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17 October 2017

Ms Shirley Chan  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms Chan,

**Subcommittee to Follow Up Issues Relating to  
the Three-runway System at the Hong Kong International Airport**

**Follow-up to the letter from Hon Jeremy Tam**

I refer to the Hon Jeremy Tam's letter of 21 September 2017 about marine works safety concerning the Three-Runway System (3RS) and an incident of a fireboat being stranded in the 3RS works area which took place on 30 August 2017. Following our initial reply dated 28 September 2017, with input from relevant government departments and the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK), I am authorised to provide a consolidated reply as follows.

In accordance with the approved Marine Travel Routes and Management Plan for construction and associated vessels under the Environmental Permit of the 3RS project, AAHK has established a Marine Traffic Monitoring System to manage vessel activities in and around the 3RS marine works area. Following the commencement of the reclamation works, AAHK has set up a Marine Traffic Control Centre (MTCC) to monitor and track designated marine traffic routes, coordinate designated marine entrances to the works site, check the compliance of vessel speed limit, and ensure good marine practice and safety. The MTCC operates round the clock. Apart from monitoring the

compliance of construction vessels' activities with relevant environmental and marine traffic safety requirements, it also serves as the central liaison point between AAHK and relevant government departments in relation to the 3RS works. For the purpose of communication, apart from a mobile Hotline available at the MTCC, designated Very High Frequency (VHF) radio channels and mobile phone numbers of several key personnel from MTCC/AAHK have been made available to all parties concerned. As well, AAHK has planned for a series of marine safety drills with relevant departments/parties, and the first one was conducted on 22 June 2017. As part of the drills, parties concerned are aware that access to the 3RS works site has to be guided by the MTCC guide boat.

As regards the incident that took place in the 3RS works area on 30 August 2017, FSD had attempted to contact the MTCC through the mobile Hotline for MTCC guide boat before its fireboat (No. 5) entered into the 3RS works area to attend an aircraft full emergency incident call. However, it was unable to reach the MTCC, and therefore to avoid delay the fireboat proceeded to entering into the works area before FSD could contact the MTCC again through other means. In the process, the fireboat went aground at sea about one nautical mile off north-east of the Hong Kong International Airport. The affected fireboat was towed away from the shallow water and thence to the Government Dockyard by tugboat for inspection. Subsequently, it was noted that the MTCC had recorded a missed call from FSD on 30 August 2017. Although there was no damage to the affected fireboat and no casualty was involved in the accident, FSD immediately reported the accident to the Director of Marine within 24 hours in accordance with the established procedures of the Marine Department (MD). Since the incident did not cause any significant damage to the vessel or induce environmental pollution, and since there was no serious injury to the vessel's crew, the incident was categorised as minor accident without the need to launch an investigation in accordance with MD's Marine Accident Investigation Guidance Notes. Relevant government departments and AAHK are now conducting a review on the operational procedures while attending incident inside the works area of 3RS.

After the incident, a meeting between FSD, MD, Marine Police, Civil Aviation Department and AAHK was held on 7 September 2017. The current procedures for vessels entering into and moving within the 3RS marine works area were discussed and reviewed at the meeting. AAHK and all government departments concerned have agreed to enhance the guidelines on the use of radio communications between

MTCC of AAHK and government concerned vessels. In order to test the enhanced guidelines/procedures and the cooperation amongst relevant government departments/parties when dealing with emergencies within the 3RS marine works area, an inter-departmental firefighting and rescue exercise was held smoothly on 13 October 2017.

Marine works safety is an important aspect of the 3RS project. AAHK and relevant government departments will remain vigilant to ensure the safety of all parties concerned.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Alice Yeung)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c.

Hon Wong Ting-kwong, SBS, JP (Chairman of the Subcommittee to Follow Up Issues Relating to the Three-runway System at the Hong Kong International Airport)

Airport Authority Hong Kong (Attn: Miss Billie Leung)