

Bills Committee on Shenzhen Bay Port Hong Kong Port Area Bill

Emergency Rescue Arrangement

Objective

This paper is to elaborate and provide supplementary information on existing emergency rescue arrangements between Hong Kong and the Mainland and the future arrangements for Shenzhen Bay Bridge (“SBB”) and Shenzhen Bay Port (“SZBP”).

Maritime Search and Rescue Operations

2. As reported earlier in paper CB(2) 1272/06-07(01), an established mechanism is in place to facilitate cross boundary search and rescue (“SAR”) operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland. As far as maritime SAR operation at the Guangdong Province coastal waters is concerned, the Hong Kong Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (“HKMRCC”) maintains a direct and close working relationship and seamless coordination with the Guangdong Provincial Emergency Search and Rescue Centre (“GDRCC”). The two centres do not require clearance from higher authorities for operation contact.

3. In case it comes to the attention of the HKMRCC that an incident in the Guangdong Province coastal waters (including Shenzhen waters on the Mainland side of the Deep Bay) necessitates SAR operations, the HKMRCC will coordinate with GDRCC and seek their permission for Hong Kong SAR resources to carry out the SAR operation in Mainland waters.

4. In case both sides have sent SAR resources to the scene, there would be on-scene communication and co-ordination. Cooperation and appropriate assistance will be offered by each party as the situation warrants, for the benefit of saving lives. For example, if the emergency

incident occurs in the Mainland waters, Hong Kong rescue parties at the vicinity may proceed to rescue the victims within sight before the permission to enter into Mainland waters has been formally granted.

5. Any untoward incidents that necessitate the coordination between the Mainland and Hong Kong authorities in respect of maritime SAR operation at the waters under SBB, which falls within the Guangdong Province coastal waters, will follow the well-established mechanism set out above.

Operations in the Vicinity of SBB

6. For the rescue zone in Shenzhen waters, the Shenzhen rescue party will be the overall Rescue Commander and all persons rescued in Shenzhen waters will be sent to Shenzhen hospitals irrespective of their resident status. Any Hong Kong residents, whether rescued by the Hong Kong or Shenzhen rescue party, if sober, may request for transfer to Hong Kong hospitals for treatment. Depending on the resources available and individual circumstances (e.g. whether the persons concerned have sustained serious injuries and whether they are fit for transfer), their request may be entertained.

7. The reverse will apply for the rescue zone in Hong Kong waters for the Hong Kong rescue party.

Response Time

8. The response time for the Hong Kong rescue parties in emergency incidents in waters near the vicinity of SBB is projected as follows :

- (a) Police small patrol boats will arrive at scene within 5 minutes as there are 2 Police operational bases in the vicinity of SBB.

- (b) Speed boats from Fire Services Department will arrive at scene in 25 minutes from their base at Chek Lap Kok.

9. If helicopter service is required in the rescue operation in the vicinity of SBB, the Government Flying Services (GFS) will provide the necessary support and a helicopter can arrive at scene in about 20 minutes. If entry to the Shenzhen air space is required, GDRCC would seek the necessary approval from the relevant Mainland authorities.

Operations within the SZBP

10. To ensure the safe operation of the future Hong Kong Port Area (HKPA) within the SZBP, a fire station with ambulance facility will be established there. A major fire appliance and an ambulance with staff will be deployed there to provide necessary round the clock emergency fire, rescue and ambulance cover. Resources on site are able to respond to incidents within the HKPA in two to four minutes. Further operational reinforcement can be immediately deployed from the fire stations and ambulance depots locating in the western region of the New Territories if necessary. The reinforcement is able to arrive at the HKPA within 10 minutes from their nearest bases at Tin Shui Wai and Fu Tei (Tuen Mun).

11. The nearest hospital to the SZBP in Hong Kong is Tuen Mun Hospital, which can be reached in about 10 minutes.

12. Discussions are underway between Hong Kong and Shenzhen authorities to map out contingency arrangements for untoward incidents, e.g. fire, rescue operations and emergency relief operations at the SZBP. The two sides have agreed that relevant drills will be conducted both before and after the commencement of the SZBP to familiarise both sides with the arrangements. Having regard to the principle that highest priority be accorded to saving lives, the two sides have agreed that both sides will initiate action immediately in case of urgent distress incidents (e.g. fire affecting the clearance area of the two sides), and may without

prior notice take action to save lives even in the clearance area of the other side. In such cases, the other side will be alerted through the control centre at the earliest possible opportunity. The principle of “rescue action first, notification second” (“先救人，後通報”) will be upheld.

Security Bureau

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