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Panel on Development

Special meeting on 6 January 2017

**Proposal on conducting a duty visit to the Dongjiang River Basin
from 19 to 20 February 2017**

Purpose

This paper invites members to consider the proposed arrangements for the Panel on Development ("the Panel") to conduct a duty visit to the Dongjiang River Basin from 19 (Sunday) to 20 (Monday) February 2017¹ to obtain first-hand information about the operation of the Dongjiang-Shenzhen Water Supply System and the measures taken by the Guangdong ("GD") Provincial authorities to safeguard the quality of Dongjiang water ("DJ water") supplied to Hong Kong.

Background

2. About 20% to 30% of Hong Kong's fresh water supply is from rainfall and the remaining 70% to 80% is DJ water imported from the GD Province. Under the "package deal lump sum" approach adopted since 2006, Hong Kong imports DJ water as needed up to an annual ceiling quantity of 820 million cubic metres to ensure a 99% reliability² of water supply in Hong Kong³.

¹ These dates were proposed by the Administration in consultation with the Guangdong Provincial authorities and in response to the discussion of the Panel on Development on 8 November 2016 on conducting a visit to the Dongjiang Basin. The relevant letter from the Administration was circulated to members on 22 December 2016 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)359/16-17(01).

² According to the Administration, "99%" reliability means that water supply is maintained round-the-clock even under extreme drought condition with a return period of 1 in 100 years. "Return period" is the average number of years during which an event will occur once statistically. A longer return period means a rarer chance of occurrence.

Under the 2015-2017 DJ water supply agreement entered between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the GD Provincial Government, the annual lump sum water prices are \$4,222.79 million in 2015, \$4,491.52 million in 2016 and \$4,778.29 million in 2017.

3. Given that DJ water is the major source of fresh water supply in Hong Kong, the quality of DJ water is always of public concern. In December 2015, there was a media report that all the 10 water samples taken by an environmental group from five reservoirs storing DJ water⁴ had been found to contain perfluorinated chemicals, which are hazardous to human health. It was also reported that the water quality monitoring data of DJ water taken from the Muk Wu Pumping Station in Hong Kong by the Water Supplies Department ("WSD") in 2015 indicated that the level of faecal coliforms in the water samples exceeded the standard by six times during the summer and that the total phosphorus level was the highest in the past decade, which had been caused by the discharge of flood water from Shawan River in Shenzhen, which is downstream of DJ, during downpours.

Request for the Administration to arrange a visit to the Dongjiang River Basin

4. Dr Hon Helena WONG wrote to the former Panel Chairman on 11 December 2015 expressing concern on the issues raised in the media report⁵ and suggested that a visit by the Panel be made within the 2015-2016 legislative session to the DJ River Basin and pumping stations receiving DJ water to understand the operation of the DJ water supply system and the measures taken to protect DJ water from pollution. At the meeting on 23 February 2016, the Panel agreed to take forward Dr WONG's suggestion of conducting a visit to the DJ River Basin.

5. After the meeting, the former Panel Chairman wrote to the Secretary of Development requesting the assistance of the Administration to line up a visit to the Dongjiang River Basin for members to observe the operation of the DJ water supply system and the facilities for monitoring and safeguarding the quality of DJ water supplied to Hong Kong, as well as the progress of the

³ According to the Administration, the actual quantity of DJ water to be imported each year is dependent on the amount of local yield, reservoir storage level and water demand.

⁴ These reservoirs are Plover Cove Reservoir, High Island Reservoir, Shek Pik Reservoir, Tai Lam Chung Reservoir and Shing Mun Reservoir.

⁵ The Administration's response to Dr Hon Helena WONG's concern was given in a paper to the Panel on Development (LC Paper No. CB(1)442/15-16(01)) circulated on 14 January 2016.

comprehensive remediation project for the water environment of the Shawan River Basin.

6. In its correspondence with the Panel on the matter in April and May 2016,⁶ the Administration advised that the GD Provincial authorities welcomed the Panel's visit to the DJ River Basin and the facilities supporting the supply of DJ water to Hong Kong. However, the GD Provincial authorities would be heavily engaged in flood prevention in the coming few months and considered the period before or after the tide season a better timing for conducting the visit. The GD Provincial authorities indicated that they would be pleased to arrange a visit for the Panel to the DJ River Basin in autumn or winter. At the Panel meeting on 21 June 2016, the former Panel Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Panel of the Sixth Legislative Council should follow up the matter.

7. At the Panel meeting on 8 November 2016, members agreed that the proposed visit to the DJ River Basin be pursued. The Clerk to the Panel wrote to the Administration to convey the Panel's request.

Objectives of the proposed visit

8. The objectives of the proposed visit are proposed as follows:
- (a) to obtain first-hand information on the measures taken by the GD Provincial authorities in safeguarding the quality of DJ water supplied to Hong Kong;
 - (b) to observe the quality of DJ water at various points of the Dongjiang-Shenzhen Water Supply System; and
 - (c) to exchange views with the GD Provincial authorities on issues of mutual concern related to the supply of DJ water to Hong Kong.

Proposed timing and arrangements for the duty visit

Proposed timing

9. Having consulted the GD Provincial authorities, the Administration has suggested that the duty visit take place on 19 and 20 February 2017 (Sunday and Monday).

⁶ LC Papers Nos. CB(1)798/15-16(01) and CB(1)1004/15-16(01)

Visit programme

10. A visit programme proposed by the Administration having regard to the Panel's request and in consultation with the GD Provincial authorities is in **Appendix I**. In gist, the proposed visit programme covers the following places/facilities/parties:

- (a) Sections of Dongjiang near Heyuan and Huizhou;
- (b) Dongjiang River Basin Water Quantity and Quality Monitoring and Control Centre;
- (c) Taiyuan Pumping Station;
- (d) Wastewater Interception Schemes for Shawan River;
- (e) Bio-nitrification Plant at Shenzhen Reservoir;
- (f) Department of Water Resources of Guangdong Province; and
- (g) Guangdong Yue Gang Water Supply Co Ltd.

Participation

11. Members are invited to consider whether both Panel and non-Panel members are to be invited to join the visit. The broad guidelines for determining the size and composition of a delegation are that members of the relevant committee should have priority in participating in the visit, and the delegation should be of a manageable size in order not to create difficulties in logistical arrangements.

12. In accordance with Rule 29A(b) of the House Rules ("HR"), Members joining the visit should participate in the entire programme.

13. The Administration has indicated that about 10 officials from the Development Bureau and the Water Supplies Department will accompany Panel members during the visit to offer technical advice and assist in logistical arrangements. The expenses incurred by the government officials participating in the visit will be borne by the Administration.

Budget and funding arrangements

14. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit account ("ODV") of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organized by committees of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in one term in excess of the approved allocation has to be paid by the Member personally. If by the end of a term there are unused balances in Members' ODV accounts, the funds available will be used to pay those Members who have expended more than their allocation, in proportion to their excess qualifying expenditure.

15. A ballpark estimate of the expenditure (including travelling, hotel accommodation, meals and sundry expenses) to be incurred by each participating Member for the proposed duty visit is about \$3,300. A breakdown of the estimated expenditure is in **Appendix II**. The actual expenditure will vary subject to the final visit programme, the transportation service charge and hotel room rate at the time of confirmation.

Advice sought

16. Members are invited to advise: (a) whether the Panel should conduct a visit to the Dongjiang River Basin as proposed from 19 to 20 February 2017; if yes, whether (b) the visit should be open to non-Panel Members.

17. Subject to the Panel's agreement to conduct the proposed duty visit, the Secretariat will proceed with the preparation and liaison work, and prepare a paper to seek the House Committee's permission in accordance with HR22(v).

Panel on Development

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Visit programme[#]

Date	Time	Programme
19 February 2017 (Sunday)	AM	Depart from the Legislative Council Complex at 7:00 am Visit — ➤ A section of Dongjiang near Heyuan ➤ Xinfengjiang Reservoir
	PM	Visit— ➤ Dongjiang River Basin Water Quantity and Quality Monitoring and Control Centre
20 February 2017 (Monday)	AM	Visit — ➤ Green Way in Huizhou ➤ Taiyuan Pumping Station
	PM	Arrive in Shenzhen Visit — ➤ Work site of the Comprehensive Remediation Project for the Water Environment of the Shawan River Basin ➤ Wastewater Interception Schemes for Shawan River ➤ Bio-nitrification Plant at the Shenzhen Reservoir Leave Shenzhen Reservoir for Hong Kong at 5:30 pm

[#] A detailed visit programme will be drawn up with the assistance of the Administration, subject to the confirmation of the receiving organizations.

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Tentative estimate of expenditure

Routing of visit: Hong Kong / Heyuan / Huizhou / Shenzhen / Hong Kong

Breakdown of estimated expenses

Item	Estimated expenses (per person) HK\$
1. Transportation (coach service)	800
2. Hotel accommodation in Huizhou (1 night) <i>60% of the subsistence allowance for Huizhou</i> ^(Note 1)	1,126
3. Meals and sundries <i>19.2.2017 – 35% of the subsistence allowance for Huizhou</i> ^(Note 2) <i>20.2.2017 (in Huizhou and Shenzhen)</i> ^(Note 3)	657 578
4. Travel insurance	120
TOTAL	3,281

NOTES:

1. Subsistence allowance for Huizhou: RMB1,646 per night
(Exchange rate as at December 2016: RMB1 = HK\$1.14)
2. As transportation in the Mainland will be arranged by the Secretariat or the Administration, the subsistence allowance payable is reduced by 5%. Other expenditures including hospitality and souvenirs will be charged against other votes of the Secretariat.
3. Expenses on breakfast, lunch and sundries
4. The actual expenditure will vary subject to the final visit programme, the transportation service charge and hotel room rate at the time of confirmation.