

Japan Credit Rating Agency, Ltd. (JCR) announces the following credit rating.

## Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

### <Affirmation>

Foreign Currency Long-term Issuer Rating:	AA+
Outlook:	Stable
Local Currency Long-term Issuer Rating:	AA+
Outlook:	Stable

### Rationale

- (1) The ratings are primarily supported by Hong Kong's ample fiscal reserves, its status as a highly developed international financial and logistics center and its solid external position. On the contrary, the ratings are constrained by its unique status based on "one country, two systems" that has been maintained since the handover by the United Kingdom in 1997. The Hong Kong economy recovered solidly in 2021 underpinned by an economic package introduced by the Hong Kong SAR government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is expected to continue to grow moderately, driven by domestic demand. Although its financial reserves have decreased due to the economic package, they remain ample and fiscal soundness is retained. Assuming that Hong Kong will keep a solid external position backed by its strong competitiveness in the finance and logistics sectors, JCR has retained the ratings with Stable outlook.
- (2) Hong Kong, located in the Pearl River Delta, is one of the People's Republic of China's special administrative regions with a nominal GDP of USD 368 billion, a population of 7.5 million and a per capita GDP of USD 66,000 in PPP terms in 2021. It has been pursuing a policy to promote international trade and investment, and has established itself as a global logistics and financial center that serves as a gateway to Mainland China. It has been adding to its economic dependence on Mainland China since the 1997 reversion from the United Kingdom. Mainland China now accounts for about 70% of visitors to Hong Kong, 60% of its exports and 50% of imports. The Hong Kong economy grew a solid 6.4% (real GDP growth rate) in 2021, led by an expansion of domestic demand brought by the economic package. The economy is expected to grow 2-3% in 2022, partly underpinned by private consumption prompted by the supply of electronic consumption vouchers. It is expected to sustain the same level of growth in the medium term.
- (3) The Hong Kong SAR government has been pursuing a prudent fiscal policy in keeping with the principle of fiscal balance as defined in Article 107 of the Basic Law, its de-facto Constitution. However, it has been posting a fiscal deficit since FY2019/20. The government is seen to have suffered a fiscal deficit equivalent to 0.6% of GDP in FY2021/22 due mainly to the implementation of the economic package in response to the pandemic. However, the fiscal balance was in surplus by 0.7% of GDP when the issuance of green bonds was counted. For FY2022/23, the government planned to double the amount of electronic voucher to HKD 10,000 per person to sustain the measure's stimulus effect on consumption proven last fiscal year. It also announced tax relief for individuals and enterprises and measures to enhance its SME Financing Guarantee Scheme. The government estimates a fiscal deficit resulting from those economic stimulus measures at 3.0% of GDP. JCR holds that the government can address the situation with its fiscal reserves standing ample at HKD 946.7 billion at the end of March 2022 or equivalent to 16 months of average monthly expenditures for FY2021/22.
- (4) Hong Kong's current account balance has been basically in surplus. At the end of 2021, its net external assets amounted to HKD 16.6 trillion (USD 2.1 trillion), equivalent to 580% of GDP. The current account surplus/GDP ratio rose to 11.2% in 2021 from 7.0% in 2020 mainly on an increased trade surplus. Hong Kong's authorized institutions remained highly sound, with their capital adequacy ratio and net nonperforming loan ratio standing at 20.2% and 0.5%, respectively, at the end of 2021.

Hiroshi Tonegawa, Michihisa Ueno

## Rating

Issuer: Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

### <Affirmation>

Foreign Currency Long-term Issuer Rating: AA+      Outlook: Stable

Local Currency Long-term Issuer Rating : AA+      Outlook: Stable

Rating Assignment Date: April 25, 2022

The assumptions for the credit ratings and the definitions of the rating symbols are published as "Types of Credit Ratings and Definitions of Rating Symbols" (January 6, 2014) in Information about JCR Ratings on JCR's website (<https://www.jcr.co.jp/en/>).

Outline of the rating methodology is shown as "Sovereign and Public Sector Entities" (October 1, 2021) in Information about JCR Ratings on JCR's website (<https://www.jcr.co.jp/en/>).

The aforementioned credit ratings are unsolicited. Except in cases of a credit rating for a sovereign, JCR indicates affix "p" after a rating symbol to distinguish it from a rating with solicitation. The undisclosed information, which has material influence on the credit rating, was not obtained from the rating stakeholder.

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JCR publishes its press releases regarding the rating actions both in Japanese and in English on the same day. In case that it takes time to translate rating rationale, JCR may publicize the summary version, which will be replaced by the full translated version within three business days. (Regarding Structured Finance products, JCR only publicize the summary version in English.)

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## INFORMATION DISCLOSURE FORM

Japan Credit Rating Agency, Ltd.

### Disclosure Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of Rule 17g-7

Issuer:	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Rating Publication Date:	April 28, 2022

1

The Symbol, Number, or Score in the Rating Scale used to Denote Credit Rating Categories and Notches and, the Identity of the Obligor or the Identity and a Description of the Security or Money Market Instrument as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(A) of Rule 17g-7

- Please see the news release. If the credit rating is a private rating, please see the report for private rating.

2

The version of the procedure or methodology used to determine the credit rating; as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(B) of Rule 17g-7

- Please see the news release. If the credit rating is a private rating, please see the report for private rating.

3

The Main Assumptions and Principles used in Constructing the Procedures and Methodologies used to Determine the Credit Rating as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(C) of Rule 17g-7

- The credit rating methodology assumes, in principle, to be applied to assess the likelihood of a given debt payment in light of its issuer's condition and business environment, etc. in the relevant future. There is certain limitation, however, in the time horizon that the rating foresees.
- The credit rating methodology assumes, in principle, that the factors posted in the below are particularly important for such likelihood to be determined, and that the rating determination is made by evaluating each of them not only quantitatively but also employing qualitative analyses.

A) Economic Base

The likelihood of a given debt payment is highly conditional to the issuing government's ability to maintain/expand the economic base into the future with maintaining soundness of financial systems.

B) Fiscal Base

The likelihood of a given debt payment is highly correlated to fiscal balance, public debt and other factors of the issuing government's fiscal condition.

C) External Positions

The likelihood of a given debt payment is highly correlated to the liquidity positions which change along with the international balance of payments and the international investment position.

D) Social and Political Bases and Economic Policy

The likelihood of a given debt payment is highly conditional to the social and political stability, effectiveness of economic and monetary policies as well as international economics.

E) Related Parties' Stance of Support/ Assistance for the Government

The likelihood of a given debt payment is affected by the stance of the credit enhancement provider and other related parties with regard to their stance of support/ assistance for the issuing government.

F) Order of Seniority in Debt Payment

The likelihood of debt payment can be different between given debts of the same issuer. The likelihood of debt payment for an individual debt is dependent on the issuing government's will, and/ or its rank relative to other debts of the same government in the order of seniority in principal/ interest payment which is determined by design as financial product or by international practice, etc.

## 4 The Potential Limitations of the Credit Rating as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(D) of Rule 17g-7

- The credit rating herewith presented by JCR is its summary opinion with regard to the likelihood of given debt payment and hence not necessarily a perfect representation of such likelihood. The credit rating is not intended to estimate the probability of default or the loss on given default, either.
- The objective of the credit rating herewith presented does not include any concerns other than the likelihood of debt payment, such as risks of price changes, market liquidity, etc.
- The credit rating herewith presented is necessary to be reviewed along with possible changes of the issuer of rated objects in its business performance and/ or circumstances which include regulatory environment, and hence subject to possible alteration.

## 5 Information on the Uncertainty of the Credit Rating as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(E) of Rule 17g-7

- The information used for the determination of credit rating as herewith presented is obtained by JCR from the issuer of rated objects and other sources that JCR trusts in terms of accuracy and reliability but possibly contains errors due to human, non-human or other causes. Consequently, the credit rating determined on the grounds of such information does not constitute, explicitly or implicitly, any representation or warrant of JCR on the information itself or any consequences of its use in terms of accuracy, relevance, timeliness, wholeness, market value, or usefulness for any specific purposes.

## 6 Use of Due Diligence Services of a Third Party in Taking the Rating Action as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(F) of Rule 17g-7

- There is no use of any third-party due diligence service in the determination of the credit rating herewith presented.

## 7 Use of Servicer or Remittance Reports to Conduct Surveillance of the Credit Rating Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(G) of Rule 17g-7

- There is no use of any servicer or remittance report to conduct surveillance of the credit rating herewith presented.

## 8 The Types of Data Relied Upon for the Purpose of Determining the Credit Rating as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(H) of Rule 17g-7

- The information posted in the below, which includes data, is used for the determination of the credit rating herewith presented.
  - A) Informational and explanatory materials published by the rating stakeholders with regard to the economy and fiscal management policy, etc. of the issuing government
  - B) Statistics and reports published by an independent organization with regard to the economy and fiscal status, etc. of the issuing government

## 9 Overall assessment of the Quality of Information Available and Considered in Determining the Credit Rating as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(I) of Rule 17g-7

- JCR holds its basic policies for securing the quality of information as a base of due diligence for the determination of credit ratings. The information used as a base for the determination of credit rating herewith presented satisfies such policies, which include the publication by the issuer or some independent media, etc.
- JCR sees no particular weakness in the quality of information used for the determination of the credit rating herewith presented as compared to the information used in other cases of the credit rating for comparable issuers or ratable objects.
- If the credit rating is an Indication, please see the report for Indication.

## 10 Information Relating to Conflicts of Interest as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(J) of Rule 17g-7

- JCR does not receive payment of compensation for the determination of the credit rating herewith presented from either one of those parties who are issuer, underwriter, depositor or sponsor.
- JCR did not receive in the last fiscal year in the past payment of compensation from the same party for any kind of JCR's service other than the determination of public or private credit rating, such as one in the ancillary business.

## 11 Explanation or Measure of the Potential Volatility of the Credit Rating as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(K) of Rule 17g-7

### A) Economic Base

The credit rating is subject to alteration if there is an improvement or deterioration of the issuer's economy or financial systems, etc. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually by a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is large.

### B) Fiscal Base

The credit rating is subject to alteration if the issuer increases/ decreases its fiscal deficit/ surplus and its public debt and thereby makes given debt payment liability less/ more bearable. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually by a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is large.

### C) External Positions

The credit rating is subject to alteration if there is a change in the issuer's international balance of payments and international investment position and thereby an improvement/ deterioration of its liquidity positions. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually by a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is large.

D) Social and Political Bases and Economic Policy

The credit rating is subject to alteration if there is a change in the issuer's social and political conditions or economic/ monetary policies, etc. and thereby an improvement/ deterioration of its economy and fiscal positions. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually by a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is large.

E) Related Parties' Stance of Support/ Assistance for the Issuer

The credit rating is subject to alteration if there is a change in the credit enhancement provider or other related parties with regard to their stance of support/ assistance for the issuing government and thereby an improvement/ deterioration of its economy, fiscal positions and liquidity positions. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is large.

F) Order of Seniority in Debt Payment

The credit rating is subject to alteration if there is a change in the rated debt's status in the order of seniority relative to other debts, due to improvement/ deterioration of the issuer's fiscal condition and/or will. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is large.

G) International Economies

The credit rating is subject to alteration if there is a change in the international economies, commodity or foreign exchange markets, etc. and thereby, through international balance of payments, an improvement/ deterioration in the issuer's fiscal balance or debt payment capacity. The resultant alteration of the credit rating is usually by a notch, with possibility of a few notches if and when the change is exceptionally large.

H) Various Events

The credit rating is subject to alteration on occurrence of various events, such as domestic unrest, war, natural disaster, etc. which are unforeseeable at the time when the credit rating is determined, causing a significant change on the issuer's economy, fiscal positions, etc. The resultant alteration of the credit rating could be by a notch but more often than not as much as a few notches.

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Information on the Content of the Credit Rating, Including the Historical Performance of the Credit Rating and the Expected Probability of Default and the Expected Loss in the Event of Default as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(L) of Rule 17g-7

- Historical records of the credit rating herewith presented are posted in the end of this paper.
- The credit rating herewith presented by JCR is its summary opinion with regard to the likelihood of given debt payment and hence not necessarily a perfect representation of such likelihood. The credit rating is not intended to estimate the probability of default or the loss on given default, either.
- Facts of the probability of default are posted as Form NRSRO Exhibit 1 on the JCR website under the URL:

<https://www.jcr.co.jp/en/service/company/regu/nrsro/>

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Information on the Sensitivity of the Credit Rating to Assumptions Made as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(M) of Rule 17g-7

A) Economic Base

The credit rating herewith presented could be changed if and when the assumptions made at the time of its determination turn out to be inaccurate with regard to the issuer's economy or financial systems, etc. The resultant change of the credit rating is most likely by a notch, as JCR speculates, but possibly as much as a few notches if the development is rapid in improvement or deterioration of the issuer's economy or financial systems on some drastic change in environments, etc.

B) Fiscal Base

The credit rating herewith presented could be changed if and when the assumptions made at the time of its determination turn out to be inaccurate with regard to the issuer's fiscal conditions in terms of annual balance or public debt. The resultant change of the credit rating is most likely by a notch, as

JCR speculates, but possibly as much as a few notches if the development is rapid in improvement or deterioration of the issuer's fiscal condition on some drastic change in its economy.

C) External Positions

The credit rating herewith presented could be changed if and when the assumptions made at the time of its determination turn out to be inaccurate with regard to the issuer's liquidity positions reflecting improvement or deterioration of the international balance of payments and the international investment position. The resultant change of the credit rating is most likely by a notch, as JCR speculates, but possibly as much as a few notches if the development is rapid in improvement or deterioration of the issuer's liquidity positions on some drastic change in the country's economic/ fiscal conditions and financing activities, etc.

D) Social and Political Bases and Economic Policies

The credit rating herewith presented could be changed if and when the assumptions made at the time of its determination turn out to be inaccurate with regard to the issuer's social and political bases and economic/ monetary policies. The resultant change of the credit rating is most likely by a notch, as JCR speculates, but possibly as much as a few notches if the country's situation changes drastically, making the issuer's social and political bases and economic/monetary policies significantly improved or deteriorated.

E) International Economics

The credit rating herewith presented could be changed if and when the assumptions made at the time of its determination turn out to be inaccurate with regard to the prospects of the international economies or commodity/ foreign exchange markets, etc. JCR expects the change should be most likely by a notch but could be as much as a few notches, should the economy or the markets change so greatly.

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Information on the Representations, Warranties, and Enforcement Mechanisms of an Asset-backed Security as Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(ii)(N) of rule 17g-7

- The credit rating herewith presented is not for an ABS product, and hence no relevant issue.

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## The Historical Performance of the Credit Rating

Issuer Name	Issue Name	Publication Date	Rating	Outlook/Direction
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	November 6, 2000	AA	
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	September 20, 2001	AA	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	September 2, 2002	AA	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	December 24, 2004	AA	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	February 15, 2006	AA	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	September 7, 2007	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	September 24, 2008	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	February 9, 2010	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	March 28, 2011	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	September 5, 2012	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	November 1, 2013	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	February 3, 2015	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	May 20, 2016	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	May 17, 2017	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	August 17, 2018	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	February 14, 2020	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(FC)	March 18, 2021	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	September 20, 2001	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	September 2, 2002	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	December 24, 2004	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	February 15, 2006	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	September 7, 2007	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	September 24, 2008	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	February 9, 2010	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	March 28, 2011	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	September 5, 2012	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	November 1, 2013	AA+	Stable



## The Historical Performance of the Credit Rating

Issuer Name	Issue Name	Publication Date	Rating	Outlook/Direction
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	February 3, 2015	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	May 20, 2016	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	May 17, 2017	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	August 17, 2018	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	February 14, 2020	AA+	Stable
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region	Issuer(Long-term)(LC)	March 18, 2021	AA+	Stable

## Attestation Required by Paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of Rule 17g-7

I, Toshihiko Naito, have responsibility to this Rating Action and to the best of my knowledge:

- A) No part of the credit rating was influenced by any other business activities.
- B) The credit rating was based solely upon the merits of the obligor, security, or money market instrument being rated.
- C) The credit rating was an independent evaluation of the credit risk of the obligor, security, or money market instrument.



Toshihiko Naito  
General Manager of International Rating Department

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