

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(1) 474/00-01

Ref: CB1/PL/EA

**Paper for the House Committee meeting on 19 January 2001**

**Proposed overseas duty visit by the  
Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs**

**Purpose**

This paper seeks members' support for the proposed overseas duty visit to Britain, Germany, France and Monaco to be conducted by the Panel on Environmental Affairs (the Panel) in April 2001 for the purpose of understanding overseas experience in sewage treatment.

**Background**

2. The subject of sewage treatment in Hong Kong has topped the agenda of meetings of the Panel over the past decade. Since the launch of the Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme (SSDS) in 1994 which aims to collect, treat and dispose of sewage in an environmentally acceptable manner, the Panel has closely followed its progress. From the outset the Panel has expressed grave concern about the environmental and technical problems associated with the construction of deep tunnels, the long term level of treatment and the locations of treatment works and outfalls. SSDS Stage I, comprising seven tunnels with a total length of 25 km, has been beset with problems. The unilateral suspension of works by the original contractor in mid 1996 resulted in the forfeiture of the two contracts and the re-tendering of the contracts for completing the tunnelling works. The scheduled completion date for SSDS Stage I has been deferred from mid 1997 to end of 2001.

3. In the light of the experience of SSDS Stage I, Government appointed in April 2000 a new International Review Panel (IRP) to re-examine SSDS Stages II, III and IV. The IRP presented its recommendations to the Panel on 1 December 2000. The IRP recommends that Hong Kong should go for a higher level of wastewater treatment with a short and low dilution outfall and that Biological Aerated Filters (BAF) treatment should be provided to all SSDS flows in all the subsequent stages of SSDS. BAF are one of the new, compact, and space-saving technologies which have become popular alternatives to traditional sewage treatment systems because of their

high-rate treatment characteristics, flexible operation, small footprint, and zero-pollution. Members take note of a number of advanced sewage treatment works applying BAF technology in Europe.

4. Members of the Panel consider it useful to visit the overseas sewage treatment plants using BAF technology before deciding on the way forward for SSDS. Having regard to the different features of these plants, their locations and their relevancy to Hong Kong, members agreed at the meeting of the Panel on 2 January 2001 to conduct an overseas duty visit to those European cities with prominent sewage treatment facilities in Britain, Germany, France and Monaco.

### **Timing for the visit**

5. Allowing time for planning the logistics and avoiding any clash with Council meetings and the Budget, the Panel considers that the most suitable period for conducting the overseas duty visit is from the late evening of 4 April 2001 (Wednesday) after the Council meeting to 13 April 2001 (Good Friday).

### **Participants of the visit**

6. According to the decision made by The Legislative Council Commission in 1997, Members going on an overseas duty visit should be fully sponsored for their trip. For the purpose of budget control, the Commission has agreed that, under normal circumstances, the number of delegates sponsored for an overseas duty trip should be limited to no more than six for a parliamentary visit and four for other overseas duty visits. Members not selected to participate may join the visit on a self-financing basis. The Panel takes note of the recent setting up of a subcommittee under the House Committee to review the existing criteria/mechanism for allocation of funds for overseas duty visits undertaken by Panels and other Committees.

7. Out of the nineteen members of the Panel, eight have indicated interest in joining the visit. Other than the Chairman of the Panel, the members selected for the visit in order of priority by lot drawing are shown in **Appendix I**. Members agree that the number of sponsored members for the visit should tie in with the recommendation of the House Committee and the decision of The Legislative Council Commission pursuant to the review. The delegation will be accompanied by a staff member of the Secretariat.

### **Funding arrangements**

8. On the basis of four members fully sponsored for participating in the visit, the estimated expenditure for the visit will be about \$300,000. A breakdown of the estimated costs is at **Appendix II**.

**Advice sought**

9. Members are invited to advise whether they recommend the above-mentioned overseas duty visit to the Commission for allocation of funds.

Prepared by  
Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
17 January 2001

**LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs**

**Membership of the proposed overseas duty visit**

1. Prof Hon NG Ching-fai (Chairman)
2. Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
3. Hon LAU Ping-cheung
4. Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
5. Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung
6. Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
7. Hon CHOY So-yuk
8. Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP

**LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs  
Budget for the overseas duty visit to  
Britain, Germany, France and Monaco**

**Date of visit** : 4-13 April 2001

**Size of delegation** : 4 Members (to be accompanied by one Secretariat staff)

**Budget** : HK\$ 300,000 (for 4 Members)

**Expenses**

| <u>Items</u>  | <u>Amount (HK\$)</u> |
|---|----------------------|
| A. Members  |                      |
| (1) Passage   |                      |
| Airfare<br>Business class (approx. HK\$42,090 x 4 persons)<br>Hong Kong - London - Hamburg - Cologne - Nice - Paris -<br>London - Hong Kong | 168,360              |
| (2) Hotel accommodation*  |                      |
| London: (approx. HK\$2,000 x 1 night x 4 persons)   | 8,000                |
| Hamburg: (approx. HK\$1,200 x 2 nights x 4 persons)   | 9,600                |
| Cologne: (approx. HK\$1,050 x 1 night x 4 persons)  | 4,200                |
| Nice: (approx. HK\$1,100 x 2 nights x 4 persons)  | 8,800                |
| Paris: (approx. HK\$1,990 x 1 night x 4 persons)  | 7,960                |
| Sub-total   | 38,560               |
| (3) Meals and overseas subsistence allowance  |                      |
| London: (GBP228 x 11.755 x 35% x 1 day x 4 persons)   | 3,752                |
| Hamburg: (DEM469 x 3.818 x 35% x 2 days x 4 persons)  | 5,014                |
| Cologne: (DEM469 x 3.818 x 35% x 1 day x 4 persons)   | 2,507                |
| Nice: (FRF1697 x 1.14 x 35% x 2 days x 4 persons)   | 5,416                |
| Paris: (FRF2113 x 1.14 x 35% x 2 days x 4 persons)  | 6,744                |
| Sub-total   | 23,433               |
| (4) Travel insurance<br>(HK\$350 x 4 persons)   | 1,400                |
| (5) Airport tax<br>(HK\$910 x 4 persons)  | 3,640                |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| (6) Local transport - hired mini bus service<br>(assuming 8 hrs/day)<br>HK\$4,500 x 8 days                   | 36,000         |
| (7) Interpretation service<br>(assuming 3 whole days' service required in France)<br>(approx. HK\$7,000 x 3) | 21,000         |
| B. Sundries  | 5,000          |
| <b>TOTAL FOR MEMBERS</b>   | <b>297,393</b> |

\* Rates quoted are for reference only. Hotel prices for April 2001 are not yet available.

Exchange rates as at 5 January 2001

1 GBP = HK\$11.755  
1 DEM = HK\$ 3.818  
1 FRF = HK\$ 1.14

(Note : Other expenditure including cost for one staff member and expenses on souvenirs will be charged against other votes of the Secretariat.)