**For information**

**Panel on Security of the Legislative Council**
**"Co-location" of Immigration and Customs Facilities**

## Introduction

At the meeting of the Panel on Security of the Legislative Council held on 10 July 2002, Members requested the Administration to provide a written response explaining why the Administration has no plan to extend the co-location arrangement at Huanggang to cargo clearance. Members also requested the Administration to provide a paper setting out the areas where legislative amendments would be required by the HKSAR Government to implement co-location of immigration and customs facilities on the Shenzhen side. Our response is set out in the following paragraphs.

## Cargo Clearance Under Co-location Arrangement at Huanggang

*Benefits of Streamlined Clearance Procedures Under Co-location Arrangement*

2. Co-location of immigration and customs facilities of Hong Kong and Shenzhen sides will mainly benefit passenger clearance. Specifically, passengers using yellow buses or coaches now have to get on and off the vehicles twice in going through the clearance procedures of the two sides. With co-location, passengers will only have to get on and off the vehicles once. This is a great improvement especially to elderly passengers carrying heavy luggage. Co-location will also allow improvements to be made to the environment and facilities at the boundary crossing point. For example, the passenger clearance operations of the two sides will be housed under one roof and the entire area, including the buffer area in between, will be air-conditioned and protected from elements such as rain or wind. The above benefits will not apply to cargo clearance.

*Cost Considerations*

3. Implementation of co-location for cargo clearance also means that we would have to move the existing cargo inspection facilities at Lok Ma Chau to Huanggang which would entail substantial additional costs since the replacement of some of the structures, e.g. the x-ray buildings, is very costly. Given the lack of substantial benefits in implementating co-location for cargo clearance, we do not think the additional costs justified.

*Land Constraints*

4. In any case, there is not enough land on the Shenzhen side to allow us to also implement co-location for cargo clearance. Extending the co-location arrangement at Huanggang to cargo clearance means that we have to make available an additional area of about 200 000 $m^2$ at the minimum at a location south of the Mainland's existing inspection facilities, which is not a practicable option for the time being.

**Legislative Amendments**

5. Under the proposed co-location arrangement, the two sides will carry out separate immigration and customs clearance on the Shenzhen side with a buffer zone in between. The understanding reached with the Guangdong side is that the respective management area of the two sides will not overlap so as to avoid any confusion or vacuum in jurisdiction. The area to be managed by the HKSAR will therefore have to be clearly designated, and legislative amendments will need to be introduced to ensure that HKSAR laws will apply in such an area.

6. Through the proposed legislative amendments, we hope to achieve the following objectives -

(a) to clearly define the designated management area to be managed by the HKSAR; and

(b) to extend HKSAR laws to the designated management area.

7. In consultation with the Department of Justice and all other Government Bureaux, we are making the necessary preparatory work for the proposed legislative amendments and hope to be able to introduce the relevant amendment bill to the Legislative Council as soon as possible.

Security Bureau
September 2002