

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)2095/04-05
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref: CB1/PL/ES/1

Panel on Economic Services

**Minutes of meeting held on
Monday, 27 June 2005, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai, JP
Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon CHIM Pui-chung
Hon KWONG Chi-kin
Hon TAM Heung-man
- Member attending** : Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP
- Members absent** : Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, S.B.St.J., JP
Dr Hon David LI Kwok-po, GBS, JP
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP
- Public Officers attending** : **Agenda item V**
Ms Sandra LEE
Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Miss Janice TSE
Deputy Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Ms Alice LAU
Principal Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
and Labour (Port, Maritime and Logistics)

Mr R F TUPPER
Deputy Director of Marine

Agenda item VI

Mr Stephen IP
Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Ms Sandra LEE
Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Ms Eva CHENG
Commissioner for Tourism

Miss Patricia SO
Assistant Commissioner for Tourism

Agenda item VII

Mr Stephen IP
Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Ms Sandra LEE
Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Ms Eva CHENG
Commissioner for Tourism

Miss Winky SO
Assistant Commissioner for Tourism

Mr Simon PEH
Assistant Director (Control)
Immigration Department

Mr LO Yat-cheung
Principal Transport Officer/Special Duties
Transport Department

Mr KOO Sii-hong, Henrique
Assistant Commissioner of Police (Operations)
Hong Kong Police Force

Attendance by invitation : **Agenda item VI**
Ocean Park Corporation

Dr Allan ZEMAN
Chairman of the Board

Mr Tom MEHRMANN
Chief Executive

Mr Matthias LI
Executive Director

Clerk in attendance : Mr Andy LAU
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Senior Council Secretary (1)9

Miss Winnie CHENG
Legislative Assistant (1)5

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I Confirmation of minutes and matters arising
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1862/04-05 - Minutes of meeting held on
2 June 2005)

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2005 were confirmed.

II Endorsement of the Report of the Panel for submission to the Council
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1845/04-05 - Draft report of the Panel for
submission to the Council)

2. Members endorsed the Report of the Panel for 2004-05 session for submission to the Council.

III Information papers issued since last meeting
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1694/04-05(01) - Tables and graphs showing the
import and retail prices of major
oil products from May 2003 to
April 2005 furnished by the
Census and Statistics Department

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LC Paper No. CB(1)1855/04-05(05) - Information paper on "Future Development of the Electricity Market in Hong Kong : Views received during the Stage I Public Consultation" provided by the Administration)

3. Members noted the information papers issued since the last meeting.
4. The Chairman said that the item on "Future Development of the Electricity Market in Hong Kong : Views Received during the Stage I Public Consultation" was originally scheduled for discussion at today's meeting. An information paper had been circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1855/04-05(05). However, at the request of the Administration, he agreed to defer the item so as to make way for the discussion of the arrangements for the opening of the Hong Kong Disneyland & Penny's Bay under agenda item VII. The Chairman sought members' view on whether it was necessary to hold a special meeting to discuss the electricity market review and retail oil prices. If necessary, members could inform the Clerk for the necessary arrangements.

IV Items for discussion at the next meeting scheduled for 25 July 2005

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1855/04-05(01) - List of outstanding items for discussion
LC Paper No. CB(1)1855/04-05(02) - List of follow-up actions)

5. Members agreed to discuss the following items as suggested by the Administration at the next meeting scheduled for 25 July 2005 at 10:45 am:
 - (a) An electricity item; and
 - (b) Proposal to enhance port competitiveness.
6. Members also agreed to hold a joint meeting with the Panel on Planning, Lands and Work on 25 July 2005 at 9:30 am to discuss the item "Proposed domestic heliport development" as suggested by the Administration.
7. The Chairman informed members that due to another commitment, he had to leave the meeting at 12:30 pm. Members agreed that in the temporary absence of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, Mr CHAN Kam-lam would chair the meeting.

V Pilotage (Dues) (Amendment) Order 2005

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1809/04-05(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

8. The Deputy Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Economic

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Development) (DS/ED) briefed members on the proposed Pilotage (Dues) (Amendment) Order 2005 (the Order), which sought to increase pilotage dues agreed between the provider and users of pilotage services. Subject to members' support, the Administration planned to gazette the Order on 30 June 2005 and table it at the Legislative Council on 6 July 2005.

9. Mr SIN Chung-kai sought clarification on whether the pilotage dues were Government fees or not. DS/ED advised that pilotage dues were commercial fees charged by licensed pilots for the provision of pilotage services. Under the existing mechanism, the fee levels were periodically reviewed by the Hong Kong Pilots Association (HKPA) and Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association (HKLSA) representing the provider and users of pilotage services respectively. The latest review recommended increases in certain pilotage dues. Section 22 of the Pilotage Ordinance (Cap. 84) empowered the Pilotage Authority, who was the Director of Marine, to set the amount of pilotage dues by order published in the Gazette after consultation with the Pilotage Advisory Committee (PAC). The present proposal reflected the agreement between the service provider and users, and had been endorsed by the PAC.

10. In reply to the Chairman, DS/ED confirmed that all pilots in Hong Kong were members of the Hong Kong Pilots Associations (HKPA). As such, the agreement reached between HKPA and HKLSA was acceptable to all licensed pilots in Hong Kong.

11. Referring to the revised additional due for detention of pilots, Mr KWONG Chi-kin enquired why the proposed increase was so high, ranging from 26.3 % to 33.3%. The Deputy Director of Marine advised that a greater magnitude of increase was proposed to discourage users of pilotage services from being late which would have a chain effect affecting other users as well.

12. Members noted that the basic pilotage due was proposed to be revised from \$3,500 to \$3,650. There would be an additional due for ships above 30 000 tons. The additional due was calculated based on the gross tonnage of ships.

13. The Chairman concluded that the Panel was in support of the Administration's proposal which reflected the agreement between the provider and users of pilotage services.

VI Ocean Park's Redevelopment Plans

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1855/04-05(03) - Information paper provided by the Administration
LC Paper No. CB(1)1864/04-05(01) - Powerpoint presentation material provided by the Ocean Park Corporation)

14. Dr Allan ZEMAN, Chairman of the Ocean Park Corporation (OPC) gave a

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presentation on the details of the Redevelopment Plans for the Ocean Park and the economic benefits of the proposal. The redevelopment cost was estimated to be \$5.5 billion. Regarding the means of financing, he said that it had yet to be determined but the initial response from the financial sector was quite positive. A video on the Redevelopment Plans was then shown at the meeting.

15. The Commissioner for Tourism (C for Tourism) briefed members that an interdepartmental “Task Force on Redevelopment of Ocean Park and Tourist Attractions in Aberdeen” chaired by the Financial Secretary had been set up to oversee the future development of Ocean Park and the development of the Aberdeen tourism node. The Administration was now assessing the Redevelopment Plans for the Ocean Park carefully in respect of the financial, legal, institutional, planning, lands, transport as well as engineering and technical aspects. The Administration had also consulted Southern District Council, which was in full support of the Redevelopment Plans. The Administration would brief the Panel further on the way forward upon completion of the assessment.

16. Mr Ronny TONG Ka-wah was concerned about the implementation of the South Island Line (SIL), which he considered was an essential supporting infrastructure for the redevelopment of Ocean Park. In the absence of a concrete timetable for SIL, he said that it was difficult for members to consider the Redevelopment Plans for Ocean Park, which involved a huge sum of investment.

17. C for Tourism said that OPC had indicated that the Redevelopment Plans and the SIL would complement each other but SIL was not an essential infrastructure for the redevelopment of Ocean Park, particularly during its initial operation stage after redevelopment. Regarding the status of the SIL, she advised that MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) had submitted a revised proposal to the Government and the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau was examining the proposal taking into account the latest position of various relevant planning parameters. SIL would be considered in the light of the results of the review on the planning of tourism and commercial development in the Southern District and other relevant factors.

18. Mr Ronny TONG Ka-wah enquired whether Hong Kong Disneyland (HKD) and Ocean Park would launch a joint promotional campaign, such as offering concessionary admission fees for those who visited both theme parks within a certain period, to capitalize on the expected increase of tourists.

19. Dr Allan ZEMAN said that Ocean Park maintained an open mind on the idea of launching a joint promotional campaign with HKD but for the time being, there was no plan to do so. Mr Ronny TONG Ka-wah remarked that it would bring about substantial benefits if a joint promotional campaign between Ocean Park and HKD could be launched.

20. Mr Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung said that the redevelopment of Ocean Park would further strengthen Hong Kong as a premier tourist destination. It would also bring about substantial economic benefits to Hong Kong. He considered that additional

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features which would provide interactive learning on nature and conservation and entertainment at the same time for visitors should be provided. To tie in with the redevelopment, it was of paramount importance that adequate road and railway infrastructure should be put in place in a timely manner. He enquired whether the implementation of SIL hinged on the merger discussion between MTRCL and Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation. He also pointed out that cable cars were a signature mode of transport. It might be worthwhile to consider extending the cable car system of the Ocean Park to Causeway Bay if SIL could not be proceeded with.

21. The Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (SEDL) thanked Mr LAM for his suggestion. He said that the availability of new transport infrastructure was no doubt very important for the tourism and other developments in the Southern District. Based on the present projection, SIL was not an essential infrastructure for the redevelopment of Ocean Park at the outset. However, the Administration would keep under review the SIL project taking into account the latest planning parameters and transport needs of the community.

22. Dr Allan ZEMAN added that the Redevelopment Plans for Ocean Park would transform the existing park into a spectacular, marine-based theme park with new species of animals, connecting people with nature. The amount of attractions would be doubled and there would be new entertainment programs. He also said that Ocean Park would shortly achieve a significant landmark by having received over 4 million visitors in the fiscal year 2004-05 – the highest attendance number ever-recorded in one fiscal year in the Park's 28 years' of operation.

23. Noting that the Redevelopment Plans for Ocean Park included a proposal for the development of three hotels to neighbour the Park, Mr SIN Chung-kai was concerned about the land use-related matters. He enquired whether the Government would ask for the full market value of land premium arising from the change of land use and whether the site would be put out for open tender.

24. C for Tourism replied that the hotel development was a standalone and optional item, and had not been included in the estimated redevelopment cost of \$ 5.5 billion. She further said that OPC was established for the purposes of managing and controlling Ocean Park as a public recreational and educational park under the Ocean Park Corporation Ordinance (Cap. 388). Should there be a need to extend the functions which the Corporation could perform, there was a need to introduce necessary legislative amendments to effect the change. As such, the current assessment had focused only on the park redevelopment, while the hotel development would be dealt with separately. In any case, a fair and open mechanism would be put in place for the disposal of land in respect of the hotel development. The land premium so received would go to general revenue.

25. Whilst indicating support for the redevelopment of Ocean Park, Mr SIN Chung-kai remarked that there was a need to further examine whether it was desirable to expand the scope of activities which OPC could undertake as it might give rise to competition-related controversies, bearing in mind that Ocean Park also received

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subsidies from other organizations such as the Hong Kong Jockey Club.

26. Mr CHAN Kam-lam remarked that he saw the merits of the proposal for the development of three hotels to neighbour the Park as it would add additional appeal to the overall proposal and facilitate tourists. He was prepared to examine the necessary legislative amendments to effect the change of functions of OPC. Regarding the future mode of operation, he opined that Ocean Park could be transformed into a private entity, such that competition-related controversies would not arise.

27. Noting that the consultant of Ocean Park estimated that the overall value of economic impact associated with the Redevelopment Plans over a 40-year period amounted to some \$145 billion, Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired about the basis for arriving at the estimate.

28. Dr Allan ZEMAN said that OPC had carried out an economic impact assessment. It was estimated that there would be around 5 million to 5.5 million visitors per year. Based on the number of visitors, the projected pay-back period was around 10 to 12 years. The internal rate of return of the project was around 16%.

29. In response to Mr CHAN Kam-lam's enquiry about the future ticket prices, Dr Allan ZEMAN said that upon completion of the redevelopment works, there would be a need to increase the ticket prices but they would be lower than those for HKD.

30. Mr CHAN Kam-lam also asked about the Administration's stance regarding the means of financing. In this regard, he opined that instead of Government equity, one of the advantages of issuance of bonds to finance the redevelopment project was that it would enhance public participation. Through public scrutiny, the business operation could be improved.

31. SEDL replied that the Administration was still examining, inter alia, the financial aspect of the proposal. It would be most desirable if Ocean Park could obtain loans from the market to finance the project. In case Government funding was required, the Administration would consult the Panel and seek the approval of the Finance Committee.

32. Whilst indicating support to the proposed redevelopment of Ocean Park coupled with the necessary transport infrastructure development, Ms Miriam LAU was concerned about the overall planning of tourism and commercial development in the Southern District. In the absence of a concrete development plan for the district, it might be difficult to justify the implementation of SIL, bearing in mind the current assessment that SIL project was not financially viable necessitating funding support from the Government. The implementation of SIL would also cause impact on other public transport operators.

33. SEDL replied that from the angle of tourism development, it would be most desirable if the hotel development and the implementation of SIL could be taken forward. Apart from the redevelopment of the Ocean Park, the Administration had

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formulated a strategy to develop Aberdeen as a tourism node. The Task Force chaired by the Financial Secretary was also overseeing the related work. Regarding the implementation of SIL, the Administration would need to take into account the results of the review being conducted by the Planning Department on the planning of tourism and commercial development in the Southern District and the Administration's consideration of Ocean Park's redevelopment proposal. If there were financial implications for the Government, it would consult the Panel and seek approval by the Finance Committee.

34. C for Tourism added that the Planning Department had completed a Focus Study on Aberdeen Harbour a few years ago which aimed at developing a new Aberdeen tourism node integrated with the redevelopment of Ocean Park. The related planning work was put on hold pending the Redevelopment Plans for the Ocean Park, which were only available in February 2005. The Administration was reviewing the plan for preserving Aberdeen as a traditional fishing port supplemented with tourism facilities under a "Fisherman's Wharf Development" concept. It was envisaged that the review would be completed before the end of 2005. In the course of the review, the Administration would consider the associated transport, environment, infrastructure and marine traffic impacts. The Administration would also consider speeding up the implementation of a few selected tourism projects in the area to tie in with the Redevelopment Plans for Ocean Park. The Administration had consulted the Southern District Council on the proposed tourism development in Aberdeen and the District Council was in full support of the proposal.

35. Regarding the conceptual redevelopment plan of Ocean Park, Ms Miriam LAU opined that the attractions within the Ocean Park should have their own unique characteristics and they should not be akin to those in the HKD. In order to add additional appeal to the overall proposal, she suggested that adventure rafting tours could be introduced.

36. In response to Miss TAM Heung-man's question about the number of local and non-local visitors to Ocean Park, Dr Allan ZEMAN replied that about 35 to 38% were local visitors and the rest comprised of visitors from the Mainland and South East Asia countries. Miss TAM pointed out that Ocean Park was beloved by Hong Kong residents. If there were a significant price increase upon the completion of the redevelopment, the general public might be much affected. Dr Allan ZEMAN replied that local residents could buy an Annual Pass to visit Ocean Park, and hence, the impact would be minimal. Senior citizens would continue to enjoy free admission to the Park.

37. Miss TAM Heung-man was also concerned about the impact of the associated hotel development on local residents. Dr Allan ZEMAN replied that similar to HKD and other themed parks in the world, hotel development next to Ocean Park would add additional appeal to the overall proposal. The initial thinking was for Ocean Park to invite other business partners to form a joint venture to take forward the hotel development proposal.

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38. Mr Abraham SHEK indicated his support to the Redevelopment Plans for Ocean Park which would bring about substantial economic benefits. He opined that Ocean Park should be allowed to engage in hotel developments. This could help Ocean Park to solicit funds in the market at a preferential rate. After all, Ocean Park was wholly owned by the Government and was not a listed company. If Ocean Park decided to enter into a joint venture with the private sector to take forward the hotel development project, it would not give rise to any competition-related controversies, provided that a proper tendering procedure was in place for selection of an enterprise to undertake the project.

39. SEDL replied that the Administration supported the general direction of the redevelopment of Ocean Park. As pointed out by Ocean Park, the hotel development could be taken forward by way of joint venture with the private sector. The tendering process would be open and fair.

40. The Chairman indicated his support to the proposed redevelopment of Ocean Park. He however was concerned about the adequacy of transport infrastructure and facilities to serve the areas. He highlighted that at present, Aberdeen Tunnel was already very congested. In the absence of any concrete plan for additional infrastructure such as SIL, the local roads would be subject to serious congestion.

41. SEDL took note of the Chairman's concern. He replied that the Administration was reviewing the implementation of SIL, taking into account the Redevelopment Plans for Ocean Park and the development of the Aberdeen tourism node. The final decision on SIL would be made in due course.

42. The Chairman thanked Ocean Park and the Administration for attending the meeting. He said that the Panel would re-visit the matter in due course.

VII Arrangements for the opening of Hong Kong Disneyland and associated facilities at Penny's Bay

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1855/04-05(04) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

43. At the invitation of the Chairman, C for Tourism briefed members on the framework of the arrangements for the phased opening of the HKD and associated facilities at Penny's Bay. A set of PowerPoint presentation materials and a map on the HKD and Penny's Bay are tabled at the meeting and circulated vide LC Paper Nos. CB(1) 1933/04-05(01) and (02)) after the meeting.

44. Mr SIN Chung-kai was concerned about the dissemination of information to impromptu visitors on the latest ticketing situation at HKD. He opined that arrangements should be made to inform them of the availability of tickets prior to their payment of fares for public transport services for access to HKD. C for Tourism advised that the Administration had discussed the matter with the concerned public transport operators. Information boards would be provided at public transport

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interchanges to inform visitors of the latest ticketing situation. On-board broadcasting systems of public transport and at MTR stations to disseminate information to visitors would also be arranged. She said that the theme park management had extensive experience on guests flow control. They would keep track of the forecast number of visitors for the next couple of hours and alert the public transport operators as and when necessary to enlist their assistance in disseminating the most appropriate information to visitors.

45. Mr KWONG Chi-kin was concerned about the provision of emergency ambulance service to meet public demand. He enquired about the target response time and the time taken for transferring patients to the near-by hospital. C for Tourism replied that HKD had its own first aid centre and medical staff to service the park. The fire station cum ambulance depot at Penny's Bay would also provide the essential back up service. She further said that in the light of the experience of Ocean Park, the demand for emergency medical service amounted to some 8 to 9 cases per month. Under the present planning, Princess Margaret Hospital would be the major receiving hospital for victims in emergency. The Administration would closely monitor the situation in collaboration with the Hospital Authority.

46. Regarding the ticketing arrangement of HKD, Mr KWONG Chi-kin opined that apart from online booking, HKD should also consider setting up in-town sales outlets or entrusting travel agencies to sell HKD tickets to facilitate visitors did not have access to the Internet or credit card facility. C for Tourism replied that apart from online booking, there were other available channels for visitors to buy tickets as announced by HKD. HKD assessed that online booking would be the most orderly and efficient mode of ticketing at the initial stage of opening. HKD would review the situation and refine the arrangements as appropriate.

47. Mr Jeffrey LAM was concerned about the contingency arrangements, particularly in the case of complete closure of Penny's Bay Highway which was the only access road to HKD. The Principal Transport Officer/Special Duties, Transport Department (PTO) advised that the Administration had formulated contingency plans to cope with emergency situations. A Joint Command Centre for the Opening of HKD (JCCOHKD) would be activated to deal with emergencies. The Transport Department would also disseminate traffic and transport information to the public through its established communication channels. When there were incidents which required the temporary closure of Penny's Bay Highway, which had six lanes for two-way traffic, the Police would make suitable arrangements to clear the site and re-open certain traffic lanes to maintain through traffic as soon as practicable. Visitors could also make use of the Disneyland Resort Line (DRL) for travel to and from HKD during the road closure period. For heavy vehicles carrying equipment to HKD, there would be a certain degree of inconvenience during the road closure period. Suitable arrangements would be made to minimize the inconvenience caused.

48. Noting that JCCOHKD would be activated on the first day of all key phases and the intervening weekends up to 9 October 2005, Miss TAM Heung-man opined that there was a need to extend the operating hours of JCCOHKD to ensure the smooth

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operation of HKD. C for Tourism replied that the Administration would monitor the situation and JCCOHKD would also be activated on other dates on a need basis.

49. In reply to Miss TAM Heung-man, C for Tourism said that the number of invited visitors to HKD during the Rehearsal Days would be gradually built up, ranging from a few thousands to 29 000 visitors near the date of opening. The Rehearsal Days offered an opportunity for operators to make adjustments to improve their operation and iron out any initial teething problems. On 12 September 2005, the theme park would be open to visitors for half day. It was envisaged that about 15 000 visitors would be received which was about half of the design capacity.

50. Mr CHAN Kam-lam was concerned about the waterborne transport service to HKD. He enquired about the details of the planned local ferry service and whether cross-boundary ferry service would be introduced to facilitate tourists in the Mainland to HKD.

51. PTO advised that there would be a ferry service plying between Central and Penny's Bay. It was envisaged that the ferry service would commence operation after the HKD opening. Regarding cross-boundary ferry service, C for Tourism advised that there was a need to strike a proper balance between optimum use of scarce resources and the need to provide convenient access for potential visitors. Having considered the cost implications for providing customs and immigration facilities at the pier in Penny's Bay and the expected patronage of such service which would concentrate in the morning and evening peak periods, there was no plan to introduce cross-boundary ferry service at this stage. The Assistant Director of Immigration added that to improve visitors' convenience, the Government had already allocated 60 new quotas for cross-boundary coach service to HKD via Lok Ma Chau. The Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation also had a plan to introduce a railbus service from Lo Wu KCR Station to HKD¹.

52. Noting the Administration's reply, Mr CHAN Kam-lan considered the arrangement not entirely satisfactory. He urged the Administration to consider introducing cross-boundary ferry service to HKD which could bring about great convenience to potential visitors. C for Tourism reiterated that there was a need to maintain a proper balance between the efficient use of resources and enhancing tourists' convenience. Further, it would be more desirable if Mainland visitors could take the opportunity to visit other parts of Hong Kong, instead of simply going to HKD. The Administration would monitor the situation and improve the public transport services at cross-boundary control points to facilitate visitors. She also clarified that the pier in HKD would be open for public use. Pleasure vessels carrying tourists could make use of the pier to HKD.

53. The Chairman remarked that as vessels would be prohibited from anchoring within the vicinity of HKD waters, this might discourage private vessel owners to make use of waterborne transport services to HKD.

¹ The railbus service is a connecting bus service to facilitate East Rail passengers who crossed the border at Lo Wu to take a connecting bus at the Sheung Shui Station to go to HKD direct.

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54. Mr CHAN Kam-lam took over the chair at this juncture.

55. Mr Abraham SHEK Lai-him enquired about the contingency plan during service disruption of DRL. PTO advised that the Administration had already discussed the contingency plan with the concerned public transport operators. In case of railway disruption, the public transport operators would strengthen the relevant bus services. Additional manpower would be deployed for crowd control.

56. Mr Abraham SHEK Lai-him urged the Government to take the opportunity of the testing period to provide the socially disadvantaged groups with an enjoyable visit to the HKD. He also remarked that more than 30 LegCo Members had written to the Government, conveying their wishes for HKD to employ more disabled persons. C for Tourism took note of Mr SHEK's view and pointed out that arrangement was being made for the socially disadvantaged groups to visit HKD during the rehearsal days. The response from HKD in respect of the employment of disabled persons in the park was also positive.

57. Mr Ronny TONG Ka-wah was concerned about the contingency planning for handling any disaster. He also enquired whether any helipad would be provided at HKD for emergency use. C for Tourism advised that there was a helipad in the vicinity of HKD. Regarding contingency planning, the Administration had worked out some 15 plans covering different scenarios. Drills would be arranged to test out the effectiveness of the plans but for security reasons, she could not release the details.

58. Ms Miriam LAU pointed out that adequate information should be disseminated to inform impromptu visitors of the latest ticketing situation of HKD, and the patronage situation of the facilities and services open to the public such as the Lake Recreation Centre which could only accommodate 5 000 people. It would be highly undesirable if motorists or visitors were barred from entry into the car park or HKD and other facilities when they arrived at Penny's Bay. As such, the Administration should strengthen the communication plan so that impromptu visitors could be informed at an early juncture of their journey to Penny's Bay of the patronage / ticketing situation of HKD and the associated public facilities in Penny's Bay including the carparks. In this respect, tunnel radio break-ins in other tunnels, other than Tsing Ma Control Area, could be arranged. HKD should also inform the cross-boundary coach operators of the latest ticketing situation before they crossed the border. Additional car parking spaces should be made available to motorists as far as practicable.

59. C for Tourism replied that visitors intending to visit the park would be encouraged to pre-book park tickets and plan ahead. They could also obtain the latest ticketing information from the official websites of HKD. To facilitate Mainland visitors, HKD was also studying the feasibility of setting up information panels at Lo Wu and Huanggang to inform Mainland visitors of the ticketing situation. Tunnel radio break-ins and variable message panels at Tsing Ma Control Area were intended to serve as a reminder in case visitors did not check the ticketing situation or pre-book

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park tickets before they started their journeys. The Administration noted that the Inspiration Lake Recreation Centre would be a major attraction at Penny's Bay. For crowd control purpose, once the patronage reached the capacity of the facility, further entry to the Centre could be regulated. The Administration would monitor the situation and make suitable arrangements accordingly.

60. Regarding the cross-boundary ferry service to HKD, Ms Miriam LAU asked the Administration to consider using the existing pier at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) for the purpose. Given that immigration and custom facilities were available at HKIA, arrangements could be made to transform the pier into a control point for passenger clearance. C for Tourism took note of Ms LAU's suggestion.

61. Mr SIN Chung-kai however held the view that given that Mainland visitors could also make use of the ferry service at China Ferry Terminal to reach Hong Kong and it was only a short trip from China Ferry Terminal to HKD, there seemed to be no particular need to set up an additional control point at HKIA for cross-boundary ferry service to HKD.

62. In considering that Lantau would be developed into a major tourism node with various facilities, Mr WONG Ting-kwong opined that there was an urgent need to provide a new hospital in Lantau to serve the population in Tung Chung New Town and visitors to Lantau. SEDL took note of Mr WONG's view and said he would convey the member's view to the Secretary for Health and Welfare for further consideration.

63. Mr WONG Ting-kwong said that there were complaints from local people about the difficulties encountered in buying tickets from HKD as emphasis had been placed in the overseas and Mainland markets. C for Tourism remarked that tickets for HKD would be open for sale on 1 July 2005. Regarding the allocation of tickets to travel agencies, she advised that the same number of tickets would be allocated to local travel agencies, and agencies in the Mainland and other overseas countries. As such, there was no question of unfair treatment.

64. Mr SIN Chung-kai enquired about the arrangements in the event of the issue of tropical cyclone warning signal or rainstorm warning, C for Tourism said that HKD would formulate suitable arrangements and announce the details in due course.

VIII Any other business

65. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:45 pm.