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22 January 2016

Mr Anthony CHU  
Clerk to the Public Accounts Committee  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central  
Hong Kong

Dear Mr CHU,

**Follow-up to Public Accounts Committee Reports No. 63 and No. 63A**

**New Civil Aviation Department Headquarters and  
Administration of the Air Traffic Control and Related Services**

Thank you for your two letters dated 8 January 2016 and 13 January 2016 respectively to the Secretary for Transport and Housing. I am authorised to reply on the Secretary's behalf.

Progress of Investigation

As announced by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on 9 December 2014, the Government has initiated investigation into the irregularities on the implementation of the new Civil Aviation Department (CAD) Headquarters project to establish whether if there is any room for procedural improvements apart from those recommended in the audit report.

An officer at Deputy Secretary level in the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) has been appointed as the Investigation Officer for the investigation. The investigation involves review of internal documents and external communication records covering different stages of the project. These include records, emails and meeting notes about facilities budgeting and planning, contractor engagement, monitoring of progress, change of schedule/facilities requirement, etc. The investigation is being conducted in a thorough manner, looking into a range of concerns from different perspectives. Based on the outcome of the investigation, the Government will take necessary follow-up actions, including appropriate administrative or disciplinary action, in accordance with civil service established procedures. We will report progress as and when appropriate.

### Progress of the New Air Traffic Management System Project

The new Air Traffic Management System (ATMS) must meet the stringent requirements on safety and performance, and there will be no compromise on these requirements under any circumstances, as emphasized by the Government on various occasions. CAD will ensure the safety, reliability and stability of the new ATMS before putting it into operation. CAD has been closely monitoring the contractor of the new ATMS to ensure that the implementation of the new system is executed in accordance with international aviation safety management standards and established Government procedures, as well as in compliance with CAD's requirements.

To this end, CAD has appointed an independent consultant to provide safety assessment of the ATMS to ensure that the contractor follows international quality standards in the process of system development. In parallel, THB also appointed its own independent consultant in November 2015 to advise the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the system readiness and staff readiness of the new system directly and independently.

As at 22 January 2016, 13 priority items, such as optimisation of the flight datablock display, fine-tuning of the flight level monitoring, require follow up. CAD is working with its contractors to resolve these issues. It is expected that the priority items will be fully addressed by March 2016. As for non-priority items, which include changing the intensity control of map lines, modifying supervisor window layout, etc. they do not affect the safe commissioning of the ATMS; CAD is working with the contractor to address these items in due course.

The phenomenon mentioned in your letter dated 13 January 2016 concerns the update rate of displayed aircraft positions on the radar screen. According to the guidelines issued in 2012 by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL), the position of an aircraft in the vicinity of the airport displayed on the radar screen should be updated at an interval of not more than 5 seconds, so as to allow the air traffic controller to timely acquire the latest aircraft position. In accordance with such guidelines, and with reference to the major ATC centres overseas (including Singapore, Australia and Thailand) which adopt update rates of 4 or 5 seconds, as well as having regard to CAD's operational needs, CAD has adopted an update rate of 4 seconds for the new ATMS. Further, in order to cater for all possible operational scenarios, the ATMS has been designed in such a way that the update rate can be adjusted through system database adaptation. CAD will regularly review and make suitable adjustments as and when necessary in line with international requirements and good practice.

Meanwhile, CAD is organizing intensive training sessions for Air Traffic Controllers and relevant staff to help them acquire the necessary competency and build up confidence to master the new ATMS. CAD is providing shadowing tests/operational trials whereby participants are able to mimic air traffic handling using the new ATMS. At the next stage scheduled in the second quarter of 2016, participants will be further allowed to operate the new ATMS to handle air traffic in a progressive and controlled manner, by conducting actual handling of real live air traffic using the new ATMS, to be supported by the existing ATC Centre.

To ensure that both the ATMS and staff are fully capable of the switch-over in mid-2016, both CAD and THB have each appointed their own independent consultants to assess the system readiness and human factor effectiveness, to provide an extra check point to ensure the successful launching of the new ATMS, with air traffic safety being the paramount concern.

According to current progress and subject to further review on system and staff readiness, CAD advises that the target to put the new ATMS into operational use remains mid-2016.

#### Claims from ATMS Contractors

So far, no claims from the ATMS contractor regarding the system have been received. At the same time, CAD has approached the Government Logistics Department and the Department of Justice for advice on pursuing

claims against the ATMS contractor on project delay so as to protect the Government's best interest. CAD is following up with the ATMS contractor accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monica Chen', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

( Miss Monica CHEN )  
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c. Director-General of Civil Aviation  
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury  
Director of Audit