

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

(June to August 2006)

6 Jun 2006	The Seminar on Financial Infrastructure jointly organised by the People's Bank of China and the HKMA is held in Beijing. The Seminar aims at sharing experiences regarding financial infrastructures on the Mainland and in Hong Kong, and further reinforcing co-operation between the two places in respect of the development of financial infrastructure. Another Seminar would be held in Shanghai on 7 June.
13 Jun 2006	The HKMA announces the formation of the Industry Working Group on Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing to further strengthen the banking industry's preparedness to meet new challenges in these areas.
19 Jun 2006	The HKMA announces the composite interest rate at the end of May 2006. The rate increased to 3.39% from 3.10% at the end of April 2006.
23 Jun 2006	The HKMA announces that the minimum rating required for Rating and Investment Information, Inc. (R&I), a recognised credit rating agency for the purpose of the profits tax concession scheme under section 14A(4)(b) of the Inland Revenue Ordinance, has been revised from BBB+ to BBB- with immediate effect.
23 Jun 2006	The monthly survey of residential mortgage lending shows that new mortgage loans drawn down during May rose by 12.9% to HK\$10.0 billion and new loans approved by the surveyed authorized institutions increased by 19.7% to HK\$13.7 billion.
19 Jul 2006	The HKMA announces the composite interest rate at the end of June 2006. The rate declined to 3.16% from 3.39% at the end of May 2006.
25 Jul 2006	The monthly survey of residential mortgage lending shows that new mortgage loans drawn down during June rose by 24.5% to HK\$12.5 billion and new loans approved by the surveyed authorized institutions decreased by 6.4% to HK\$12.9 billion.
27 Jul 2006	The HKMA publishes the unaudited balance sheet of the Exchange Fund for the end of June 2006. During the first half of 2006, the Accumulated Surplus increased by HK\$17.1 billion to HK\$460.2 billion, the total assets increased by HK\$38.4 billion to HK\$1,105.2, and the investment income amounted to HK\$30.7 billion.
3 Aug 2006	The HKMA releases for public consultation a draft of the Banking (Capital) Rules. These Rules, which are planned to come into effect in January 2007, are the implementing Rules for Basel II, the new international standard for banks' capital adequacy.
4 Aug 2006	The results of the latest survey on residential mortgage loans in negative equity shows that the number of such loans decreased by 400 cases to about 8,800 cases with an aggregate value of HK\$15 billion in the second quarter. Compared with the peak of about 106,000 cases at the end of June 2003, the number has fallen by 92%.
16 Aug 2006	The survey on credit card lending for the second quarter of 2006 shows that total card receivables increased by 2.5% (or HK\$1.6 billion) in the quarter, having fallen by 9.9% in the previous one.

17 Aug 2006	The HKMA announces the composite interest rate at the end of July. The rate declined to 3.11% from 3.16% at the end of June.
25 Aug 2006	The monthly survey of residential mortgage lending shows that new mortgage loans drawn down during July fell by 16.6% to HK\$10.4 billion and new loans approved by the surveyed authorized institutions decreased by 24.5% to HK\$9.7 billion.

Four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. The order of issue of the press releases each month is as follows:

- SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
- SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Exchange Fund Balance Sheet Data)
- Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account
- SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity

The above press releases on the Exchange Fund data may be found on the HKMA's website at www.info.gov.hk/hkma/eng/press/category/exchange_index.htm

Other latest press releases may also be found at www.info.gov.hk/hkma/eng/press/index.htm