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20 January 2017

Ms Shirley CHAN
Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

By E-mail

Dear Ms Chan,

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development

Submission from the Tsuen Wan District Council

Thank you for your letter of 21 December 2016 relaying the concern of the Environmental and Health Affairs Committee of the Tsuen Wan District Council (TWDC) about the noise generated from the Rambler Channel Public Cargo Working Area (PCWA). I am authorised to reply as follows.

The Marine Department (MD) is concerned about the noise issue at the Rambler Channel PCWA. The noise is mainly generated from the handling of metal cargo. To ensure that the operation of the PCWA complies with the Noise Control Ordinance, the MD from time to time conducts measurements of noise level on site together with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD).

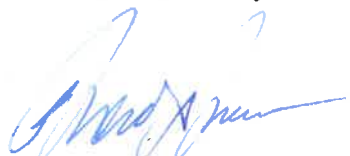
Although the noise levels at the PCWA did not exceed the statutory limit stipulated in the Noise Control Ordinance, the MD has put up a number of large banners carrying the advice "Handle Cargo Carefully To Reduce Noise Nuisance" (put in the Chinese wording) at prominent locations in the back-up area to remind workers to minimise noise, with a view to reducing the impact on residents. The MD also urges operators to adopt noise abatement measures, such as placing thick planks and rubber tyres on the ground as cushion, slowing down crane operations as far as practicable, and avoiding collision of cargoes in the air or discharging cargoes directly from goods vehicles to the ground, to minimise the generation of noise during operation. In addition, MD officers carry sound measuring devices with them during patrol at the PCWA to facilitate noise measurement any time. If excessive noise is detected, MD officers will warn the operator concerned on the spot.

The TWDC proposed amending the Port Control (Cargo Working Areas) Ordinance (Cap. 81) to shorten the operating hours of the Rambler Channel PCWA. Under the Ordinance, the Director of Marine may, by notice in writing, specify the hours during which cargo may be loaded or unloaded within a specified PCWA. At present, PCWA operators have to enter into a Berth Licence Agreement for the use of the berths. The Agreement has clearly stipulated the conditions for using the berths. One of the conditions allows the licensees to load or unload cargo at their berths from 7 am to 9 pm daily, except for the period from 5 pm on Lunar New Year's Eve to noon on the third day of Lunar New Year. Prohibiting the licensees from loading or unloading cargo on Sundays would shorten the overall operating hours of the PCWA, which not only goes against the spirit of contract, but will also affect the operation of Hong Kong Port and the related industries.

The MD appreciates the requests of the TWDC and residents. It is currently discussing with the licensees to enlist their support in avoiding noisy operations on Sundays as far as possible, so as to reduce the noise impact on the neighbourhood. It will also continue to work closely with the EPD to urge the licensees to take effective noise abatement measures to improve the situation.

Please contact the undersigned or Mr LI Kin-pong, General Manager (Acting) of the MD (tel. no.: 2852 4451), if you require further assistance.

Yours sincerely,



(Ivan SHUEN)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c. Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP (Fax no.: 2845 0176)