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13 Aug 2012

Clerk to Panel on Transport
Legislative Council,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Ms. Joanne Mak)

Dear Ms. Mak,

**Panel on Transport
Consultancy Report of Hong Kong Construction Association**

I refer to your letter of 15 May 2012 to the Secretary for Transport and Housing. I have been authorised to reply on his behalf. The Administration's initial response to the consultancy report entitled 'Visionary Transport Infrastructure Study 2030' commissioned by the Hong Kong Construction Association (HKCA), covering issues under the Panel's purview, is set out at the Annex.

Yours sincerely,

(Frankie WAN)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

**The Administration's Response to
'Visionary Transport Infrastructure Study 2030'**

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
A Roadmap for Electrification of Roads	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop electric vehicle re-charge infrastructure 	<p>The Government has been actively promoting the wider use of electric vehicles (EVs) in Hong Kong. We consider it important to put in place a comprehensive charging network in this regard. Apart from encouraging private car park operators to install more EV charging facilities, the Government has been installing some 500 standard chargers at various Government car parks. There are now some 1 000 standard EV chargers for public use.</p> <p>In addition, we are going to double the number of quick chargers from five at present to ten by end 2012 to provide EV users with quick charging service. These quick chargers will be set up at various locations including the Eastern, Southern, Central and Western, Yau Tsim Mong, Kwun Tong, Sha Tin, North, Yuen Long and Islands Districts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate and financially support on-road trial schemes of electric buses (supercapacitor and battery buses), trolley buses, minibus, taxi and electric car hiring • Trial of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in 	<p>To strike a balance between environmental friendliness and cost-effectiveness of franchised bus operation, franchised bus companies are required to operate buses up to the age of 18 and to purchase new buses of Euro V standard or above since 2010. It is estimated that about 40% of the franchised bus fleet will meet the emission level of Euro IV or above by 2015. In the meantime, the Government is working jointly with the franchised bus companies on a trial to retrofit Euro II and III buses with selective catalytic reduction ("SCR") devices to help reduce nitrogen oxides emissions. Together with the diesel particulate filters already installed on the buses, the SCR devices could upgrade emission performance of the vehicles to the level of Euro IV or above buses. Subject to satisfactory trial results, the Government will fund the full cost of retrofitting Euro II and III buses with SCR devices.</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
<p>major corridor such as Nathan Road with electric buses</p>	<p>As announced in the 2010-11 Policy Address, the ultimate policy objective of the Government is to have zero emission buses running across the territory. To this end, the Government will be providing funding support for trials of using hybrid and electric buses in franchised bus operation in Hong Kong. Funding approval for the trials was obtained from the LegCo Finance Committee in April 2011 and July 2012 respectively.</p> <p>It was also announced in the 2010-11 Policy Address that the Government planned to designate pilot low-emission zones (“LEZs”) in busy districts such as Causeway Bay, Central and Mong Kok. The target is to have only low-emission buses (i.e. those meeting the emission level of Euro IV or above) running in these zones by 2015.</p> <p>Separately, to encourage the public transport sector and goods vehicle owners to test out green innovative transport technologies including electric vehicles, the Government set up a \$300 million Pilot Green Transport Fund (“the Fund”) in March 2011. As at end June 2012, the Fund approved 30 applications to test out 61 electric/hybrid vehicles.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more exclusive road corridors for trams and extend trams/trolleys to new development areas 	<p>At present, a considerable portion of carriageways on Hong Kong Island, such as King’s Road in North Point, Yee Wo Street in Causeway Bay and Hennessy Road in Wan Chai, are already dedicated for trams. In view of our constraint in road space in the urban area, the provision of more exclusive road corridors for trams would entail serious implications on traffic flow, aggravate traffic congestion and affect other road users. The Administration therefore has no plan to pursue such a proposal at this juncture.</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
<p>A Policy Framework for Pedestrian Planning</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate walking demand and needs into the traditional transport planning models • Develop a target modal split for walking • Develop a continuous walking network • Develop strategic walkways • Pedestrian priority zones • Tram / pedestrian areas 	<p>In order to promote walking and to improve the overall pedestrian environment, TD is following an environmentally friendly approach in managing traffic and transport matters and is committed to putting more emphasis on the interests of pedestrians.</p> <p>Since 2000, several pedestrian schemes have been implemented in Causeway Bay, Central, Wan Chai, Mong Kok, Jordan, Sham Shui Po, Stanley, Yuen Long and Sheung Shui. As at 2011, there are 7 full-time pedestrianised streets, 31 part-time pedestrianised streets and over 40 traffic calming streets :-</p> <p>(i) In full-time pedestrian streets, pedestrians have absolute priority. Vehicular access is restricted to emergency services only but service vehicles may be allowed in specific period, for selected locations. Full-time pedestrian schemes have been implemented in Theatre Lane, Chiu Lung Street, Findlay Road, Russell Street, Paterson Street, Jardine's Crescent, etc.</p> <p>(ii) In part-time pedestrian streets, vehicular access is only allowed in specific periods. To minimize vehicular access to the area, there is no on-street parking space. However, loading bays are provided for loading and unloading purposes. Part-time pedestrian streets have been implemented in Lan Kwai Fong, D'Aguiar Street, Temple Street, Apliu Street, Fuk Wa Street, Yeun Long New Street, etc.</p> <p>(iii) In traffic calming streets, footpaths are normally widened and on-street parking spaces are reduced as far as possible. Also, taxi stands and green minibus stands are</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
	<p>only provided if relocation is not practical. Traffic calming streets have been implemented in Wyndham Street, Queen's Road Central, Elgin Street, Yun Ping Road, Russell Street, Pak Hoi Street, Ning Po Street, etc.</p> <p>TD will continue to keep in view the need for pedestrian schemes, having regard to the effect of the pedestrian schemes on traffic management, the environment and the safety of pedestrians, etc.</p> <p>We have commissioned studies to explore the feasibility of developing footbridge networks and subway links to improve pedestrian connectivity in Causeway Bay, Mong Kok and Yuen Long. We are also considering the development of footbridge networks in Wan Chai to establish a comprehensive elevated walkway system connecting Wan Chai North and Admiralty. On the other hand, the Government is embarking on a programme to construct hillside escalator links to facilitate pedestrians to commute in uphill areas.</p>
<p>A Policy Framework for Cycling Planning</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate cycling into the traditional transport planning models • Develop a target modal split for cycling in particular to new towns and new development 	<p>90% of the mechanized trips in Hong Kong are made on public transport along fixed routes, and this allows a relatively accurate forecast of traffic demand for mechanized trips which have relatively fixed origins and destinations. However, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to forecast and accurately model the movement pattern of cycling activities, as cycling activities comprise mainly “irregular” trips, most of which are for leisure and recreation and some are for short distance travel. Therefore, we consider it not desirable to incorporate cycling into the traditional transport planning models or develop a target modal split for cycling.</p>

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
<p>areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a continuous cycling network and parking facilities in housing estates, shopping malls and MTR stations in new towns and new development areas• Promote cycle hire schemes	<p>Hong Kong is densely populated. While we have well-developed road network and public transport system in Hong Kong, our road traffic is heavy and the roads and footpaths are highly congested, making it difficult to provide spaces to develop tracks designated for cycling. Allowing a large number of bicycles to use busy roads together with other vehicles in urban areas without providing designated cycle tracks will increase the risk of accidents. Due to safety consideration, the Government does not encourage the public to use bicycle as a transport mode in urban areas. Compared with urban areas, new towns in the New Territories or new development areas, where density is relatively low, have better conditions for using bicycle for short-distance travel. If situation permits, we will provide cycle tracks and ancillary facilities in new towns and new development areas to enable the public to cycle safely for recreational purpose and short-distance travel.</p> <p>The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) is developing a cycle track network in the New Territories by phased interconnection of various new towns between Ma On Shan and Tsuen Wan. It is expected that a 82-kilometre of cycle track network will be provided upon completion of the network expansion. In new development areas like Kai Tak, CEDD is actively exploring the extension of the district cycling track network within the new Kai Tak Development area to cover other major open spaces and tourism spots. There is also a plan to build a cycle track at the new Central harbourfront.</p> <p>On ancillary facilities, there are currently a total of about 40 000 bicycle parking spaces throughout the territory. TD strives to provide additional parking spaces at major transport hubs in the New Territories. For instance, TD expects to</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
	<p>provide 1 000 additional bicycle parking spaces by 2013 through retrofitting and replacing existing cycle parking spaces at major transport hubs, such as railway stations.</p>
<p>Feasibility Studies for Planned and Wish-list Rail Lines</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the feasibility of the following railway links: — South Island Line (West) — North HK Island Line — Northern Link — Hong Kong Shenzhen Western Express Line — Extension of Island Line to Siu Sai Wan — University via Ma On Shan to Sai Kung / Tseung Kwan O link — Shatin / Tai Wai to West Kowloon / Tsuen Wan (in a longer term) 	<p>The Government commenced a consultancy study in March 2011 on the Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000 to update Hong Kong's long-term railway development blueprint. The study is conducted in two stages and takes about 2 years to complete.</p> <p>The Stage 1 study mainly explores ideas of major regional railway corridors serving the New Territories. A public engagement exercise took place from 20 April to 21 July 2012.</p> <p>The Stage 2 study will mainly investigate local enhancement schemes, in particular those for railway services in the urban areas (including constructing parallel lines, extensions or spur lines, adding new stations etc.). The Stage 2 public engagement exercise is tentatively scheduled to be launched at the end of this year.</p>

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
Implementation of Strategic Road	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a Chek Lap Kok to Tuen Mun and West Shenzhen link, thereby improving the links to the Mainland and providing an alternative route to the airport 	<p>The Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link (TM-CLKL) is a dual two-lane 9 km carriageway which includes a 5 km sub-sea tunnel and a total of 4 km of viaducts at both ends of the tunnel.</p> <p>The project is designed to meet future traffic demand in Northwest New Territories and Lantau Island. On completion, it will provide a direct route between the Northwest New Territories and Lantau, joining Northwest New Territories, Tuen Mun River Trade Terminal, Ecopark, the Airport, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and North Lantau developments. It will significantly shorten journey time between the Northwest New Territories and Lantau as well as provide an alternative land access to the Hong Kong International Airport.</p> <p>Detailed design and reclamation of the southern landfall of the TM-CLKL commenced in late 2011. The southern connection of the project will be completed in 2016 to synchronise with the commissioning of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, while the northern connection will be completed in 2017.</p>
Effective Traffic Management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement more electronic payment systems in all road toll charging points (tunnels and bridges) for voluntary and then compulsory auto payment of 	<p>It is the Government's policy to provide both manual and automatic toll collection lanes at all tolled tunnels and roads in the territory to allow motorists to choose between making toll payment in cash or electronically according to their needs. Therefore, both manual and automatic toll collection lanes are available at all tolled tunnels and roads in the territory.</p> <p>The Government keeps an open mind about introducing new toll collection systems for tunnels and roads. In considering the introduction of a new automatic toll collection system for tunnels and roads, apart from providing another alternative for</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
<p>tolls</p>	<p>motorists to pay tolls, we need to explore the technical feasibility of such a system (such as the interfacing of the proposed system with the existing toll collection system of the tolled tunnels and roads, and whether the new system is compatible with new electronic payment systems available on the market in the future) and other relevant factors, including whether adoption of a new automatic toll collection system can enhance toll collection efficiency, achieve a smoother traffic flow at the tunnel portals as well as its cost-effectiveness. The Government will continue to explore how best to take forward the proposal.</p> <p>From a traffic management point of view, we have no plan at this stage to mandate the use of automatic means for payment of tolls, as doing so would limit the choice of some 50% of the motorists. (The utilisation rate of the automatic toll collection lanes at all tolled tunnels and roads consistently stays at around 50%.) In addition, this would not be in line with the Government policy of providing both manual and automatic toll collection lanes at all tolled tunnels and roads in the territory for motorists to choose between making toll payment in cash or electronically according to their needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop dedicated public transport corridors on HK Island and Nathan Road aided with bus-bus interchanges 	<p>Given the high development density, there is no spare land available on the key corridors of Hong Kong Island and Nathan Road for the proposed specially-designed public transport interchanges (“SPTI”) to accommodate all buses commuting to / from the areas concerned. SPTI would naturally attract a large volume of passengers travelling to / from it. It is likely to create bottleneck / congestion inside the SPTI and along its access roads, particularly during peak hours.</p> <p>To reduce unnecessary traffic flow, TD will continue to work with the franchised bus companies and relevant District</p>

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
	<p>Councils to rationalise bus routes and reduce bus frequencies as the circumstances may permit. The Government will also continue to encourage the franchised bus companies to introduce more bus-bus interchange schemes having regard to passenger demand, their operating conditions and financial capability.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement traffic management schemes in congested corridors such as Lockhart Road / Hennessy Road / Johnston Road areas 	<p>TD is working with the franchised bus companies to reorganise bus routes with a view to improving the efficiency of the bus services and making better use of the road network. The number of bus trips passing through Causeway Bay has been reduced by about 23% (i.e. about 2,100 bus trips) since 1999.</p> <p>Lockhart Road is a dual 2-lane carriageway. There is no adjoining carriageway which is of comparable capacity to allow operation of a one-way traffic system on Lockhart Road.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more convenient and comfortable park-and-ride facilities 	<p>The Government will continue to promote the "Park-and-Ride" scheme to encourage people living in more remote areas to drive to railway stations and change to railway for travel to and from the urban areas.</p> <p>At present, there are seven car parks that provide "Park-and-Ride" service in Hong Kong. For the first quarter of 2012, the average daily number of "Park-and-Ride" users is 1,250, which accounts for 43% of all users of the seven car parks.</p> <p>The Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000 will study the "Park-and-Ride" scheme to further complement Hong Kong's railway development.</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control waiting of private cars in Central 	<p>The proposal to provide free or concessionary parking space at car parks in the Central Business Areas may not be effective in solving congestion as it may attract even more private cars to the congested areas to use the free or concessionary parking spaces, and private car drivers might still wait at the road side for picking-up/setting-down their passengers for convenience.</p> <p>TD would require private developers to provide sufficient loading / unloading area and parking spaces at redevelopment sites in Central according to the latest guidelines. Furthermore, TD would work closely with the Police on enforcement in busy areas such that prolonged on-street waiting by private cars would be kept to a minimum.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize road opening works by using common utility tunnels 	<p>The Highways Department is looking into the feasibility of implementing Common Utility Enclosures (CUEs). CUEs in the form of culvert road crossings could reduce the disturbance caused by road openings. Trials on CUEs are being conducted to ascertain the feasibility of adopting CUEs in Hong Kong.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement district-wide Maintenance / Operation / Management (MOM) mode for more effective road management 	<p>Management, operation and maintenance (MOM) contracts are currently applied to areas such as tunnels, controlled areas, etc which mainly serve vehicular traffic. Accesses to these networks are controlled, while pedestrian traffic and other activities are limited if not totally disallowed.</p> <p>As regards other public road networks, issues related to road cleansing, management and maintenance are more complicated than the controlled areas because of the interface with various other activities (e.g. commercial and residential establishments nearby). Various government departments will need to collaborate to oversee the management and maintenance issues,</p>

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
	and different management and maintenance contracts for such facilities are adopted. We will continue to monitor the situation and apply the most suitable contractual arrangements to meet the need of different areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out public consultation on congestion charge 	<p>From the traffic management perspective, a road pricing scheme that aims to relieve traffic congestion can be implemented equitably and effectively only if alternative routes that have adequate capacity for motorists to bypass the charging zone are available. For Hong Kong Island, such an alternative route is the Central – Wan Chai Bypass (CWB). Therefore, a road pricing scheme aimed at relieving traffic congestion could only be considered after the CWB is in place in 2017. Since road pricing is a highly controversial policy, any such proposal would require thorough discussion in the community.</p>
Green Bus Fleets	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 5-year programme to upgrade the bus fleets to Euro V standards 	<p>Please refer to our response to the second item under “A Roadmap for Electrification of Roads” on p.2.</p>
Better Transport Information System	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement real time passenger information system for bus and tram services 	<p>At present, about 5,000 (or 85%) franchised buses are already equipped with visual and/or audio bus stop announcement system. The franchised bus companies are enhancing the provision of bus service information to passengers at bus stops and termini by installing information display panels showing route and fare information, and through free smart phone applications and their websites.</p> <p>The Government has also enhanced the regulatory power over</p>

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
	<p>the type, form and manner of information to be provided by the bus companies to passengers in the three franchises newly granted in late April 2012. A similar clause will be incorporated in the other three bus franchises upon their expiry in 2016/2017.</p> <p>As regards bus arrival information, some of the franchised bus companies already provide real-time information. For example, Citybus Limited has launched a trial of real-time bus arrival time enquiry service for selected airport routes on its website. Long Win Bus Company Limited will commence a trial on the provision of real-time bus arrival information on selected routes by mid-2013.</p> <p>The Hong Kong Tramways ("HKT") recently launched a real-time passenger information system for mobile devices with which passengers may, amongst other things, check the destinations and the arrival time of the trams. Similar information is also available on HKT's website. Besides, HKT will be installing light-emitting diode (i.e. LED) units at designated tram stops later this year to display the destinations and arrival time of the trams, etc..</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the parking guidance system 	<p>We note the suggestion of implementing parking guidance systems and will keep in view the development, applicability and cost-effectiveness of related technologies. Currently, there are road signs indicating the presence of nearby parking spaces and some car parks will display information of the availability of their parking spaces. These assist drivers to find parking spaces for their vehicles.</p> <p>TD is planning to conduct a trial scheme to assess the technical feasibility and public acceptance of the new features and</p>

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
	<p>functions to be incorporated in the new generation of parking meters. As part of the trial scheme, TD will explore the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of collecting information on availability of parking spaces and disseminating such information to motorists.</p>
The Role of Telecommunication in Traffic Management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore active use of telecommunication in traffic management • Incorporate telecommunication effects in transport modelling • Study the possible impact of telecommuting on transport demand 	<p>We have been applying information and telecommunication technologies in traffic management, e.g. Area Traffic Control Systems, Traffic Control and Surveillance Systems, Journey Time Indication Systems.</p> <p>We also disseminate traffic and transport information to the public through various means. For example, TD launched internet services like the “Hong Kong eTransport” and “Driving Route Search Service” which allow the public to search for the most suitable public transport and driving route respectively. We will continue to keep in view the development of telecommunication technologies in the market and deploy them in traffic management and transport modelling when appropriate.</p>
A Sustainable Local Ferry Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the type and standard of ferry services that should be provided and how such services may be 	<p>To enhance the long-term financial viability of ferry services, the Government has been providing various measures to enable ferry operators to reduce operating costs and increase non-fare box revenue:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. taking over pier maintenance responsibility; b. waiving fuel duty;

<p>HKCA's Suggested Actions</p>	<p>The Administration's Response</p>
<p>provided in a sustainable manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review alternative ways to purchase services, e.g. indirectly through Government or directly by passengers, and whether any necessary subsidies should be paid to the service providers or to passengers on a need basis 	<p>c. reimbursing pier rentals and exempting vessel licence fees for ferry services under the Elderly Concessionary Fares Scheme;</p> <p>d. allowing ferry operators to sublet ferry pier areas for commercial concession to generate non-fare box revenue to cross-subsidise the ferry operation; and</p> <p>e. streamlining the subletting approval procedures to help expedite generation of non-fare box revenue.</p> <p>In May 2008, the Government initiated a review on ferry services for outlying islands with a view to enhancing the long-term financial viability of these services and maintaining fare stability. The review was completed in mid-2010 and consultations were carried out with the Legislative Council Transport Panel, the Traffic and Transport Committee of the Islands District Council, relevant Rural Committees and members of the public.</p> <p>The Government proposed to provide the following additional helping measures for the six major outlying island ferry trunk routes (namely “Central – Cheung Chau”, “Peng Chau – Mui Wo – Chi Ma Wan – Cheung Chau” (Inter-islands), “Central – Mui Wo”, “Central – Peng Chau”, “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan” routes) for the new three-year licence period from 2011 to 2014:</p> <p>a. extending the special helping measures provided to four of the major outlying island ferry trunk routes during 2008 to 2011 to all six routes. Details of the measures are given as follows –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) waiving annual vessel survey fee and private mooring fee; (ii) reimbursing pier water, cleansing and electricity

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
	<p>charges; and</p> <p>(iii) reimbursing the balance of revenue foregone due to provision of elderly fare concessions after netting off the amount of pier rental reimbursement and vessel licence fee exemption under the established arrangement;</p> <p>b. reimbursing vessel maintenance cost incurred and vessel insurance cost;</p> <p>c. reimbursing revenue foregone due to provision of child fare concessions; and</p> <p>d. re-launching the “visiting scheme to outlying islands” by providing fare subsidy to encourage institutions such as schools, non-governmental organizations, community and local groups to organize activities to these outlying islands.</p> <p>In November 2010, the FC approved a commitment of about \$120 million for the implementation of the above mentioned helping measures.</p> <p>The Administration is also planning the construction of additional floors at Central Piers Nos. 4 to 6. Ferry operators could use the additional floor spaces for commercial or retail activities to generate more non-fare box revenue to cross-subsidize the ferry operation.</p> <p>When considering Star Ferry (SF)’s fare increase application for its two franchised ferry routes viz. “Central – Tsim Sha Tsui” and “Wan Chai – Tsim Sha Tsui”, the Chief Executive in Council approved the introduction of an exceptional helping measure to reimburse SF with the total revenue foregone arising from the offer of free rides for the elderly for the “Central –</p>

HKCA's Suggested Actions	The Administration's Response
	Tsim Sha Tsui'' ferry service in 2012 (upon the implementation of the new fares) and 2013. The amount of reimbursement to SF is estimated to be around \$5.67 million in total for 2012 and 2013.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and implement preferred ways to reduce ferry air pollutant emissions	The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has collected the views of the operators of local ferries / vessels travelling in Hong Kong waters on the proposal of capping the sulphur limit of the marine light diesel at 0.1%. Arrangements are being made by EPD for a trial of powering old-model local vessel engines with low-sulphur diesel in laboratory settings. If the trial is successful and the sulphur limit is introduced, the emission of sulphur dioxide and respirable suspended particulates of individual local vessels will be reduced by 80% and 30% respectively.