

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC158/99-00
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/F/2/2

**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 15th meeting
held at the Legislative Council Chamber
on Wednesday, 24 May 2000, at 9:00 am**

Members present:

Hon HO Sai-chu, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Prof Hon NG Ching-fai
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon Christine LOH
Hon CHAN Yuen-han
Hon CHAN Kam-lam
Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP

Members absent:

Hon Edward HO Sing-tin, SBS, JP
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP

Dr Hon LEONG Che-hung, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP

Public officers attending:

Miss Elizabeth TSE	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury
Mr S S LEE, JP	Secretary for Works
Mr Patrick LAU, JP	Secretary for Planning and Lands
Mr Mike STOKOE, JP	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection
Mr James HERD	Principal Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (Works)
Ms Eva TO	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment and Food
Mr S K WONG	Director of Architectural Services
Miss Janet WONG	Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Administration and Development)
Mr K K LEE	Senior Superintendent (Operations), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr Jonathan MCKINLEY	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Recreation and Sport)
Ms Lolly CHIU	Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Administration)
Mr S K POON	Chief Leisure Manager (Kowloon), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mrs W K YUEN KWONG	Senior Staff Officer (Planning), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mrs Margaret CHAN	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower
Mr Peter P Y LEUNG	Assistant Director (Special Duties), Education Department
Mr Kim SALKELD	Deputy Secretary for the Environment and Food
Mr T K CHEUNG, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr W Y SHIU	Chief Engineer/Project Management, Drainage Services Department
Mr Edmond K M HO	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Sewage Infrastructure Planning Group)
Mr David F L WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B)
Miss Diane WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Health and Welfare (Welfare)
Dr Michael CHIU	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection

Mr William C W HUI	Civil Secretary, Correctional Services Department
Mr SIT Tung	Regional Social Welfare Officer (West Kowloon), Social Welfare Department
Mr Patrick HO	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (1)
Mr LEUNG Kwok-sun, JP	Director of Highway
Mr T K LEE	Chief Highway Engineer/Hong Kong, Highways Department
Mr D G THOMAS	Chief Superintendent of Police (Planning and Development), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr K S SHUM	Chief Technical Advisor / Subvented Projects, Architectural Services Department
Mr Louis HUNG	Principal Transport Officer / Urban, Transport Department
Mr H K WONG, JP	Director of Territory Development
Ms Shirley LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5)
Mr C J CHIVERS	Chief Engineer/New Territories West (1), New Territories West Development Office, Territory Development Department
Mr LEE Yan-ming	Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West, Transport Department
Mr M L WAN	Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing (Project Management)
Mr W TSUI	Chief Engineer (Sha Tin and Sai Kung), Territory Development Department
Mr K K SIN	Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories East, Transport Department

Clerk in attendance:

Miss Polly YEUNG	Chief Assistant Secretary (1)3
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG	Assistant Secretary General 1
Ms Sarah YUEN	Senior Assistant Secretary (1)4

PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

Upgrading of projects to category A

HEAD 703 - BUILDINGS

PWSC(2000-01)27 6NB Replacement of cremators at the Kwai Chung Crematorium

While expressing support for the proposed new cremators, Mr Fred LI enquired if they would be free from the odour problem caused by cremation. In reply, the Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) explained that the odour problem was caused by incomplete combustion. Since the new cremators would reach 850°C to ensure complete combustion and would be equipped with an exhaust gas filtering system, there should not be any odour problem.

2. As to whether the crematorium staff would be prevented from stealing the properties of the dead, the Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Administration and Development) (DDFEH) said that the Administration was equally concerned about such unruly behaviour and would take proper precautionary measures. For example, closed-circuit television systems would be installed and the existing cremation process would also be reviewed in close consultation with the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

3. Miss Emily LAU sought the Administration's confirmation on whether the new cremators would use low sulphur content fuel as in the case of vehicles so as to mitigate air pollution. In reply, D Arch S said that as the cremators had been designed to use fuel with sulphur content below 0.3% by weight, fuel with even lower sulphur content would be used if such products were available. Moreover, since the sulphur dioxide emitted by them would be filtered by an exhaust gas filtering system, there should be minimal air pollution. The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (DDEP) concurred with D Arch S's comments.

4. Miss Emily LAU was of the view that the principle of using the most environmentally friendly fuel as far as practicable should be followed in all policy areas instead of just being applied to vehicles. The Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment and Food (PAS(EF)) assured members that such was the Administration's general policy objective. The Administration undertook to look into Miss LAU's suggestion and report back in writing before the relevant Finance Committee (FC) meeting. DDFEH further advised that the operation of the cremators would be a specified process under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance and as such, would need to satisfy the Best Practicable Means for incinerators of crematoria set by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) in order to obtain a licence for operation.

Admin

5. On whether the use of the new cremators would be able to shorten the present waiting time for cremation service, DDFEH and the Senior Superintendent (Operations), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department said that the current performance pledge was to arrange cremation service within 15 days of application. As the new cremators could shorten the time for each cremation from the present 2 1/2 hours to 1 1/4 hours, the capacity for cremation would be enhanced and this would in turn shorten the waiting time. DDFEH however explained that it was difficult to quantify the improvement to waiting time at this stage because the increased capacity might be somewhat used by a possible increase in the demand for cremation service as a result of an ageing population and the increased use of cremation as against traditional earth burial. Members noted that to cope with a large demand for cremation services, in particular during the cold season where the number of deaths was higher, overtime sessions were conducted.

6. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee. Miss Emily LAU requested that her reservation on the item be recorded.

PWSC(2000-01)23

45RG

Tai Kok Tsui Complex (Phase 2)

7. Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired whether the market to be provided under this proposal would adopt a new design with store rooms and larger stalls to address the long-standing problem of shortage of space. In reply, D Arch S explained that the stalls in the proposed market would be of various sizes to suit the needs of stalls selling different goods. DDFEH supplemented that in reprovisioning markets, the number and sizes of stalls to be provided in the new markets would be worked out on the basis of those in the old markets to be reprovisioned. As such, the proposed market which would rehouse stalls from the Tai Kok Tsui Temporary Market (TKTTM) and the Boundary Street Market (BSM) would have 23 large stalls, five poultry stalls with their own handling facilities, and 97 small stalls such as newspaper stalls.

8. In this regard, the Chairman and DDFEH also pointed out that the possibility of introducing layout changes to the new market was remote because the proposed complex housing the new market was one of the outstanding capital works projects of the two Provisional Municipal Councils for which funding approval had been given and the detailed layout plans and tender documentation drafted. DDFEH further pointed out that owing to the difficulties in identifying suitable sites in fully developed Tai Kok Tsui and in view of the plot ratio of the present site, there would be a limit in the number and sizes of stalls that could be accommodated in the new market. The present design was considered the most appropriate after balancing all considerations. She however assured members that the Administration was equally concerned about the undesirable conditions of certain existing markets and had therefore proposed to

provide air conditioning to the proposed market to improve its air quality. Moreover, management would also be improved to ensure stalls would be operating within their own areas.

9. Mr Fred LI urged the Administration to ensure that there would be separate zoning and lift access to the market and cooked food stalls on the ground and first two floors of the proposed complex, and the swimming pool and recreational facilities to be provided on the 4/F to 8/F. In response, D Arch S confirmed that users of the former facilities would mainly be served by two sets of escalators while four lifts would serve the latter facilities as well as the library on the 3/F.

10. Mr Fred LI was concerned about the adequacy of four lifts in serving both the library and the swimming pool having regard that both facilities would be heavily patronized. In response, D Arch S explained that each of the four lifts would be able to carry 21 persons per trip and would take only 31 seconds to ascend from G/F to the swimming pool on the 4/F. He and the Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Administration) (DDLCS) further explained that of the four lifts, only two would serve all floors, the other two would be for the exclusive use of pool users. However, as the proposed complex would be served by five sets of staircases, users of the library on the 3/F could also take the two lifts serving the swimming pool at the 4/F by walking up or down one floor. As such, while pool users would enjoy the exclusive use of two lifts, library goers would have four lifts to choose from. The proposed provision of lifts should therefore be sufficient to meet the service demand in relation to both the swimming pool and the library. Moreover, this proposed mode of circulation would also be put under close review after opening of the complex to ensure its effectiveness in alleviating the problem of crowd control.

11. Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired about the feasibility of locating the swimming pool in the open space adjoining the proposed complex to be vacated by TKTTM upon its reprovisioning, instead of inside the complex. He also asked about the cost difference between the two options. In reply, D Arch S advised the costs would be similar. The Chairman however pointed out that the option mentioned by Mr CHAN had already been thoroughly debated at the Subcommittee to Follow up on the Outstanding Capital Works Projects of the Two Provisional Municipal Councils for Inclusion into the Government's Public Works Programme (the Follow-up Subcommittee) and members in general did not support this option because of land use considerations. In this connection, D Arch S confirmed that the proposed swimming pool could be used all-year round as it was indoor and would be heated in the cold months.

12. Miss Emily LAU sought explanation on whether and how the present project would help meet the Hong Kong Planning Standard and Guidelines (HKPSG) in the provision of leisure and cultural services (LCS) facilities and open space to the Yau Tsim Mong (YTM) District which had a population of

300 000.

13. On the provision of LCS facilities, the Senior Staff Officer (Planning), Leisure and Cultural Services Department (SSO(P), LCSD) reported that according to the HKPSG, one swimming pool should be provided for a population of 287 000. As there was already a large swimming pool at Kowloon Park serving the YTM District, the additional swimming pool to be provided under this project would put the YTM District above the standard prescribed under HKPSG. As for library service, one standard library should be provided for each district under HKPSG. At present, the YTM District already had two small libraries (the Tai Kok Tsui Public Library at Tit Shu Street and the Tsim Sha Tsui Public Library) and two district libraries (the Yau Ma Tei Public Library and the district library at Fa Yuen Street). As such, there was no shortfall in the provision of library service in YTM District.

14. As regards the provision of open space, the Chief Leisure Manager (Kowloon), LCSD reported that the four sites zoned "O" (occupied by TKTTM, BSM, Canton Road Temporary Cooked Food Bazaar and Tai Kok Tsui Temporary Cooked Food Bazaar) to be released by the construction of the proposed complex could provide around 0.58 hectares to help meet the HKPSG's recommended provision of 60 hectares of open space for YTM District. In addition, 14.54 hectares of open space would also be made available by the planned reclamation at West Kowloon. With the existing provision of open space at around 34 hectares, the shortfall in open space provision in YTM District would therefore be reduced to only about 10 hectares upon completion of the above two projects.

15. Miss Emily LAU found the progress in providing open space to YTM District unsatisfactory. Pointing out that the HKPSG had been in force for a long time, she called for more active efforts to achieve the targets. To help members monitor such efforts, she suggested that the Administration should include in every submission on proposed community facilities the HKPSG for the relevant district, how the proposal could help meet the targets and the measures to be undertaken to meet the shortfall, if any. The Administration took note of her suggestion. SSO(P), LCSD further stressed that the Administration was already making active efforts to meet the shortfall. For example, LCSD was closely liaising with the Planning Department in identifying suitable land in YTM District for open space development and was at present examining a site at Cherry Street.

Admin

16. As regards the paper which the Administration had undertaken to report on the existing provision of leisure and cultural facilities as against the recommended provision under the HKPSG, DDLCS advised that the paper was ready and would be examined at the meeting of the Follow-up Subcommittee to be held on 7 June 2000. The Chairman advised that policy issues related to the HKPSG should be further discussed at the said meeting.

XX

17. Noting that two schools were located adjacent to the site of the proposed complex, Ir Dr Raymond HO and Miss Emily LAU were concerned about the arrangements in the relevant works contract to ensure that the construction activities, especially piling works, would not affect the operation of the two schools. In particular, Miss LAU enquired whether all noisy works could be conducted after school hours. In reply, D Arch S emphasized that piling would be conducted in strict compliance with the relevant legislation. Close liaison would also be maintained with the school management to ensure that noisy construction activities would be programmed in such a way so as not to affect school activities. Works might even be suspended during school examinations. As to whether the Administration would specify in the invitation for tenders the use of a certain environmentally friendly piling method, D Arch S advised that contractors would be required to comply with the relevant environmental protection legislation. He said that the Administration would take into consideration members' concern when selecting the contractor for the project.

18. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

PWSC(2000-01)28 85ET Improvement works to existing government schools based on the recommendations of the Education Commission Report No. 5, phase 4

19. Miss Emily LAU enquired about how the proposed improvement works could help bring the facilities of the 12 government schools in question to prevailing standards. In response, the Assistant Director (Special Duties), Education Department (AD(SD),ED) referred members to Enclosure 2 to the paper and reported that having regard to the physical constraints of individual schools, the additional facilities as set out in the checklist at Enclosure 2 and accepted by these schools would be provided under the present proposal. Nevertheless, he confirmed that the school environment would still be significantly improved as a result.

20. Miss CHAN Yuen-han expressed support for the proposal. She and Miss Emily LAU however urged that in providing additional facilities to the schools, the Administration would seriously consider their needs for sports facilities and open space. In reply, AD(SD),ED highlighted the difficulties in providing more open space to existing schools but emphasized that where feasible, ED would ask the Lands Department to allocate additional land to the schools for this purpose. Where necessary and technically feasible, the use of the space on the rooftop would be actively explored.

21. In this regard, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (PAS(EM)) explained that improvement works were in the form of a

roof-top extension or an annex. Although it might not be possible to provide additional open space, the intention was to preserve the existing provision of open space of the schools concerned as far as possible. In response to Miss CHAN Yuen-han, PAS(EM) further clarified that any new facilities or multi-purpose area provided would be fully equipped as part of the relevant improvement project.

22. Mr CHAN Kam-lam asked whether the scope of additional works to each of the government schools under this proposal and hence the cost incurred would be the same. In reply, AD(SD),ED advised that the scope might be different having regard to the needs and physical circumstances of individual schools. However, the latest schedule of accommodation for new schools to be completed from year 2000 onwards would be adhered to as far as practicable. He also confirmed that the improvement works under this proposal all involved extensions to existing school buildings.

23. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee

REVISION IN SCOPE/CHANGE IN COMMITMENTS FOR CAPITAL SUBVENTION PROJECTS

HEAD 708 - CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2000-01)29	19EC	Improvement works to existing aided secondary schools based on recommendations of the Education Commission report No. 5, phase 4
	20EC	Improvement works to existing aided primary schools based on the recommendations of the Education Commission report No. 5, phase 4

24. Miss Emily LAU acknowledged the urgent need for school improvement works. She however enquired about the cost of commissioning a consultant to review the present procedures of implementing the School Improvement Programme (SIP), and when the review report would be ready for release. In response, PAS(EM) reported that the cost of the consultancy review was about \$1.26 million [Post-meeting note : The Administration subsequently confirmed that the cost should be \$1.14 million]. The review report would be ready at the end of May 2000 and its executive summary would be released and circulated to the Education Panel.

Admin

25. Miss Emily LAU noted that the basic yardstick adopted by the Administration for implementing school improvement works was that the estimated cost of the works would not exceed one-third of the standard cost for constructing a new school, while the consultant's recommended threshold was about 40%. As the two criteria only differed slightly, she questioned the need for the consultancy study.

26. In response, PAS(EM) explained that in consideration of the increasing costs of improvement works and the fact that SIP was a ten-year long programme which had proceeded half-way into phase 4, the Administration considered it a responsible course of action to conduct a mid-term review on the cost-effectiveness of SIP. Members noted that the Administration considered it prudent to adopt the said cost threshold of one-third of the average cost of building a new school to enable SIP to continue pending completion of the review, so that improvement works for schools which incurred a relatively low cost would not be unduly delayed. As regards the 40% cost threshold, PAS(EM) pointed out that it had been recommended by the consultant after careful examination of the cost data of schools in phases 2A and 4 and represented the point at which a critical mass of schools would proceed with the full scope of improvement works.

27. Miss Emily LAU opined that in examining the cost-effectiveness of SIP, due consideration should be given to the benefits resulting from a good learning environment. In response, PAS(EM) assured members that preliminary assessment on the basis of the consultant's recommendation had already indicated the cost-effectiveness of proceeding with SIP for all of the remaining 81 schools in phases 2A and 4 for which improvement works were technically feasible. Half of these schools would undergo the full scope of works and 25% would undergo up to 80% of the scope of works. As for the schools for which improvement works had been considered too costly, the Administration would discuss with the school management concerned to reduce the scope of works to allow for certain urgently required core items to be provided.

28. Noting that many of the facilities required by the schools concerned would not be provided, Miss Emily LAU expressed grave concern about the progress in improving the school environment. In reply, AD(SD),ED admitted that due to cost consideration, structural and space limitations, the needs of individual schools could not be met in full. He however pointed out that in proposing adjustments to the scope of works, the Administration had consulted the school management concerned and ascertained their needs so that the provision of new facilities could be prioritized. The Chairman further pointed out that notwithstanding its limitations, the present proposal was already a step forward in improving the school environment. He also opined that if the costs incurred were too high, reprovisioning instead of improvement works should be considered to achieve cost-effectiveness.

29. Miss Emily LAU said that Government should thoroughly improve the environment of existing schools by allocating more land for schools. She also requested that the unsatisfied requirements for improvements under this proposal should be followed up. In response, AD(SD),ED said that in consideration of the large number of schools awaiting improvement, the Administration could only work closely with schools to ensure the best possible improvement option having regard to their individual circumstances. Notwithstanding, the Administration would always do its best to accommodate any genuine urgent needs.

Admin

30. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry about the future of the 28 schools to which improvement works were technically not feasible, PAS(EM) and AD(SD),ED said that other improvement options were being explored. In fact, some of the 28 schools had problems with land title and once such problems had been solved, improvement works could proceed. In some cases, however, there might be a need to meet fire safety requirements before improvement works could be carried out. As for the other schools for which improvement works were not feasible because of site constraints or structural problems, in-situ redevelopment or reprovisioning would be considered in close consultation with the school management concerned. At Miss LAU's request, AD(SD),ED agreed to provide a paper on the progress in exploring improvement options for these 28 schools.

31. Miss CHAN Yuen-han pointed out that for schools which were very old and in very bad conditions, the decision on whether to carry out improvement works or to reprovision the school would be very difficult to make. As such, she urged the Administration to adopt a less bureaucratic and more flexible approach in implementing the SIP, and be more responsive to the views of schools when considering the option of reprovisioning. Mr James TO however highlighted that when considering reprovisioning, the Administration should note that many schools, especially those in the urban areas, would not like to be reprovisioned to other districts. AD(DS),ED noted their views for consideration.

Admin

32. Addressing Miss CHAN Yuen-han's concern about the noise impacts arising from the implementation of the improvement works under this proposal, D Arch S assured members that the Administration would liaise closely with the school management concerned to programme the works in such a way as to minimize the impacts on school activities. He also agreed to ensure that the contractor would be responsible for disposal of the construction waste generated from these works.

33. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

Upgrading of Projects To Category A

HEAD 704 - DRAINAGE

**PWSC(2000-01)30 276DS Sha Tin sewage treatment works
stage 3 extension**

34. Miss Emily LAU expressed support for the proposal. She however sought the Administration's confirmation that odour from the Sha Tin sewage treatment works (STSTW) would be reduced and that a natural and pleasant view in harmony with the surroundings would be provided. The Director of Drainage Services (DDS) replied in the affirmative. He advised that landscape works would be provided to effectively mitigate the visual impacts of the STSTW. As for the odour problem, the Administration was confident after a detailed study that by adding chemicals to the incoming sewage, the odour problem could be mitigated. As to whether the addition of chemicals would give rise to another odour, DDS said that this would not occur. Moreover, the quantity of calcium nitrate added for treating the odour would be kept to the minimum.

35. As regards the odour and water quality monitoring work to be conducted during the operation phase of the STSTW, the Chief Engineer/Project Management, Drainage Services Department advised that a base case for controlling the environmental impacts of the STSTW would be established by measuring the relevant indice before operation of the proposed extension and modifications to STSTW. Thereafter, monitoring would be conducted regularly for at least one year after commissioning of the plant to ascertain the effectiveness of the mitigation measures and the sewage treatment process. Should the base case be exceeded, improvements would be introduced. Besides, routine monitoring would also be conducted to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory environmental standards.

36. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

PWSC(2000-01)31	323DS	Improvement of sewage treatment facilities on Hei Ling Chau and at Sha Tsui Detention Centre on Lantau Island
	324DS	Improvement of sewage treatment facilities at O Pui Shan Boys' Home

37. Mr James TO asked when the Administration had discovered that the effluent from the three sewage treatment facilities on Hei Ling Chau Island, at the Sha Tsui Detention Centre on Lantau Island and the O Pui Shan Boys' Home in Kwai Chung had failed to meet the standards prescribed in the discharge licences issued under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO), and for how long the non-compliance had been tolerated.

38. In response, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B) (PAS(S)B) reported that since the institutions on Hei Ling Chau were built as long as some 30 years ago, their respective sewage collection system was unable to meet presentday environmental standards. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (ADEP) supplemented that the problem was discovered in 1996 when EPD checked the systems for the purpose of issuing to the institutions discharge licences under WPCO. PAS(S)B and ADEP explained that thereafter, various measures had been undertaken to ensure that the effluent could comply with the standards prescribed in the licences. For example, more regular draining of the septic tanks, pumping of sewage, improving maintenance, the use of chlorination disinfection systems, installation of temporary sewage treatment facilities, etc. However, although the capacity of the systems had been greatly enhanced, it was still necessary to introduce the improvements under the current proposal to provide a long-term solution to tackle the problem.

39. Mr James TO expressed grave concern that the Correctional Services Department (CSD), which was in charge of the three institutions, should knowingly fail to rectify the problem and tolerate non-compliance with the statutory environmental requirements for nearly five years. He considered it unacceptable that in enforcing the WPCO, EPD had adopted a double standard under which CSD was allowed to improve its substandard facilities without sanction while non-government parties were prosecuted for non-compliance. His views were shared by Miss Emily LAU. In reply, the Deputy Secretary for the Environment and Food (DS(EF)) stressed that EPD had not been more tolerant with CSD but had been urging it to improve the effluent from the three sites concerned. However, the problem could not be tackled by simply improving the operation or capacity of existing facilities.

40. In this regard, DS(EF) and ADEP pointed out that the three sites were not the only sites that had failed to meet the WPCO standards as many villages using septic tanks had the same problem. In fact, there was normally a need to allow

some time for the facilities within a recently designated Water Control Zone (WCZ) to meet the enhanced effluent standards. In so doing, while no differentiation would be made between public and private parties, due to resource constraints, enforcement efforts would be directed at tackling the major sources of pollution first. As such, facilities involving septic tanks such as those under this proposal were normally dealt with later because they affected fewer people and the resultant pollution was less serious.

41. Mr James TO considered the present enforcement of the WPCO unacceptable and said that with the benefit of hindsight, when Members examined the relevant Bill, consideration should also be given to the enforcement aspects. As these considerations were not within the purview of the present proposal, the Chairman and Mr CHAN Kam-lam commented that the points made by Mr TO should be followed up at the relevant Panel(s) if necessary.

Admin

42. On whether any prosecution had been taken against non-complying facilities involving septic tanks, ADEP said that as septic tanks were installed underground, there was difficulty in taking samples to substantiate an offence. As such, action could only be taken where there was overflow of effluent and no remedial action had been taken. He agreed to provide the relevant prosecution figures in relation to private facilities after the meeting. As for non-compliant facilities of Government departments, ADEP explained that EPD could only urge the relevant Government departments to rectify the situation and in case of their repeated failures to make improvement, EPD would report to the Chief Secretary for Administration. DS(EF) added that several such reports had been made and the departments concerned had been required to seek funding to effect improvement. He stressed that all Government departments had to comply with the law. Miss Emily LAU considered that the stay of legal action on Government departments was unfair.

43. Miss Emily LAU asked whether 323DS and 324DS under this proposal had been expeditiously upgraded from Category B to Category A in about one month because a report on them had been made to the Chief Secretary for Administration. In reply, DDS informed members that although efforts had been made to tackle the problem under the present proposal, time was required to identify the most viable and cost-effective solution. The relevant preliminary feasibility study had only been completed in March 2000. Hence, there was an urgency in upgrading the above two projects to effect improvement to the facilities concerned so as to meet the statutory standards.

44. In reply to Mr James TO, the Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (DS(Tsy)) confirmed that the need to comply with legal requirements would receive priority consideration in the allocation of funding. Nevertheless, funding approval by FC would still be required where necessary.

45. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee

HEAD 706 - HIGHWAYS

PWSC(2000-01)32 71TI Public transport terminus, cross boundary coach terminus and operational area for Marine Police in Sai Wan Ho

46. Mrs Miriam LAU enquired whether the cross boundary coach terminus to be constructed under this proposal could serve all 24 cross boundary coach routes operating on Hong Kong Island. In reply, the Principal Transport Officer /Urban, Transport Department (PTO/U,TD) advised that of the 24 routes, only six which would depart from Hong Kong East would use the terminus.

Admin

47. In reply to Mrs Miriam LAU on the intended use of the ten coach parking places in the terminus, PTO/U,TD said that they would be used by coaches stacking and waiting for loading and unloading only. However, the use of them for parking at night might be considered. Mrs LAU queried that this special arrangement was not available for other modes of public transport such as taxis and buses. In reply, PTO/U,TD highlighted the specific operational need of cross boundary coaches which normally departed at more or less the same time of the day. Noting members' concern, he would consider renaming the parking places as "stacking area" to avoid misunderstanding and hence operational problems arising from use of them as formal parking spaces during day time.

48. As for the management of the said parking places, PTO/U,TD said that both the loading/unloading berths and the parking places would be managed by a management company and the six coach companies concerned would have to pay management fees.

49. Miss Cyd HO enquired about the increase in noise impacts resulting from the public transport interchange (PTI) under this proposal and the planned mitigation measures. In reply, the Chief Highway Engineer/Hong Kong, Highways Department reported that a Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) in relation to this project was conducted in September 1999 and the report was submitted to EPD. On the basis of this PER, EPD had concluded that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would not be necessary. As for the short-term impacts during construction, the Administration would control noise, dust and site run-off nuisance to comply with established standards through the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures specified in relevant contracts for the entrusted works.

50. Miss Cyd HO highlighted the presence of schools and residential developments around the site of the proposed PTI and the likely environmental

impacts of PTIs in general, and questioned why EPD did not consider it necessary to conduct an EIA for the project. In response, DDEP referred to the relevant PER which had concluded that the proposed facilities would not give rise to long-term impacts which would exceed established criteria. As for emissions, EPD had also issued a practice note two years ago for building professionals' reference in designing PTIs to ensure that their users would not be exposed to more emissions than necessary.

Admin

51. Miss Cyd HO opined that the relevant PER should cover the vicinity of the proposed PTI as well because vehicles using the PTI would also use the peripheral road systems, causing an impact on the air quality. On whether there were objective standards for ascertaining the impacts of PTIs, DDEP advised that all relevant factors would be considered. They included the road systems around the proposed PTI and the design of the PTI per se. He believed that the impacts on the surrounding area should have already been taken into account when the Highways Department conducted the relevant PER. At the Chairman's request, DDEP undertook to provide a summary of the said PER for members' reference before the relevant FC meeting.

52. Mrs Miriam LAU, on the other hand, was concerned about the air quality in existing PTIs and enquired about measures taken to alleviate the pollution problem. In response, the Director of Highways confirmed that a set of technical requirements on the design, provision and operation of air ventilation systems in PTIs was available and the developer constructing the PTI had to comply with these requirements.

53. On the management of the proposed PTI, PTO/U,TD said that according to established practice, different parties and departments would be responsible for the management and maintenance of different parts of the PTI. For example, each bus company would be responsible for managing its own facilities in the PTI as specified in its franchise, and the maintenance of the road surface would be the responsibility of relevant Government departments.

54. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee

HEAD 707 - NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

PWSC(2000-01)33

52TH

Route 5 - section between Shek Wai Kok and Chai Wan Kok

55. Mr LEE Wing-tat pointed out that the traffic flow along Cheung Pei Shan Road (CPS Road) would increase as a result of the construction of the section of Route 5 between Shek Wai Kok and Chai Wan Kok under this proposal. As residents of Cheung Shan Estate and Shek Wai Kok Estate along CPS Road were already suffering from traffic noise in excess of 70dB coming from CPS Road,

Mr LEE was concerned that the residents in these estates would be exposed to even greater noise impacts. He also considered it unreasonable that according to the existing policy, no noise mitigation measures would be provided to CPS Road or the two estates simply because they were outside the scope of the proposed project. Referring to a letter from eight members of the Tsuen Wan District Council (TWDC) urging him not to support the proposal, he urged for a policy change in this regard and stated that in the absence of noise mitigation measures for CPS Road and the two estates, he would not support the proposal. Miss Emily LAU, Mr Fred LI, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong, Miss Cyd HO and Mr Andrew CHENG shared his concerns.

56. In reply, the Director of Territory Development (DTD) highlighted the need to ensure effective deployment of limited resources. He explained that in considering the provision of noise mitigation measures which were costly, priority would be accorded to new projects. He and the Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (PAS(T)) however assured members that the Administration was in the course of conducting an overall review of the existing policy and that the provision of mitigation measures to existing roads adversely affected by noise pollution would also be examined in this context. In this regard, the Chairman pointed out that the policy issue, which was complex and had far-reaching implications, should be followed up at the relevant Panel(s) instead of being debated at this meeting.

XX

57. Miss Emily LAU was not convinced of the Administration's explanation on grounds of resource consideration. In her view, every effort should be made to tackle pollution of whatever form as the society would have to bear the substantial costs ultimately incurred. She said that according to a recent report, air pollution could cost the society some \$3.8 billion a year in terms of medical expenses and productivity loss. She therefore considered that the cost of mitigation measures could be well justified in terms of the benefit it would bring to the community.

Admin

58. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong concurred with Miss LAU. He highlighted the existing practice in the education sector of applying new environmental standards to all schools alike, and opined that pending completion of the policy review, the Administration should expand the scope of this project to cover CPS Road as a start. Miss LAU and Miss Cyd HO further proposed that the Administration should ascertain the indirect social cost such as medical costs and loss in productivity caused by noise pollution and provide the information to members as soon as practicable to facilitate their consideration of this proposal. The Chairman however pointed out that as the required information was not directly related to this proposal and required a lot of study, the Administration should be allowed more time to collect and provide the information.

Admin

59. In response, DTD emphasized that he had to act in accordance with existing policies. Unless the Administration had decided on a change in policy to provide noise mitigation measures to existing roads as well, it would be inappropriate for him to consider such plans in respect of CPS Road. He however assured members that the Administration would make the best endeavour to expedite the review. He added that should it be decided that the provision of noise mitigation measures be extended to existing roads, CPS Road would likely be among the first to benefit from the improvement. DDEP also confirmed that the results of the review would be ready in the near future. Although there might be difficulty in providing noise barriers on existing roads due to the existence of buildings and many other constraints, other remedial measures such as the use of low noise road surfacing would be examined to provide noise relief as far as practicable.

Admin

60. Mr LEE Wing-tat enquired whether any assessment of the traffic noise levels at the section of CPS Road adjacent to the two estates had been made, in particular at night. In response, DDEP agreed to provide the necessary information after the meeting. DTD, PAS(T) and the Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West, Transport Department (CTE(NTW),TD) supplemented that the increase in traffic volume and hence traffic noise along CPS Road as a result of the construction of the proposed road section would not be significant. They reiterated that even without this section of Route 5, vehicles travelling between Tsuen Wan and Sha Tin would inevitably use the Shing Mun Tunnels and CPS Road because this was the most direct route linking the two districts. As such, although there might be an increase in vehicular traffic along CPS Road, such increase was more the result of the natural growth in general traffic volume than a direct result of the proposed road scheme.

61. DTD and PAS(T) urged members to support the present proposal in the light of the significant benefits the proposed road section would bring to residents of Tsuen Wan. They stressed that the merits of the present proposal should be distinguished from the policy issue relating to the provision of noise mitigation measures on existing roads which was the subject of a current review. DTD, PAS(T) and CTE(NTW),TD advised members that at present, vehicular traffic between the Shing Mun Tunnels and Tuen Mun Road/Castle Peak Road had to pass through the congested local road network within Tsuen Wan. The proposed road would provide a direct trunk road link between the Tunnels and Tuen Mun Road and would help relieve congestion in the town centre and reduce the noise and air pollution there. As such, the veto of this proposal would be to the disadvantage of Tsuen Wan but without bringing any improvement to residents of the two estates. Moreover, with the construction of this very important remaining section of Route 5, the NT Circular Road would be completed and the traffic flow in the New Territories would be greatly improved. Their views were shared by Ir Dr Raymond HO.

62. On the environmental implications of the present project, members expressed the following concerns and views on noise mitigation measures for the Administration's consideration -

- (a) The best environmental mitigation measures for this road scheme might not have been recommended because of cost considerations.
- (b) Should the proposal on 24-hour border crossing be adopted, the traffic growth and hence the noise impacts arising from the proposed road scheme might be significantly greater than those anticipated by the Administration.
- (c) While on average, the noise levels along the proposed road section would not exceed 70 dB, occasional levels of over 70dB coming from heavy vehicles during night-time might disturb sleeping residents. As such, there might be a need to prohibit heavy vehicles from using the road section at night.
- (d) Due to the height limitation of the proposed noise barriers, while the noise impact on units at lower storeys might be abated, those at higher storeys might still be exposed to excessive noise.
- (e) Instead of constructing noise barriers which did not have any visual appeal and which would affect air circulation, screen planting on each side of the road should be considered and further details should be discussed at the Environmental Affairs Panel, if necessary.

63. In reply, DTD and the Chief Engineer/New Territories West (1), New Territories West Development Office, Territory Development Department (Ch Engr(NTW), NTWDO) noted members' views for consideration and made the following points -

- (a) While giving due regard to cost-effectiveness, the Administration had also taken into consideration the needs of the residents in deciding on the mitigation measures. The Administration had made efforts to ensure that the traffic noise from the proposed road section would not exceed the guideline of 70dB.
- (b) The proposed noise mitigation measures had been designed with a view to mitigating the daytime traffic noise anticipated to be generated from the proposed road section in 2011 when it would be in full operation. The Administration therefore believed that the measures would be effective even if the border was open round the clock.

- (c) Since the volume of vehicular traffic during night-time would normally be much smaller, it was unlikely that the traffic noise levels at night would be very high.
- (d) Semi-noise enclosures would be installed to prevent noise from affecting flats at higher storeys. Having considered the conditions at the Tsuen Kam Interchange, the Administration was of the view that there was no need for installation of semi-noise enclosures there and the use of noise barriers would suffice.

Admin

64. In this regard, Mr LEE Wing-tat enquired about the estimated traffic noise impacts on sensitive receivers along the proposed route such as Tsuen Tak Garden, Kam Fung Garden, Luk Yeung Sun Chuen and part of Shek Wai Kok Estate upon provision of the proposed noise mitigation measures. In reply, DTD agreed to provide information on the results of the relevant environmental impact assessment (EIA) to members. Ch Engr(NTW), NTWDO supplemented that with the provision of the mitigation measures, about half of the buildings along the proposed road section would be exposed to traffic noise below 70 dB.

Admin

65. Mr LEE Wing-tat considered the effectiveness of the proposed noise mitigation measures unsatisfactory as only about half of the affected buildings would be relieved. He was also disappointed at the absence of such information in the discussion paper. In response, Ch Engr(NTW), NTWDO pointed out that even without the proposed road section, many of the buildings concerned were already under a noise exposure of over 70 dB. The additional noise impact arising from the proposed road section was minimal and could be mitigated by the measures proposed. DTD further pointed out that it was practically impossible to ensure that the noise exposure of all buildings along the proposed road section would be below 70 dB all the time. However, at spots where the noise level could not be kept below 70 dB, other remedial measures such as installation of air-conditioning facilities would be considered. For example, the developer of Discovery Park had already agreed to provide the necessary noise abatement measures pursuant to the relevant provisions in the land sales agreement. As regards details of the remedial measures undertaken by developers, DTD advised that as the costs would be borne by the developers, they had not been presented in the paper. He also reported that apart from Discovery Park, where the road section would go underground, mitigation measures such as the provision of air-conditioning facilities would be provided by the developer of Tsuen Kam Centre. DTD also emphasized that the Administration had always worked according to a consistent set of EIA and engineering design standards when deciding on the mitigation measures for projects to control their operational noise to a practicable minimum. To address members' concerns however, he undertook to provide a supplementary paper on the provision of mitigation measures.

66. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry about the objections to the project, none of which had been withdrawn, PAS(T) clarified that of the 12 objections received, the objection by residents of Hoi Pa Village was the only one related to noise impacts. As for the others, nine were from members of the Tang Clan who objected to the road scheme on grounds that it would affect the "fung shui" of their ancestral grave in the area. One objection was from the Mass Transit Railway Corporation expressing concerns about traffic impacts on their Tsuen Wan depot during construction and the other was from residents at the foot of Tai Mo Shan aggrieved by resumption of their land.

67. On the complaint hotlines to be provided during construction, DTD advised that the purpose of the hotlines was to facilitate independent monitoring by nearby residents of the construction impacts and to enable the Administration to provide a prompt response. As regards co-operation of contractors, he said that although the directors of the contractor companies would not be held personally liable for non-compliance with environmental requirements, administrative sanctions such as revocation of licence might be considered for recalcitrant offenders. DTD elaborated that a report would be made on each contractor every six months in which compliance with environmental requirements constituted an important part. If the performance of a contractor failed to meet the necessary standards on repeated occasions, consideration would be given to revoking the contractor's licence.

68. Miss Cyd HO suggested that to ensure members could fully understand the environmental impacts of individual projects, future submissions should include under the paragraph on environmental implications an assessment of noise impacts during both the construction and operational stages. Moreover, apart from describing the impacts on buildings within the scope of the project scope, the paragraph should also describe the impacts on other buildings which would be affected by the proposed works. The Chairman requested the Administration to note Miss HO's suggestion for consideration.

Admin

69. Mrs Miriam LAU enquired about the current volume/capacity (v/c) ratio of the road junctions in Tsuen Wan town centre where the congestion could be eased by the proposed road section. In reply, CTE(NTW),TD said that the traffic volume of these traffic signal junctions was expressed in terms of the reserved capacity, and currently all of them were operating beyond their capacities at -10% to -15%, with long traffic queues on their approach roads. As for the Tsuen Kam Interchange, its present v/c was around 0.7.

70. Mrs Miriam LAU noted that the v/c of the Tsuen Kam Interchange would become 1.71 in 2006 upon completion of the Tsing Yi North Coastal Road (TYNCR) if the proposed roadworks were not provided. She commented that if this proposal was negated, the Administration should consider de-connecting the TYNCR to the Interchange. In response, CTE(NTW),TD assured members that the traffic along TYNCR would not affect the traffic volume in Tsuen Wan

town centre as vehicles heading for and going from TYNCR would only pass through Tsuen Wan via Texaco Road and the Interchange.

71. Mr Fred LI questioned why there had not been any recent consultation with TWDC as the last consultation with Tsuen Wan District Board (TWDB) took place in 1993 and 1995. He also pointed out that TWDB in fact did not fully support the project in 1995 as it had reservation about the noise impact during construction and upon completion of the project. Mr TAM Yiu-chung was also concerned about the noise impact during construction. In reply, DTD advised that TWDB's concern about noise impacts during construction had already been addressed by the Administration's undertaking to control the construction impacts to within the established standards under the relevant Environmental Permit. He said that the Administration had not consulted the current TWDC as the project had been approved by the Executive Council in 1997 and no further major changes had been contemplated.

72. As to why actual works on the project had taken so long to commence, DTD explained that the progress of the preliminary design had been hindered by strong objections to the proposed road layout, especially those from the Tang Clan. That apart, the significant scope of the project had also necessitated longer time for detailed design. He added that the former delay was unforeseeable and the latter delay was not significant. The Administration was fully aware of the urgent need for the proposed road section.

73. Noting members' grave concerns and their request for additional information, especially on issues related to noise impacts, the Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (DS(Tsy)) decided to withdraw the item. She however drew members' attention to the urgency of the project.

HEAD 711 - HOUSING

PWSC(2000-01)34

643TH

Trunk Road T7 in Ma On Shan

74. Referring to the difference in the effectiveness of cantilever noise barriers and semi-enclosed noise barriers, Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the criteria for deciding on the type of noise barrier to be constructed for abating the noise impacts of Trunk Road T7 in Ma On Shan under this proposal. In particular, he was concerned about the provision of cantilever, instead of semi-enclosed, noise barriers to the section of the road opposite Kam Ying Court.

75. In reply, DTD advised that in deciding on the type of noise barriers to be provided, the Administration would take into consideration the distance between the road and the buildings along it, as well as the heights of the buildings. As such, if a building was both tall and close to the road, the more costly option of semi-enclosed noise barriers would be provided. In the case of Kam Ying Court,

the Administration considered the provision of cantilever noise barriers appropriate having regard to its physical conditions based on the above criteria.

76. Mr LAU Kong-wah doubted the effectiveness of cantilever noise barriers in mitigating the noise impacts of Trunk Road T7 on Kam Ying Court. While expressing support for the construction of the road, he was also keen to ensure fairness in the provision of noise barriers along the road. He queried why Kam Ying Court was the only estate along the road not to be provided with semi-enclosed noise barriers.

Admin

77. In response, DTD stressed the need to work according to a consistent set of criteria in providing noise barriers to ensure the proper use of public funds. As such, unless the provision of semi-enclosed noise barriers to Kam Ying Court could be fully justified according to the aforesaid criteria, it would be very difficult for the Administration to accede to Mr LAU's request to provide the estate with semi-enclosed noise barriers. He however agreed to provide an estimate on the additional costs incurred if semi-enclosed noise barriers were also provided for Kam Ying Court. The Chief Engineer (Sha Tin and Sai Kung), Territory Development Department (CE/ST&SK,TDD) further explained that the mitigation measures for the road had also been worked out on the basis of the calculation results of noise assessment made in the context of the environmental review on the air and noise implications of the project conducted in March 2000 to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory standards. At Mr LAU's request, DTD agreed to deposit a set of the relevant EIA Report and the Environmental Review report at the Secretariat for members' reference.

Admin

(Post-meeting note: a copy each of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (February 1998) and the Environmental Review (March 2000) has been deposited with the Secretariat . Members were duly informed vide LC Paper No. PWSC138/99-00.)

78. Miss CHAN Yuen-han acknowledged the need for the proposed Trunk Road T7. She however emphasized the need to give careful consideration to the resultant noise impacts of every road project on the residents concerned as early as the design stage because mitigation measures taken after completion of a road were rarely effective. As such, re-consideration should be given to the need of Kam Ying Court for semi-enclosed noise barriers to ensure its residents would not be exposed to excessive traffic noise. She also pointed out that when designing the mitigation measures, a greater capacity should be allowed to enable them to cope with traffic growth in a longer term.

79. Apart from Kam Ying Court, Mr Andrew CHENG also highlighted two other sections of the proposed Trunk Road T7, namely, the sections near Heng On Estate and Symphony Bay, and enquired about the rationale of providing only cantilever noise barriers for them, given that semi-enclosed noise barriers had been proposed for other sections of the road, such as Monte Vista

which, in his view, had similar conditions as the said developments. In reply, DTD said that the relevant recommendations had been made by the consultants of the project having regard to the same criteria as mentioned earlier -. To assure members that the decisions in relation to the provision of noise barriers to Trunk Road T7 were fair and reasonable, DTD and CE/ST&SK,TDD made the following points -

- (a) Cantilever noise barriers had been proposed for Symphony Bay because it was a low-rise and low-density residential development.
- (b) Kam Ying Court was relatively farther away from the road. In addition, the section of the road next to it was at the top of a slope and this had resulted in a different calculation result of noise assessment.
- (c) Although the housing blocks in Heng On Estate were very tall, the section of the road next to it was only an access road, where traffic flow would be relatively small.
- (d) There was a need to provide semi-enclosed noise barriers for Monte Vista because of the height of buildings.

80. Noting that members were particularly concerned about the provision of different types of noise barriers in the present proposal and having considered the technical nature of such information, the Chairman advised that an informal briefing should be arranged to enable the Administration and the consultants of the project to explain to members their recommendations and the reasons.

(Post-meeting note: The special briefing was held on 2 June 2000 at 9:00 a.m. in the form of a closed meeting. Members had been notified vide LC Paper No. PWSC 135/99-00.)

81. Miss Emily LAU expressed concern about the noise impacts of road projects in general and urged the Administration to make their best efforts to mitigate them as far as practicable. She further suggested that apart from noise barriers, low noise road surfacing and screen planting should also be used to minimize the noise impacts of the proposed Trunk Road T7.

82. In reply, DTD and CE/ST&SK,TDD confirmed that low noise road surfacing would be used for the whole stretch of the road as this was the standard material used for all new trunk roads to mitigate noise impacts and increase friction to enhance safety. As for tree planting, CE/ST&SK,TDD advised that to make up for the loss of five hectares of woodland, the Administration would plant trees and shrubs on all disturbed and new slopes with screen planting along the roadside and interchange areas providing a total landscaping area of about 6.5 hectares. He added that the effect of screen planting in mitigating noise

impacts had not been mentioned in the discussion paper because it could not be quantified.

83. In this connection, Ir Dr Raymond HO pointed out that more than 20% of the cost of this project had been earmarked for the provision of noise mitigation measures and this was an adequate level of funding. He cautioned that it was necessary to strike a reasonable balance between environmental considerations and other aspects of the project.

84. Miss Emily LAU enquired about the Administration's response to a letter from residents of Heng On Estate expressing their concern about the noise impacts of this road project. While DTD said that he had not yet had sight of the said letter, he agreed to look into the matter and follow up where necessary.

85. Regarding traffic justification for the proposed Trunk Road T7, CTE/NTE, TD advised that at present, Ma On Shan (MOS) was only served by two main roads, viz Sai Sha Road and MOS Road. The planned developments at northern MOS, Lee On, Cheung Muk Tau and Sai Sha was expected to generate substantial traffic demand overloading the junctions located along Sai Sha Road and MOS Road. The proposed Road T7 would serve as a bypass to accommodate through traffic, thus relieving the traffic burden at the critical junctions along Sai Sha Road and MOS Road. Noting that the project would cost more than \$2 billion, Miss Emily Lau expressed reservation about whether it would be value for money to construct the road solely for the purpose of relieving congestion at the junctions.

Admin 86. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry on the volume/capacity (v/c) ratio of Trunk Road T7, CTE/NTE, TD advised that by 2011, the ratio would be around 1. He agreed to provide after the meeting the ratio for 2006, as well as the current v/c ratios of Ma On Shan Road and Sai Sha Road.

87. Noting that even with the proposed Trunk Road T7, the design flow/capacity (DFC) ratio of the junctions would still be as high as 0.86 in 2006, Mrs Miriam LAU was keen to ensure that the road would be able to effectively cope with the future traffic growth without the need for widening in the near future. In response, DTD confirmed the adequacy of the road's planned capacity and explained that since nearly all planned developments in the area should have been completed by 2006, the traffic growth thereafter should level off. CTE/NTE, TD added that although the DFC of the junctions would increase significantly between 2001 and 2006, the increase between 2006 and 2011 would be minimal. In reply to Mrs LAU, he also confirmed that in conducting the relevant traffic study, the extension of MOS to Tai Wai Rail Link before 2006 and the rail link to Kowloon in 2011 had already been taken into account.

88. Miss Cyd HO referred to the engagement of consultants at a cost of around \$66 million to carry out the detailed design and site investigations of the

proposed Trunk Road T7, and questioned why after completion of the above consultancy study the Administration should still fail to ascertain the quantities of earthworks and foundation works involved, so that there was a need to tender the works under a standard remeasurement contract. In reply, DTD explained that while the study had proved very useful in drawing up the proposed routing, due to the inherent uncertain nature of civil engineering works, the quantities of the earthworks and foundation works involved could still vary depending on the actual ground conditions. He however assured members that the possibility of major changes was very low.

89. Miss Cyd HO was keen to ensure that the provisions of the proposed remeasurement contract would be able to safeguard the Government against possible financial or legal liabilities. In reply, DTD advised that to reduce the possibility of claims for damages against the Government, the Administration would step up supervision during construction to detect and tackle site problems early. He nevertheless advised that while adequate safeguards would be included under the contract, in recognition of the inherent uncertainties in civil engineering works, there was also a need to safeguard the contractors' position in claiming for damages arising from unforeseeable circumstances.

90. Mr LAU Kong-wah stated that before more details on the provision of noise mitigation measures to Trunk Road T7 were made available at the special briefing as advised by the Chairman, Members of the Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong would abstain from voting on this proposal.

91. Miss Emily LAU said that pending the provision of more information to assure members of the adequacy of the proposed noise mitigation measures for the project, Members of The Frontier would also abstain from voting.

92. Mr Andrew CHENG said that Members of the Democratic Party would also abstain from voting for the same reasons.

93. In response, DS(Tsy) agreed to withdraw the item. As the Administration considered that the project was urgent, she indicated that the Administration might consider submitting the item to FC for approval after members had been briefed at the special briefing. While Mr LAU Kong-wah found DS(Tsy)'s suggestion acceptable in principle, other members had reservation about it. The Chairman explained that if the special briefing could be arranged before the next meeting of the Subcommittee to be held on 7 June 2000, the item could be re-submitted to the Subcommittee for consideration at that meeting. Failing that, consideration might be given to holding an additional meeting to deal with the item. If the Administration decided to submit the item to FC without re-submitting it to PWSC, he would consult the FC Chairman accordingly.

94. As there was insufficient time to consider agenda item PWSC(2000-01)35, members agreed that discussion of this item should be carried over to the next meeting.

95. The meeting ended at 1:05 p.m.

Legislative Council Secretariat

15 June 2000