

立法會
Legislative Council

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Panel on Transport
Meeting on 15 November 2013

Background brief on "Universal Accessibility" Programme

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the "Universal Accessibility" ("UA") Programme and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by Legislative Council Members on the subject.

Background

2. The Administration announced a new policy on UA in August 2012. The new policy aims at expanding the scope of the Administration's programme to retrofit barrier-free access facilities to existing public walkways (i.e. footbridges, elevated walkways and subways) so as to facilitate access of the public. Since then, when considering retrofitting barrier-free access facilities to existing or newly constructed public walkways, the Administration would treat *lifts* and *ramps* equally (unless the site conditions dictate one form over another), which is a change from the past practice which gives priority to ramps. As long as site conditions permit, the Administration will still consider installing lifts at walkways where there is already a standard ramp installed. After a lift has been installed, the Administration will evaluate whether to keep the ramp or demolish it for more spacious pavement or to make way for roadside greening.

3. When the Administration announced the new policy, the Administration at the same time invited members of the public to propose by the end of October 2012 locations of public walkways where they considered necessary to retrofit lifts. During the nomination period, the Administration has received suggestions involving over 250 suggested locations/public walkways within the

ambit of the new policy¹.

4. On 11 January 2013, the Finance Committee approved the Administration's application for creating a new block allocation for implementation of the UA Programme, and an allocation of \$2.449 million and \$187.272 million in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 respectively, to facilitate the implementation of the works projects under the new policy. According to the Administration, the creation of a new block allocation for implementation of the UA Programme was to ensure efficient and flexible works arrangement and resource allocation for carrying out the retrofitting works.

5. At the policy briefing for the Panel on Transport ("the Panel") on 18 January 2013, the Secretary for Transport and Housing advised that it would provide a consolidated list of proposals under the UA Programme to District Councils ("DC") to discuss the priority for implementation, at the same time continue taking forward the original retrofitting programme which was recommended by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Major views and concerns of Members

6. At the meetings of the Panel on Transport and Public Works Subcommittee held on 16 November and 17 December 2012 respectively, Members generally welcomed the Administration's new policy and hoped that the UA Programme could commence as soon as possible.

7. Some Members expressed concern over the schedule of implementing the UA Programme and the number of projects which could be completed with the proposed allocation for each year. The Administration explained that each DC would be invited to select three proposals on the consolidated list for priority commencement of the relevant works. Nevertheless, the completion dates of those projects would depend on the complexity and scale of the relevant works.

8. Members also expressed views on the provision of air-conditioning service for the lifts, size of lifts, barrier-free access ("BFA") specifications and the need to ensure sufficient manpower for implementing the UA Programme and the maintenance works thereafter.

¹ The list of suggested locations can be found at LC Paper No. PWSC21/12-13(01) issued by the Transport and Housing Bureau on 7 January 2013.

Relevant motion/questions moved/raised at Council meetings

9. At the Council meeting on 21 November 2012, a motion on "Building an inclusive society for all", with a relevant part on the UA Programme, was passed. The wording of the motion is in **Appendix I**. Members urged the Administration to expeditiously implement the UA Programme to provide BFA, and actively respond to the suggestions put forward by members of the public from various districts on the construction of BFA.

10. During the 2012-2013 legislative session, four questions relating to the UA Programme were raised at the Council meetings of 17 October 2012, 24 October 2012, 15 May 2013 and 22 May 2013. The hyperlinks to the questions and the Administration's responses, together with other relevant papers, are in **Appendix II**.

Latest position

11. The Administration plans to seek support for funding application for the financial year 2014-2015 for the block allocation 6101TX for the implementation of the UA Programme at the Panel meeting to be held on 15 November 2013.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
11 November 2013

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Building an inclusive society for all”
moved by Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
at the Council meeting of 21 November 2012**

**Motion as amended by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG,
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, Hon CHAN Han-pan, Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki,
Hon Emily LAU and Hon Michael TIEN**

That, Hong Kong as an international city is advanced in economic development but falls behind in social development, often neglecting the basic rights of persons with disabilities; as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (‘the Convention’) has been in force in Hong Kong since 31 August 2008, this Council urges the Government to expeditiously establish an independent dedicated committee to promote, give effect to and monitor the SAR Government’s full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention, and based on the World Health Organization’s international standards on the definition of disabilities, to extend the scope of protection for persons with disabilities, review the definition of ‘severely disabled’ for Disability Allowance, and allow persons with disabilities under the age of 12 and those who do not lose 100% of their work capacity to equally enjoy the rights conferred under the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities; and on 9 November 2011, this Council passed a motion on ‘Comprehensively reviewing the Disability Allowance scheme’, to which the authorities responded on the same day that they expected to complete the review of the Disability Allowance (‘DA’) scheme in early 2012 and report comprehensively to the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services (‘the Panel’); this Council urges the Government to expeditiously report the outcome of the Government’s review on the DA scheme to the Panel, so that this Council can conduct timely follow-up discussions in order to be accountable to all persons with disabilities in Hong Kong; this Council also urges the Government:

- (a) to conduct studies on extending the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities to maxicabs and trams, etc.;
- (b) to increase barrier-free transport services such as the numbers of buses under Rehabus services and Easy-Access Transport Services, etc., so as to provide more point-to-point services for persons with disabilities;

- (c) to expeditiously implement the ‘universal accessibility’ programme to provide barrier-free access, and actively respond to the suggestions put forward by members of the public from various districts on the construction of barrier-free access;
- (d) to proactively promote barrier-free community facilities, improve community facilities, and provide owners’ corporations of buildings with technical and funding support for improving the main entry and exit access of their buildings;
- (e) to formulate a five-year plan for community care, build additional residential care homes for persons with disabilities and increase the number of places, so as to shorten the waiting time for admission and access to services;
- (f) to put in place a ‘subsidy for carers of persons with disabilities’ to assist carers of persons with disabilities in alleviating their financial burdens and mitigate the impact on their livelihood due to their inability to go out to work;
- (g) to set up a quota system for employing persons with disabilities and provide tax concessions to encourage employers to employ more persons with disabilities; and
- (h) to proactively support rehabilitation organizations to establish social enterprises, so as to provide employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- (i) in respect of enhancing public education, to implement Article 8 of the Convention, raise the awareness of the community at large regarding persons with disabilities, and combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, so as to achieve the harmonious integration between persons with disabilities and able-bodied persons;
- (j) in respect of creating a barrier-free environment, to implement Article 9 of the Convention and examine the existing barrier-free measures in connection with buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;
- (k) to assist persons with disabilities in integrating into community life and implement Article 19 of the Convention, ensuring that public facilities

and various types of community services are responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities; and

- (l) in respect of supporting school children with specific learning difficulties, to implement Article 24 of the Convention, make reference to the special education policies of other countries and regions, and enact a 'special education law' to protect the learning needs of school children with specific learning difficulties; the Government should also strengthen teacher training, create a suitable learning environment, and ensure the integration of school children with specific learning difficulties into community life; and
- (m) to implement the recommendations relating to Hong Kong made by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities after it had examined the report submitted by China (including Hong Kong and Macao) on her implementation of the Convention during the session convened at Geneva in September this year; and
- (n) to expeditiously review the impact of the implementation of the minimum wage on the employment of persons with disabilities.

"Universal Accessibility" Programme**List of relevant papers**

Date of meeting	Panel/Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
17.10.2012	Council meeting	Hon TAM Yiu-chung raised a question on lift and escalator practitioners	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201210/17/P201210170410.htm
24.10.2012	Council meeting	Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun raised a question on the new policy on "universal accessibility"	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201210/24/P201210240306.htm
16.11.2012	Panel on Transport ("TP")	Administration's paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)153/12-13(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1116cb1-153-3-e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)307/12-13(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1116cb1-307-1-e.pdf
		Fact sheet on the Universal Accessibility Programme and concerns expressed by different sectors of the community regarding the Programme	FS13/12-13 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/chinese/sec/library/1213fs13-c.pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of the meeting	CB(1)545/12-13 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20121116.pdf
21.11.2012	Council Meeting	Motion on "Building an inclusive society for all"	http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm1121-m3-wordings-e.pdf
		Progress Report	http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm1121-m3-prpt-e.pdf
17.12.2012	Public Works Subcommittee	Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund	PWSC(2012-13)39 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p12-39e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information about the "Universal Accessibility" Programme	PWSC21/12-13(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/fc/pwsc/papers/pwsc1217pwsc-21-1-e.pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC24/12-13 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pwsc20121217.pdf
18.1.2013	TP	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2013 Policy Address	CB(1)409/12-13(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0118cb1-409-3-e.pdf
15.5.2013	Council Meeting	Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG raised a question on barrier-free access and facilities	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201305/15/P201305150224.htm .
21.5.2013	Council Meeting	Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun raised a question on the provision of escalators and lifts at footbridges for public use	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201305/22/P201305220582.htm