

**Reply to PAC further questions on MSW (letter dated 17 Dec 2015)****Recovery of municipal solid waste**

- (a) with reference to paragraph 3.39(b) and 3.40 of the Audit Report, the progress on the publishing of the number of housing estates and the corresponding population which have provided the Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) with statistics on recyclables collected and those not providing the statistics;**

**Reply:**

When we recruit housing estates and residential buildings to join the Source Separation of Waste Programme (SSW), apart from helping them to install recyclable separation bins and encouraging their residents to practice source separation, we would also request them to join the annual competition/ Commendation Scheme on SSW by returning monthly statistics on the amount of recyclables collected.

2. We have been publishing the list of all participating housing estates/ buildings on the Hong Kong Waste Reduction Website. We will also publish on the website the number of housing estates/ buildings and the corresponding population which have provided us with the statistics. As the two lists are publicly available, we do not consider it necessary to publish a separate list singling out those housing estates not providing the statistics under a voluntary programme which aims to incentivize participation. Nevertheless, we will strengthen efforts to encourage participating housing estates/buildings to provide us with the relevant statistics. The list of all participating housing estates/ buildings and the figures about estate number and population returning the statistics will be updated regularly. To facilitate the public reading the information, we will amend the website page layout and put the information on the “News & Events” page. We plan that the revised website page and the figures be ready and published starting from April 2016.

- (b) with reference to paragraph 3.39(c) and 3.40 of the Audit Report, the progress on computing and publishing the per-household-per-day quantities of recyclables collected by the**

**participating estates which have provided EPD with statistics on recyclables collected; and**

**Reply:**

As we have indicated above, we conduct the annual competition/ Commendation Scheme on SSW and assess the performance of the estates/ buildings by the returned monthly statistics on the amount of recyclables collected. The Commendation Scheme result, in a list of award-winning housing estates/ buildings, is also published on the Hong Kong Waste Reduction Website.

2. The average per-household-per-day quantities of recyclables collected by the estates/ buildings are reflected by the awards they have obtained, i.e. a participating estate or building would be given one of the following awards if its recovered domestic waste reached some thresholds:

- (i) Diamond Award — equal to or greater than 30 kg/household/month;
- (ii) Gold Award — equal to or greater than 22 but less than 30 kg/household/month;
- (iii) Silver Award — equal to or greater than 17 but less than 22 kg/household/month;
- (iv) Bronze Award — equal to or greater than 10 but less than 17 kg/household/month; and
- (v) Certificate of Merit — less than 10 kg/household/month;

3. We will consider ways to disclose the per-household-per-day quantities of recyclable waste collected by participating estates/buildings without diminishing the original intent of incentivizing good waste reduction behavior or affecting the overall participation rate of a voluntary programme.

4. As a first step, we will consider publishing regularly an “overall average per-household quantities of recyclables collected for the programme”. Together with the information on number of housing estates and corresponding population returning statistics, we plan to have the overall average per-household quantity figure be published

on the Hong Kong Waste Reduction Website, on the “News & Events” page, starting from April 2016.

### **Way forward**

- (c) Estimation of the remaining serviceable lives of the three landfills is one of the most important factors in considering the Administration’s funding applications for environmental projects, such as landfill extension, waste-to-energy facilities and organic waste treatment facilities, etc., by Legislative Council Members. As such, any variation in the estimation of the remaining serviceable lives of the three landfills will affect the overall waste management strategies and the priority and the timetable of implementing the relevant projects. In view of the inadequacies identified in the Audit Report on the estimation of the remaining serviceable lives of the three landfills and EPD’s latest estimation, whether the Administration would develop a new blueprint setting out the revised waste management strategies, in particular whether additional resources and manpower would be allocated to enhancing the reduction and recycling of MSW.**

### **Reply:**

The underlying thinking of the Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022 (the Blueprint) is to tackle waste problems from a resource re-circulation perspective. As part of waste reduction, we encourage the public to reuse and recycle as far as possible. Unavoidable waste will be turned into energy by modern technology while disposal at landfills will be the last resort. To measure the effectiveness of the comprehensive package of waste reduction measures set out in the Blueprint, we have adopted a single target of reducing the MSW waste disposal rate on a per capita basis by 40 percent by 2022. The accuracy and reliability of the waste statistics related to waste disposal is beyond doubt as they are based on factual weighbridge data recorded at entrances of waste treatment facilities. Other factors such as the fluctuations in waste recovery rates and the estimation of the serviceable lives of the three landfills would not diminish the impact of the various waste reduction measures, nor the waste reduction target set out in the Blueprint.

2. In the coming years, we will endeavour to implement the Blueprint and appeal to the public for support to achieve the targeted results. While the Blueprint has only been implemented for a few years, we have been constantly reviewing our waste management policies and initiatives to ensure they are responsive to new challenges posed by societal development, keep pace with public aspirations and are timely and adequate to address the needs of the industry. We would brief the EA panel on the progress and initial achievements of our waste management measures promulgated in the Blueprint in 2016 when the waste statistics for 2015 is available.