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Transport and
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本局檔號 Our Ref.

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3 April 2013

Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Mr Derek LO)

Dear Derek,

**Public Works Programme Item No. 114AP
Providing Sufficient Water Depth for
Kwai Tsing Container Basin and its Approach Channel**

During the discussion of the above project item at the Panel on Economic Development meeting on March 25, Members have asked for further information on (a) details of the arrangements for disposal of the dredged sediments in the proposed project; (b) details of any delay to large container ships navigating in and out the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals due to insufficient water depth at the Kwai Tsing Container Basin and its approach channel, and dredging plans by container operators; and (c) details of any new measures adopted to prevent the death of fishes caused by the project.

The supplementary information for the above questions is provided in **Annex** for reference.

Yours sincerely,



(F L CHEUK)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

Encl.

c.c.

CEDD

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(I) Details of the arrangements for disposal of the dredged sediments in the proposed project

The total volume of the dredged sediments involved in the dredging works is estimated to be 4 million cubic metres (in-situ volume).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) would issue a dumping permit under the Dumping At Sea Ordinance (Cap 466). The dredged sediments would be classified according to their contaminant levels. They would then be transported by barges to and disposed of at the designated sediment disposal locations in compliance with the requirements by the Marine Fill Committee.

The dredged sediments under this project would be categorized into three types, namely, Category L, Category M and Category H and their disposal arrangements would be handled according to the dumping permit issued by the EPD and are as follows :

- (a) Category L sediment (estimated volume at about 2.9 million cubic metres, accounting for 73% of the total volume) would be disposed of at the open sea sediment disposal area at East of Ninepin or South of Cheung Chau.
- (b) Category M sediment and Category H sediment (estimated volume at about 1.1 million cubic metres, accounting for 27% of the total volume) would be disposed of at the confined marine sediment disposal facility such as the facility at East Sha Chau or South of the Brothers.
- (c) A small amount of Category H sediment with higher contamination (estimated volume at about 17 000 cubic metres, accounting for less than 0.5% of the total volume) would be contained and sealed with geotextile material, and then disposed of at the confined marine sediment disposal facility at East Sha Chau or South of the Brothers.

The geotextile material for containing the Category H sediment with higher contamination would be properly sewed and sealed in compliance with the specification and procedures set by the EPD to ensure no leakage during disposal. The EPD had conducted on-site testing for this disposal arrangement at other projects.

Transportation of the dredged sediments to designated disposal location would be closely monitored by the EPD as every barge would be equipped

with Global Positioning System (GPS).

(II) Details of any delay to large container ships navigating in and out the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals due to insufficient water depth at the Kwai Tsing Container Basin and its approach channel, and dredging plans by container operators

In 2012, there were a total of 216 trips of visiting container ship with draft of over 15 meters. Among them, 107 trips needed to adjust for tidal allowance for the ship to berth or unberth from Kwai Tsing Container Terminals. According to the terminal operators, these ships needed harmonization with tidal window or cooperation of stevedore in advance. As to a departing ship, if it was not possible to get the ship ready to sail within the suitable tidal window, there would be delay to the ship which could only leave in the subsequent tidal window. As port operations involve a good number of private operators, the Administration does not have relevant data on the delays.

Individual container terminal operator has indicated to the Administration that they would cooperate with the Government's dredging project, and their plans include dredging of the water depth of Container Terminal 6, Container Terminal 7 and Container Terminal 9 North berths to 17 m below Chart Datum, and the water depth of Container Terminal 9 South berths to 16.5 to 17 m below Chart Datum in 2016.

(III) Details of any new measures adopted to prevent the death of fishes caused by the project

Mitigation Measures as proposed under Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

In accordance with the Environmental Permit issued by the EPD, the Administration would implement water quality impact mitigation measures, including the limitation of the number of dredgers, control of the dredging rate and the mode of work, installation of silt curtain and implementation of good site management practice.

Environmental Monitoring and Audit

For this project, the Administration would implement an environmental monitoring and audit programme during construction to ensure the

effectiveness of the mitigation measures. The Administration would conduct regular water quality monitoring at 22 water quality sensitive receivers, including fish culture zones (FCZs), sea water intakes, gazetted bathing beaches and coral communities. Furthermore, the Administration would conduct 24-hour water quality monitoring at the four FCZs and 3 sea water intakes for collection of supplementary information. In case the water quality is identified to be reaching the trigger level or is deteriorating, immediate investigation to ensure the problem could be solved at the earliest stage would be carried out.

Environmental Team and Community Liaison Group

Apart from the environmental team, a community liaison group for this project would be set up. The group comprises relevant government departments, an independent expert, an environmental team, an independent environmental checker, project engineer, representative of the contractor, representatives of concerned fisheries associations or affected groups.

The environmental team would implement the environmental monitoring and audit programme. The Administration would also engage an independent environmental checker to monitor and audit the work of the environmental team. The reports of the environmental monitoring and audit programme would be uploaded to the internet for inspection by relevant parties.

In case of fish-kill incidents, the environmental team would take immediate action to notify the contractor, project engineer, independent environmental checker and the EPD, and carry out investigation together with the project engineer and contractor representative. If the fish-kill incident is caused by the project, the Administration would assist the mariculturists to liaise with the contractor for compensation. The project engineer and the contractor representative would review the working procedure, and if necessary strengthen the mitigation measures, such as further reducing the dredging rate or suspend part of the dredging works. The environmental team would monitor the effectiveness of the enhanced mitigation measures.

Special Measures on Revision of the Original Mechanism of Ex-gratia Allowance (EGA) and Introduction of One-off Special EGA

(Please refer to paragraph 26 of the paper.)