

Your Ref.. : CB4/PAC/R73
Our Ref. : FEHD CI&PC/32-60/10/11C

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4 February 2020

Mr. Anthony Chu,
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee,
Legislative Council Complex,
Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Chu,

Public Accounts Committee

Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 73

Planning, provision and management of public toilets by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

I refer to your letter of 10 January 2020. Our reply for items (o) to (v) is provided in the ensuing paragraphs.

Item (o)(i)

2. In general, there are two work shifts of toilet attendants, i.e. day shift and evening shift. The toilet attendants are on duty for about 9 hours in day shift and 6 hours for the evening shift. The actual work shift pattern and working hours of toilet attendant of each public toilet are contingent upon service needs and may vary. The specific arrangements are stipulated in the service contracts of individual public toilets. As a contract requirement, cleansing workmen including toilet attendants are not allowed to work more than 10 hours per day.

Item (o)(ii)

3. FEHD observes that deep cleansing service is able to effectively enhance the hygiene condition of public toilets and has started to deploy dedicated deep cleansing teams from 2019 to 186 public toilets of high utilisation. FEHD would extend the DCT services to all street cleansing services contracts (covering all public toilets) upon next contract renewal to be completed by November 2020.

Item (p)(i), (ii) & (iv)

4. FEHD and ArchSD have completed a review on the facilities in all public toilets with toilet attendants, and have taken follow-up actions as below:

- (a) If circumstances permit, FEHD will install oscillating fans; mechanical ventilation such as extraction fan, fresh air inlet or propulsion fan; power sockets, lockers, as well as rest and changing facilities in the existing attendant rooms to improve the working environment of toilet attendants. The major difficulties encountered in improving facilities in attendant rooms are site constraint and the inherent layout which may not support the provision of certain facilities such as installation of ventilation equipment. FEHD will continue to work with ArchSD to iron out the technical problems as far as practicable.
- (b) ArchSD has provided the progress of improvement works to attendant rooms of public toilets to the Public Accounts Committee in their reply letter dated 3 February 2020 separately. FEHD will submit requests to ArchSD for feasibility of improvement works to the remaining toilets as soon as possible.
- (c) Owing to site constraints in the existing public toilets without attendant rooms but provided with attendant services, FEHD and ArchSD will review the situation when these toilets are refurbished with a view to providing attendant rooms as far as practicable.

Item (p)(iii)

5. As at 10 January 2020, out of the 53 public toilets as stated in paragraph 4.40(b)(i) of the Audit Report, three are already provided with two

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *See Appendix 17 of this Report for the reply dated 3 February 2020 from Director of Architectural Services.*

attendant rooms (each at the male and female toilets), and 46 have attendant rooms located at the common area of the toilets that can be shared used by male and female toilet attendants. The attendant rooms of the remaining 4 public toilets are currently situated at either the male or female toilets. FEHD will as far as technically feasible make available attendant rooms for both male and female toilet attendants when the public toilets in question are refurbished.

Item (q)

6. In 2019, FEHD received 2 367 complaints on public toilets.

7. FEHD has in place a departmental circular on "Handling of complaints" setting out the procedures and guidelines on how complaints generally should be processed. Complaints received are input into the Complaints Management Information System (CMIS) which provides a central record of complaint information to help monitor progress with a view to ensuring that all complaints are dealt with properly and efficiently. Supervisors have the responsibility to ensure that complaint cases are handled appropriately from start to finish, and are properly and in a timely manner recorded in the CMIS in accordance with the laid down procedures. CMIS has built-in reminder and alert functions to assist case officers and their supervisors to identify cases with delays in reply to complainants (e.g. alerts for overdue interim reply and substantive reply and a monthly management information report on complaints showing the lapse time of overdue complaints). Supervisors should oversee the progress of cases undertaken by the case officers and make good use of the monthly management information report for monitoring overdue cases. They should look into the reasons for long overdue cases or long period of inaction during investigation of the cases and provide guidance/assistance to the case officers as necessary with a view to concluding the cases as soon as possible. In addition, long overdue cases and repeated complaints are included as standing agenda items for discussion at FEHD internal meetings at both the headquarters and district levels. FEHD keeps the complaint handling mechanism under review to ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly.

Item (r)

8. FEHD has commenced the feasibility study to enhance the CMIS having regard to the recommendations which Audit Commission had made in

paragraph 4.53 of the Audit Report. These recommendations include making best endeavour to deal with complaints received on public toilets promptly and update CMIS records timely; and enhancing CMIS (e.g. adding a field for inputting the name of a public toilet) and strengthening the regular analysis of complaints received on public toilets (e.g. by individual toilet and by the nature of complaints) with a view to providing useful management information for monitoring and enhancing public toilet services. Currently, FEHD is in the process of developing a prototype of the enhanced features for CMIS and aims to put it into trial run in March 2020. Subject to the outcome of the trial run, we expect to implement the enhanced features in the third quarter of 2020 tentatively.

Item (s)

9. FEHD has organised educational and publicity programmes to promote the importance of toilet hygiene as well as the proper use of toilet facilities, and appeal to the public for their support and co-operation in enhancing the cleanliness and hygiene of public toilets through various channels. Major initiatives implemented in recent years include-

- (1) Provision of background music and message through built-in broadcasting system in 30 public toilets to broadcast health messages and remind the publicity of the importance of toilet hygiene and the proper use of toilet facilities;
- (2) Setting up health education promotional booths to broadcast similar recorded messages by Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak in 36 public toilets with a high utilization rate;
- (3) Making use of social media of Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak as well as other publicity materials to step up public education;
- (4) Displaying in public toilets posters and stickers featuring Ah Tak to remind the public of the toilet rules for using public toilets; and
- (5) Setting up a feature corner on good toilet behaviour at FEHD's Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui, targeting mainly student visitors who account for a significant percentage of total patronage.

10. FEHD will continue to promote the importance of toilet hygiene and the proper use of toilet facilities, and appeal to the public to be mindful and considerate when using public toilets through promotional and educational activities. Details of expenditure incurred in these respects in 2017-18 to 2019-20 are provided in **Annex I**.

Item (t)

11. With reference to the record in Table 11 of Audit Report, majority of the repair requests relate to plumbing and drainage systems, such as defective flushing cisterns, sensor water taps and clearance of seriously choked drainage system. The defects usually arise from high utilization rate and might also be due to improper use of toilet facilities. ArchSD will work closely with FEHD to provide necessary technical advice and carry out necessary repairs to resume the facilities for public use as soon as practicable.

Item (u)

12. Currently, 36 public toilets are equipped with promotional booth and another 30 public toilets installed with background music and message broadcasting system. The breakdown on these public toilets is provided in **Annex II**. In 2019-2020, \$396,240 was incurred for the provision of these booths and broadcasting systems.

Item (v)(i)

13. The types of information about public toilets available in the FEHD website are:

- (a) name of the public toilet;
- (b) address;
- (c) opening hours;
- (d) enquiry telephone number;
- (e) its geographical location as shown on a map; and
- (f) a list of public toilets temporarily closed for renovation.

14. The hit rates in 2018-2019 financial year are 33 006 for desktop version users and 21 743 for mobile version users. Please refer to **Annex III** for the snapshot of the relevant webpage.

Item (v)(ii)

15. FEHD has been gathering public views on its facilities and services via various means including an electronic form at <https://www.fehd.gov.hk/english/enquiry/enquiry.html>, e-mail at enquiry@fehd.gov.hk and 1823 hotline. In 2018-2019, we received some suggestions on the name and address of several public toilets.

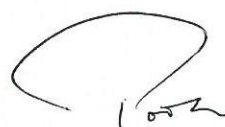
Item (v)(iii)

16. FEHD has already enhanced the website by providing a list of public toilets temporarily closed for renovation. The Department would regularly update the webpage to ensure the information is up-to-date.

Item (v)(iv)

17. FEHD has provided a mobile version of its website for smart phone users to browse the information of FEHD public toilets. We understand that a mobile application for locating public toilets and other toilet facilities is already provided by the non-government sector for public use.

Yours sincerely,



(POON Ping-yeung)

for Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

- c.c. Secretary for Food and Health (fax no. 2526 3753)
- Director of Architectural Services (fax no. 2877 0594)
- Commissioner for Tourism (fax no. 2801 5792)
- Director of Water Supplies (fax no. 2827 8400)
- Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2147 5239)
- Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)

**Expenditure on education and publicity
on toilet hygiene and proper use of toilet facilities**

2017 – 2018	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020 (As at January 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Background music and message broadcasting system (\$60,000) ● Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak Facebook page* (\$390,000) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Background music and message broadcasting system (\$288,200) ● Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak Facebook page and Instagram* (\$890,000) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Background music and message broadcasting system (\$250,090) ● Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak Facebook page and Instagram* (\$1,200,000) ● Promotional booth for keep toilet clean with Ambassador Ah Tak's health message (\$146,150) ● Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak stickers (\$42,000) ● Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak posters (HK\$25,000)
Total: \$450,000	Total: \$1,178,200	Total: \$1,663,240

Remarks: * denotes the total expenditure on education and publicity including public toilets

**List of Public Toilets equipped with
Promotional Booths and Background Music
and Message Broadcasting Systems**

District	Number of public toilets with promotional booths	Number of public toilets with background music and message broadcasting systems
Central/Western	1	4
Wan Chai	2	1
Eastern	1	0
Southern	7	0
Yau Tsim Mong	6	3
Sham Shui Po	4	3
Wong Tai Sin	1	0
Kwun Tong	2	1
Kowloon City	0	4
Kwai Tsing	2	1
Tsuen Wan	4	7
Tuen Mun	4	0
Yuen Long	0	0
North	0	0
Tai Po	2	1
Sha Tin	0	2
Sai Kung	0	1
Island	0	2
Total	36	30

Snapshots of FEHD webpage showing information about public toilet

Friday 17 January 2020 18.5°C 63% Weather Last Update 19:10 more >

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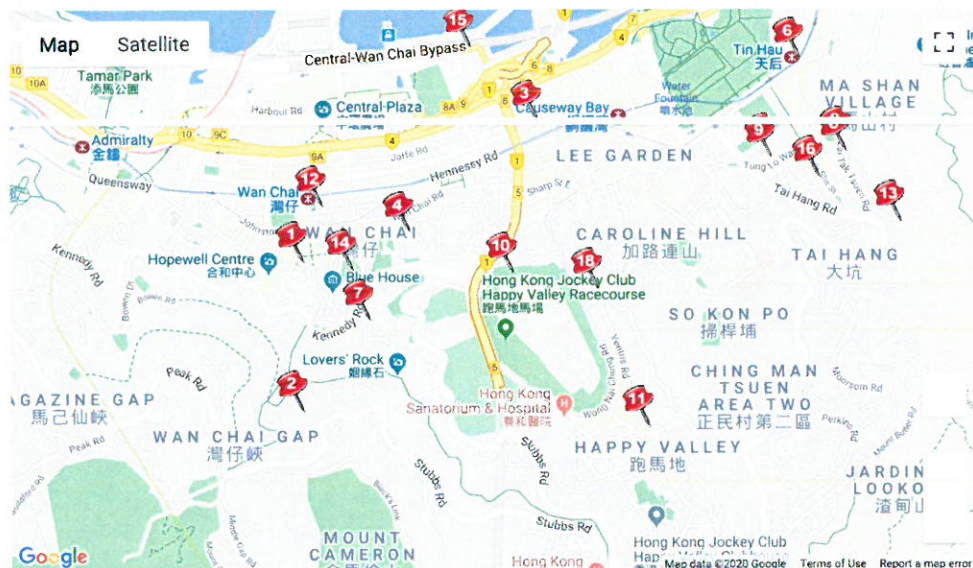
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Reference Information

Public Toilets

Wan Chai

Apart from public toilets, there are also other toilet facilities provided for public use in public venues (e.g. public parks, cultural and sports centres) and commercial buildings (e.g. shopping arcades).



	Public Toilets	Address
	Amoy Street Public Toilet	G/F., The Avenue Phase 2, 200 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai
	Bowen Road Public Toilet	Bowen Road near Wan Chai Gap Road
	Canal Road Public Toilet	Junction of Canal Road and Lockhart Road (next to Wan Chai Fire Station)
	Cross Lane Public Toilet	Junction of Cross Lane and Bullock Lane
	Expo Drive East Public Toilet	Expo Drive East (next to Golden Bauhinia Square)
	Hing Fat Street Public Toilet	Hing Fat Street near the Entrance of Victoria Park
	Kat On Street Public Toilet	Junction of Kat On Street and Kennedy Street
	Lin Fa Kung- Public Toilet	Lily Street, Lin Fa Kung, Tai Hang
	Moreton Terrace Public Toilet	Tung Lo Wan Drive (At side of Bus Terminus)

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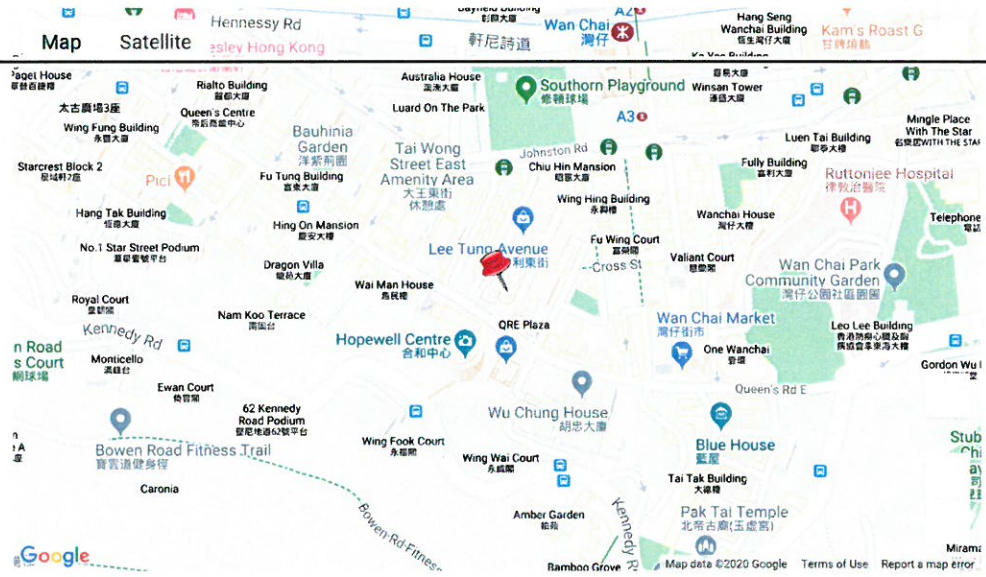
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Public Toilets Detail

Amoy Street Public Toilet

Address	G/F., The Avenue Phase 2, 200 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai
Opening Hours (if applicable)	24 hours
Enquiry Tel no. of Wan Chai	2507 3364



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Temporary Closure of Public Toilet for Renovation

Central and Western

No.	Name of Public Toilet	Address	Suspension Period
1	In Ku Lane Public Toilet	No 8 In Ku Lane, Sheung Wan	27 September 2019 - 22 January 2020
2	Kotewall Road Public Toilet	Opposite to No. 17 Kotewall Road, Mid-	16 September 2019 - 3 March 2020
3	Wing Wo Street Public Toilet	Opposite to 23-27 Wing Wo Street, Central	16 September 2019 - 13 March 2020

Eastern

No.	Name of Public Toilet	Address	Suspension Period
1	Nam On Street Public Toilet	No. 81 Nam On Street	23 October 2019 - 22 April 2020

Islands

No.	Name of Public Toilet	Address	Suspension Period
1	Ngong Ping Road Interchange Public Toilet	Ngong Ping Road Interchange, Ngong Ping, Lantau	2 October 2019 - 23 January 2020
2	Tat Tung Road Public Toilet	Tat Tung Road, Tung Chung	9 September 2019 - 24 January 2020