

NOTE FOR PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

Supplementary Information on 72LC – Prison Development Plan at Hei Ling Chau – feasibility study and preliminary site investigation for land formation and infrastructure works

INTRODUCTION

When considering PWSC(2002-03)95 on **72LC** at the Public Works Subcommittee meeting held on 26 February 2003, Members requested the Administration to provide –

- (a) information to explain how the forecast of penal population as set out in paragraph 9 of the paper was arrived at. Relevant figures and computation methods should be specified;
- (b) information to confirm/explain whether it is feasible for in-house staff of the Government to undertake all or part of the works included in this proposal instead of engaging consultants to undertake the works as currently planned, and whether the works included in this proposal could be undertaken in stages such that the need to proceed with the later stage(s) of works could be reviewed in the light of the result/outcome of the earlier stage(s) of works;
- (c) the cost of transporting remands pending trial from the proposed prison complex to courts in urban areas; and
- (d) the expected economic return from the existing penal sites to be released for alternative development after the commissioning of the proposed prison complex.

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THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Forecast of penal population

2. The penal population projection was worked out in accordance with an established methodology which was explained to the Security Panel of the Provisional Legislative Council in December 1997. The basic computation is as follows –

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{Projected penal population for a particular year} \\
 = & \text{Penal population at the end of the preceding year} \\
 & \textbf{Plus} \quad \text{Projected admissions in the year} \\
 & \textbf{Less} \quad \text{Projected discharges in the year,}
 \end{aligned}$$

where *projected admissions and discharges* are based on the projected numbers of arrests/prosecutions provided by the Police and Immigration Department and the projected lengths of detention of inmates, taking into account relevant factors such as the crime rate, crime detection rate, sentencing pattern and general population growth.

———— The result of the projection is shown in Enclosure 1.

Deployment of in-house staff to undertake the works

3. There are established policy and procedures in place for engaging consultants for capital works projects. In general, the proponent department would need to examine the availability of in-house resources, in terms of both manpower and expertise, before proposing to out-source consultancy and engineering services. The Administration has completed such procedures before submitting the current funding proposal (PWSC(2002-03)95) to PWSC. Details of our assessment are set out in paragraphs 4 – 6 below.

4. The proposed works comprise a feasibility study (FS) and a preliminary site investigation (SI), which are estimated to cost \$20 million and \$23 million, both in September 2002 price, respectively. Out of the estimated \$20 million for consultants' fees for the FS, \$6.2 million is for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study. The Director of Environmental Protection is the approving authority of the EIA report. To avoid any potential conflict of interest, we consider it not appropriate for the Environmental Protection Department to take up the EIA study.

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5. The remainder of the FS, which costs \$13.8 million, covers many inter-related aspects under the jurisdiction of more than ten departments. It is therefore more efficient for consultants to undertake the multi-disciplinary study. Nevertheless, in view of PWSC members' concern, we have discussed with these departments again requesting them to critically review their resource situation to see if they can undertake all or part of the FS. It was confirmed that there is no reserve capacity in these departments for large-scale feasibility studies of this nature, as all of their staff are committed to core duties arising from the departments' normal operations and services.

6. As regards the preliminary SI, the works will be carried out by contractors and supervised by the in-house staff of the Civil Engineering Department. The Government has no plant, equipment or labour to carry out the SI works.

Division of the FS into stages

7. The feasibility study will be carried out in two stages. The Stage 1 study comprises preliminary assessments on various aspects such as environmental impacts, engineering, traffic and transport, planning and land uses, project finance and formulation of a preferred option for the land formation and infrastructure works. Subject to the outcome of the Stage 1 study, we will proceed to Stage 2 for detailed assessments and preliminary design for the selected option. In the course of the Stage 1 study, we will consult the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) and interested sectors of the public. Before we proceed to Stage 2, we will present the findings of Stage 1 to the ACE and the Islands District Council for views. We will then review the need to proceed with Stage 2 taking into account the findings of Stage 1 and the views collected in the whole consultation process. There will be provisions in the consultancy agreement which separate the consultancy fees for the two stages and stipulate that the consultants are only required to proceed with Stage 2 upon the Government's instruction.

Cost of transporting remands

8. At present, we have four reception centres, namely Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre (for male adult remands), Pik Uk Correctional Institution (for male young remands), Tai Lam Centre for Women (for female adult remands) and Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution (for female young remands). Remands are escorted every working day, according to the court schedule, from these four separate reception centres to various courts located in different parts of the territory for trial proceedings, and are normally returned to the reception centres on the same day. After a remand has been convicted, his or her status will be changed to one of prisoner. Following the conviction, the prisoner will first be sent back to the relevant reception centre from

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the court. There he or she will be categorised and then transferred out to an institution to serve his or her sentence. The current costs of transporting remands therefore cover the following –

- (a) transfers from reception centres by land transport to various courts and returns; and
- (b) after conviction and categorisation, transfers from the respective reception centres by land transport (and where necessary, by sea transport as well) to other institutions for further detention.

9. In the proposed mid-sized prison development project, all the four reception centres will be placed under a reception complex on Hei Ling Chau. As far as transfers to and from courts are concerned, our initial assessment is that a combined land-and-sea transport mode, with appropriate landing points provided, should be the most cost-effective. We envisage that there would be considerable economy-of-scale savings arising from the sharing of vehicles, vessels and escort staff among the remands. As regards transfers to institutions for the serving of sentence, it should be noted that after completion of the proposed mid-sized prison development project, some 80% of the penal population would be accommodated in institutions on Hei Ling Chau and Lantau Island. Substantial savings can be achieved from the greatly shortened transfer trips when compared with the present situation. A detailed examination of the mode of operation of transfers of remands/prisoners to and from the proposed prison complex (e.g. location of transit piers, escort routes and deployment of the Escort and Support Group and the Transport Pool) will be carried out in the proposed feasibility study. Subject to the outcome of the findings, a better assessment of the transport costs can be made.

10. But as an illustration and for indicative purposes only, we have attempted a rough calculation of the cost of transporting remands to the High Court/District Court on Hong Kong Island from the existing reception centres and that of transporting the same group of remands to the same places from the proposed prison complex on Hei Ling Chau, subject to a number of assumptions (such as a transit pier in Central). The average operating cost per inmate per single trip at present is about \$190, whereas that for hypothetical operation from Hei Ling Chau can be about halved. Added to the much reduced costs of transfer trips from reception centre to institutions for servicing sentence as mentioned in paragraph 9 above, the total cost reduction in respect of transfer of remands from Hei Ling Chau should be very substantial.

/Economic

Economic return

11. As set out in Enclosure 2 to PWSC(2002-03)95, the penal institutions to be released upon the commissioning of the proposed prison complex are –

Hong Kong Island

Stanley Prison

Pak Sha Wan Correctional Institution

Tung Tau Correctional Institution

Victoria Prison

Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution

Cape Collinson Correctional Institution

Ma Hang Prison

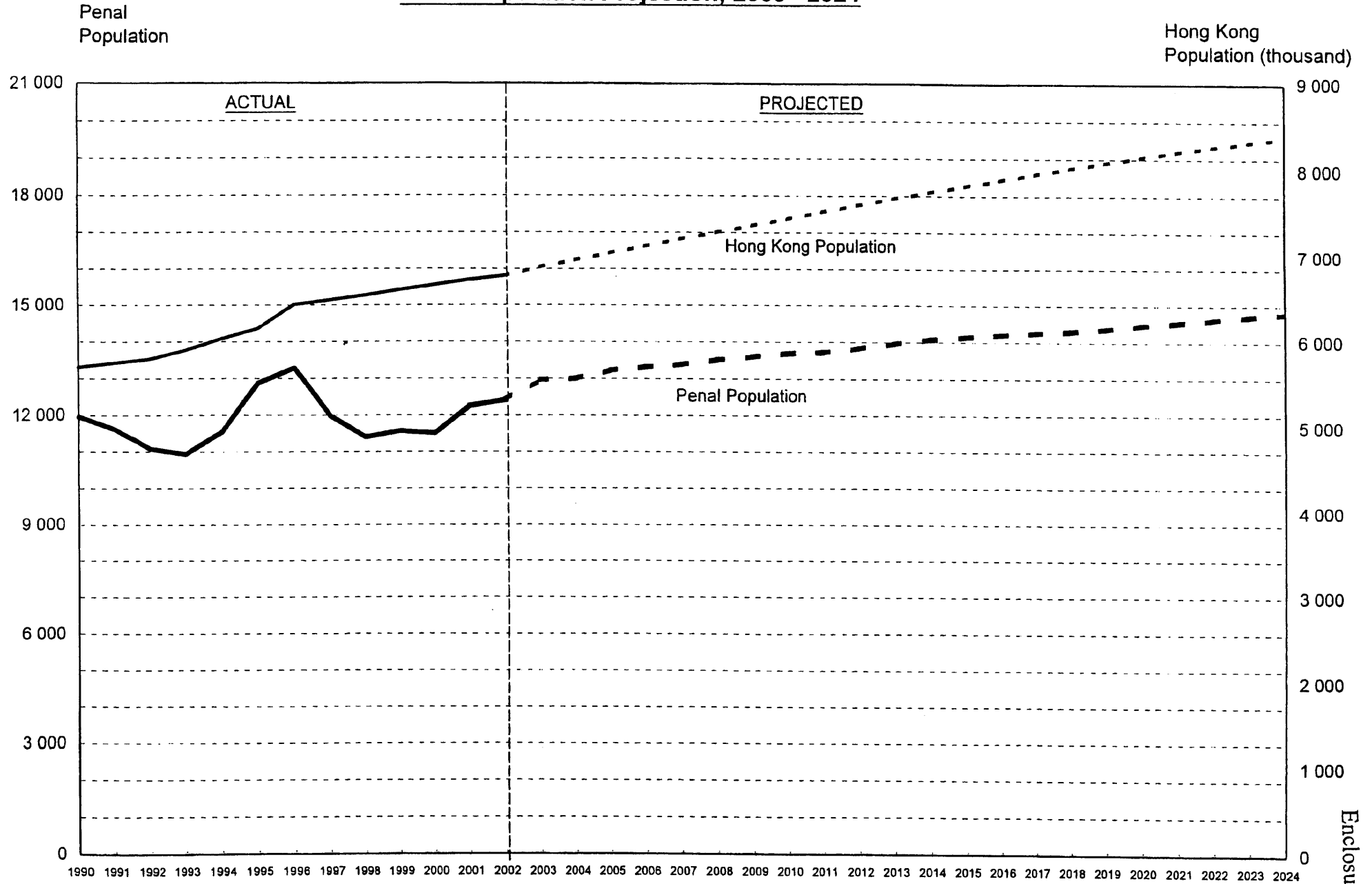
Kowloon

Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre

12. The expected economic return from the existing penal sites to be released for alternative development depends on a number of factors, including the usages and densities of development of the sites and the gear-up costs involved to service such usages. As explained in our letter of 26 April 2003 to the Clerk to PWSC in response to a question asked at the meeting on 12 February 2003 (Enclosure 2), while we are committed to releasing the sites for alternative uses or redevelopment to meet community needs, at present there is no pre-determined plan for any of these sites following vacation. Their possible alternative uses will be examined and reviewed by relevant bureaux and departments (including the Planning Department and the Lands Department) in due course as the proposed project at Hei Ling Chau proceeds further.

Security Bureau
May 2003

Penal Population Projection, 2003 - 2024



政府總部
香港下亞厘畢道



GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
LOWER ALBERT ROAD
HONG KONG

本函檔號 OUR REF.:

SBCR 2/1916/97

來函檔號 YOUR REF.:

26 April 2003

Ms Anita Sit
Clerk to Public Works Subcommittee
3rd Floor, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Sit,

**Public Works Subcommittee:
Meeting on 12 February 2003**

I refer to paragraph 22 of the minutes of the above meeting and would like to provide the following supplementary information as requested.

Subject to feasibility study¹ and funding approval, we plan to proceed with the development of the 7220-place prison complex at Hei Ling Chau for completion by 2013 or later. When commissioned, the new prison complex will be able to take over all the prisoners kept in the correctional institutions on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon, including the Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre and the proposed female prison² at the same location³. The current plan is to decommission all these institutions after the transfer of the prisoners and release the buildings and sites for alternative uses or redevelopment to meet the community needs. At present there is no pre-determined plan for any of these buildings and sites after their vacation. Their possible alternative uses will be examined and reviewed by

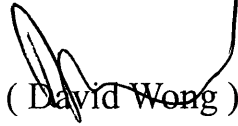
¹ 5072LC – Prison development plan at Hei Ling Chau – feasibility study and preliminary site investigation for land formation and infrastructure works.

² 3073LC – Reprovisioning of Victoria Prison at Lai Chi Kok old staff married quarters site.

³ The whole site is currently zoned for “Government, Institution or Community” use on the draft Lai Chi Kok Outline Zoning Plan No. S/K16/11.

relevant bureaux and departments (including the Planning Department and the Lands Department) in due course as the proposed project at Hei Ling Chau proceeds further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Wong', is written over the printed name '(David Wong)'. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

for Secretary for Security