

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting on 11 December 2015**

**Proposed overseas duty visit to Singapore  
by the Panel on Development**

**Purpose**

This paper seeks the permission of the House Committee for the Panel on Development ("the Panel") to conduct a duty visit to Singapore to study the country's experience in diversifying the sources of water supply, including the development of seawater desalination and water reclamation.

**Background**

2. The Panel monitors and examines Government policies and issues of public concern relating to lands, buildings, planning, water supply, Public Works Programme and other works matters.

3. The fresh water resources in Hong Kong come from the yield collected from local gathering ground and raw water imported from Dongjiang ("DJ") in Guangdong Province. However, these resources are facing various challenges, including increasing water demand, fluctuating local yield, climate change, as well as keen competition for DJ water resources due to the rapid economic development in the Pearl River Delta Region. According to the Administration, the water resources available in DJ and the yield collected from the local water gathering ground may not be able to meet the water demand of Hong Kong during a more severe drought with a return period of 1 in 100 years after 2020. To safeguard secure water supply in Hong Kong, the Administration is developing new water resources which are insensitive to climate change, such as seawater desalination and water reclamation.

4. With the support of the Panel and the endorsement of the Public Works Subcommittee, the Administration obtained the approval of the Finance Committee on 26 June 2015 for a funding of \$154.5 million in money-of-the-day prices for carrying out an investigation study review, design and associated site investigation works for developing the first stage of a desalination plant to be constructed in Tseung Kwan O. The review and the works, planned to start in late 2015 for completion in 2017, will be followed by site formation works, construction works and water main laying works, etc., at a later stage. The first stage of the plant is targeted for commissioning in 2020.

5. Having regard to the aforementioned development, the Panel considers it an opportune time to study the policy matters and technology related to seawater desalination in overseas cities. The Panel has requested the Secretariat to conduct research on the development of seawater desalination technology in selected places to facilitate the Panel's consideration of the matter. After deliberating the information given in the Information Notes<sup>1</sup> prepared by the Research Office at the meetings in October and November 2015, the Panel agreed that it should conduct a duty visit to Singapore during the Easter break in 2016 to study the country's experience in diversifying the sources of water supply, including the development of seawater desalination and water reclamation. Members consider that relevant knowledge of and updates on Singapore's experience would benefit the planning for water resources development in Hong Kong in the next five to 10 years.

### **Proposed duty visit by the Panel**

#### Objectives of the proposed duty visit

6. The principal objectives of the proposed duty visit are as follows --
- (a) to study Singapore's experience, policies and strategies on water supply management;
  - (b) to obtain first-hand information on the development, operation and cost-effectiveness of seawater desalination and water reclamation in Singapore; and

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<sup>1</sup> FS07/14-15 (Seawater Desalination Technologies), FS08/14-15 (Seawater Desalination in Israel), FS09/14-15 (Seawater Desalination in Singapore) and FS10/14-15 (Seawater Desalination in Australia)

- (c) to exchange views with the relevant parties involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies on water supply management.

7. In the light of the occurrence of the incidents in the past few months in which the drinking water at consumers' taps in some public housing estates, residential buildings, hospitals and schools was found to have a lead content exceeding the World Health Organization's standard, the Panel will take the opportunity of conducting the proposed visit to learn about the measures taken by the Singapore government to safeguard the quality of piped drinking water.

#### Visit programme

8. The proposed duty visit is scheduled to be conducted from 20 to 23 March 2016. An outline of the visit programme is in **Appendix I**. The detailed visit programme is being drawn up with the advice and assistance of the Consulate-General of the Republic of Singapore in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in Singapore.

#### Participants of the visit

9. Panel members and other Members have been invited to indicate whether they would join the visit. A total of eight Members have indicated interest. A list of the participants is in **Appendix II**.

10. The Panel will also invite officials from the relevant bureau/department to join the visit to facilitate Members' understanding of the relevant technologies and the applicability of Singapore's experience to Hong Kong. In line with the established practice, the expenses incurred by the government officials participating in the visit will be borne by the Government.

#### Funding arrangements

11. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit account ("ODV") of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organized by committees of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in one term in excess of the approved allocation has to be paid by the Member personally.

If by the end of a term there are unused balances in Members' ODV accounts, the funds available will be used to pay those Members who have expended more than their allocation, in proportion to their excess qualifying expenditure.

12. A ballpark estimate of the expenditure (including airfare, hotel accommodation, meals, in-town travelling and sundry expenses) to be incurred by each participating Member for the proposed duty visit is about \$13,000. A breakdown of the estimated expenditure is in **Appendix III**. The actual expenditure will vary subject to the final visit programme, and the airfare and hotel room rates at the time of confirmation.

### **Advice sought**

13. Rule 22(v) of the House Rules provides that should any Panel consider it necessary to undertake any activities outside Hong Kong under the name of the Panel of the Council, the prior permission of the House Committee shall be sought.

14. The House Committee's permission is sought for the Panel to conduct the overseas duty visit as proposed in the foregoing paragraphs.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
9 December 2015

## Appendix I

### Panel on Development

#### Proposed overseas duty visit to Singapore From 20 (Sunday) to 23 (Wednesday) March 2016

#### Outline of visit programme<sup>#</sup>

Date	Time	Programme
20 March (Sunday)	PM	Arrival in Singapore
21 March (Monday)	AM	Meetings with the following organizations -- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources of Singapore</li><li>● The Public Utilities Board</li><li>● The National Environment Agency</li><li>● The relevant committee(s) in the Singapore Parliament tasked to oversee matters related to water supply and quality</li><li>● Relevant non-government organizations</li></ul>
	PM	
22 March (Tuesday)	AM	
	PM	
23 March (Wednesday)	AM	Visits to the following facilities -- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● SingSpring Desalination Plant</li><li>● Tuaspring Desalination Plant</li><li>● NEWater plants</li></ul>
	PM	(Departing from Singapore for Hong Kong on the afternoon/evening of 23 March)

# A detailed visit programme is being drawn up with the advice and assistance of the Consulate-General of the Republic of Singapore in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in Singapore, subject to the confirmation of the receiving organizations.

**Panel on Development**

**Proposed overseas duty visit to Singapore**

**List of participants**  
(as at 9 December 2015)

Panel members

Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS (Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan

Other Member

Hon Kenneth LEUNG

## Appendix III

### Panel on Development

#### Proposed overseas duty visit to Singapore From 20 (Sunday) to 23 (Wednesday) March 2016

#### Tentative estimate of expenditure

#### Routing of visit: Hong Kong / Singapore / Hong Kong

#### Breakdown of estimated expenses

Item	Estimated expenses (per person) HK\$
1. Return air passage  Hong Kong / Singapore / Hong Kong	(Economy Class)  2,800 <sup>(Note 1)</sup>
2. Hotel accommodation (60% of the subsistence allowance <sup>(Note 2)</sup> )  Singapore (3 nights) (20 to 22 March 2016)	1,925 x 3 = 5,775
3. Meals and sundries (35% of the subsistence allowance <sup>(Notes 2 and 3)</sup> )	4,491
4. Travel insurance	200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,266</b>

#### NOTES:

1. Airfare quotation obtained in December 2015. Price inclusive of taxes and surcharges.
2. Subsistence allowance for Singapore: SGD578 per night  
(Exchange rate as at early December 2015: SGD1 = HK\$5.55)

3. As in-town transport will be provided by the Secretariat, the subsistence allowance payable is reduced by 5%. Other expenditures including hospitality, interpretation services and souvenirs will be charged against other votes of the Secretariat.
4. The actual expenditure will vary subject to the final visit programme, and the airfare and hotel room rates at the time of confirmation.