

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)1916/10-11  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/SE

**Panel on Security**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 1 March 2011, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon James TO Kun-sun (Chairman)  
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Dr Hon Margaret NG  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS  
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP  
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP  
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, GBS, JP  
Hon CHIM Pui-chung  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan  
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Hak-kan  
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon WONG Yuk-man
- Member absent** : Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP

**Public Officers** : Item IV  
**attending**

The Administration

Mr LAI Tung-kwok, SBS, IDSM, JP  
Under Secretary for Security

Mr David LAU Kam-kuen  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security

Mr YU Koon-hing, CMSM  
Assistant Commissioner (Boundary and Ports)  
Customs and Excise Department

Mr TAM Yat-keung  
Deputy Head of Land Boundary Command  
Customs and Excise Department

Mr Herman CHAN Ng-lick  
Chief Engineer (Project)  
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Item V

The Administration

Mr LAI Tung-kwok, SBS, IDSM, JP  
Under Secretary for Security

Mr NGAI Wing-chit  
Deputy Secretary for Security

Mr Howard YAM  
Assistant Commissioner for Tourism

**Clerk in** : Mr Raymond LAM  
**attendance** Chief Council Secretary (2) 1

**Staff in** : Ms Connie FUNG  
**attendance** Senior Assistant Legal Adviser 1

Mr Ian CHOW  
Council Secretary (2) 1

Miss Lulu YEUNG  
Clerical Assistant (2) 1

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**I. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**  
(LC Paper No. CB(2)1150/10-11)

The minutes of the special meeting held on 17 January 2011 were confirmed.

**II. Information papers issued since the last meeting**  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1052/10-11(01), CB(2)1053/10-11(01) and CB(2)1147/10-11(01))

2. Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting -

- (a) submission on the Police's enforcement operations against public light buses from Taxi & PLB Concern Group;
- (b) Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor's letter dated 15 February 2011 concerning the Trial Scheme on School Drug Testing in Tai Po District; and
- (c) supplementary information paper provided by the Administration on the passing rate of Police Inspectors in Standard III Inspectorate Professional Examination.

3. Regarding the submission referred to in paragraph 2(a) above, the Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Administration should be requested to provide a written response.

**III. Date of next meeting and items for discussion**  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1152/10-11(01) and (02))

Regular meeting in April 2011

4. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for 12 April 2011 at 4:30 pm -

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- (a) Torture claim screening system: current practice and legislative proposal;
- (b) Enforcement against the smuggling and sale of illicit cigarettes; and
- (c) Manpower situation in respect of crime officers of the Hong Kong Police Force.

Regarding item (a), Dr Margaret NG suggested that representatives of the Law Society of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Administrator of the Duty Lawyer Service should be invited to attend the meeting. Members agreed.

5. Regarding the item "Deletion of one civil service directorate post in the Independent Police Complaints Council" proposed by the Administration, members agreed that the Administration should be requested to provide an information paper on the subject for circulation to members. Members would then decide whether the item should be discussed at a meeting.

Demonstration by the Independent Commission Against Corruption ("ICAC") on its existing Operations Department Information System

6. The Chairman reminded members that the demonstration by ICAC on its existing Operations Department Information System would be held on 15 March 2011 at 2:00 pm at its headquarters in North Point.

**IV. Replacement of two mobile x-ray vehicle scanning systems of the Customs and Excise Department**

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1152/10-11(03) and (04))

7. Under Secretary for Security ("US for S") briefed members on the proposal by the Customs and Excise Department ("C&ED") to replace two sets of Mobile X-ray Vehicle Scanning System ("MXRVSS") at the Boundary Control Points ("BCPs") at Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok, as detailed in the Administration's paper.

8. The Deputy Chairman noted from the Administration's paper that the proposed MXRVSSs were equipped with advanced technologies and inspection functions, including dual technologies of transmission and

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backscatter X-ray scanning. He enquired about the details of the advanced technologies adopted and whether C&ED intended to inspect all vehicles at BCPs at Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok with the new MXRVSSs.

9. Assistant Commissioner (Boundary and Ports) of C&ED ("AC of C&ED") responded that C&ED introduced in 2001 two MXRVSSs in the two BCPs in order to support its enforcement operations. The existing MXRVSSs had been in use for 10 years. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department ("EMSD") had tested and suggested that the existing MXRVSSs be replaced before 2014. Furthermore, the annual maintenance cost for the two MXRVSSs had been rising in recent years. As the production of the existing MXRVSSs model had ceased since 2005, there had been a lack of supply of spare parts in the market which made maintenance work more difficult.

10. AC of C&ED advised that the new MXRVSSs would further strengthen the detection capability and operational efficiency of C&ED. The proposed systems were equipped with advanced technologies and inspection functions, including dual technologies of transmission and backscatter X-ray scanning. Transmission X-ray technology projected images of objects loaded inside container/vehicle through beaming X-ray to them. While the old model could beam X-ray through steel of 100mm thickness, the new MXRVSSs could beam X-ray through steel of 200mm thickness, and the projected images of objects by the new MXRVSSs had a higher resolution. AC of C&ED further explained that backscatter technology collected the X-ray reflected from the objects, and should the objects include organic items such as drugs and explosives, those items would be highlighted in different colours and varying density, hence allowing C&ED officers to identify irregularities easily.

11. AC of C&ED further advised that C&ED's mode of inspection would be based on its risk assessment, such as prevailing crime trend and intelligence. With the aid of the proposed MXRVSSs, examination of a fully loaded 45-foot container could be completed within 30 minutes, obviating the need to unload cargoes for examination. The use of the MXRVSS did not only enhance the cargo flow at BCPs, but also benefited the trade by reducing operating cost.

12. Mr IP Kwok-him asked whether vehicles which had been inspected and scanned by MXRVSS required further physical examination.

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13. AC of C&ED responded that the current daily vehicular throughput of the Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok BCPs was approximately 6 800 vehicles, mostly trucks. In 2010, approximately 8 300 vehicles had been inspected by MXRVSS, comprising about 6.9% of the total vehicular throughput at those two BCPs. Whether or not a vehicle required x-ray scanning by MXRVSS or physical examination was based on risk assessment, such as prevailing crime trend and intelligence. Customs officers would conduct physical examination on a vehicle if intelligence indicated that the vehicle might contain counterfeit goods, which could not be identified by X-ray images generated by MXRVSS. On average, it took about two to three hours to complete the physical examination of a fully loaded 45-foot container. The manpower required for a physical examination included a team supervisor and two customs officers, together with several cargo loading and unloading workers. The manpower required for operation of MXRVSS included a driver, an X-ray image analyzer, and a customs officer overseeing the safety of the process.

14. Noting the new MXRVSSs would generate X-ray images of higher resolution, Mr IP Kwok-him asked how the drivers' privacy would be protected. AC of C&ED responded that the drivers would be required to get off their vehicles before MXRVSS scanning commenced.

15. Noting that the production of the existing MXRVSSs model had ceased in 2005, Mr WONG Yung-kan asked about the number of MXRVSSs at various BCPs manufactured by the same manufacturer as those being used at BCPs at Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok.

16. AC of C&ED advised that six MXRVSSs were currently deployed by C&ED, two of which were deployed at BCPs at Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok, two at Kwai Tsing Container Terminals and Kwai Chung Customhouse, and two at Shenzhen Bay BCP. The two MXRVSSs at Kwai Tsing Container Terminals and Kwai Chung Customhouse were expected to operate until 2017, while the two MXRVSSs at Shenzhen Bay BCP were expected to operate until 2020. These MXRVSSs were manufactured by another supplier.

17. Mr WONG Yung-kan asked whether the production of the models of the four MXRVSSs, namely the two deployed Kwai Tsing Container Terminals and Kwai Chung Customhouse, and the two deployed at Shenzhen Bay BCP, would likely cease in the near future and thus result in limited availability of spare parts.

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18. AC of C&ED responded that in view of the evolving X-ray scanning technology, C&ED would keep track of the latest technology development on the MXRVSS and upgrade its equipment to meet operational needs, where necessary.

19. Mr WONG Yung-kan enquired about the difference between MXRVSS and the fixed vehicle X-ray inspection system used in Lok Ma Chau BCP.

20. AC of C&ED explained that MXRVSS was a movable system which could be deployed flexibly at different locations, whereas a fixed vehicle X-ray inspection system had to be housed inside a compound and was immovable. The fixed vehicle X-ray inspection system could not be used at Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok BCPs due to lack of sufficient space.

21. Mr Paul TSE sought information on the operational needs to deploy MXRVSSs at BCPs. AC of C&ED explained that according to intelligence and operational need, such as launching of special operations during certain risk periods of a day, C&ED would deploy the MXRVSS from one BCP to another for reinforcement purpose. Currently C&ED also deployed a MXRVSS from Shenzhen Bay BCP to Tuen Mun River Trade Terminal until the delivery of a MXRVSS for cargo examination at Tuen Mun River Trade Terminal.

22. Noting that C&ED's MXRVSSs were manufactured by different suppliers, Mr Paul TSE asked whether there were differences in the operation of different MXRVSSs and hence differences in the training required for C&ED staff. He enquired about the price difference between MXRVSS and a fixed vehicle X-ray inspection system.

23. AC of C&ED responded that the suppliers of MXRVSSs were required to provide C&ED staff with relevant training regarding operation of the MXRVSSs concerned. Refresher courses would also be provided to staff members who were required to operate MXRVSSs. A fixed vehicle X-ray inspection system was more expensive than MXRVSS.

24. The Chairman asked whether the new MXRVSSs would possess any advanced features, apart from a much stronger X-ray penetrating power than the older model. AC of C&ED explained that the new MXRVSS could generate images of a much higher resolution which would help frontline officers conduct more accurate analysis.

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25. The Chairman asked whether C&ED had examined the latest technology and equipment in the world before determining the specification of the equipment to be procured.

26. AC of C&ED advised that C&ED had been using the non-intrusive inspection equipment for scanning of vehicle/container since 2001. C&ED was aware of the latest technology development on non-intrusive inspection equipment, in particular those being used by overseas Customs administrations. C&ED had also sent officers to attend overseas exhibitions and experience-sharing sessions organized by the World Customs Organisation so as to keep them abreast of the latest technology.

27. Noting that the new MXRVSSs would not be delivered until December 2013, Ms Cyd HO suggested C&ED to compress the tendering process to expedite the delivery of the new MXRVSSs. She also requested the Administration to provide a breakdown of the service charge payable to the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund for project management. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide a written response.

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28. US for S responded that the Administration would review the implementation schedule for the new MXRVSSs. As far as the payment to EMSD for project management was concerned, it was mainly charged on an accountable basis.

29. Dr LAM Tai-fai asked if C&ED had designated any staff or established any mechanism for the procurement of equipment.

30. US for S advised that there was a dedicated team responsible for procurement in C&ED, which constantly reviewed its purchasing mechanism and procedures.

31. AC of C&ED advised that the Office of Project Planning and Development of C&ED was responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of equipment used by frontline officers and consulting EMSD on the most suitable equipment and technology for replacement. The new MXRVSS, with higher penetrating power of transmission and backscatter X-ray scanning, was the most advanced and latest model in the market. The new model was first introduced in September 2009, and consideration was still being given to the use of such model in the United States and the United Kingdom.

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32. Noting that the new MXRVSSs had X-ray beam that could penetrate 200mm steel, Dr PAN Pey-chyou asked how C&ED would protect the health of C&ED officers, drivers, workers or even illegal immigrants during the scanning process.

33. AC of C&ED advised that C&ED had specified that the radiation level of MXRVSSs had to comply with the relevant standard set by the Department of Health ("DH"). Besides, the MXRVSS was installed with safety sensors which would shut down its operation automatically when any abnormal radiation was detected. A radiation dosimeter was also worn by each C&ED staff member who operated the MXRVSSs. These radiation dosimeters were regularly sent to DH for analysis and monitoring, and no over-exposure to radiation had been found. Over the past three years, C&ED had sent 32 staff that operated the MXRVSSs to DH for health check-up and none of them were found over-exposed to radiation. Since the drivers would be required to leave their vehicles before MXRVSS commenced scanning, they would not be exposed to radiation.

34. The Chairman asked whether a person hiding inside a vehicle scanned by MXRVSS would be exposed to excessive radiation. AC of C&ED responded that the person would be exposed to radiation equivalent to that of one-twentieth of one chest X-ray test.

Admin

35. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide a written response on whether the operation of MXRVSS would pose any risk to the health of persons inside a vehicle and persons near the vehicle.

36. The Chairman concluded that members supported in principle the Administration's submission of its proposal to replace the two MXRVSSs at BCPs at Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok to the Finance Committee.

**V. Outbound travel alert for Hong Kong travellers**  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1152/10-11(05) and (06))

37. US for S briefed members on the operation of the Outbound Travel Alert ("OTA") system, particularly on its coverage and regular review, and the operation of the system in the Egypt incident, as detailed in the Administration's paper.

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38. Mr WONG Yuk-man pointed out that many other places provided much outbound travel information to their travellers. For example, Taiwan provided in its website detailed outbound travel information covering many countries and places and classified the risk of travel to these places into four levels of travel alert. He expressed concern that the OTA webpage of the Security Bureau ("SB") provided very little outbound travel information about Libya, apart from providing the hyperlinks to relevant information in the websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and governments of other countries. He commented that OTA should not only cover Hong Kong travellers' destination hotspots and the current coverage of 80 countries was too narrow. His view was shared by Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung.

39. US for S responded that although Libya was not under the coverage of the OTA system, information about the situation in Libya was provided under "Other Information" in SB's OTA webpage. The Administration had issued press releases on the risk of travel to Libya. He stressed that the Administration was monitoring the situation of countries or places that might pose threats to travellers even if they were not under the coverage of the OTA system.

40. Dr LAM Tai-fai asked about the number of countries which had granted visa-free access to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") passport holders. He also asked whether the Administration would consider extending the coverage of the OTA system to all these countries.

41. US for S responded that about 140 countries had granted visa-free access to HKSAR passport holders. Countries that were Hong Kong travellers' popular destinations had all been placed under the OTA coverage, which had been increased recently from 60 countries to 80 countries.

42. Referring to paragraph 7 of the Administration's paper, Dr LAM Tai-fai asked about the number of Hong Kong residents who had registered their outbound travel information with the Administration. He asked whether the Administration had assessed the effectiveness of such an arrangement and whether the Administration would consider stepping up publicity on such an arrangement.

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43. US for S responded that the Administration launched the Registration of Outbound Travel Information service at the end of 2010 to enable Hong Kong residents to register their itineraries and contact details through GovHK before departure. The Administration would disseminate information to these residents, including through short message service ("SMS") of mobile phones, when necessary. There were currently over 1 000 Hong Kong residents who had registered for the service. The Administration would step up promotion of the service, and would consider seeking the assistance of travel agencies in such promotion.

44. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that the Administration should consider obtaining information about the travel risk in other countries from the Central Authorities.

45. US for S responded that the Administration had made reference to the outbound travel risk information in the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as those of other countries to facilitate Hong Kong residents' assessment of outbound travel risk.

46. Mr IP Kwok-him and the Chairman asked whether there were any established arrangements to bring group tours stranded overseas back to Hong Kong under different levels of OTA.

47. US for S responded that the Administration had agreed with the travel industry on the arrangements to bring group tours stranded overseas back to Hong Kong under different levels of OTA. For instance, following the issue of Red OTA for Egypt, the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong ("TIC") immediately announced the cancellation of all outbound tours to Egypt. One tour that had departed for Egypt had stayed in the airport at Cairo for more than 10 hours and thereafter returned to Hong Kong immediately. There was no standard practice for the return of group tours when an OTA was issued, suitable arrangement would be made having regard to the circumstances of the incident. However, the Administration would try its best to provide assistance to Hong Kong residents stranded or encountering difficulties overseas.

48. Mr Paul TSE enquired about the criteria for the inclusion of a country under the coverage of the OTA system and the criteria for issuing different levels of OTA.

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49. US for S and Assistant Commissioner for Tourism responded that the OTA system was introduced to enable members of the public to better understand the possible risk to their personal safety when travelling overseas. The Administration would conduct regular reviews twice a year and update the OTA system annually. The Administration would include popular destinations of Hong Kong residents under OTA coverage. The major factors taken into consideration in determining OTA level included -

- (a) level of threat to personal safety;
- (b) duration of the threat;
- (c) whether the threat was targeted at tourists; and
- (d) whether the place was visited by many Hong Kong residents.

50. Mr Paul TSE said that many members of the public were concerned that the decision of the travel industry on whether outbound tour groups should commence their journeys under a certain OTA alert levels was mainly based on commercial instead of safety considerations. He considered that the Administration should set up in consultation with the travel industry an established mechanism on whether outbound tour groups should commence their journeys and the compensation arrangements under different OTA alert levels.

51. US for S advised that the OTA System had been established in consultation with the travel industry. Assistant Commissioner for Tourism advised that the travel industry had developed a set of criteria for determining whether an outbound tour group should commence its journey and the prime consideration was the personal safety of the tour group members. The travel industry would take into account a number of factors when making a decision, including the OTA alert level, information supplied by its partners in the country concerned, and advice provided by the tourism board of the country concerned. Following the issue of Red OTA in relation to the incident in Egypt, all outbound tours to Egypt had been cancelled.

52. In response to the Deputy Chairman's question on the authority for the issuance of different levels of OTA alert, US for S explained that the relevant division in SB, in consultation with relevant departments, was responsible for making recommendations on the issuance of an OTA alert.

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A decision on the issuance of an Amber OTA was made by a Deputy Secretary for Security and a decision on the issuance of a Red or Black OTA was made by the Secretary for Security.

53. The Deputy Chairman noted that SB issued an Amber OTA for Egypt on 28 January 2011 due to its unrest situation and raised the OTA level to Red in the afternoon of 29 January 2011 after the Government of Egypt imposed a curfew on certain cities. Noting that the Government of Egypt announced the imposition of a nationwide curfew at 10 pm on 29 January, Hong Kong time, he queried why the Administration did not raise the OTA level to Black until the following day.

54. US for S advised that the updating of information from Egypt might have been slower at night. The Administration would examine whether there was room for improvement in this regard.

55. At the suggestion of the Deputy Chairman, US for S agreed to consider sending alert SMS messages to Hong Kong residents whose mobile phone lines were roamed to a place where a Red OTA was issued.

56. The Chairman asked whether a Hong Kong resident who received such a SMS message while travelling abroad could register for the Outbound Travel Information service immediately upon the receipt of an alert SMS message issued by the Government.

57. US for S advised that once a Hong Kong resident has registered for the Outbound Travel Information service and provided information on his travelling period, the Administration would be able to provide further alert messages to that person by SMS.

58. The Chairman asked about the time taken for the Administration to send alert messages by SMS to Hong Kong residents whose mobile phone line had roamed to the place concerned. US for S responded that the process would take about three hours.

59. Noting that the Administration had not issued an OTA for Libya despite its recent unrest situation because Libya did not fall within the coverage of the OTA System, the Chairman expressed concern that some Hong Kong residents might believe that it was safe to travel to that place because no OTA alert had been issued. He suggested that the Administration should issue an OTA for a place whenever necessary even if the place was not under OTA coverage.

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60. US for S advised that SB's OTA webpage contained a column "Other Information" which provided travel safety information on places which were not popular destinations of Hong Kong residents or outside the coverage of the OTA system. He agreed to consider the Chairman's suggestion.

61. The meeting ended at 4:31 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
31 May 2011