 1998.

Only contractors on the Approved Contractors for Public Works List I in Group C (confirmed) for Building Works or on the List II for Building Works (confirmed) can apply for prequalification. Interested parties may apply for prequalification documents from the Chief Architect, Division 2, Architectural Services Department, 37th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong. The deadline for submission of prequalification applications is noon on June 7.

End

### Vigorous training for proficient fire-fighters

\* \* \* \* \*

The Fire Services personnel have to go through the mill of a tough and vigorous training to ensure the efficiency and proficiency of fire-fighters, the Director of fire Services, Mr Peter Cheung, said today (Friday). Speaking at the department's passing-out parade, Mr Cheung said fire-fighters are required to work in dangerous and difficult circumstances, at odd hours and under unfavourable situations.

"We are not only required to be skilful, but also required to have a dedicated attitude and a strong determination," he said.

Mr Cheung said the Fire Services Department had undergone significant changes and it had correspondingly raised its standards of services during the past three decades.

Noting that the department had been able to meet the enormous demands of the modern society of Hong Kong, he was confident that all graduating recruits would be capable of meeting or even bettering the high standards of services achieved.

The number of emergency calls the Fire Services Department received is rising every year. In 1995, Fire Services personnel responded to 31,014 fire, 21,420 special services and 425,343 ambulance calls, representing a 5.23%, 5.18% and 0.002% increase respectively over 1994.

On parade were 13 probation officers and 127 firemen who had completed their respective basic training courses and who would soon be posted out to various fire stations to gain more field experience.

End

### Fresh water cut in Central

\* \* \* \* \*

Fresh water supply to some premises in Central will be temporarily suspended between 11 pm on Monday (May 27) to 6 am the following day for waste detection work on watermains to be carried out. The suspension will affect:

- \* Arbuthnot Road;
- \* all even number premises between 32-56 and odd number premises between 31-79 Wyndham Street;
- \* Glenealy;

- \* Chancery Lane;
- \* all even number premises between 20-26 and odd number premises between 3-31 Old Bailey Street;
- \* all even number premises between Nos 38-54 and odd number premises between 47-57 Peel Street;
- \* all even number premises between 2-34B and odd number premises between 1-43 Staunton Street;
- \* all even number premises between 2-52 and odd number premises between 1-49 Elgin Street;
- \* Shelley Street;
- \* all even number premises between 46-54 and odd number premises between 47-55 Graham Street; and
- \* all even number premises between 10-66 Hollywood Road.

End

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	<u>\$ million</u>	<u>Time (hours)</u>	<u>Cumulative change (\$million)</u>
Opening balance in the account	2,140	0930	-177
Closing balance in the account	2,909	1000	-177
Change attributable to :	1100	-177	
Money market activity	-177	1200	-177
LAF today	+946	1500	-177
		1600	-177

LAF rate 4.00% bid/6.00% offer TWI 124.1 \*+0.0\* 24.5.96

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.24	2 years	2802	6.30	100.46	6.14
1 month	5.08	3 years	3904	6.30	99.46	6.61
3 months	5.14	5 years	5103	6.75	98.32	7.29
6 months	5.24	7 years	7302	6.02	92.10	7.67
12 months	5.56	5 years	M502	7.30	99.74	7.50

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$10,599 million

Closed May 24, 1996

End