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The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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30 June 2015

Clerk to the LegCo Panel on Economic Development
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Debbie Yau)

Dear Ms Yau,

Panel on Economic Development
Update on Follow-up Actions arising from the Report of
the Commission of Inquiry into the Collision of Vessels near
Lamma Island on 1 October 2012

At the meeting of the Panel on Economic Development held on 27 May, Members have asked the Government to provide the findings and recommendations raised by the Task Force on Reform regarding the business processes and operational procedures of the Marine Department etc. The supplementary information is now provided at **Annex** for reference.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mary Tsang', written over a horizontal line.

(Mary Tsang)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

Supplementary Information

Work of the Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department and the Task Force on Reform on Organizational Review of the Business Processes and Operational Procedures of the Marine Department

BACKGROUND

The Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department (Steering Committee) was set up in May 2013 to steer and supervise the Marine Department (MD) in undertaking a comprehensive systemic review and reform. Its Terms of Reference and membership are at **Appendix**. To support the work of the Steering Committee and to co-ordinate implementation of various improvement measures, a Task Force on Reform (Task Force) has been formed within MD. The Task Force, with the assistance of the Efficiency Unit, has conducted an organizational review on the business processes and operational procedures of MD.

2. The first phase of the review, which primarily examined the licensing, certification and regulatory work for local vessels, was completed in end February 2014. The second phase of the review focusing on work related to ship safety and navigational safety was also completed in early 2015. Review findings indicated that there was room for MD to improve its operational efficiency and effectiveness, internal communication and collaboration, information transparency, and records management.

3. The review set out various recommendations which had been discussed and endorsed by the Steering Committee. A Change Management Team comprising representatives of all relevant sections of MD has been set up since March 2014 to take forward the implementation of the recommendations. Implementation details of major improvement measures are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

(I) Information Technology (IT) Enhancement

4. The Task Force found that there was no common platform to facilitate the storage, retrieval and sharing of information and records of the Local Vessels Safety Section (LVSS). Instructions, guidelines and other essential information were documented in different sources and it was time consuming for staff to locate and retrieve the necessary information to support their daily operations. Improvement was recommended with a view to enhancing productivity and efficiency. A central repository has been subsequently set up in LVSS to facilitate the storage and retrieval of related information. Information such as updated guidelines and instructions, law and regulations and codes of practice are uploaded to the repository and shared amongst LVSS staff. Staff are now able to access the most updated information in a timely manner to support the discharge of their duties.

5. To take advantage of the latest IT advancement, MD will participate in a pilot programme of the Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) led by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in next year. The development of the ERKS can further facilitate and strengthen record keeping and sharing of information in MD. In the longer term, MD intends to implement an Enterprise Information Management System which will help enhance operational efficiency and provide better services to the community.

6. To make an early move, MD is taking steps to enhance the Licensing and Survey of Local Vessel System which provides key support to plan approval and vessel survey. The system captures the information of all licensed local vessels, and improvements are being introduced so that workflow functions for plan approval and survey work will be incorporated into the system to facilitate monitoring of case progress. In addition, approved ship plans and survey reports will be converted into electronic images, and stored at the central repository, for instant retrieval and sharing amongst authorized staff.

(II) Internal Work Coordination and Referral

7. To enhance internal work coordination and referral, MD has introduced new institutional arrangements to deal with issues requiring the joint

efforts of different sections and units. For example, LVSS has devised guidelines and arranged briefings for the Harbour Patrol Section to facilitate patrolling officers to carry out the inspection of fire fighting and life saving appliances during their daily patrol of vessels. Arrangements have also been made for the two sections to liaise regularly on the type of suspected non-compliance cases discovered by one that need to be followed up by the other. Actions have also been taken to strengthen communication between frontline staff and the management. To provide a high level steer, a coordination panel chaired by the Deputy Director of Marine has been set up to resolve issues which could not be settled at the section level.

(III) Survey Guidelines and Recording

8. The Task Force noted that in the past MD field staff had performed their survey work based on their past experience or verbal advice from more senior colleagues. The Task Force also found room for improvement in the method of survey recording. To enhance effectiveness and efficiency, technical guidelines on various aspects, such as ship general arrangement plans, navigational lights and sound signal, measurement of vessel principal dimensions and tonnage and inclining experiment during ship survey, have been and will continue to be developed to provide better guidance for frontline staff and to reflect the latest best practice. Moreover, standard forms have been designed and put into use to ensure a consistent practice in recording ship survey results. The clear records and their consistent presentation will make it easier for vessel owners to carry out remedial actions, whilst facilitating the follow-up and re-surveying work of MD officers.

(IV) Performance Monitoring

9. With a view to enhancing the monitoring of the implementation of the review recommendations, new monthly and quarterly reports on the achievement of performance targets and other operation related indicators have been put in place. In addition, regular meetings between the management and the section heads have been arranged to devise action timelines, review performance achievements, discuss complicated issues and identify practical solutions.

(V) Strengthening Plan Approval Work

10. The Task Force found that the same team of LVSS staff had been required to perform both plan approval and survey duties. To improve the quality and efficiency of plan approval work, LVSS has established a designated team to handle plan approval work. It is noteworthy that MD's latest practice, under which separate teams are assigned to handle plan approval and survey work, is similar to that adopted by renowned classification societies which operate internationally.

(VI) Follow-up Actions of Marine Accident Investigation (MAI)

11. MAI is conducted by MD for every major marine traffic accident and recommendations will be made to help minimize the recurrence of similar incidents in future. To facilitate the follow-up of the recommendations, MD has introduced new workflow procedures with the use of standard forms to assist different sections in recording and reporting their follow-up actions for scrutiny by the senior management.

June 2015

**Steering Committee on Systemic Reform
of the Marine Department**

The Secretary for Transport and Housing (STH) has set up the “Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department” (Steering Committee) to advise and steer the Director of Marine, who shall be assisted by the Task Force on Reform and other units in the Marine Department to :

- (a) undertake a comprehensive review of the legislative compliance and administrative measures governing passenger safety and local vessel regulation and inspection matters, in the light of the recommendations in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Collision of Vessels near Lamma Island on 1 October 2012, drawing up detailed improvement proposals and seeing to their implementation;
- (b) review and re-engineer the business processes, operational procedures and supervisory structure in the Marine Department’s management to strengthen internal governance; and
- (c) map out a strategy to address the long-standing vacancy situation of the professional grades in the Department and to develop a manpower training programme.

The overall objective is to ensure that the Marine Department possesses the necessary capabilities to fully and properly discharge its functions and responsibilities.

The Steering Committee is chaired by STH, and two lay members, Ms Alice TAI Yuen-ying and Mr Irving KOO Yee-yin have been appointed.