

**LegCo Panel on Transport
8 November, 2001**

Public submission on Route 10 by Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

**Potential for poor funding and execution of environmental impact assessment work
to delay major projects**

1. The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) is grateful for the opportunity to present its submission to the Panel
2. These remarks are made in respect of the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Chapter 370), PWP Item No. 6519 TH: Route 10-North Lantau to Yuen Long Highway (NLYLH) (Southern Section)
3. On 23 July, 2001 HKBWS met with representatives of the Highways Department, AFCD the project engineer and the ecological consultant to discuss the objection of HKBWS (Objection Letter No. 40) to the gazettal of the southern section of Route 10.
4. At this meeting it emerged that the area of concern to HKBWS was not of great importance for Hong Kong's bird populations.
5. However it also emerged that, in the opinion of the Society, the survey work conducted by the ecological consultant was insufficient to establish what birds were using the site, or what the impact of both the construction and operational phases of the project would have on these birds.
6. Lack of sufficient funds provided by the project engineer was one reason cited by the ecological consultant for the low number of surveys conducted. This is a not uncommon complaint amongst ecological consultants working on projects of this nature.
7. As a result of points 4 and 5, HKBWS declined to withdraw its objection to the project. The objection still stands. It is understood that this may extend the public consultation period required for this project and thus delay completion of the project.
8. While the quality of ecological surveying is not relevant to this panel, the potential for delays caused by objections to such work are surely relevant.
9. HKBWS believes that such delays could be avoided by a) improved performance from project engineers, ecological consultants and b) the imposition and enforcement of higher standards by AFCD.

10. HKBWS further believes that it is in the interests of HyD, the Transport Bureau and the general public to encourage the abovementioned improvements and remove or minimise such delays on future projects.
11. HKBWS would welcome more detailed discussions to discuss appropriate and acceptable levels of ecological surveying with representatives of any of the abovementioned groups or government bodies.
12. HKBWS would also like to acknowledge the persistence of Highways Department in securing the meeting of 23 July, 2001 with HKBWS and commend the commitment of the department to the public consultation process.

Michael Kilburn
Vice Chairman
Hong Kong Bird Watching Society