

**HKCA Submission to
Panel of Environmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Combating Fly-tipping**

Background. The public fill facilities every day receive over 20,000 tonnes of Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials generated by the local construction industry. With the view to preserve our valuable landfill space, the Government introduced the Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme at the end of 2005. Through the Charging Scheme, construction waste producers are encouraged to reduce, sort and recycle construction waste.

In order to prevent illegal land filling and fly-tipping activities after the introduction of the Charging Scheme, the Trip Ticket System which was already in place for public work contracts could help keep track of the whereabouts of the trucks from the loading point to the disposal point. A tight control system with computerized and visual aids was also devised by EPD here to have a deterrent effect and stop such malpractices as far as practicable.

Unfortunately the problem of fly-tipping and land filling activities is still prevalent as evidenced by the increase in the number of complaints against these activities. Such activities become an eyesore to the public and there is increasing public concern and calls for Government for further controls on such activities.

The HKCA had already expressed concern about the possible aggravation of the problem of illegal dumping on private land and fly-tipping after the introduction of the Charging Scheme during its legislation. We had also expressed grave concern about the potential danger of increased fly-tipping as the amount of charge involved for one truck of construction waste could be as high as \$1,400. The need of a very tight control mechanism to regulate the depositing of C&D waste and material was intimated to the tripartite meeting attended by authorities and industry stakeholders at that time.

We note that the Government is taking active steps to tackle the fly-tipping problems. Despite of the various control measures as described on the progress paper (ref: CB(1) 1319/08-09(01) prepared by EPD in April 2009, major

stakeholders including landowners, developers, contractors and the truck drivers will also need to act in concert and show firm commitment to ensuring proper disposal of C&D waste and material . Each of them has an important role to play in combating fly-tipping as below -

1. Government – A significant obstacle to waste sorting and recycling is the space available at construction sites to undertake this process. The provision of additional works areas associated with government contracts specifically for sorting waste would be a big step forward.

There also could be more encouragement for contractors to sort and reduce waste and make greater use of recycled materials by having these practices feature more significantly in the assessment of tenders for government building and engineering contracts.

2. Landowners – the HKCA support the reformist idea of abandoning the use of private land but not a construction site to be alternative disposal ground. This will definitely help to avoid the consequence of adverse environmental impacts and hygiene problems arising thereof.
3. Developers –The main objectives of the C&D material management strategy are to reduce the generation of C&D waste, to maximize reuse and recycle, and to reduce the intake of mixed C&D waste at landfills. Developers have a key role to play in encouraging sorting and minimization of waste by contractors on construction sites.

The environmental management plan which is now a contractual requirement for contractors to submit a waste management plan for public works projects has been working well and the environmental performance of the contractors are continuing to improve. The HKCA welcome the arrangement if private developers follow the same practice by incorporating the requirement of a waste management plan into their contracts. However, it depends very much on the willingness of the private sector. In promoting this, the HKCA in collaboration with the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong REDA will launch an action plan to roll out suitable measures to the private sector through procurement and contractual arrangement.

Besides, we also support the need to extend the existing trip-ticketing system for public works projects to major private works projects to track the movement of C&D waste and materials.

4. Contractors – Contractor can contribute towards waste reduction by adopting environmentally friendly construction methods and by planning their work to efficiently eliminate waste to the maximum extent possible, e.g. the use of metal formwork, prefabrication, etc.

Lot of contractors nowadays are putting efforts in combating fly-tipping by various preventive measures and methods. For instance, one HKCA member contractor has adopted the use of GPS (Global Positioning System) to keep track of its dump trucks. The system has been proved successful and relatively inexpensive. There is no reason why this should not be introduced as a condition of contract by government, MTRC and developers.

5. Truck Drivers – We need to change the mindset in the construction industry with a greater emphasis on personal responsibility and self-regulation as opposed to relying primarily on legislative and contractual sanctions. To facilitate the change in attitude and to empower industry participants to approach proper disposal of waste in a more proactive manner, we recommend that hands-on training should be provided to all drivers and impressing on them the dire consequences of illegal dumping. Relevant promotional activities can be organized in the join hands of major stakeholders and the truck driver association.

Apart from the above, we at HKCA have launched our latest Best Practice Guides for Environmental Protection on Construction Sites (BPG) in March this year to recommend good practice for enhancing environmental performance of construction activities. There is guidance in the BPG for on site sorting, waste minimization, the use of recycling materials and prevention against illegal land filling and fly-tipping activities. Relevant information can be retrieved from the website of the HKCA at-

<http://www.hkca.com.hk/bpg.htm>

In Closing. The HKCA commends the move of the Government in strive for setting more stringent and comprehensive control for ensuring proper disposal of C & D waste and material through legislation and contract conditions. We hope that our recommendations will enable the Government to formulate a waste control strategy most beneficial to Hong Kong. We endeavor to work closely with the Legislators and Authorities and HKCA is committed to contributing to the balanced and sustainable development of Hong Kong.

HKCA
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