

For discussion on
27 October 2014

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**Waste Disposal (Designated Waste Disposal Facility) (Amendment)
Regulation 2013 and the Waste Disposal (Refuse Transfer Station)
(Amendment) Regulation 2013 (Commencement) Notice**

**Commencement of Measures to Enhance the Utilization of Refuse
Transfer Stations and Performance of Refuse Collection Vehicles**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on the proposal to bring into effect the relevant provisions of the Waste Disposal (Designated Waste Disposal Facility) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 (DWDF Amendment Regulation) and the Waste Disposal (Refuse Transfer Station) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 (RTS Amendment Regulation) (collectively known as Amendment Regulations) to:

- (a) open up the Shatin Transfer Station (STTS) for private waste collectors on **1 March 2015**;
- (b) commence the reduction of fee for use of refuse transfer stations (RTSs) on **1 March 2015**; and
- (c) commence the requirement of new equipment standards on refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) on **1 April 2015**.

BACKGROUND

2. We are committed to enhancing the utilization of the RTS network and the environmental performance of RCVs to avoid nuisance arising from their operation. On 28 October 2013, we consulted the Panel on a package of measures to ensure that the municipal solid waste (MSW) diverted from the South East New Territories (SENT) Landfill can be properly handled by the network of RTSs and any potential traffic

and environmental impact can be minimized (ref. : LC Paper CB(1)107/13-14(03)). Some of the measures require legislative amendments and some are administrative. The relevant legislative amendments were tabled at the Legislative Council (LegCo) on 4 December 2013 for negative vetting. A subcommittee under the House Committee of the LegCo was formed to study the Amendment Regulations. After deliberations, the subcommittee supported the Amendment Regulations and agreed to some amendments proposed by the Secretary for the Environment (SEN). A LegCo Resolution on the proposed amendments was passed on 22 January 2014. The commencement dates of individual components of the Amendment Regulations would be appointed by SEN by notice in the Gazette. The measures set out in paragraph 1(a) to (c) above are part of the Amendments Regulations which are now ready to be brought into effect. Progress of the relevant administrative measures is given in the following paragraphs. As regards the designation of the SENT Landfill to receive only construction waste, its extension is being considered by the LegCo Finance Committee. Subject to the funding approval and when other necessary preparatory work is ready, it will be covered by a separate Commencement Notice.

PROGRESS OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Re-routing of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department's (FEHD) collection service

3. The re-routing of FEHD's collection service aims to make available more RTS capacity at West Kowloon Transfer Station and STTS to cope with the MSW diverted from the SENT Landfill. The plan involves FEHD delivering some of the MSW it collects to the Northeast New Territories Landfill direct without going through an RTS and re-routing its collection service in some districts so that more FEHD-collected waste will go through the North Lantau Transfer Station, Island East Transfer Station and Island West Transfer Station, which have more unused capacity.

4. FEHD has started the re-routing of its collection service, which involves the diversion of some 1,980 tonnes of MSW per day. As of September 2014, FEHD has diverted 16 collection routes in Sai Kung and Tai Po districts involving about 250 tonnes of MSW per day. FEHD aims to complete 60% of the planned diversion by end of 2014 and the rest by mid-2015.

Opening of STTS for private waste collectors

5. To prepare for the opening of the STTS for use by private waste collectors, some enhancement works, such as upgrading of the computer transaction system, are underway at the STTS to ensure its smooth operation upon opening. These enhancement works will be completed in early 2015.

Assistance to new RTS users

6. Private waste collectors are required to register under the Refuse Transfer Service Scheme before they can deliver waste to an RTS. At present there are about 400 private RTS users with over 1000 vehicles registered under the Scheme, and over 200 new users are envisaged when the SENT Landfill ceases to receive MSW. To assist these new users, application forms will be made available at landfills, on Environmental Protection Department's (EPD) website and through trade associations. We will also set up an enquiry hotline to offer assistance to new applicants.

7. In order to assist new RTS users to be familiarized with the operation, they will be offered opportunities for trial use of the STTS free of charge. The trial scheme will be launched in November 2014 and we will also gather feedback from trial users to fine-tune the operational arrangement.

Subsidy scheme for upgrading RCVs

8. To help the waste collection trade to meet the new statutory requirements on the equipment standards of RCVs, a one-off subsidy is provided to private refuse collection vehicle owners to retrofit their vehicles with tailgate covers and waste water sump tanks.

9. Upon funding approval by the LegCo Finance Committee on 15 November 2013, the one-off subsidy scheme was launched on 10 January 2014. The trade's response to the scheme was very positive. By the application deadline of 30 September 2014, we had received 329 applications, which represent 95 per cent of the private RCVs eligible for the subsidy. By the same date, 201 RCVs had already been retrofitted under the scheme, and the remaining 128 RCVs will be retrofitted progressively in the coming 5 months.

10. From our record, there are about 13 eligible private RCVs which have not joined the scheme. We understand that some of these owners intend to join another EPD scheme on 'Phasing Out Pre-Euro IV Diesel Commercial Vehicles' to receive an ex-gratia payment for replacement of old RCVs while the rest are not currently using the service of landfills/RTSs (i.e. the RCVs are not engaged in refuse collection or are inactive).

Liaison with stakeholders

11. To better engage individual private waste collectors currently using the SENT Landfill, we undertook a two-week survey at the SENT Landfill from December 2013 to January 2014 and followed up with 356 telephone interviews with these waste collectors. Useful information on their waste collection districts, frequency of disposal, usage pattern were gathered for formulating the diversion arrangement.

12. To enhance communication with the various stakeholders, a working group, consisting of representatives from the waste collection trade, property management and government departments, was set up in March 2014. Meetings have been held and the stakeholders have provided useful advice for refining the detailed arrangement of the waste diversion plan (WDP).

13. We have also arranged separate meetings with the waste collection trade associations to better understand their operational concerns regarding the implementation of the WDP including the re-routing of FEHD's collection service.

Publicity programme

14. A publicity programme has been formulated to publicize the measures as outlined in paragraph 1 above. Banners, posters and information leaflets will be posted up or distributed at landfills and RTSs. The details of the above measures will also be made available on EPD's website, and our hotline staff are being trained to answer relevant enquiries and provide assistance to the trades.

WAY FORWARD AND ADVICE SOUGHT

15. Subject to Members' views, we intend to publish the Commencement Notices to effect the relevant provisions of the Amendment Regulations as mentioned in paragraph 1 above in the Gazette on 19 December 2014 and table them at the LegCo on 24 December 2014 for negative vetting.

**Environment Bureau / Environmental Protection Department
October 2014**