

For information

## **Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs**

### **Views and Opinions Received from Major Stakeholders on the Findings and Recommendations of the Territory Wide Implementation Study of Water Cooled Air Conditioning in Hong Kong**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper informs Members of the views and opinions received during the consultation exercise on the findings and recommendations of the Territory Wide Implementation Study of Water Cooled Air Conditioning Systems (WACS) in Hong Kong (hereinafter referred to as the Study).

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. In October 2000, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) commissioned a consultancy study on the territory-wide implementation of WACS in Hong Kong. The Study was completed in April 2003. The findings and recommendations of the Study were presented to this Panel in July 2003.

#### **CONSULTATION PROCESS**

3. The Executive Summary of the Study was posted on the EMSD website on 11 August 2003. The major stakeholders were separately informed in writing and were invited to give their views and comments on the findings and recommendations of the Study. The consultation exercise was completed on 10 November 2003. A total of 25 submissions had been received and were categorized into the following groups -

- (a) Group A - Professional institutions and academics (7 submissions)
- (b) Group B - Government/publicly funded organizations and government advisory committees (6 submissions)

- (c) Group C - Trade organizations, utilities and private developers (8 submissions)
- (d) Group D - Others (4 submissions)

## **SUMMARY OF VIEWS AND OPINIONS**

4. 16 submissions (3 from Group A, 3 from Group B, 8 from Group C and 2 from Group D) explicitly supported the implementation of WACS in Hong Kong. The rest, except one submission that had reservations on the implementation of the District Cooling Scheme (DCS), were generally positive in their views.

5. The major views and opinions relating to the findings and recommendations of the Study are grouped and highlighted in the following paragraphs.

### **Cooling Tower Scheme**

6. 12 submissions (1 from Group A, 3 from Group B, 5 from Group C and 3 from Group D) commented on the findings and recommendations related to the Cooling Tower Scheme. Among them, two (both from Group C) supported the scheme and requested the Government to accelerate the pace of lifting the restriction on using fresh water for evaporative cooling towers. The other views and suggestions mainly focused on the control measures applicable to cooling towers, the reuse of wastewater from cooling towers, the surveillance programme of cooling towers and the potential increase in fresh water consumption.

### **District Cooling Scheme and Central Seawater Scheme**

7. 16 submissions (3 from Group A, 4 from Group B, 6 from Group C and 3 from Group D) commented on the findings and recommendations related to the DCS and the Central Seawater Scheme (CSS). They generally recognized the benefits of the DCS in energy and cost saving as well as more flexibility in building design and considered that the DCS would be suitable for new development areas. They suggested that preferential terms, such as waiving pipeline wayleave charges, granting bonus gross floor area and allowing conversion of existing plant rooms for other purposes, should be provided to enable successful implementation. Three submissions (2 from Group B and 1 from Group C) suggested that buildings in the relevant districts should be compelled to subscribe to the service of the DCS or CSS. One (from Group D)

was concerned about the environmental impact on seawater quality and the treatment methods for seawater, and another (from Group A) about traffic impacts arising from road excavation works during the construction stage. One (from Group A) was of the view that the coexistence of the DCS and the Cooling Tower Scheme would deter investment on the DCS. One submission (from Group D) was concerned about the potential downside of implementing the DCS, for example, the opportunity cost of granting land for the DCS, creation of a new monopoly, etc. However, these concerns are not insurmountable based on overseas experience and they can be addressed by adopting appropriate architectural / engineering design for the systems and establishing a suitable regulatory framework.

## **WAY FORWARD**

8. With the encouraging feedback from the public consultation and earlier support from this Panel and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Subcommittee, we will lift the restriction on using fresh water for cooling towers in more areas where fresh water supply capacities are adequate. We will impose stringent design and operational requirements to address the concerns raised. We will also select suitable areas for implementing the DCS when the opportunity arises.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

9. Members are invited to note the feedback from the public consultation.

**Environment, Transport and Works Bureau  
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department  
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