

For Immediate Release

BEA Launches 2006 Corporate Tax Loan Programme

*Loan Amounts Available up to 200% of Profits Tax Amount at Rates As Low As
BLR - 1.50%*

Hong Kong, 21st September, 2006 - The Bank of East Asia (“BEA”) has today launched its Corporate Tax Loan Programme for 2006. As tax season approaches, the Corporate Tax Loan Programme has been designed to ensure that companies are financially prepared to settle their impending profits tax payments.

To help reduce the strain on corporate cash flows, the Corporate Tax Loan Programme will provide tax loan amounts up to 200% of the profits tax amount. Interest rates can be as low as the Best Lending Rate (“BLR”) minus 1.50% or HIBOR (whichever is higher). BEA’s BLR is currently set at 8.25%. The Programme’s flexible loan repayment terms enable corporate customers to repay their tax loans in monthly instalments ranging from 6 to 24 months. A preferential arrangement fee is fixed at 0.5% of the loan amount, or HKD1,000 (whichever is higher).

Mr. Adrian Li, BEA’s General Manager & Head of Corporate Banking Division said, “With our Corporate Tax Loan Programme, companies can free themselves from the financial burden of settling tax payments and focus their attention on business development. Given the strong response to our past programmes and BEA’s highly competitive rates this year, we are confident that our 2006 Corporate Tax Loan programme will be a great success.”

For the benefit of its customers, BEA also provides a streamlined application process. To apply, corporate clients simply need to submit their profits tax demand notes, business registration certificates, and bank statements for the past six months. For more information on BEA’s Corporate Tax Loan Programme, please contact the Corporate Tax Loan Hotline on 3608 0838, or visit any BEA branch.

BEA has developed a full range of corporate loan products that suit the diverse needs of its clients. In addition to corporate tax loans, the Bank also offers overdrafts, trade finance, term loans, equipment financing, and loans under the SME Loan Guarantee Scheme. For more details on BEA’s Corporate Banking services, please visit the Bank’s website at www.hkbea.com or the Corporate Cyberbanking website at www.hkbea-cyberbanking.com/corporate.

About The Bank of East Asia

Incorporated in Hong Kong in 1918, BEA is dedicated to providing comprehensive retail and commercial banking services to its customers in Hong Kong, Greater China, and overseas. BEA is the largest independent local bank in Hong Kong, with total consolidated assets of HKD 263.3 billion (USD33.91 billion) as of 30th June, 2006. The Bank is listed on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong and is one of the constituent stocks of the Hang Seng Index.

With more than 170 outlets worldwide, BEA operates an extensive international network covering Hong Kong and Greater China, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the British Virgins Islands, and Southeast Asia. For more information on BEA, please visit any BEA branch or the Bank's homepage at www.hkbea.com.

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BEA – Serving customers through one of Hong Kong's largest banking networks, with over 110 branches and SupremeGold Centres around town