

Legislative Council Panel on Commerce and Industry

Proposed new Customs Headquarters Building

Purpose

This paper provides additional information on the proposed new Customs headquarters building in response to questions raised by Members at the last Panel meeting.

Ratio of Schedule of Accommodation Area to Construction Floor Area

2. Members questioned whether the ratio of the Schedule of Accommodation (S of A) area of the proposed building to the construction floor area (CFA) was too low.

3. The CFA of the proposed building is 66 314 m². Its S of A area is 27 637 m². Together with the area of 577 m² provided for the refuse collection point within the building, the net operational floor area (NOFA) of the building is 28 214 m².

4. The ratio of NOFA to CFA for the proposed building is 43%. This ratio is comparable to those of other Government buildings, such as the Shatin Government Offices (44%) and the Police Headquarters Building (39%). Car-parking areas, lifts, corridors, walls, staircases and utility areas account for the difference between NOFA and CFA. Please refer to Annexes A and B for the details.

Breakdown of total capital cost

5. Members requested a breakdown of the total capital cost. This is provided below -

Item	\$ million
(a) Piling	122.8
(b) Building	491.8
(c) Building services	296.4
(d) Drainage and external works	7.2
(e) Furniture and equipment	87.6
(f) Reprovisioning of RCP	26.9

(g) Consultant's fee for	16.1
(i) quantity surveying	6.1
(ii) electronic engineering	10.0
(h) Contingencies	94.5
Sub-total	1,143.3 (September 2001 prices)
(i) Provision for price adjustment	(18.6)
Total	1,124.7 (money-of-the-day prices)

6. The piling cost is relatively high because the site is close to the sea and special precautionary measures will be required to keep the pile in dry condition during construction. Furthermore, deeper piling will be needed having regard to the result of ground investigations.

7. The estimated construction unit cost is \$11,886 per square metre of CFA. This is calculated by dividing the sum total (\$788.2 million) of the building cost and the building services cost by CFA (66 314 m²). As in the case of other Government building projects considered by the Public Works Subcommittee, it is the common practice to base cost-comparison on building and building services costs only. The other cost elements in paragraph 5 above are either site-specific or project-specific.

Allowance for future expansion

8. Members asked whether any allowance was made in the project design to cater for future expansion of the building.

9. In planning the project, C&ED has taken into account all foreseeable manpower and operational requirements in the next ten years. The department does not envisage any significant increase in space requirement in the proposed building. As such, no allowance has been made in the project design for future expansion. In any event, the proposed building has been designed based on a plot ratio of 15, which will be the ceiling for a private office building on that site.

Video interview rooms

10. Members asked for the justification for providing 15 video interview rooms in the proposed building.

11. At present, C&ED has a total of 10 video interview rooms in various offices throughout the territory. Five of them will be re-located to the proposed building. Together with 10 additional video interview rooms to be provided in the building, they will be used by seven major operational formations¹ based in it.

12. To meet public expectation for transparency in statement-taking and to enhance admissibility of statements in the court, C&ED plans to expand the use of video interview to cover not only for District and High Court cases, but also for suitable Magistracy cases. To cater for growing needs, C&ED considers that 15 video interview rooms will be required in the building.

Night duty rooms with changing facilities

13. Members asked for information on the number of officers who will use the night duty rooms and changing facilities in the proposed building.

14. At present, C&ED can provide only a limited area for changing facilities and night duty rooms. Most disciplined officers have to keep their personal uniform items in their own offices or in lockers in open areas. Without proper changing facilities, these officers need to use their individual offices or toilets for changing clothes.

15. The proposed changing facilities with lockers (595m²) are for 1 180 disciplined officers based in the proposed building. The proposed night duty rooms² (250m²) are for about 600 disciplined officers based in the building who have to work overnight or at irregular hours, or to standby in times of emergency.

Indoor Firing Range (IFR)

16. Members questioned whether the IFR could be built at the C&E Training School at Tai Lam. Members also questioned the utilization rate of the IFR at the proposed building.

¹ These are Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau, Customs Drug Investigation Bureau, Intelligence Bureau, Customs Liaison Bureau, Special Task Force, Office of Dutiable Commodities Administration, and Marine & Land Enforcement Command.

² Night duty rooms can accommodate 50 officers (25 male and 25 female) at any one time.

17. The total cost of the IFR in the proposed building is \$42.2 million, broken down as follows-

	\$ million
Building	17.7
Building Services	13.7
Furniture & Equipment	<u>10.8</u>
Total	42.2

If the IFR were to be built at the Tai Lam Training School, it would cost \$46 million. The difference is due to economy of scale, as the CFA of the development at Tai Lam (3 900 m²) would be much smaller than that of the proposed building (66 314 m²). In addition, to construct an IFR at Tai Lam would entail the provision of supporting facilities there.

18. The proposed IFR, together with the existing outdoor firing range at Tai Lam, will be used for firearm tests and practices for 1 180 disciplined officers in the proposed building, as well as 2 700 disciplined officers in other premises of C&ED³. It would save a lot of travelling time for those officers based in the proposed building if they use the proposed IFR instead of the Tai Lam facility.

19. As regards utilization rate, based on existing staff establishment and operational requirements, C&ED requires a total of 416.5 days of firing range time each year. The total capacity of the proposed IFR and the outdoor firing range at Tai Lam is 423 days a year (excluding public holidays, maintenance days and bad weather days at Tai Lam).

Height restriction of the proposed site

20. Members questioned whether there would be a restriction on the building height should the site be used for private development. If a private office building were to be built on the site, it will be subject to a maximum plot ratio of 15. This is comparable to the plot ratio that we adopt for the proposed building.

³ C&ED provides revolver firing tests twice a year for all service members and two additional revolver firing practices for all its investigators. In addition, it provides practice and refresher courses on submachine gun, shotgun and firing range management to selected officers.

Way forward

21. Subject to the support of this Panel, we intend to submit the proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee and Finance Committee for approval at the beginning of the next legislative session.

Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau
Commerce and Industry Branch
July 2002

Breakdown of Construction Floor Area¹

Area (m ²)	Type
28 214	Net Operational Floor Area (NOFA ²)
14 076	Car parking areas, driveways and ramps
24 024	Others including lifts, corridors, walls, structural elements, partitions, staircases, circulation passages, loading and unloading areas, plant rooms, mechanical floor(s), service areas and pipe ducts, refuge floor(s), areas essential for fire escape, etc.
<hr/> 66 314	<hr/> Construction Floor Area

¹ CFA is the sum of all areas at all floor levels, including basements, mezzanine floors, balconies and enclosed rooftop structures, measured to the outer face of the external walls including its external cladding, i.e. the main building line, and measured over all partitions, columns, internal or external structures and load-bearing walls, party walls, stair wells, lift wells, escalator openings, pipe & drain ducts, cable riser shafts and the like, areas of bay windows etc. It excludes decorative feature projections beyond the outer face of external walls such as fins, architrave, solar shading devices and the like, uncovered trafficable roof areas such as external playgrounds, landscaped areas and the like, etc.

² NOFA excludes any structure and partitions, circulation, staircase, staircase halls, lift landings, space occupied by toilet and shower facilities, mechanical and electrical services such as lift, air-conditioning systems, car parks etc.

**Examples of NOFA/CFA Ratio
for other Government Building Projects**

Project	PWSC Reference	Site Area (m²)	NOFA (m²)	CFA (m²)	NOFA/CFA (%)
Customs Headquarters Building	-	2 944	28 214	66 314	43
Shatin Government Offices	PWSC (98-99)48	3 560	24 567	56 331	44
Police Headquarters	PWSC (99-00)88	7 400	54 813	138 830	39