

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Replacement of Sailing Information Display Systems at Cross-boundary Ferry Terminals

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the Marine Department's proposal to replace the Sailing Information Display Systems at the two cross-boundary ferry terminals at an estimated cost of \$24.3 million.

BACKGROUND

2. The two cross-boundary ferry terminals are the Macau Ferry Terminal (MFT) in Sheung Wan and the China Ferry Terminal (CFT) in Tsim Sha Tsui. They play an important role in facilitating cross-boundary passenger movement. Over the past few years, their passenger throughput has continued to rise. In 2004, their total throughput was over 19 million, representing a substantial increase over the 16 million in 1999.

3. The Sailing Information Display Systems at the two ferry terminals provide up-to-date information on ferry services, including the arrival and departure schedules and the berths for embarkation and disembarkation. The existing systems have been in use since the opening of MFT and CFT in 1985 and 1988 respectively, and are now operating beyond their normal serviceable life. The aging of the systems has led to an increase in their fault rates, hence undermining the terminals' services.

PROPOSAL

4. We propose to replace the systems for the following reasons -

- (a) ***Improve the reliability of dissemination of ferry service information to passengers.*** Availability of accurate, prompt and uninterrupted sailing information at the two ferry terminals is essential to the passengers. As the systems grow old, there has been an increase in their downtime and in the number of faults. In 2004, there were 1,048 such incidents,

which was 36% higher than that in 2003. Maintenance of the existing systems has also become increasingly difficult as certain parts and components have become obsolete. The maintenance contractor has encountered increasing difficulties in procuring replacement parts. Replacing the systems would enhance the reliability of the information disseminated and improve services to the passengers.

- (b) ***Enrich the content of the information disseminated.*** The current systems display only ferry schedules and berths for embarkation and disembarkation. It is considered desirable to include other travel-related information such as weather conditions, typhoon news or other important messages. Similar information is already being displayed at the Hong Kong International Airport and many bus terminals and railway stations.
- (c) ***Upgrade the systems' capability to store and analyse data.*** The existing systems do not support data storage and data analysis. Analyses such as frequency of sailings to various ports are carried out on an ad hoc basis. We consider it desirable to include data storage and analysis functions in the systems to facilitate monitoring of the ferry services and projecting future demand etc.

5. We propose to replace all the display units, data input, processing and transfer components, and signal control equipment of the existing systems. At the terminals' entrances, a new generation Light Emitting Diode main display board, which could display text and graphics of different formats, will be put up. The existing black and white sailing information monitors and the old-generation Light Emitting Diode monitors at the passenger waiting areas etc at MFT and CFT respectively will be replaced by Plasma and Liquid Crystal Display panels to improve the quality of the images. Similar display systems are already in use at the Hong Kong International Airport and at various land control points.

6. The data input, processing and transfer components, as well as the signal control equipment will need to be replaced as the existing equipment will not be compatible with the new display systems.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

9. A lead-time of about 28 months will be required for tendering, delivery, installation, testing and commissioning of the new systems. We plan to implement the proposal according to the following schedule -

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Target completion date</u>
Detailed design of the systems and preparation of tender	December 2005
Tendering	February 2006
Tender evaluation and placing order	May 2006
Final design of the systems	July 2006
Material delivery of the systems at MFT	December 2006
On-site work at MFT	October 2007
Material delivery of the systems at CFT	September 2007
On-site work at CFT	July 2008

WAY FORWARD

10. We plan to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee on 10 June 2005.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to note the proposed replacement of the Sailing Information Display Systems at the two cross-boundary ferry terminals.

**Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
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