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28 April 2015

Ms Shirley CHAN
Clerk to Panel
Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Chan,

Panel on Environmental Affairs

**Review of the Implementation of the Extension of the
Plastic Shopping Bag Charging to All Retail Outlets**

Thank you for your letter of 13 April 2015, enclosing also the letter from Dr Hon Kenneth Chan on the captioned.

Plastic shopping bag (“PSB”) charging has been fully implemented in the entire retail sector starting from 1 April 2015 following the commencement of the Producer Eco-responsibility (Amendment) Ordinance 2014. Within April 2015, i.e. the first month of implementation, enforcement officers from the Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) would give verbal warnings against contraventions and would only take enforcement actions if the retailers concerned fail to rectify the non-compliance after receiving our warnings. Such arrangement aims to enable retailers and members of the public to better adapt to the new requirements so that PSB charging could be implemented smoothly. As at 26 April 2015, a total of 65 verbal warnings were issued to retailers. With


effect from 1 May 2015, EPD will no longer give prior verbal warnings on the legal requirements of PSB charging and immediate enforcement action will be taken should any contraventions be found.

We will continuously monitor the implementation situation and conduct relevant research including the annual PSB disposal survey. As requested by the Panel on Environmental Affairs, we would compile the enforcement statistics for quarterly release starting from July 2015. We will also aim to present the findings of the next PSB disposal survey as soon as practicable when we are in a position to do so.

Please however note that PSB charging is implemented in the second phase through a “retention by retailer” approach (vis-a-vis the previous “remittance to the Government” approach in the first phase. The Government does not maintain statistics on the amount of PSB charges that the retail industry has collected or the number of PSBs distributed. That said, the Hong Kong Retail Management Association has agreed to coordinate the voluntary reporting of the relevant statistics by its members. We will inform the Panel of such statistics once they are released.

Should you have any enquiries, please feel free to contact the undersigned at tel. 3509-8646 or via email to liberacheng@epd.gov.hk.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Libera CHENG)
for Director of Environmental Protection