



Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce
香港總商會 1861

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Helping Business since 1861

11 July, 2014

The Hon James Tien, GBS, JP
Chairman, Panel on Economic Development
Legislative Council, HKSAR

Dear James,

The Third Runway Project in the Hong Kong International Airport

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (“HKGCC”) would like to reiterate the support of the business community in building the Third Runway. We congratulate the Airport Authority Hong Kong (“AA”) for the completion of the Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) report on the expansion of the Hong Kong International Airport (“HKIA”) into a Three-Runway System (“3RS”), which meets the requirements of the EIA Study Brief and Technical Memorandum.

Competitiveness

2. World-class connectivity has been a crucial element underlining Hong Kong’s success as an international business hub and home to some 3,500 regional headquarters of international companies. HKIA is the world's busiest cargo airport and the third largest international airport. In 2013, it handled about 60 million passengers, 4.13 million tonnes of cargo, and 372,000 air traffic movements, doubling all the corresponding figures in 1998 when the airport was inaugurated.

3. HKIA will soon reach its full capacity of 420,000 air traffic movements per annum in the next few years. Without the Third Runway, capacity constraints will ultimately eliminate growth and suffocate the aviation industry that provides 8% of the city’s jobs and contributes some 8% of our GDP, not to mention the impacts to the affiliating tourism, finance and retail industries further down the road. Failing to accommodate the increasing air traffic movements, projected at 607,000 per annum by 2030, will undermine Hong Kong’s competitiveness and hamper our economic growth.

Labour Support

4. With construction activities peaking in Hong Kong in view of the upcoming mega projects such as Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, Our Future Railway, Northeast New Territories New Development Areas and Long Term Housing Strategy, the Government should ensure that there are sufficient construction workers to support the urgently needed 3RS project. We should make reference to the Special Labour Importation Scheme for the new airport and related projects in the 1990s to design a

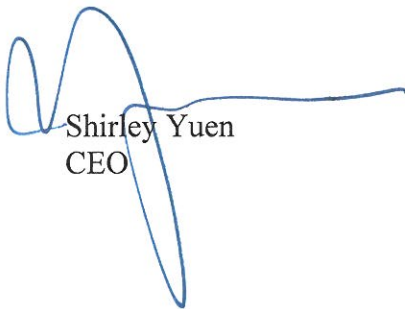
similar labour scheme so that the acute labour shortage currently facing the construction industry would not lead to unexpected project delays for the HKIA expansion. The Administration and LegCo may also consider playing a more active role in monitoring project implementation and making the budget, timing and any factors affecting possible delays of the project as transparent as possible to the public to avoid any hiccups.

Sustainable Development

5. We understand that any major infrastructure development will create an inevitable impact on the environment, and it is necessary to strive for a balance between economic prosperity and quality of life. The comprehensive two-year EIA study has been undertaken involving professionals, experts, and all stakeholders, including HKGCC, green groups and the general public, to address the likely environmental effects arising from the 3RS project. We note that the AA has tried all means to identify, avoid and minimize the potential impacts by proposing 250 extensive measures to deal with the 12 key environmental aspects concerning air quality, noise control, marine ecology and fisheries. We urge the AA to maintain close communication with all stakeholders in the implementation process, so that the proposed measures will be conducted in an effective manner to achieve a sustainable future. Also, marine transport in terms of intensity and routing should be carefully planned and controlled during the reclamation process to minimize any disturbance to marine life.

6. All in all, HKGCC calls for expediting the development process of 3RS without further delay.

Yours sincerely,



Shirley Yuen
CEO

cc: Ms Anissa Wong, Director of Environmental Protection, Environmental Protection Department