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Paper for the House Committee meeting on 6 January 2006

**Panel on Transport
Report on the visit to the Pearl River Delta**

Purpose

The Panel on Transport (the Panel) of the Legislative Council (LegCo) undertook a duty visit to the Pearl River Delta (PRD) on 5 and 6 December 2005. This report presents the details of the trip and the observations made during the visit.

Background

2. As Guangdong and Hong Kong share common watery and land boundaries and are physically tied, the two places are close partners in terms of social and economic development, sharing mutual concerns and benefits. To achieve a more competitive Greater PRD and to enable its sustainable development, there is a need for even closer co-operation between Hong Kong and the PRD.

3. In view of the increasingly closer ties between Hong Kong and the Mainland both economically and socially, the Panel considers it necessary to enhance co-operation and exchanges with the Mainland, so as to foster regional co-operation and promote the flow of people and goods between the two places. As Hong Kong and the Mainland are pushing forward a number of major cross-boundary infrastructural projects such as the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor (HKSWC), the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, the Panel considers it timely to undertake a visit to the PRD to observe the latest developments in cross-boundary transport infrastructure. The Panel would also like to take this opportunity to discuss with the relevant Mainland authorities

measures to further promote the flow of people and goods for the benefits of the general public.

4. Following the visit to the PRD of a delegation led by the Chief Executive in September 2005, the President of LegCo had written to HUANG Liman, Chairwoman of the Standing Committee of the Guangdong Provincial People's Congress (GPPC), to propose that communications between LegCo and the GPPC be established. The proposal later received a favourable reply from Chairwoman HUANG who said that both sides could have topical exchanges on certain economic and livelihood issues of concern to both Guangdong and Hong Kong.

5. On 15 November 2005, the Financial and Economic Committee of the GPPC extended an invitation to all 17 members of the Panel to visit the PRD on 5 and 6 December 2005 to observe the latest developments in cross-boundary transport infrastructure and exchange views on traffic and transport matters of mutual concern.

6. The Panel submitted a report on the proposed duty visit to the House Committee on 25 November 2005 and the proposal was endorsed by the House Committee.

The Delegation

7. The delegation was composed of 11 members of the Panel and 7 staff members of the LegCo Secretariat. The membership list of the delegation is in **Appendix I**. The visit was covered by a corps of reporters from some 30 media organizations.

The Visit

8. During the visit, the delegation had direct exchanges with the relevant committees of the GPPC for the first time. The leading officials concerned from the Financial and Economic Committee of the GPPC as well as the standing committees of the people's congresses of Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai accompanied the delegation during the relevant parts of the visit. The visit programme is in **Appendix II**. The list of the accompanying officials from Guangdong Province is in **Appendix III**.

The Forum with the GPPC

9. During the forum, HUANG Weihong, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee the GPPC, briefed the delegation on the composition and structure of the Standing Committee of the GPPC and the development of the transport industry in Guangdong Province. Officials from the Guangdong Provincial Transportation Department and the Guangdong Provincial Development and Reform Committee subsequently gave the delegation a detailed account of the development of highways, waterways, railways and airports in the province and the development plans for transport facilities throughout Guangdong. Both sides also exchanged views on transport matters of mutual concern.

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge

10. As regards the planning and progress of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the delegation notes that the advance work for the Bridge is progressing well. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Advance Work Co-ordination Group set up by the three governments of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao has already reached an agreement on the alignment and landing points of the Bridge. The agreed alignment, known as the northern bridge-cum-tunnel alignment, would land in Northwest Lantau near the San Shek Wan headland on the east, and in Gongbei of Zhuhai and A Perola of Macao on the west. The delegation subsequently made a trip to Gongbei, Zhuhai, for a site visit of the Zhuhai landing point of the Bridge.

11. The delegation notes that the feasibility study for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge covers 25 topical studies including assessments on the environment, financing, hydrology, traffic, marine, wind speed, etc. The topical studies have substantially been completed except the two relating to environmental impact assessment and financing arrangements. The Co-ordination Group is now deliberating the findings of the feasibility study, and would map out the actions that should be taken in the next stage of work. In addition, the Co-ordination Group is planning to invite expressions of interest for the Bridge so as to gauge market interest in the project, and preparations are also being made for the project's conceptual design.

12. As the construction cost of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is estimated to be as high as \$54 billion, members of the delegation are very concerned about the financing arrangements for the project, and whether the three governments would shoulder part of the cost so as to minimize the traffic and toll-related problems arising from the adoption of the "Build, Operate and Transfer" approach. The delegation hopes that the three governments would continue

discussions with a view to identifying a workable approach for the early implementation of the project.

The Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link

13. The delegation also received a briefing by the Mainland authorities on the progress of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (ERL), which would shorten the journey time between Hong Kong and Guangzhou from about 100 minutes at present to within one hour or so. The proposed Mainland section would be connected to the Guangzhou-Wuhan Express Rail and the national railway system. Through this rail link, Hong Kong would be connected directly with major Mainland cities, such as Beijing and Shanghai. Passengers using the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong ERL could also reach other major cities in the PRD via the Intercity Rapid Rail. The ERL project would play a very important role in further strengthening the economic ties and co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland, promoting mutual economic prosperity and development, and enhancing the international competitiveness of the region as a whole.

14. As the construction of the section between Guangzhou and Shenzhen would commence soon, members of the delegation indicated that they would press the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to make greater effort to explore with the Ministry of Railway, the governments of Guangdong Province and Shenzhen a feasible proposal for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen section, so as to keep in line as far as possible with the overall progress of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong ERL.

Other matters of concern

15. During the exchange of views, members of the delegation raised the following matters for the attention of the Mainland authorities:

- (a) consideration should be given to relaxing the restriction that Hong Kong drivers aged 60 and above are not allowed to drive heavy passenger vehicles and trailers in the Mainland, so as to preserve employment opportunities for local drivers and ensure the sustained growth of the logistics industry;
- (b) restriction should be imposed on the number of licenses to be issued to cross-boundary drivers from the Mainland and their permitted operating areas in Hong Kong, so as to protect the interests of the local transport trade;

- (c) the operating hours of the customs clearance area for container trucks should be reviewed so as to facilitate cross-boundary flow of goods;
- (d) the system for issuing Hong Kong and Guangdong licenses should be reviewed and a number of these licenses should be reserved for ordinary people of the two places so that they could apply to their respective transport authorities for one-off entry permits and holders of such permits could drive between the two places for sight-seeing or visiting relatives on the specified dates, in order to meet public demand in this respect; and
- (e) road safety measures should be enhanced to protect the safety of road users.

16. The Mainland authorities indicated that they would further examine the above matters raised by the delegation.

Visiting Activities

17. During the two-day visit, the delegation took a look at some transport facilities in Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai, including Line 2 of the Guangzhou Metro, the new Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, the Zhuhai landing point of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, HKSWC, Shenzhen Traffic Police Command Centre and Yantian Port.

Guangzhou Metro

18. The Guangzhou Metro is the biggest-ever municipal work project in Guangzhou. Line 1 and Line 2 of Guangzhou Metro have commenced operation with an operating track length of 36.6 km, 32 stations and an average daily ridership of 560 000. The routes under construction include the adjusted project of Line 2, Line 3, Line 4, Line 5, Line 6, extension of Line 2 and Line 8 and the trial section of the Guangzhou-Foshan section of the express rail transport among cities in the Pearl River Delta. Among them, the adjusted project of Line 2, the first section of Line 3, University City Special Line of Line 4 are planned to be operational by the end of 2005.

19. During the tour, the delegation took a ride on Line 2 of Guangzhou Metro. The construction of Phase One of Line 2 started on 8 November 1999 with an estimated investment of \$10.608 billion. The trial operation began on 26 June

2003. The completion of Phase One of Line 2 marks the substantial formation of the cross-shaped network of Guangzhou Metro. Line 2 starts from Jiangxia Station on the north and terminates at Pazhou Station with interchange to Line 1 at Gongyuanqian Station. Line 2 has a track length of 23.21 km and 21 stations, whose Phase I construction between Sanyuanli Station and Pazhou Station has a track length of 18.28 km and 16 stations. Line 2 currently has an average daily ridership of 280 000.

20. The commissioning of Guangzhou Metro has contributed to the advancement of the overall standard of our country's rail transport.

The new Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport

21. During the visit, the delegation toured the new Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport and received a briefing by airport representatives on the operation and future planning of the new airport.

22. Situated in the north of Guangzhou, the new Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport is about 28 km from the city centre. Members of the delegation note that the total investment in Phase One of the new airport amounted to \$19.8 billion (RMB). The new airport occupies an area of about 15 square kms and its terminal has a floor area of about 320 000 square metres. The designed handling capacity of Phase One is an annual passenger throughput of 25 million and an annual air cargo throughput of 1 million tonnes. The new Baiyun International Airport commenced operation on 5 August 2004.

23. The regional control centre of the new Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport is one of the three domestic civil aviation air traffic control hubs in China. This highly automated, networked and modernized control centre provides excellent air control and air route support services and is operating around the clock.

24. The delegation notes that the total area of the airfield of the new Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport is 7.2 million square metres and it has 66 parking bays for passenger aircraft and 6 for cargo aircraft at present. Its parallel east and west runways can operate concurrently. The west runway is 3 600 metres in length and 45 metres in width while its counterpart on the east is 3 800 metres long and 75 metres wide, which can accommodate A380 type of aircraft. The new airport has 168 check-in desks and passengers can choose the desks according to their destinations to go through the check-in procedures. The transfer flow is designed according to the central hub concept, which enables transit passengers to complete the transfer procedures without having to leave the restricted area and undergo security clearance again.

The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor

25. The HKSWC will be the fourth vehicular boundary crossing between Hong Kong and the Mainland, which is being built by the governments of Shenzhen and Hong Kong in accordance with the uniform building standards and the principle as agreed by the two governments that “based on the boundary of Guangdong and Hong Kong, each side will finance, build, own and manage its portion of the project within its own boundary”. HKSWC has a total length of 5.5 kms (the Hong Kong section is 3.5 kms long, with an approved project estimate of \$3.2 billion).

26. During the visit, the delegation went to the construction site of HKSWC and received a briefing by the relevant authorities on the planning and progress of the project. The landing point of HKSWC on the Mainland side is Dongjiaotou, Shekou, which is quite far away from the Shenzhen city centre. Members of the delegation note that this landing point has been chosen in order to divert traffic from the congested existing crossings. Moreover, traffic forecasts indicate that much of the cross boundary traffic will be heading towards the PRD region which is to the west of Shenzhen city centre. In Shekou, HKSWC will be conveniently connected to the highway network (i.e. Guangshen Highway) leading to other parts of Southern China. As much area of Shekou is already developed, the most suitable landing point will be Dongjiaotou which can provide adequate space for the cross boundary facilities. HKSWC will cross Deep Bay and land at Ngau Hom Shek in the northwest New Territories and be connected to Yuen Long Highway by the Deep Bay Link. The daily traffic flow of HKSWC in 2006 is estimated at 31000 vehicles.

27. The delegation also notes that the Mainland authorities are building new cross boundary facilities in Shekou and the co-location of immigration and customs facilities of Hong Kong and the Mainland would be implemented at the new boundary control point for both passenger and cargo clearance, so as to tie in with the commissioning of HKSWC. The co-location arrangement for both passenger and cargo clearance would streamline procedures and save passengers’ time, especially those using coaches who would only have to get on and off once in going through the clearance procedures of the two sides. In terms of operation, each side would conduct its own immigration and customs checks according to its own laws and regulations with a buffer area in between, i.e. the existing modus operandi would remain basically unchanged. The respective management areas of the two sides would not overlap so as to avoid any confusion or vacuum in jurisdiction. To tie in with the commissioning of HKSWC, the HKSAR Government intends to introduce the Hong Kong Port Areas Bill into the Legislative Council in 2006, which will extend the laws of HKSAR to the Hong

Kong Management Area and provide for related purposes, so as to provide statutory basis to implement co-location of immigration and customs facilities.

28. Following the visit, the Panel will make a site visit to the Hong Kong section of HKSWC on 6 January 2006 and follow up with the Administration various traffic problems which may arise after the completion of HKSWC.

The Smart Traffic Command Centre of the Traffic Police Bureau of Shenzhen Public Security Bureau

29. The delegation visited the Smart Traffic Command Centre of the Traffic Police Bureau of Shenzhen Public Security Bureau to observe its operation. The Command Centre was completed on 29 October 2000. Its functions include collecting and analysing information, making decisions which will be conveyed to all levels, performing real-time comprehensive surveillance and giving directions. The Command Centre serves as a highly efficient, modernized and smart dynamic traffic control nerve-centre for the entire city. The Centre is under the direct supervision of the Traffic Police Bureau whose superior command is the Shenzhen Public Security Bureau Headquarters.

30. The Shenzhen Traffic Police Bureau currently has more than 1 800 traffic police officers, who are responsible for traffic control duties involving more than 833 000 motor vehicles, over 846 000 motorists and more than 2 000 kms of roads in the entire city. As the nerve-centre of this force, the Command Centre is responsible for all contingencies of the Bureau, giving directions and arranging deployment of officers, traffic control, processing information, examining and supervising the execution of instructions. The Command Centre consists of the following eight systems:

- (a) 122 call receiving and handling system;
- (b) satellite-based Global Positioning System and duty-execution tabulation system;
- (c) mobile wireless police communication system;
- (d) CCTV traffic monitoring system;
- (e) electronic police smart system for monitoring and recording traffic offences;
- (f) automatic number plate identification system;
- (g) monitoring system for traffic control duties; and
- (h) information inquiry system.

Yantian Port

31. Situated in the east of Shezhen, Yantian Port borders on Da Meisha and Xiao Meisha to the east and Sha Tau Kok to the west, facing the Kowloon Peninsula of Hong Kong across the sea, with Henggan and Longgan Industrial Zones lying to its north.

32. During the visit, members of the delegation note that the water depth of both the waterways and quayside of Yantian Port is up to 16 metres, deep enough to accommodate fifth generation container vessels or even bigger ships. At present, Yantina Port occupies a total area of 208 hectares with nine deep-water container berths and has established connections with 75 international shipping lines. The Port operates around the clock and all year round and has become a major import and export channel for Southern China. Its container throughput has increased from 13 000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in 1994 when it commenced operation to 6.26 million TEUs in 2004, accounting for nearly 50% of the total container throughput of the Shezhen port.

33. The container terminals at Yantian Port are undergoing expansion which involves a total investment of \$11 billion and a total area of 136 hectares with a berth length of 3 297 metres and six container berths, which can accommodate ultra large container ships with a capacity of over 10 000 TEUs. The expansion was approved by the Central People's Government in March 2005. According to the plan, the first berth will commence operation in the latter half of 2006, with the whole project expected to be completed in 2010. Upon the completion of the expansion project, the total area of the container terminals of Phases I, II and III combined will be 344 hectares with 15 deep-water container berths, 71 quay cranes, 286 gantry cranes and an annual handling capacity of up to 12 million TEUs.

34. Members of the delegation consider that in the face of competition from neighbouring ports, ports in Hong Kong must consolidate their strength, for example, by enhancing the efficiency of container terminals in the territory and maintaining frequent shipping schedules. The Administration should actively take measures in respect of operating costs, efficiency of customs clearance, the relevant infrastructural planning, etc, with a view to maintaining the competitiveness of Hong Kong ports.

Conclusion

35. Members of the delegation would like to express their heart-felt thanks to the Financial and Economic Committee of the GPPC for its invitation, arrangements for the visit programme and the warm reception given to the delegation during the two-day visit. This exchange has enabled the delegation to observe on the spot the developments in the PRD and the progress of various cross-boundary infrastructural projects. Moreover, the visit has also enabled the delegation to have valuable exchanges with the officials in charge of various infrastructural projects and organizations on transport matters of concern to the people of Hong Kong.

36. The delegation wishes to thank the relevant Mainland units for their carefully planned arrangements in respect of the visit programme, meals and accommodation, transport and customs clearance. As far as media coverage is concerned, kind assistance from the Information Office of the Guangdong People's Government has resulted in this visit receiving positive comments from all sides.

37. The delegation would also like to thank staff of the LegCo Secretariat for their assistance.

38. The delegation believes that this direct exchange with the GPPC has been very successful and has laid a solid foundation for future friendly contacts between both sides.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
5 January 2006

Panel on Transport

**Membership of the delegation to visit the Pearl River Delta
on 5 and 6 December 2005**

Members

Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP (Chairman)
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP

Staff

Ms Pauline NG, Assistant Secretary General
Miss Kathleen LAU, Chief Public Information Officer
Mr Andy LAU, Chief Council Secretary
Ms Anita SIT, Senior Council Secretary
Mr Simon WONG, Senior Public Information Officer
Ms Emily PANG, Senior Public Information Officer
Ms Guy YIP, Council Secretary

Appendix II

Visit Programme

5 December (Monday)

- Morning
- Arrive at Huanggang Control Point, Shenzhen
 - Arrive at the Garden Hotel, Guangzhou
 - Meet with HUANG Hongwei, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Guangdong Provincial People's Congress (GPPC), CHAI Qiwen, Deputy Director of the Guangdong Provincial Department of Transportation, ZHANG Zhulin, Division Head of the Guangdong Provincial Development and Reform Committee and other officials from the GPPC, receive a briefing on the composition and structure of the GPPC and the latest development of the transport industry in Guangdong Province, and have an exchange of views on transport matters of mutual concern
 - Attend a banquet hosted by HUANG Hongwei, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the GPPC, in honour of the delegation at the Convention Hall of the Garden Hotel
- Afternoon
- Go to the Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport by coach and have a look at the Airport Expressway on the way, accompanied by LONG Jian, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Guangzhou People's Congress, MA Yusheng, Member of the Standing Committee of the Guangzhou People's Congress and Director of the Financial and Economic Committee, and other officials
 - Tour Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport and receive a briefing on the operation of the airport by ZHANG Kejian, Deputy Chief Executive of the Guangdong Provincial Airport Management Group Company
 - Take a ride on Line 2 of Guangzhou Metro and receive a briefing on the construction of Guangzhou Metro by LIU Guangwu, Deputy Secretary of the Communist Party Committee of Guangzhou Metro
 - Go to Zhuhai by coach and receive a briefing on the latest development of the Nansha Expressway and Jingzhu Expressway on the way by HE Jiangmin, Deputy Head of Division of the Guangzhou Construction Committee

- Arrive at Zhuhai Holiday Resort Hotel
- Evening ● Attend a banquet hosted by YU Rongai, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of Zhuhai People's Congress, DU Bingrong, Deputy Director of the Financial and Economic Committee of Zhuhai People's Congress, in honour of the delegation
- Tour the New Yuanming Garden and watch the Qing Dynasty
- Leave the New Yuanming Garden for the hotel by coach

6 December (Tuesday)

- Morning
- Tour the landing point of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge in Zhuhai and receive a briefing on the landing point by GUAN Enhong, Chief Engineer of the Zhuhai Planning Bureau
 - Travel to Shenzhen by coach
 - Tour the construction site of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor and receive a briefing on the progress of the project by LI Rongqiang, Executive Vice-Director of the Office for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor Project and Deputy Director of Shenzhen Construction Bureau
 - Attend a banquet hosted by TANG Jinshen, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of Shenzhen People's Congress, and other leading officials of the Congress, in honour of the delegation at Wuzhou Guest House
- Afternoon
- Visit Shenzhen Traffic Police Command Centre and receive a briefing on the operation of the Command Centre by YE Nan, Head of the Command Branch of Shenzhen Traffic Police Bureau
 - Visit Yantian Port in Shenzhen and receive a briefing on the operation of the container terminals by ZHENG Jingsheng, Chairman of Yantian Port Group
 - Leave Yantian Port for Hong Kong by coach

The list of the accompanying officials from Guangdong Province

Name	Post title
HUANG Weihong	Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Provincial People's Congress
CHEN Liumin	Chairman of the Financial and Economic Committee of the Provincial People's Congress
YOU Guojing	Deputy Chairman of the Financial and Economic Committee of the Provincial People's Congress
CHEN Yikui	Deputy Director of the Office of the Provincial People's Congress
CHAI Qiwen	Deputy Director of the Provincial Department of Transportation
ZENG Xiaoshi	Deputy Director of the Provincial Reception Office
CHAI Weisheng	Head of the Meeting Affairs Division of the Provincial People's Congress
LUO Lin	Head of the Composite Division of the Provincial People's Congress
ZHANG Zulin	Division Head of the Provincial Development and Reform Committee
CHEN Hantao	Researcher of the Provincial Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office
HONG Chuyi	Deputy Director of the Information Office of the Provincial People's Government
YANG Yueping	Deputy Director of the Office of the Financial and Economic Committee of the Provincial People's Congress