

**For discussion on
1 March 2002**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL
ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

**Aerial Ropeways (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 211)
AERIAL ROPEWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2002**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the Administration's proposed amendments to the Aerial Ropeways (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 211) and the Aerial Ropeways (Operation and Maintenance) Regulations.

BACKGROUND

2. The Aerial Ropeways (Safety) Ordinance ("the Ordinance") provides for the design, manufacture, installation and regulation of the operation and maintenance of aerial ropeways. It was enacted in 1976. The subsidiary legislation, the Aerial Ropeways (Operation and Maintenance) Regulations ("the Regulations"), enacted in 1977, provides for the regulation of the operation and maintenance of monocable ropeways with detachable grips.

3. The cable car system at Ocean Park is the only existing aerial ropeway installation in Hong Kong. This ropeway is of mono-cable design, with the carriers supported and drawn by a single rope. With the advancement of technology, several ropeway designs other than the basic mono-cable version have been developed to suit different requirements in passenger-carrying capacity, haulage route, wind resistance and riding comfort, etc.

4. The Government plans to develop a cable car system on Lantau linking Tung Chung and Ngong Ping (the “Tung Chung Cable Car System”). In April 2001, the Government invited proposals for a 30-year franchise for the finance, design, construction and operation of the Tung Chung Cable Car System. Several proposals were received and the Government has completed the initial assessment of these proposals. The Government has now begun negotiations with the short-listed proponents with a view to selecting the successful proponent later this year.

5. Based on the preliminary preferred alignment of the Tung Chung Cable Car System, the aerial ropeway will extend over the Tung Chung Channel. In order to reduce the number of pylons supporting the aerial ropeway (a larger number of pylons will be required to support the single rope in a mono-cable system), and to allow for better resistance of wind speed, it is likely that a ropeway design different from the basic mono-cable version will be adopted for the new cable car project.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

6. To tie in with the future development of the Tung Chung Cable Car system, we propose that amendments be made to the Ordinance to clarify the scope of the legislation to ensure that all aerial ropeways that may be installed and operated in Hong Kong will be covered by this Ordinance, and to provide clearer and updated requirements governing the oversight of aerial ropeways safety. For the purpose, the amendments will seek -

- (a) to make drafting improvements to the definition of “aerial ropeways”;
- (b) to impose on the owner of an aerial ropeway a legal obligation to provide the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (“the Director”) with such assistance and facilities as the Director may require for the carrying out of an examination and test after major alterations have been made to the aerial ropeway;

- (c) to enable the Secretary for Planning and Lands to make regulations empowering the Director and public officers authorized by the Director to seize and detain an aerial ropeway, or any part of the ropeway, that has been involved in an occurrence specified in the Regulations; and
- (d) to make other drafting improvements to the Ordinance.

7. As regards the Regulations, it is explicitly stipulated under Regulation 3 that they only apply to a particular type of aerial ropeway design, viz, the “continuously circulating mono-cable ropeways with detachable grips”. In order to embrace different designs of aerial ropeways that may be installed in Hong Kong, and to provide clearer and updated provisions on the operation and maintenance of aerial ropeways, we also propose amendments to the Regulations. The major proposals include -

- (a) making the Regulations applicable to all types of ropeway design that will be covered by the Ordinance as amended;
- (b) empowering the Director to specify the time within which and the form and manner in which an occurrence specified in the Regulations is to be reported;
- (c) empowering the Director to specify the time within which and the form and manner in which information relating to the occurrence is to be furnished;
- (d) empowering the Director to specify wind speed limits for the safe operation of aerial ropeways;
- (e) empowering the Director, after occurrence of major incidents, to seize and detain the relevant engineering parts of an aerial ropeway for subsequent detailed examination and investigation;

- (f) revising the maintenance schedule such that all critical components of an aerial ropeway are included;
- (g) revising the criteria for rope replacement, and empowering the Director to specify the situations in which a rope is not to be used in the operation of an aerial ropeways; and
- (h) including provisions regarding the use and examination of hauling ropes and track ropes.

CONSULTATION

8. The Administration has consulted the owner of the only aerial ropeway system in Hong Kong at present, i.e. the Ocean Park Corporation on the proposed amendments. It is generally supportive of the proposed changes. The Project Brief of the Tung Chung Cable Car project had referred to plan to introduce amendments to the Ordinance and Regulations to ensure that all prospective proponents were aware of this development.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no financial and staffing implications arising from the proposed legislative amendments.

WAY FORWARD

10. We are drafting the Aerial Ropeways (Safety)(Amendment) Bill 2002 with a view to introducing it into the Legislative Council in May 2002. We hope that the legislative amendments will come into effect before the end of 2002 before the successful proponent of the Tung Chung Cable Car system submits the design for the aerial ropeway system to the Director.