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22 July 2013

Clerk to the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development
(Attn: Mr Noel Sung)
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Sung,

**Replacement of the Air Traffic Control System
of the Civil Aviation Department**

Thank you for your letter dated 11 July 2013. With regard to the questions raised by Hon TANG Ka-piu in the letter, I am authorised to reply as follows.

The Government attaches paramount importance to maintaining aviation safety, and is committed to providing an efficient air traffic management service with a view to consolidating Hong Kong's leading position as an international aviation hub. The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) has strictly followed the relevant rules and procedures as stipulated in the Government Stores and Procurement Regulations (SPR) throughout the replacement process for the new air traffic control system. The new system fully meets the international requirements for air traffic management.

In the process of preparing the tender document, the CAD had conducted comprehensive market research of similar systems, and paid visits to major air traffic control centres in the United Kingdom, Australia, Italy, France, Norway, Guangzhou and Beijing, etc, to exchange views with the air traffic

control personnel there and make reference to their views and experience in operating air traffic management systems. CAD had also incorporated the latest technology and safety requirements into the tender document.

The Raytheon Company which was awarded with the Air Traffic Management System contract has over 50 years of experience in designing and manufacturing air traffic control and radar systems, and their systems are widely used by civil aviation authorities around the world, including the United States, Dubai, India, etc.

The CAD has enquired with the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and was given to understand that the three air traffic control (ATC) centres in New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai are currently using the Raytheon Company's Autotrac3 systems, which were officially put into full operations in 2011. The AAI is satisfied with the overall performance of the systems. Moreover, subsequent to the commissioning of the new systems in the three ATC centres in New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai, the AAI was awarded the Jane's 2012 ATC Operational Efficiency Award¹ and the ATC Global Awards 2013 - Air Navigation Services².

Due to delay in tendering of the "Design and Construction" works of the new CAD Headquarters Building, coupled with the need to optimize the Autotrac3 system and the longer time taken to test and evaluate the system than expected, commissioning of the new ATC Centre could not commence by end of 2012 as originally scheduled. The CAD is making every effort to complete the implementation of the air traffic control system replacement project. Installation work of the other six major systems at the new ATC Centre has been substantially completed, and acceptance tests are progressing.

To ensure the new systems are safe, reliable and stable, the systems of the ATC Centre will undergo a series of stringent tests and satisfy safety assessment conducted in accordance with the established international aviation safety management standards and procedures. It is expected that the enhancement and functional testing of the new Autotrac3 system will be completed in the first quarter of 2014 the earliest, followed by comprehensive integration testing and training of the new systems. The earliest operation of the new ATC Centre is estimated to be in the second half of 2014.

¹ The award is presented by Jane's Airport Review under IHS (Information Handling Services). This organisation is an independent and well recognised platform in the aviation industry. The award aims at commending and rewarding party with good performance records over the past 12 months across seven key areas of air traffic control. The Airports Authority of India was the winner of Operational Efficiency Award in 2012.

² The award is presented by the ATC Global in association with Air Traffic Management magazine. It aims at commending and rewarding individuals and organisations to drive forward the air traffic management industry.

Thank you for the interest of the Members in the project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dw'.

(Desmond Wu)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c. Director-General of Civil Aviation (Attn: Mr Simon Li)