

**Written Submission by The Professional Commons in the Meeting
of the Panel on Economic Development on 19 July 2011
Regarding the Subject of
“Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030”**

1. Since the publication of the “Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030” in June 2011, and the revealing of the plans for the construction of the third runway in the Hong Kong International Airport, there has been a focus on the discussion and analysis of the maintenance of competitiveness, cost-benefit analysis, as well as economic and environment impacts regarding the construction of the third runway.
2. While there seemed to be lack of discussions regarding the operations of the consultation exercise itself, The Professional Commons would focus on expressing our concerns regarding the problems in the public consultation exercise for the promotion of the construction of the third runway itself, under the banner of the “Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030”.
3. The Professional Commons is of the view that the Government has not yet fulfilled its obligation for the exercise of “procedural justice” in a public engagement exercise that would have a significant economic and social impact, and have not yet fully revealed all the information required for conducting a full-fledged analysis for individuals and groups in the civil society alike concerning the cost-effectiveness, economic, environmental and social impacts for the construction of the third runway. The level of information disclosure at this stage is inadequate. In fact, the low level of information disclosure has become an obstacle for the fulfillment of a genuine public engagement exercise so far.
4. The Airport Authority hosts merely three public forums, and one public forum for young leaders since the consultation period begins. We believe that there are still many rooms for improvement in the consultation exercise itself. For example, there were reports suggested that some individuals who wish to attend the second public forum in Kowloon in early July 2011 were denied entry to the public forum. We were also disappointed by the fact that there were no representatives from the Airport Authority attending the discussion/Q and A session at the public forum targeting the youth on 2 July 2011. In fact, merely

asking the general public to submit opinions regarding the contents of the “Master Plan” are not enough, the Airport Authority, at this stage, failed to step up its efforts for the outreaching of different sectors of the general public in the discussion of the future of the Hong Kong International Airport.

5. We believed that a primary principle for the fulfillment of “procedural justice” is the full disclosure of information to the public, so as to allow the general public the rights to access for the important data for decision-making purposes. The information which shall be provided should be consists of two categories, that is:
 - Basic, concise and easy-to-remember information, which is targeting to the general public for the raising of the awareness on the issue,
 - In-depth information targeting other concerned individuals and organizations for the facilitation of the further understanding of the proposals, and for the formulation of alternatives.
6. Nonetheless, the Airport Authority has maintained exclusivity to the access of the necessary information required for the conducting of a full-fledged analysis for its own use. Hence, the Airport Authority is the sole user of such information, and can fully manipulate the relevant data for its own purposes, that might be including the putting forward and promotion for the construction of the third runway.
7. Such inadequacies can be reflected from the following case as described below: Prior to the publication of the “Master Plan”, the Airport Authority has actually conducted a set of detailed preliminary analysis concerning the cost-effectiveness, economic, environmental and social impacts for the construction of the third runway, it was revealed in Chapter 1 of the Technical Report of the Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030 that the Airport Authority has conducted nine preliminary feasibility studies concerning the various aspects on the likely impacts for the construction of the runway. They are:
 - **Airport Facilities Planning:** Consultant: AECOM (para. 1.9)
 - **Primary Air Traffic Forecast** Consultant: IATA Consulting (para. 1.10)
 - **Airspace and Runway Capacity Analysis** Consultant: National Air Traffic Services (para. 1.11)
 - **Preliminary Engineering Feasibility & Environmental Assessment**

Consultant: Mott MacDonald (para. 1.12)

- **Initial Land Formation Engineering Evaluation** Consultant: Meinhardt (para. 1.13)
- **Preliminary Air Quality Impact Analysis** Consultant: Arup (para. 1.14)
- **Preliminary Aircraft Noise Impact Analysis** Consultant: URS Corporation (para. 1.15)
- **Economic Impact Analysis** Consultant: Enright, Scott & Associates (para. 1.16)
- **Preliminary Financial Assessment** Consultant: The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) (para. 1.17)

8. But these preliminary studies have **not** been revealed to the public during the consultation stage of the “Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030”. In fact, The Professional Commons has requested both the Airport Authority and the Transport and Housing Bureau for the disclosure of the nine preliminary studies on 29 June 2011, but there are **no** substantial replies, or any relevant information has been given from both the Airport Authority and the Transport and Housing Bureau respectively up to this date of the submission of the written submission (18 July 2011). As these information are of vital importance in the analysis on whether the general public should support the proposed construction of the third runway or not, should the Airport Authority is unable to openly provide such information to the general public during the public consultation exercise, it will impairs the general public from making a clear judgment and analysis regarding the construction of the third runway.
9. We have also noticed that a wide array of individuals and organizations from the civil society have promulgated a number of key questions, as well as formulated a number of options and alternatives for the further development of the Hong Kong International Airport, we believe that the Airport Authority does not attach significant importance to these questions and alternatives at this stage, as it does not provide a venue for serious dialogue and discussions with the individuals and civil society organizations on their inquiries and alternative proposals, nor it has provide a detailed reply to each of their proposed options so far.
10. The inadequacies in terms of provision of information to the public would make it quite unlikely for the civil society organizations to conduct a well-rounded analysis on the pros and cons for the construction of the third runway, as well as allowing different civil society organizations, as well as the general public, for

the construction of an alternative proposal for boosting the competitiveness of the Hong Kong International Airport, with or without the construction of the third runway.

11. In conclusion, although The Professional Commons acknowledges the importance of the contributions of the aviation sector towards the economic development of Hong Kong, as well as the development of new facilities for maintaining the Hong Kong International Airport on the competitive edge as the premier aviation hub in the Asia-Pacific region, we believe that the principles for the achievement of “procedural justice”, the achievement of full information disclosure, and the pursuit for a community consensus on the best practice for the further development of the Hong Kong International Airport should not be compromised.
12. Half of the consultation period for the “Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030” has already passed, the consultation exercise is now reaching a critical moment. Hence, for the achievement of “procedural justice”, the Airport Authority must address to the issues regarding the public consultation itself that we have raised above. We believe that any information that would help to facilitate the further understandings of the proposals specified in the “Master Plan” must be disclosed as soon as possible, so that the individuals and organizations would be able to further analyze the pros and cons of the third runway, and state its opinions until the end of the consultation period. The Airport Authority should also proactively respond to the concerns from the individuals and civil society groups. The “Master Plan” and the related public consultation exercise must serve as a genuine tool for public consultation and engagement regarding the development and future of the Hong Kong International Airport.