

香港特別行政區政府
消防處

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FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

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18 March 2009

Ms. Miranda HON
Clerk to the Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council
Hong Kong SAR of the PRC

Dear Ms HON,

**The Director of Audit's Report on the
results of value for money audits (Report No. 51)
Emergency ambulance service (Chapter 4)**

I refer to your letter of 11 March 2009 and would like to respond as follows –

- (a) **Analysis of the emergency ambulance calls answered in the years from 2005 to 2008** – An analysis showing the data required is at **Annex**.
- (b) **Process of procuring an ambulance**

Having consulted the Financial Services and Treasury Bureau (FSTB), Security Bureau (SB), Government Logistics Department (GLD) and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), the position is set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

(i) The length of time required in each step of the existing procurement process

Bidding of funds, announcement of RAE result and availability of funds

- Under the Capital Non-Works Resource Allocation Exercise (CNW RAE), bureaux/departments are invited to submit proposals which will incur expenditure in the following financial year. It takes **about 4 months** from the preparation of the bids by the bureaux/departments to the announcement of RAE results ^{Note 1}. Funding for approved items will be available at the beginning of the new financial year on 1 April, following passage of the relevant vote on account resolution by the Legislative Council.

Drawing up of design and specifications

- Once funding is secured in early April, EMSD will draw up the design and specifications of the vehicles in collaboration with FSD. This process takes **about 6 months** to complete.

Tendering

- Upon completion of the design and specification process, the ensuing tendering process takes **about 5 to 6 months** to complete^{Note 2}.

Delivery

- Delivery of ambulances after award of contract normally takes **about 12 months** as the ambulance is a “purpose-built” vehicle which requires installation of various equipment. If a large number of ambulances are to be procured or the new vehicles have to comply with the latest emission standard, longer lead time up to about two years may be required for delivery. For prolonged delivery schedule, partial or staged delivery will be sought.

(ii) Improvement measures to expedite the procurement process

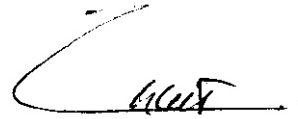
Discussion has been held among the GLD, EMSD and FSD with a view to shortening the lead time for procurement of ambulances. The specific measures to be adopted by the three parties to expedite the procurement process are as follows:

- EMSD will start drawing up the design and specifications in collaboration with FSD when FSD is preparing funding bids under the CNW RAE, with a view to completing the process within 4 months before the announcement of RAE result; and
- GLD will in parallel start making pre-tender preparation upon the submission of the RAE bid by FSD, with a view to completing the preparatory work and inviting tender as soon as funding is secured.

With the above measures, the processes of bidding for funds, approval of funds, drawing up of design and specifications and tendering could be taken forward concurrently. The whole procurement process from the bidding of funds to delivery could be **reduced by 8 months to 25 months** when compared to the lead time as set out in para. (b)(i) above.

The Chinese translation of this letter and attachment together with their e-copies will follow shortly.

Yours sincerely,



(LO Chun-hung)
Director of Fire Services

(Note 1 : *CNW RAE bids are normally invited in early July and results are announced around the end of October. In respect of the procurement of ambulances, the processes of bidding of funds and approval of funds involve FSTB, SB, GLD, EMSD and FSD, and the procedures for identifying ambulances to be replaced are set out in Appendix H of the Audit Report No. 51.)*

(Note 2 : *The tendering process includes review of specifications, preparation of tender document, invitation and evaluation of tenders, preparation and submission of proposals to tender board for the award of contract. Within the five to six months' tender processing time, pre-tender preparation by GLD normally takes one to two months which includes vetting of tender specifications, evaluation criteria and other terms in consultation with the Department of Justice as required. In line with the Government Procurement Agreement of the World Trade Organization, a tender closing period of 42 days is provided to give sufficient time to tenderers worldwide to prepare and submit their bids. Tender evaluation by EMSD normally takes around two months to complete. Longer tender processing time may be required depending on the number of offers received and whether clarification on tender proposals with tenderers, legal clearance on tender recommendation or negotiation with recommended tenderer is required.)*

c.c. Secretary for Security (Attn : Ms. Carol YUEN)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Attn : Ms. Bernadette LINN)
Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (Attn : Mr. SHE Siu-kuen)
Director of Government Logistics (Attn : Ms. Maria KWAN)
Director of Audit (Attn : Ms. Hildy CHAN)

Internal

Chief Ambulance Officer

Annex

Analysis of the 2-minute Activation Time for Emergency Ambulance Calls

Actual Response Time in respect of the 2-minute Activation Time	2008			2007			2006			*2005 (July – December)		
	No. of Calls	% of Calls	Cumulative % of Calls	No. of Calls	% of Calls	Cumulative % of Calls	No. of Calls	% of Calls	Cumulative % of Calls	No. of Calls	% of Calls	Cumulative % of Calls
≤ 30 seconds	114,722	19.1%	19.1%	98,073	17.1%	17.1%	26,497	4.9%	4.9%	5,056	1.9%	1.9%
> 30 seconds to ≤ 1 minute	287,651	47.9%	67.0%	279,968	48.8%	65.9%	169,276	31.4%	36.3%	46,087	17.3%	19.2%
> 1 minute to ≤ 1 minute 30 seconds	126,435	21.0%	88.0%	125,843	21.9%	87.8%	167,426	31.0%	67.3%	82,709	31.0%	50.2%
> 1 minute 30 seconds to ≤ 2 minutes	45,395	7.6%	95.6%	43,682	7.6%	95.5%	95,201	17.6%	84.9%	66,358	24.8%	75.0%
> 2 minutes	26,625	4.4%	100.0%	26,091	4.5%	100.0%	81,503	15.1%	100.0%	66,850	25.0%	100.0%
Total No. of Calls	600,828	100.0%	100.0%	573,657	100.0%	100.0%	539,903	100.0%	100.0%	267,060	100.0%	100.0%

*** Remark : The Third Generation Mobilizing System (TGMS), which is capable of generating the required data, was put into full commission on 26 June 2005. The data for 2005 covers the full months after commissioning, viz. July to December 2005.**