# 立法會 Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)119/15-16(04)

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#### Panel on Transport Meeting on 6 November 2015

#### **Updated background brief on "Universal Accessibility" Programme**

#### **Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the "Universal Accessibility" ("UA") Programme and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by Legislative Council ("LegCo") Members on the subject.

#### **Background**

New policy for providing barrier-free access ("BFA") facilities

- 2. The Administration announced a new policy on UA in August 2012. The new policy aims at expanding the scope of the Administration's original programme to retrofit BFA facilities to existing public walkways (i.e. footbridges, elevated walkways and subways) ("the Original Programme") so as to facilitate access of the public. Since then, when considering retrofitting BFA facilities to existing or newly constructed public walkways, the Administration would treat *lifts* and *ramps* equally (unless the site conditions dictate one form over another), which is a change from the past practice which gives priority to ramps. As long as site conditions permit, the Administration will still consider installing lifts at walkways where there is already a standard ramp installed. After a lift has been installed, the Administration will evaluate whether to keep the ramp or demolish it for more spacious pavement or to make way for roadside greening.
- 3. When the Administration announced the new policy, the Administration at the same time invited members of the public to propose by the end of October 2012 locations of public walkways where they considered necessary to retrofit lifts. During the nomination period, the Administration received suggestions

involving over 250 suggested locations/public walkways within the ambit of the new policy<sup>1</sup> ("the Expanded Programme").

The Administration invited all the 18 District Councils ("DCs") to prioritize the new items in their districts proposed by the public in the first half of 2013. Each of DCs selected three public walkways (locations) for priority implementation, viz. a total of 54 public walkways (locations). Among them, some public walkways (locations) involve more than one structure number (item), resulting in a total of 57 priority items. The Administration has largely completed the technical feasibility studies and investigation works for these public walkways selected by DCs. The Administration also reported the study findings and preliminary proposals to the DCs in the first quarter of 2014. detailed design works for those items confirmed to be technically feasible and supported by DCs have commenced.

#### Funding applications

- 5. On 11 January 2013, the Finance Committee ("FC") approved the Administration's application for creating a new block allocation Subhead 6101TX - "Universal Accessibility Programme" under Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 706 – "Highways" to fund the implementation of the UA Programme. The Administration obtained allocations of \$2.449 million, \$187.272 million and \$567.696 million in 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 respectively to take forward the works projects under the UA Programme.
- 6. On 27 February 2015, FC further approved an allocation of \$803.98 million in 2015-2016 to implement the UA Programme.

#### Major views and concerns of Members

7. At the meetings of the Council, FC, Public Works Subcommittee and Panel on Transport ("the Panel") held in the Fifth LegCo, Members generally welcomed the Administration's new policy and urged the Administration to speed up the funding arrangements and works schedule. During the previous discussions, Members also expressed views on the design, specifications and facilities for the lifts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The list of suggested locations can be found at LC Paper No. PWSC21/12-13(01) issued by the Transport and Housing Bureau on 7 January 2013.

#### Progress of the UA Programme

- 8. A number of Members expressed concern over the schedule of implementing the UA Programme. In order to expedite the retrofitting works, they made several suggestions, such as streamlining some preparatory works of the projects and adopting the design-and-build approach in carrying out the UA Programme. In response, the Administration explained that it had all along been aiming at completing the works expeditiously. Suitable contract procurement arrangement would be devised for the concerned works.
- 9. Most of the 154 outstanding items under the Original Programme as mentioned in paragraph 2 are anticipated for progressive completion until 2018 as scheduled<sup>2</sup>. As at 28 February 2015, ten items have been completed, 74 items are under construction and 35 items are anticipated to commence in 2015-2016. The construction works for the remaining 35 items will commence as soon as possible upon completion of design and obtaining of support from DCs. Besides, most of the retrofitting works items under the Expanded Programme as mentioned in paragraph 3 are anticipated to be completed from 2017 to 2018 in phases. As at 28 February 2015, one priority item is under construction and 46 priority items are anticipated to commence in 2015-2016. The construction works for the remaining ten priority items will commence construction as soon as possible upon completion of their investigation and design works and obtaining of support from DCs.

#### Manpower supply

- 10. Noting that there were brain-drain and succession problems of construction and lifts workers, some Members were concerned about whether there was sufficient manpower to implement the proposals under the UA Programme and to carry out the maintenance works in the future. They therefore urged the Administration to ensure sufficient manpower for implementing the UA Programme on schedule, and the maintenance works thereafter.
- 11. In response, the Administration advised that based on the Highways Department's assessment, contractors should have sufficient manpower for retrofitting lifts at public walkways according to the target completion dates. In respect of the maintenance works, the Administration advised that the number of lifts to be installed under the UA Programme would be about 200 to 300, which was a small number in comparison with the current number of about

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Source: Replies to initial written questions raised by FC Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2015-16 on 1 April 2015 (Session No.: 12) (Question Serial No. 1554)

60 000 lifts in the territory. The Administration believed that this should be manageable to the trade as far as manpower was concerned.

#### Lift design and facilities

- 12. Some Members expressed concern about whether the provision of air-conditioning service was a standard provision for all lifts. They suggested that while the provision of air-conditioning service for lifts with heavy utilization was reasonable, the provision of such service for those with low usage rates was not environment-friendly. Also, they considered that the provision of air-conditioning service undesirable as there were times when the air-conditioners were out of order and the lifts became stuffy inside. they suggested providing natural ventilation for lifts. In response, the Administration advised that there was no set policy for providing air-conditioning service for lifts. Nevertheless, the Administration would take into consideration Members' concern on energy saving when working out the detailed design of lifts.
- 13. Apart from the provision of air-conditioning service, Members expressed that some facilitates like the elevator buttons and tactile guide paths were not designed to cater for those in need and the areas in the vicinity of some footbridges were not spacious enough to facilitate turning of wheelchairs. The Administration advised that when designing BFA standard, it had already consulted relevant stakeholders, including persons with disabilities. The Administration added that it would carry out technical feasibility study before commencing the design and construction works of each retrofitting project.

#### Follow-up to the proposals outside the ambit of the UA Programme

- 14. Some Members expressed concern about how the Administration would deal with those proposals falling outside the ambit of the UA Programme, in particular the locations of which were under the purview of the Hong Kong Housing Authority, the Link Real Estate Investment Trust and the MTR Corporation Limited. They also suggested expanding the scope of the UA Programme or even launching a separate programme to deal with those proposals which fell outside the ambit of the UA Programme.
- 15. In response, the Administration explained that the UA Programme aimed at retrofitting BFA facilities at public walkways under the purview of the Highways Department. As for other proposals which were outside the ambit of the UA Programme, the Administration had, after properly consolidating the relevant information, referred to the relevant organizations for consideration and following up. The Administration supplemented that the implementation of

those proposals might require the consent of the owners concerned.

#### Relevant motion/questions moved/raised at Council meetings

- 16. At the Council meeting on 21 November 2012, a motion on "Building an inclusive society for all", with a relevant part on the UA Programme, was passed. The wording of the motion is in **Appendix I**. Members urged the Administration to expeditiously implement the UA Programme to provide BFA, and actively respond to the suggestions put forward by members of the public from various districts on the construction of BFA.
- 17. During the Fifth LegCo, five questions relating to the UA Programme were raised at the Council meetings of 17 October 2012, 24 October 2012, 15 May 2013, 22 May 2013 and 16 April 2014. The hyperlinks to the questions and the Administration's responses, together with other relevant papers, are in **Appendix II**.

#### **Latest position**

18. The Administration plans to report on the latest progress of the UA Programme, and consult members on the proposal of the Administration to seek approval from FC for an allocation in 2016-2017 for the block allocation Subhead 6101TX – "Universal Accessibility Programme" under Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 706 – "Highways" at the Panel meeting to be held on 6 November 2015.

Council Business Division 4
<u>Legislative Council Secretariat</u>
29 October 2015

#### (Translation)

# Motion on "Building an inclusive society for all" moved by Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung at the Council meeting of 21 November 2012

# Motion as amended by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG, Hon WONG Kwok-hing, Hon CHAN Han-pan, Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki, Hon Emily LAU and Hon Michael TIEN

That, Hong Kong as an international city is advanced in economic development but falls behind in social development, often neglecting the basic rights of persons with disabilities; as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ('the Convention') has been in force in Hong Kong since 31 August 2008, this Council urges the Government to expeditiously establish an independent dedicated committee to promote, give effect to and monitor the SAR Government's full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention, and based on the World Health Organization's international standards on the definition of disabilities, to extend the scope of protection for persons with disabilities, review the definition of 'severely disabled' for Disability Allowance, and allow persons with disabilities under the age of 12 and those who do not lose 100% of their work capacity to equally enjoy the rights conferred under the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities; and on 9 November 2011, this Council passed a motion on 'Comprehensively reviewing the Disability Allowance scheme', to which the authorities responded on the same day that they expected to complete the review of the Disability Allowance ('DA') scheme in early 2012 and report comprehensively to the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services ('the Panel'); this Council urges the Government to expeditiously report the outcome of the Government's review on the DA scheme to the Panel, so that this Council can conduct timely follow-up discussions in order to be accountable to all persons with disabilities in Hong Kong; this Council also urges the Government:

- (a) to conduct studies on extending the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities to maxicabs and trams, etc.;
- (b) to increase barrier-free transport services such as the numbers of buses under Rehabus services and Easy-Access Transport Services, etc., so as to provide more point-to-point services for persons with disabilities;

- (c) to expeditiously implement the 'universal accessibility' programme to provide barrier-free access, and actively respond to the suggestions put forward by members of the public from various districts on the construction of barrier-free access;
- (d) to proactively promote barrier-free community facilities, improve community facilities, and provide owners' corporations of buildings with technical and funding support for improving the main entry and exit access of their buildings;
- (e) to formulate a five-year plan for community care, build additional residential care homes for persons with disabilities and increase the number of places, so as to shorten the waiting time for admission and access to services:
- (f) to put in place a 'subsidy for carers of persons with disabilities' to assist carers of persons with disabilities in alleviating their financial burdens and mitigate the impact on their livelihood due to their inability to go out to work;
- (g) to set up a quota system for employing persons with disabilities and provide tax concessions to encourage employers to employ more persons with disabilities; and
- (h) to proactively support rehabilitation organizations to establish social enterprises, so as to provide employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- (i) in respect of enhancing public education, to implement Article 8 of the Convention, raise the awareness of the community at large regarding persons with disabilities, and combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, so as to achieve the harmonious integration between persons with disabilities and able-bodied persons;
- (j) in respect of creating a barrier-free environment, to implement Article 9 of the Convention and examine the existing barrier-free measures in connection with buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;
- (k) to assist persons with disabilities in integrating into community life and implement Article 19 of the Convention, ensuring that public facilities

and various types of community services are responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities; and

- (l) in respect of supporting school children with specific learning difficulties, to implement Article 24 of the Convention, make reference to the special education policies of other countries and regions, and enact a 'special education law' to protect the learning needs of school children with specific learning difficulties; the Government should also strengthen teacher training, create a suitable learning environment, and ensure the integration of school children with specific learning difficulties into community life; and
- (m) to implement the recommendations relating to Hong Kong made by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities after it had examined the report submitted by China (including Hong Kong and Macao) on her implementation of the Convention during the session convened at Geneva in September this year; and
- (n) to expeditiously review the impact of the implementation of the minimum wage on the employment of persons with disabilities.

## "Universal Accessibility" Programme

### List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
17.10.2012	Council meeting	Hon TAM Yiu-chung raised a question on lift and escalator practitioners	http://www.info.gov.hk/g ia/general/201210/17/P2 01210170410.htm
24.10.2012	Council meeting	Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun raised a question on the new policy on "universal accessibility"	http://www.info.gov.hk/g ia/general/201210/24/P2 01210240306.htm
16.11.2012	Panel on Transport ("TP")	Administration's paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)153/12-13(03)  http://www.legco.gov.hk/ yr12-13/english/panels/tp /papers/tp1116cb1-153-3 -e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)307/12-13(01)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/panels/t p/papers/tp1116cb1-307- 1-e.pdf
		Fact sheet on the Universal Accessibility Programme and concerns expressed by different sectors of the community regarding the Programme	FS13/12-13 http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/chinese/sec/libr ary/1213fs13-c.pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of the meeting	CB(1)545/12-13  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/panels/t p/minutes/tp20121116.p df
21.11.2012	Council meeting	Motion on "Building an inclusive society for all"	http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/counmt g/motion/cm1121-m3-w ordings-e.pdf
		Progress report	http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/counmt g/motion/cm1121-m3-pr pt-e.pdf
17.12.2012	Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC")	Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund	PWSC(2012-13)39 http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/fc/pwsc /papers/p12-39e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information about the "Universal Accessibility" Programme	PWSC21/12-13(01)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/fc/pwsc /papers/pwsc1217pwsc-2 1-1-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC24/12-13  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr12-13/english/fc/pwsc /minutes/pwsc20121217. pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
18.1.2013	TP	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2013 Policy Address	CB(1)409/12-13(03)  http://www.legco.gov.hk/ yr12-13/english/panels/tp /papers/tp0118cb1-409-3 -e.pdf
15.5.2013	Council meeting	Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung raised a question on barrier-free access and facilities	http://www.info.gov.hk/g ia/general/201305/15/P2 01305150224.htm
22.5.2013	Council meeting	Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun raised a question on the provision of escalators and lifts at footbridges for public use	http://www.info.gov.hk/g ia/general/201305/22/P2 01305220582.htm
15.11.2013	TP	Administration's paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)268/13-14(05)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/t p/papers/tp1115cb1-268- 5-e.pdf
		Background brief on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)268/13-14(06)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/t p/papers/tp1115cb1-268- 6-e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information	CB(1)473/13-14(01)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/t p/papers/tp1115cb1-473- 1-e.pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)669/13-14  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/t p/minutes/tp20131115.p df
26.11.2013	Panel on Development	Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations for 2014-2015	CB(1)319/13-14(01)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/d ev/papers/devcb1-319-1- e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)742/13-14  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/d ev/minutes/dev20131126 .pdf
18.12.2013	PWSC	Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund	PWSC(2013-14)27  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/fc/pwsc /papers/p13-27e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC46/13-14 http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/fc/pwsc /minutes/pwsc20131218. pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
10.1.2014	Finance Committee	Recommendation of PWSC on Public Works Programme and capital subvention projects	FCR(2013-14)48  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/fc/fc/pa pers/f13-48e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	FC59/13-14  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/fc/fc/mi nutes/fc20140110.pdf
17.1.2014	TP	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2014 Policy Agenda	CB(1)702/13-14(05)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr13-14/english/panels/t p/papers/tp0117cb1-702- 5-e.pdf
16.4.2014	Council meeting	Hon WU Chi-wai raised a question on barrier-free access facilities	http://www.info.gov.hk/g ia/general/201404/16/P2 01404160423.htm
25.11.2014	TP	Administration's paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)238/14-15(03)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/t p/papers/tp20141125cb1- 238-3-e.pdf
		Updated background brief on "Universal Accessibility" Programme	CB(1)238/14-15(04)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/t p/papers/tp20141125cb1- 238-4-e.pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Administration's supplementary information	CB(4)568/14-15(01)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/t p/papers/tp20141125cb4- 568-1-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(4)437/14-15  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/t p/minutes/tp20141125.p df
25.11.2014	Panel on Development	Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations for 2015-2016	CB(1)241/14-15(03)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/d ev/papers/dev20141125c b1-241-3-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)547/14-15  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/d ev/minutes/dev20141125 .pdf
16.1.2015	TP	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2015 Policy Agenda	CB(4)349/14-15(04)  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/panels/t p/papers/tp20150116cb4- 349-4-e.pdf
10.2.2015	PWSC	Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund	PWSC(2014-15)52 http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/fc/pwsc /papers/p14-52e.pdf

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC127/14-15  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/fc/pwsc /minutes/pwsc20150210. pdf
27.2.2015	Finance Committee	Recommendation of PWSC on Public Works Programme and capital subvention projects	FCR(2014-15)51  http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/fc/fc/pa pers/f14-51e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	FC238/14-15 http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/fc/fc/mi nutes/fc20150227.pdf
1.4.2015	Finance Committee (Special meeting)	Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2015-16 (Session No.: 12) (Questions Serial Nos. 1506, 1554, 1623, 1722, 1723, 4864, 5307 and 6135)	http://www.legco.gov.hk /yr14-15/english/fc/fc/w_ q/thb-t-e.pdf

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