

**Chapter 3
of the Director of Audit's Report No. 66**

**Retrofitting of barrier-free access facilities
for grade-separated walkways**

Questions raised and information required

Questions to be responded by the Highways Department

Q1: Paragraph 7 on Page v — Significant time and cost overrun in implementing retrofitting works items

In one case, the project expenditure for the retrofitting works for two subways had increased by 16% to \$67 million due to additional works for utility diversion. In the other two retrofitting projects, the completion dates had been deferred from the original completion dates by 1 088 and 730 days respectively due to interfacing with the nearby water mains replacement works. Would the Administration please advise whether there are any new policies / measures to :

- (a) avoid reoccurrence of the problem that the need for utility diversion was only revealed after awarding the works contracts ?**
- (b) adopt the Audit Commission's recommendation, if possible, of identifying the need for utility diversion in feasibility study reports to endeavour to find solutions before awarding the works contracts ?**

A1: Details of the three projects mentioned in Paragraph 7 on Page v of the Audit Report are as follows :

- (i) The first project which was mentioned with cost overrun is Public Works Programme (PWP) Item No. 143TB "Improvement to pedestrian subway system at Kwai Fuk Road roundabout". The Highways Department (HyD) had explained to the Audit Commission that the main objective of the project is to improve the existing pedestrian subway system, including construction of a new subway barrel and its lifts connecting to the ground level. The works for**

construction of new lifts only contributed to about 18% of the approved project estimate. There was an increase in the overall project cost due to various unforeseeable factors (such as higher-than-expected tender prices), thus increasing the approved project estimate by 16% to \$67 million (i.e. an increase of \$9.3 million). The increase in the costs for the lifts only constituted a small portion of that \$9.3 million.

The Audit Report mentioned that the increase in approved project estimate of \$9.3 million was partly due to additional works for utility diversion. The HyD clarified that the cost overrun for these lift construction works (about \$0.5 million, about 5%) was caused by the various unforeseeable factors (such as higher-than-expected tender prices) mentioned above, but not additional works for utility diversion.

- (ii) The second project which was mentioned with about 1,000 days of delay is PWP Item No. 153TB “Enhancement of footbridges in Tsim Sha Tsui East”. The scope of 153TB includes the refurbishment of two footbridges in Tsim Sha Tsui East, apart from the provision of 3 lift towers and 6 lifts. The main objective of this project is to enhance the tourism-supporting facilities in that area. As mentioned in paragraph 2.11(b) of the Audit Report, the whole project was delayed due to the contractor’s delay in the procurement of materials for various sections of the contract. During construction, the HyD met the contractor’s management many times, urging them to complete the works timely and properly. At the same time, the HyD also deducted liquidated damages from the contract payment according to the contract provisions and reflected the contractor’s unsatisfactory performance in their performance reports.

The delay of this project was not caused by additional works for utility diversion.

- (iii) The third project which was mentioned with about 700 days of delay is the provision of lifts to an existing footbridge across King’s Road at the junction of North View Street and North Point Road in North Point. As stated in the HyD’s response in Appendix B of the Audit Report, the HyD had all along been liaising with the Water Supplies Department (WSD) with a view to tendering the lift retrofitting works

after confirming the completion date of the WSD's works. Subsequently, with the delay in the completion of the WSD's works contract, the HyD's lift retrofitting works project unavoidably suffered from a consequential delay. Having noted the difficulties encountered in the WSD's works due to unfavourable ground conditions and stringent traffic requirements (i.e. traffic lanes could not be closed during normal working hours on weekdays), the HyD had instructed its contractor to implement mitigation measures to create more work fronts at the concerned road section to reduce the delay to the works, and requested the utility undertakers to change the diversion routes so as to shorten the time needed for carrying out works on the road.

Paragraph 4 of Case 2 of the Audit Report mentions that in Audit's view, for works requiring utility diversions (as identified in feasibility studies) in implementing a works project in future, the HyD needs to endeavour to find solutions before letting out the works contracts. In this regard, the HyD has all along been maintaining close liaison with utility undertakers during the planning and design stages of each retrofitting item to assess the scope and time required for modification or diversion of existing underground utilities, and coordinate the arrangement for such diversion works to ensure smooth implementation of each retrofitting item. Nevertheless, when taking forward the items, the HyD would inevitably encounter unforeseeable challenges and difficulties in implementing the works, such as the variations between the actual condition and utility undertakers' assessed condition of underground utilities, which would affect the progress of works and project costs. The HyD would endeavour to overcome these challenges and difficulties and adopt appropriate measures to minimise the related impact, including enhancing the design schemes and construction processes where appropriate and practicable with a view to completing the lift retrofitting works as soon as possible.

In response to the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will remind its staff and consultants that they should endeavour to find feasible solutions for diversion of existing utilities before awarding works contracts. If the works subsequently entail utility diversion or there are other works sites in the vicinity, the HyD will continue to assess in detail the possible impact of these factors on the lift retrofitting works and the time required for resolving these issues.

The HyD will endeavour to look for the optimal solution for coordinating the retrofitting and utility diversion works, so as to make a more accurate estimate of the completion date.

Q2 : Paragraphs 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 2.12, 2.19 and 2.25 – Slow progress, significant time and cost overrun in implementing retrofitting works items

The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) informed the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Transport in June 2011 that the majority of the retrofitting works for barrier-free access facilities (BFA) for grade-separated (GS) walkways under the 2011 Retrofitting Programme would be completed by 2017-2018. These works formed part of the 2011 Retrofitting Initiative for providing barrier-free access facilities to the disabled. Among the 184 walkways found to be feasible for retrofitting works, as of December 2015, the retrofitting works for only 60 (33%) had been completed. The retrofitting works for 17 (9%) were under detailed design and public consultation and 13 (7%) had not commenced. The Audit Commission noted that there had been significant time and cost overrun in implementing the retrofitting works items. In some cases, the need for utility diversion was only revealed after awarding the works contracts. On the other hand, the HyD's feasibility studies found that 95 walkways were not feasible for retrofitting works. However, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)'s feasibility studies found that it was technically feasible to carry out retrofitting works for these three walkways by adopting alternative solutions. In this connection, whether HyD agrees that :

- (a) the Administration will not be able to complete all relevant retrofitting works according to the target set in 2011 (i.e. by 2017-2018). What measures are to be implemented to expedite the progress of these retrofitting works to ensure those disabled who need to use these facilities would not be affected ?
- (b) what is the latest progress for those retrofitting works which have not yet been completed ?

- (c) **what are the Administration's measures to avoid significant time and cost overrun when implementing the retrofitting works in future ?**

- (d) **According to Cases 5 to 7 (Paragraph 2.19), the HyD's technical feasibility studies under the 2001 Retrofitting Initiative found that it was infeasible to carry out the retrofitting works for a footbridge in Sham Shui Po, a footbridge in Wan Chai and a subway in Wan Chai, whereas the CEDD later found in its feasibility studies conducted under the 2012 Expanded Programme that it was technically feasible to carry out the works for these three walkways by adopting alternative solutions. What are the reasons for the different recommendations given by HyD and CEDD ?**

A2(a)-(c): As at end 2015, out of the 184 GS walkways mentioned in the Audit Report as feasible for retrofitting works, 60 items had been completed (including 26 items completed under the "Original Programme" of the Universal Accessibility Programme (UAP) as at end 2015). The HyD is now implementing the remaining 124 items spreading over all districts under the "Original Programme". Of these 124 items, the works of 94 items have commenced, while the works for the remaining items will commence as soon as possible. As stated in paragraph 2.16(a) of the Audit Report, the HyD has stated that it will expedite actions to complete the remaining retrofitting works under the 2011 Retrofitting Programme, so as to achieve the completion of about 80% of the 150 items under the "Original Programme" (i.e. 122 items including the 26 items completed as at end 2015) in phases by 2018 as stated in the 2016 Policy Address.

As mentioned in our reply to Q1, at the planning and design stage, the HyD would conduct public consultation and site investigation for each item. Since diversion of existing utilities would often be required, the HyD would maintain close liaison and co-ordination with the utility companies and the responsible parties of the other works or development projects to ensure smooth implementation of each item. Nevertheless, there would inevitably be unforeseeable challenges and difficulties in implementing

the works, such as longer-than-expected time to handle different public opinions during the design stage. Moreover, the general crowded condition of underground utilities and the variations often observed during construction between the actual condition and utility undertakers' recorded condition of underground utilities would affect the progress of works and project costs. The HyD would endeavour to overcome these challenges and difficulties, and adopt appropriate measures to minimise the related impact.

In response to the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will remind its staff and consultants that they should endeavour to find feasible solutions for diversion of existing utilities before awarding works contracts. If the works subsequently entail utility diversion or there are other works sites in the vicinity, the HyD will continue to assess in detail the possible impact of these factors on the lift retrofitting works and the time required for resolving these issues. The HyD will endeavour to look for the optimal solution for coordinating the retrofitting and utility diversion works, so as to make a more accurate estimate of the completion date.

The HyD has been exercising stringent cost control. For the 26 items completed as at end 2015 under the UAP, all were completed within their original approved project estimates without cost overrun.

The HyD will continue to use its best endeavours to take forward the works in accordance with established policies and relevant guidelines.

A2(d): In view of the fact that there have all along been a large number of retrofitting works items, the HyD has been endeavouring to implement the works with optimal use of available resources. In this regard, when reviewing the technical feasibility of these retrofitting works items in the past, the HyD would exclude those items which were considered technically infeasible due to factors such as site constraints on a case-by-case basis, in order to concentrate the use of resources for implementing items that were technically feasible. Subsequently, the Civil Engineering Development Department (CEDD)'s feasibility studies

conducted under the 2012 Expanded Programme (i.e. the Expanded Programme under the UAP) considered that parts of the retrofitting works of some items would be technically feasible after taking into consideration the actual site conditions and after adopting appropriate modifications to the project scheme.

For the footbridge in Case 5 in the Audit Report (connecting to the main destination Chak On Estate through Tai Woh Ping Road), as stated in the Audit Report, the HyD at that time considered that the existing Tai Woh Ping Road connecting the footbridge to Chak On Estate was too steep and large-scale site formation works would have to be carried out to make the road barrier-free. There was however insufficient space for such works. Subsequently, the CEDD carried out site investigation under the 2012 Expanded Programme and considered that the provision of a lift and a ramp would still be beneficial for the pedestrians to cross Tai Po Road although the steepness of Tai Woh Ping Road still could not be improved under this project (but pedestrians would still need to access Chak On Estate via the existing Tai Woh Ping Road). The CEDD hence considered the retrofitting proposal feasible and obtained agreement from the relevant District Council (DC).

For the footbridge across Gloucester Road and Percival Street in Case 6 in the Audit Report, as stated in the Audit Report, the HyD at that time considered the lift retrofitting works at Exit D were infeasible because the proposed lift location overlapped with two underground sewers and there was insufficient space to divert the sewers. It was also considered infeasible as re-provisioning a staircase after retrofitting a lift at the same location would extend the length of staircase at Exit D, making the adjacent footpath too narrow. Under the 2012 Expanded Programme, the CEDD reviewed the scheme of retrofitting of lift and re-provisioning of staircase at the same location after demolishing the existing staircase at Exit D. Based on the experience gained in implementing various retrofitting works over the past few years, CEDD made appropriate modifications to the scheme of retrofitting of lift and re-provisioning of staircase. CEDD then considered the

retrofitting works feasible and obtained agreement from the relevant DC.

For the subway near Sports Road in Case 7 in the Audit Report, as stated in the Audit Report, the HyD at that time (in 2009) considered that since a lift could not be installed at Exit B, retrofitting works for the subway were considered infeasible. Under the 2012 Expanded Programme, the CEDD reviewed the original retrofitting proposal and considered that implementing lift retrofitting works at Exits A and C would still be beneficial to the pedestrians to cross Canal Road East although it was still not feasible to carry out retrofitting works at Exit B. The CEDD then considered the proposed scheme feasible and obtained agreement from the relevant DC.

Over the years, the HyD has been retrofitting BFA facilities at GS walkways in accordance with established policies and relevant guidelines. However, with developments that took place in recent years, the environment around public walkways, such as the provision of at-grade crossings or BFA facilities nearby, might have changed. In response to the Audit's findings (see paragraph 4.11 of the Report) that 328 walkways had not been provided with BFA facilities as of April 2011, as well as the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will review the latest information on BFA facilities of existing GS walkways, and examine the feasibility of retrofitting such facilities for those GS walkways currently without BFA facilities where appropriate. The HyD would report the results to the Legislative Council (LegCo) and relevant DCs when appropriate.

Q2 (cont'd): Page 18 Case 1 - Works delay due to interfacing problems with other works projects at the same location

Owing to the interfacing of the lift retrofitting works with a nearby water mains project under delay, the concerned lift could only commissioned in 20 months after commissioning of the lift at the other end of the footbridge. The project cost had increased by \$6.72 million (from \$17.66 million to \$24.38 million). What measure would be taken by the HyD to

prevent recurrence of similar interfacing problems between the retrofitting works and other public works project in future ?

A2 (cont'd): Please refer to Appendix B of the Audit Report and our reply to Q1(iii) for the details of works of the case mentioned in P.18 of the Audit Report.

Regarding the interface of retrofitting works with other public works projects, at the planning and design stage, the HyD would conduct detailed site investigation for each item. If diversion of existing utilities is required, the HyD would maintain close liaison and co-ordination with the utility companies and the responsible parties of the other works or development projects to ensure smooth implementation of each item.

If the works entail utility diversion or there are other works sites in the vicinity after commencement of works, the HyD will assess in detail the possible impact of these factors on the lift retrofitting works and the time required for resolving these issues. The HyD will endeavour to look for the optimal solution for coordinating the retrofitting and utility diversion works.

The HyD will write to remind its staff and consultants of the above matters in relation to the interface of retrofitting works with other public works projects.

Q3: Page 20 Case 2, Paragraphs 1 and 3

What policy could be implemented to enhance the accuracy of recording the actual numbers, extents and locations of utilities by the utility undertakers to prevent reoccurrence of the problems similar to the case under 6167TB for which it had taken several years to work out the utility diversion proposal with the utility undertakers for gas mains, power cables and tele-communication cables, resulting in significant time overrun ?

A3: Records of underground utilities are under the policy portfolio of the Development Bureau. Regarding the said subject, there were detailed discussions in the past among three works departments and five utility undertakers (including the HyD, the Drainage Services Department, the WSD, CLP Power Hong Kong Limited,

Hongkong Electric Company Limited, Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited, Hutchison Global Communications Limited and PCCW Limited). Studies were also undertaken by an independent consultant to investigate the feasibility of establishing a comprehensive and centralised database of underground pipelines. After reviewing the technical conditions required for the establishment of the database and taking into account the views of stakeholders (including works departments and utility undertakers), the independent consultant recommended that the present electronic data platform for underground utilities was the best option. This platform commenced operation in 2004. The participating organisations appropriately maintain their own underground utility records according to unified rules and standards. Through this jointly-built electronic platform, timely responses are given to enquiries on particular locations raised by relevant works departments or utility undertakers, and data are shared among the mentioned parties where necessary, thus serving the similar function as a centralised database.

Furthermore, since the underground utilities in Hong Kong are increasingly crowded, the HyD has conducted a review on the existing database of underground utilities in 2013. Taking into account the technical conditions required for the establishment of the database and the views of stakeholders (including works departments and utility undertakers), the HyD is of the view that it is still appropriate to continue adopting the current operation mechanism. Nevertheless, the HyD and the stakeholders will continue to review the operation of the aforementioned electronic platform and make enhancement, and will also invite new major operators in the market to join the platform.

Furthermore, as mentioned in our reply to Q1, in response to the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will remind its staff and consultants that they should endeavour to find feasible solutions for diversion of existing utilities before awarding works contracts. If the works subsequently entail utility diversion or there are other works sites in the vicinity, the HyD will continue to assess in detail the possible impact of these factors on the lift retrofitting works and the time required for resolving these issues. The HyD will endeavour to look for the optimal solution for coordinating the retrofitting and utility diversion works, so as to make a more accurate estimate of the completion date.

Q4: Page 20 Case 2 Paragraph 2

According to report, the Contractor submitted claims for the works items due to delay in retrofitting works for the subway under 6101TX. What is the amount of this cost claim and the status? Is there any other works item being claimed by the Contractor due to delay? If yes, what are the details?

A4: Regarding the contractor of the lift retrofitting items for the subway under block allocation Subhead 6101TX mentioned in Case 2 on Page 20 of the Audit Report, the contractor had notified claims relating to delay or additional costs of 11 retrofitting works items (including Case 2). The HyD and its consultants were handling the claims in accordance with the contract provisions. Since the Contractor has not yet submitted specific cost figures for the claims, detailed information of the claims cannot be provided at this moment.

Q5: Paragraph 3.10 - the pedestrian flow of some walkways nominated under the 2012 Expanded Programme was relatively low

The 18 DCs were each invited to nominate three walkways from the List of Public Proposed Walkways (PPW List) for lift retrofitting works. The PPW List provided to Tuen Mun and Sha Tin DCs contained 28 and 21 walkways respectively, the List provided to Central and Western, Sham Shui Po and Sai Kung DCs each contained 4 walkways, and that to Islands DC only contained 1 walkway. As a result, Sham Shui Po and Islands DCs together nominated three walkways outside the List for lift retrofitting works. Moreover, an elevated walkway in Southern District and a footbridge in Sai Kung District had peak-hour pedestrian flow of 69 and 112 respectively; whereas a footbridge in Yau Tsim Mong District and a footbridge in Kwun Tong District had peak-hour pedestrian flow of above 5,000 respectively were not nominated. Based on the above, whether the HyD agrees that, since there exists a large difference in the pedestrian flows of walkways nominated by different DCs, the public resources for implementing the lift retrofitting works for the 3 walkways nominated by DCs were not spent in the most cost-effective

way (i.e. the public money spent on these retrofitting works could not benefit the majority of the public) ?

A5: When this Government launched the UAP in August 2012, it was made clear that the Government would retrofit lifts progressively for all walkways where necessary and technically feasible. The policy intent is that regardless of pedestrian flow, the Government will retrofit lifts for all GS walkways where technically feasible. Expected usage may be a factor taken into account by the DCs in selecting the priority items. The public reaction to the UAP was overwhelming. Between August and October 2012, there were suggestions for lift installations at about 250 public walkways. In the light of the great demand, the Government adopted a model that was close to the views of the public by collaborating with the 18 DCs, and invited each DC to prioritise the new items proposed by the public in their districts in the first half of 2013, and select three public walkways for priority implementation (the Expanded Programme).

To assist the DCs in selecting priority items, the HyD and the CEDD provided DCs with the number of suggestions received and pedestrian flow information for each of these public walkways to facilitate their overall consideration of priorities. The HyD understand that when selecting items for priority implementation, the DCs would usually consider pedestrian flow, number of suggestions received, existence of existing facilities for the elderly/disabled nearby, the availability of alternative BFA facilities, development status of the community nearby, etc. Some DC members also suggested using benefits of the works, good use of public funds and effective use of resources as criteria for selecting priority items for implementation. The Government respects the decisions made by each DC after thorough discussion for the implementation of retrofitting items. After the DCs have selected the priority items, the HyD and the CEDD would conduct technical feasibility studies, investigation and detailed design for these priority items, as well as consult the DCs on the design scheme, etc.

To ensure proper use of public funds, the HyD and the CEDD would take forward the items selected by the DCs in a cost-effective manner through an established project management system, designs that cater for the needs of all the stakeholders, a fair tendering system and strict supervision on the quality of works.

Q6: Paragraph 4.10 – Some GS walkways constructed after effective date of Disability Discrimination Ordinance have not been provided with BFA facilities

The Disability Discrimination Ordinance took effect in 1996. The Audit Commission revealed that at least 11 GS walkways constructed and opened for use during the period from 1999 to 2005 were not provided with BFA facilities. Would the HyD please advise :

- (a) the reason why those GS walkways constructed and opened for use from 1999 to 2005 were not provided with BFA facilities ?**
- (b) the progress of lift or ramp retrofitting works for these GS walkways?**
- (c) if the lift or ramp retrofitting works for these GS walkways are not feasible, what remedial measures would be taken by the HyD ?**

A6: The HyD has all along been retrofitting BFA facilities at existing GS walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by the HyD) where technically feasible and resources permit. Most of the walkways constructed after 1996 and maintained by the HyD have been retrofitted with BFA facilities in accordance with requirements stipulated in the Disability Discrimination Ordinance.

For the 11 walkways mentioned in the Audit Report without BFA facilities, seven of them were not constructed by the HyD but were handed over to the HyD for repair and maintenance after construction. The remaining four walkways were constructed by the HyD but the HyD could not retrieve from the relevant records the reasons of not providing BFA facilities when these walkways were being constructed.

Out of the above-mentioned seven walkways not constructed by the HyD but were handed over to the HyD for repair and maintenance, three have been included in the “Original Programme” under the UAP or other projects for retrofitting works. For the remaining four walkways, the HyD will conduct a review in response to the Audit Recommendations and take

measures to implement retrofitting works after considering the relevant information (including technical feasibility and nearby environment, etc.), and consult the concerned DCs for the retrofitting works.

For the other four walkways constructed by the HyD, one of them has been included in the Original Programme under the UAP for retrofitting works. For the remaining three walkways, the HyD will conduct a review in response to the Audit Recommendations and take measures to implement retrofitting works after considering the relevant information (including technical feasibility and nearby environment, etc.), and consult the concerned DCs for the retrofitting works.

Q7: Paragraph 8 on Page v

The Audit report stated that, the HyD had not issued guidelines for determining whether a public GS walkway is feasible for carrying out lift/ramp retrofitting works. Why the HyD did not issue such guidelines? In response to the recommendation in Audit report, would the HyD issue such guidelines as soon as possible?

A7: Paragraph 8 on page v of the Audit Report states that, the HyD had not issued guidelines on determining whether a walkway is feasible for carrying out lift/ramp retrofitting works.

Over the years, the HyD has been installing BFA facilities at GS walkways in accordance with established policies and relevant guidelines, such as the Transport Planning and Design Manual of the Transport Department and the Structures Design Manual of the HyD. In response to the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will review the existing guidelines and consider whether additional guidelines should be formulated to specify the conditions under which lift/ramp retrofitting works for a public GS walkway would be feasible.

Q8: Paragraph 8 on Page v

Why the CEDD and the HyD have different views on some of the lift retrofitting works, such as the retrofitting works for the 3 GS walkway in Sham Shui Po and Wan Chai as mentioned in the report? What are the justifications adopted by the CEDD to overthrow the decision made by the HyD during the 2001 Retrofitting Initiative that the lift/ramp retrofitting works for these walkways to be infeasible?

What are the details of the “alternative solutions” mentioned in the report?

(This question is the same as question (1) to be responded by the CEDD)

A8: Please refer to our reply to Q2(d).

(The reply to Q2(d) is a coordinated reply of the HyD and the CEDD.)

Q9: Paragraph 12 on Page vi

- (a) Information on pedestrian-flow and the nearby facilities for the elderly and Person with a Disability (PWDs) near the walkway, are very essential for the DC’s consideration in nominating walkways for lift retrofitting works. Why did the HyD only provide the above information to 3 (Tuen Mun, Kwai Tsing and Kwun Tong) DCs, so that the remaining 15 DCs could not have sufficient information to consider the feasibility of lift retrofitting works?**
- (b) On the other hand, why did the CEDD provide the pedestrian-flow information of a footbridge to Wong Tai Sin DC only after the DC had nominated such footbridge for retrofitting works?**
- (c) Any new policy / measure to rectify the mistakes for insufficient information or late submission of information as mentioned above?**

(This question is the same as question (2) to be responded by the CEDD)

A9: To assist the DCs in selecting priority items, the HyD provided DCs with information comprising the pedestrian flow, the number of suggestions received, the layout plan and photos for each of those public walkways to facilitate their overall consideration of priorities. Since the DCs are familiar with the districts' environment and the local sentiment, through detailed discussion among the DC members, most of the DCs could nominate the priority items for implementation based on the information provided and their understanding of the local situation. If the DCs request for more information during discussion, the HyD will endeavour to cooperate. There were individual DCs (such as Tuen Mun, Kwai Tsing and Kwun Tong) that requested for additional information during the consultation process. The HyD had provided the relevant information upon receiving such requests to facilitate the DCs to nominate the priority items. In response to the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will proactively provide more information to the DCs to facilitate their discussion in the future.

As the main span of the footbridge serves the primary function of the walkway to cross the road, its pedestrian flow should normally be adequate to reflect the level of usage of the walkway (including its entrances/exits) for consideration by the DCs. As regards the case related to Wong Tai Sin DC, the DC had already nominated three walkways for priority implementation based on the information provided by the HyD. Subsequently, when carrying out feasibility study for one of the priority items, the CEDD proposed to demolish a ramp to provide space for the lift retrofitting works. Therefore, the CEDD provided the additional pedestrian flow information for individual ramps and staircases at the DC's request, in order to confirm that the impact to the public of the demolition works would be minimal.

The Chief Executive announced in the 2016 Policy Address that the implementation of the UAP will continue. From the fourth quarter of this year, the Government will invite the DCs to further nominate not more than three existing walkways in each district for the second phase of the programme. The HyD has started relevant preparatory work, including carrying out preliminary assessment on the technical feasibility of the retrofitting works and

rough estimation of the construction costs, assessing pedestrian flow, and collecting information of existing facilities for the elderly/disabled nearby, the availability of alternative BFA facilities and development status of the community nearby, etc. This would enable the further provision of relevant information of walkways (including the current and estimated future pedestrian flow of the walkway concerned, estimated construction cost, facilities for the elderly nearby and site constraints, etc.) to the 18 DCs when inviting them to select walkways for implementation, so as to facilitate the DCs to determine the priority of implementation with due consideration of pertinent factors (including cost-effectiveness).

In response to the Audit Recommendations, in order to assist DCs' selection of appropriate items for implementation, the HyD will provide unified information to the DCs when taking forward items of the second phase of the UAP in the fourth quarter of this year.

(This is a coordinated reply of the HyD and the CEDD.)

Q10: Paragraph 17 on Page viii

Would the HyD accept the Audit Commission's recommendation to re-examine the justifications for not carrying out retrofitting works for walkways found under the 2001 Retrofitting Initiative to be infeasible for such works, and inform LegCo and the related DCs of the examination findings? If yes, what are the details? If not, why?

A10: In response to the Audit Recommendations, the HyD will review the latest information on retrofitting BFA facilities of existing GS walkways, including re-examining whether the justifications of not carrying out retrofitting works previously are still applicable in light of the present circumstances. The HyD will take measures to implement retrofitting works after considering the relevant information (including technical feasibility and nearby environment, etc). The HyD would report the results to the LegCo and relevant DCs when appropriate.

10 June 2016