

**For discussion on  
6 May 2003**

Paper No. CB(2)1915/02-03(04)

**Legislative Council Panel on Security**

**Supplementary Information on  
242LP - Marine Police Outer Waters District Headquarters and  
Marine Police North Division at Ma Liu Shui, Sha Tin**

**PURPOSE**

This paper presents supplementary information on the proposal to construct a purpose-built operational base to accommodate Marine Police Outer Waters District Headquarters (MOWDIST HQs) and Marine Police North Division (MNDIV) on the existing site of MNDIV at Ma Liu Shui, Sha Tin.

**BACKGROUND**

2. The proposal was submitted to the Panel on Security vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1327/02-03(04) and discussed at the meeting on 6 March 2003. Members present at the meeting acknowledged the practical need for the project. However, in view of the budget deficit, some Members asked the Administration to provide supplementary information and consider various suggestions as follows-

- (a) To provide information on the number and scope of Police building projects under construction and the amount of savings which could be achieved from these projects;
- (b) To provide information on the number and scope of Police building projects under planning;
- (c) To consider whether the project in question could be deferred by carrying out maintenance works to the existing building;

- (d) To consider whether Marine Police East Division (MEDIV) operational base could be expanded, thereby obviating the need to relocate MOWDIST HQs to MNDIV;
- (e) To consider whether the project scope could be reduced by accommodating administrative units of MOWDIST HQs in other Police buildings in Sha Tin; and
- (f) To provide information on the criteria adopted by the Police in determining which projects are accorded priority in competing for resources within the administrative machinery.

## **THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE**

### **Savings from Existing Projects**

3. We welcome Members' suggestion to utilise savings from existing capital projects for other worthwhile proposals. This is in fact in line with our existing resources allocation mechanism.

4. Capital funding proposal exceeding \$15 million would need to be submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration. The Finance Committee's approved project estimates (APE) will become the expenditure ceiling for the respective capital works project. To avoid locking up valuable resources for other worthwhile projects and as part of our internal financial management and control, the Administration would take into account work progress, outturn tender prices and claims outlook for each project in our annual resources allocation process and only allocate the necessary provision to meet the forecast expenditure in accordance with the actual cash-flow requirement of the project, but not the full provision of its APE. Under the existing resources allocation mechanism, Members' suggestion to deploy savings from existing Category A Police projects would therefore not release any further new resources for the proposed MOWDIST HQs and MNDIV project at Ma Liu Shui, Sha Tin.

## **Other Police Building Projects**

5. Information on other Police building projects under construction and being planned are set out in Annexes A, B and C respectively. The projects listed in Annexes B and C are at various stages of planning. Most of them are in the early planning stages and are subject to changes in the process.

## **New Operational Base vs. Maintenance**

6. The deteriorating condition of the existing base of MNDIV attracts continuing and heavy repair and maintenance costs. Over the last five years, more than \$4 million was spent solely on maintaining the minimum serviceability of the overcrowded and sub-standard structure. As the building is aging, the maintenance cost is likely to increase in the future. Moreover, because the building is located at the seafront and constantly attacked by salty mist and wind, especially its corrugated metal roof and steel support, the pace of deterioration of the temporary structure is faster than the pace of normal maintenance activities. Therefore, it is the considered view that it is not economical to sustain the serviceability of the building through maintenance in the medium or long term.

7. In addition, the existing MNDIV is far below acceptable standards. The age, nature and design of the building, which was originally constructed as a ferry terminal, cannot facilitate the installation of modern technology in a cost-effective manner. The building is also overcrowded with a shortfall of about 1 900 m<sup>2</sup>. The 387 officers of MNDIV have to work in cramped conditions. These problems cannot be solved by maintenance works.

## **Expanding MEDIV Building**

8. A suggestion was made at the meeting of Security Panel in March to expand the existing MEDIV building, with a view to obviating the need to relocate MOWDIST HQs to MNDIV hence reducing the urgency to build an operational base to accommodate MOWDIST HQs and MNDIV at this point in time. We have reservations on the benefits to be achieved by this suggestion. First, even if MOWDIST HQs are not to be moved to Ma Liu Shui, MNDIV would still have a pressing need for reprovisioning. Second, it is undesirable from an operational point of view to retain MOWDIST HQs at

Tui Min Hoi. As mentioned in LC Paper No. CB(2)1327/02/03(04), one main reason for re-locating MOWDIST HQs to Ma Liu Shui is to provide a more strategic location and reduce the response time for District staff to travel to different parts of the District during emergencies. Besides, the existing MEDIV building was designed and built to accommodate only one Division, therefore we cannot pursue this suggestion as it would be detrimental from an operational standpoint.

### **Alternative Accommodation**

9. Marine Police have a fundamental operational requirement that, being a sea-going unit, they have to be located near the seafront to facilitate mooring boats, fast response and essential vessel maintenance. It is not practicable to accommodate them in any Police building far away from the seafront. From an operational point of view, the pier on the present site of MNDIV at Ma Liu Shui meets the minimum operational requirement without any re-provisioning. The present site is in a strategic location allowing fast deployment to areas covered by MNDIV. It is also in the centre of MOWDIST enabling the District Commander and his staff to respond effectively to major incidents within the District. The Police have examined other possible sites but the Ma Liu Shui site is the only one considered suitable and available.

10. There was a suggestion that the Administration should consider relocating non-operational staff of MOWDIST HQs to Police stations or other Police buildings in Sha Tin. We consider that this is not feasible because at present MOWDIST HQs have seven posts, amongst which four are disciplined and three are civilian posts. The disciplined officers must be accommodated at a seafront location because they are responsible for overall command. The three civilian staff perform supporting functions and should be co-located with the disciplined officers. Besides, given the small establishment of MOWDIST HQs, the savings to be generated from locating operational and administrative staff in different places would be minimal. In the case of MNDIV, the bulk of its personnel are disciplined officers (93%). They either belong to sea-going units or are required to work in command and control posts or perform report room duties etc. They therefore have to operate near the seafront. The remaining 28 civilian staff (about 7%) are responsible for supporting functions. To separate them from the operational staff is not conducive to efficient operations and would not bring substantial improvement

to the existing cramped situation in MNDIV.

### **Prioritizing Police Building Projects**

11. Members also enquired about the criteria that the Police Force adopted in prioritizing its building projects. Given the wide and diverse range of duties that the Police Force has to perform, it has a large building estate, including about 59 Police Stations, Regional and District headquarters and other operational facilities. Apart from accommodating staff in offices, these buildings are avenues to provide services to the public. They are inspected regularly to enable the Police to assess the need for maintenance, refurbishment and new construction works. This regular and continuing planning process helps to ensure that the Police Force is provided with appropriate accommodation that is conducive to its efficiency and provision of service to the public. Some of the Police's buildings were built decades ago and their condition and design preclude the installation of adequate facilities. Hence construction projects have to be initiated from time to time to replace old and inefficient buildings.

12. Before bidding funds for new building projects, the Police Force will carefully consider each case on its merits. A number of factors have to be examined, including operational need, urgency, financial and staffing implications and the likely impact on the operations of the affected units. Only bids with strong justifications will be submitted to compete with bids from other Bureaux and Departments within the administrative machinery.

13. Members questioned the reasons for not pursuing the project earlier. The deferment was principally the result of a very difficult site search and competing priorities in the previous years' Public Works Programme. A brief history of the project is set out below:

- Ø In 1982 planning for the project commenced.
- Ø In 1986 the original site at the mouth of Shing Mun River, Tolo Harbour was identified.
- Ø In 1987 the site was found to be unsuitable because of the shallow seabed and underwater gas pipelines. Later, another site was reserved at Ma On Shan for the project.

- Ø However, the project stalled again in 1990 when cavernous marble was detected, preventing development of the site.
- Ø As an interim measure to relieve the very severe overcrowding at the Tai Po Kau facility, MNDIV moved from Tai Po Kau to its present temporary building in 1992.
- Ø In 1996, following re-zoning of the site at Ma On Shan for hotel construction, the Police commenced planning of the present proposal at the Ma Liu Shui site.

### **Reduction in Project Cost**

14. Subsequent to the meeting of Security Panel in March, we have seriously re-examined the scope of the project to identify possible reduction in project cost. Our initial assessment suggests that some non-essential aspects may be reduced such as the cost of on-site reprovisioning and external and internal site works. It is anticipated that savings in the region of approximately \$10 - \$13 million are achievable.

### **ADVICE SOUGHT**

15. Members are invited to give their views and comments on the project. The proposal is scheduled to be submitted for consideration by the Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee in June 2003.

**Security Bureau**

**April 2003**

**Police Building Projects Currently Being Constructed**

<b><u>S/N</u></b>	<b><u>Project Title</u></b>	<b><u>Project Scope</u></b>
1	234LP - Redevelopment of Police Headquarters, Arsenal Street, Wan Chai (Arsenal Yard Phase III Development)	Reprovisioning of May House and Caine House in Police Headquarters (PHQ), the existing Wan Chai District Headquarters and Divisional Police Station, and various PHQ units in leased accommodation in Hong Kong Island and Kowloon.
2	271LP - Reprovisioning of Police Dog Unit and Force Search Unit from Burma Lines Site to Sha Ling, Man Kam To	Reprovisioning project initiated by the then Housing Bureau to release site occupied by the Police Dog Unit and Force Search Unit for future housing development. The project includes construction of two three-storey buildings with kennels and ancillary facilities.
3	241LP - New Territories South Regional Police Headquarters and Operational Base at Tsuen Wan	Construction of a purpose-built complex to accommodate New Territories South Regional Headquarters and its operational units, plus an Indoor Firing Range.

**Police Building Projects Being Planned**

<b><u>S/N</u></b>	<b><u>Project Title</u></b>	<b><u>Project Scope</u></b>
1	243LP - Reprovisioning of Central Police District Headquarters and Divisional Police Station	Reprovisioning project in order to release the site for development. Project scope not confirmed.
2	567XY - Reprovisioning of Hong Kong Island Regional Headquarters and Operational Base	Reprovisioning project in order to release the site for development. Project scope not confirmed.
3	237LP - Kowloon East Regional Headquarters and Operational Base	Construction of a purpose-built complex to accommodate Kowloon East Regional Headquarters and its operational units.



**Police Building Projects Under Consideration**

<b><u>S/N</u></b>	<b><u>Project Title</u></b>	<b><u>Project Scope</u></b>
1	239LP - Kowloon West Regional Headquarters & Operational Base, Mong Kok Police District Headquarters and Tai Kok Tsui Divisional Police Station	Construction of a purpose-built complex to accommodate KW Regional Headquarters and its operational units, a new enhanced Mong Kok District Headquarters and a new Tai Kok Tsui Police Divisional Station.
2	231LP - Urban Tactical Training Complex	Construction of an urban training facility, comprising a ‘mock town’, a 100 m rifle range, together with the necessary administration and service facilities.
3	45JA - Police Quarters at Tuen Mun, Area 44	Construction of 320 Junior Police Officers (JPO) married quarters in Tuen Mun to re-provision a proportion of the present substandard JPO quarters on the western side of the New Territories.
4	233LP - Junior Police Officers Married Quarters at Tung Chung, Area 13	Construction of 384 Junior Police Officers married quarters in Tung Chung on a site adjacent to the new Lantau District Police Station.