

香港特別行政區政府
保安局



The Government of the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Security Bureau

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20 December 2017

Clerk to the Finance Subcommittee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Anita SIT)

Dear Ms SIT,

FCR(2017-18)35
Implementation of Marine Situational Awareness System

At the meeting of the Finance Committee on 1 December 2017, members requested the Government to explain how the proposed Marine Situational Awareness System (“MARSAS”) will be used to handle incidents or crimes that happen within the waters of Hong Kong under different scenarios.

The Police will install MARSAS in 141 police vessels and at eight command centres on land to enable the transmission or sharing of real-time information (including emails, pictures, charts, videos, drawings or other graphical information) amongst police vessels and command centres, as well as on-scene imagery (such as radar charts and video streaming, etc.) captured by the existing Electro-optical Sensor System, radar and other sensors on board vessels and on land. MARSAS will strengthen the Police’s ability to respond to major maritime incidents, acts of terrorism at sea, conduct maritime law enforcement, and carry out day-to-day patrols and operations, and allow the aforementioned operations to be executed in a safer and more effective way.

In the event of a major maritime incident, MARSAS can effectively improve the efficiency of rescue operations. At present, police vessels at the scene of the accident can only provide on-site

information to command centres through the Marine Region Communications System ("MRCS") or mobile phones. Information so provided is often fragmented and incomprehensive, and fails to depict the latest situation due to the quickly evolving nature of such incidents. The radio network may be congested when many police vessels use MRCS at the same time, thus increasing the difficulty for command centres to be informed of and assess the overall situation.

With MARSAS, command centres and commanders on scene can directly obtain real-time information which is necessary for making prompt and accurate assessment on the situation, thereby making the most appropriate deployment and resource allocation. In addition, at critical times, commanders can remotely control cameras installed on police vessels to monitor the scene, thereby enhancing operational efficiency. At the same time, police vessels arriving on the scene can learn about the on-site situation beforehand through MARSAS, and prepare appropriate rescue equipment and manpower on the way, thereby increasing operational efficiency.

When the accident escalates and requires support of land units, MARSAS can be activated instantly at command centres on land to provide commanders of land units with real-time information. Such information, including real-time positions of police vessels with casualties on board and their estimated arrival time, live videos of the vessel in distress, and real-time sea traffic in different waters, etc., would help them understand the overall on-scene situation at sea. This would facilitate commanders on land to make informed decisions promptly when there are major maritime incidents.

In addition, in the operations for combating various types of maritime crimes, MARSAS can enhance the Police's capability in detecting and intercepting vessels. Taking the interception of illegal immigrants as an example, criminal syndicates often use speedboats to smuggle illegal immigrants while maneuvering aggressively to escape from police apprehension. With MARSAS, command centres or police officers on duty can identify suspicious activities or patterns related to criminal activities through the single display more clearly. Marine police officers can label a particular suspicious vessel when it is found, even if it is hidden in a busy area of the sea, thereby shortening the time needed for locating the vessel. At the same time, commanders and police vessels on scene can be informed of the positions of police vessels and the tracks of target vessels through the single intelligence display, and obtain real-time images and videos of the scene which are shared for use.

Officers can thereby track the development of the situation at the same pace. In addition, before taking enforcement actions, marine police officers can make more detailed deployment with the real-time information provided by MARSAS, strengthening the command and coordination of police vessels in intercepting the target vessels. MARSAS also allows on-scene police vessels to actively adjust the pursuit and interception route in fast-changing circumstances.

(Andrew TSANG)
for Secretary for Security

C.C.

Hong Kong Police Force (Attn.: Regional Commander (Marine))