

For discussion
on 24 May 2021

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development

Update on the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the latest implementation of the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund (“MATF”) since the funding injection in May 2019.

BACKGROUND

2. With a commitment of \$100 million to be utilised for five years from 2014-15 to 2018-19, the MATF was established in April 2014 to achieve the strategic objective of enhancing Hong Kong’s position as an international maritime and aviation centre and addressing the manpower needs of the two industries. The objectives of the Fund are to –

- (a) attract more new blood to expand the pool of talent and address the issue of aging workforce;
- (b) diversify expertise of the workforce to meet manpower demands of the sectors, especially high value-added services; and
- (c) enhance the overall competency and professionalism of the sectors and in turn our global competitiveness as an international maritime and aviation centre.

Upon establishment, we have been implementing five on-going training and scholarship schemes. Further, we have introduced enhancement measures to those schemes, and launched new initiatives for the maritime and the aviation sectors under the MATF.

3. An additional injection of \$200 million was approved in May 2019 with a view to supporting the continued operation of the MATF, through possible enhancements to the schemes underway and more collaboration among the Government, tertiary institutions, professional organisations, stakeholders and employers in the two industries.

CONTROL AND REVIEW MECHANISM

4. Each scheme under the MATF has its own well-defined objectives, procedural guidelines, criteria for approving applications, reporting and auditing requirements as well as prescribed arrangements for making disbursements, etc. To ensure proper and effective use of the MATF, all schemes are subject to periodical reviews and control mechanism. Among others, the Manpower Development Committee of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board (“MDC”) and the Tripartite Taskforce on Manpower Training (Aviation) (“Tripartite Taskforce”), comprising members of the professionals, academia and stakeholders, have been set up to advise on the administration of respective maritime and aviation MATF schemes.

5. The MDC and the Tripartite Taskforce monitor the implementation progress of MATF schemes and the usage of funds by convening regular meetings or through considering written reports. Moreover, the MDC and Tripartite Taskforce would review the effectiveness of individual schemes vis-à-vis objectives of the MATF and consider possible enhancement measures. The above control mechanism will continue to safeguard the proper use of the MATF.

EXISTING SCHEMES

6. A total of 14 schemes are now operated under the MATF, of which nine are maritime-related, three aviation-related and the remaining two applicable to both the maritime and aviation sectors. The schemes are administered by the Transport and Housing Bureau (“THB”), the Marine Department (“MD”), the Vocational Training Committee (“VTC”), Hong Kong International Aviation Academy (“HKIAA”) and a number of local tertiary institutions (mainly for scholarship and overseas exchange sponsorship schemes). The MATF schemes under respective groups are listed below –

Maritime-related Schemes

- (a) Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme
- (b) Ship Repair Training Incentive Scheme

- (c) Local Vessel Trade Training Incentive Scheme
- (d) Hong Kong Nautical and Maritime Scholarship Scheme (*in collaboration with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University*)
- (e) The University of Hong Kong – Dalian Maritime University Academic Collaboration Scheme
- (f) The University of Hong Kong – Shanghai Maritime University Academic Collaboration Scheme
- (g) Hong Kong Maritime and Logistics Scholarship Scheme (*in collaboration with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University*)
- (h) Overseas Exchange Sponsorship Scheme
- (i) Local Vessel Competency Enhancement Scheme [*New scheme*]

Aviation-related Schemes

- (j) Partial Tuition Refund Scheme for the Specialised Aircraft Maintenance Programme
- (k) Hong Kong Aviation Scholarship Scheme (*in collaboration with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (“PolyU”), Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (“HKUST”), HKIAA and Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi)*)
- (l) Aviation Operations Training Incentive Scheme [*New scheme*]

Schemes applicable to both sectors

- (m) Professional Training and Examination Refund Scheme
- (n) Maritime and Aviation Internship Scheme

7. Details and implementation progress of the above schemes are set out at **Annex**. Since its establishment, the MATF has been providing funding support for various training incentives, subsidy schemes and scholarship programmes for the maritime and aviation industries. By end-March 2021, the MATF has benefitted more than 11 820 students and in-service practitioners, with around 60% from the maritime sector and 40% from the aviation side.

NEW INITIATIVES AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

8. Subsequent to the funding injection in May 2019, we have made a number of enhancements to existing schemes and introduced new initiatives which are summarized in paragraphs 9 to 20 below.

New Initiatives

Local Vessel Competency Enhancement Scheme (“LVCES”)

9. On the side of maritime, the local vessel trade has all along been facing difficulties in recruiting coxswains, engine operators and deck/engine ratings to serve on board. In response to repeated calls for support or incentive to encourage in-service practitioners to take examinations for higher qualifications, the Government launched the LVCES under the MATF by granting a one-off financial incentive of \$12,000 to any Grade 3 Local Certificate of Competency (“CoC”) holder who passes the examination and successfully obtains the relevant Grade 2 CoC. With the higher professional qualifications, they can perform in a greater variety of jobs in the industry and will be in a better position to move up the career ladder. The scheme also helps alleviate the manpower shortage of qualified local coxswains and engine operators to operate vessels with overall length of 16.5m or above which require a qualification beyond Grade 3 CoC. Since the rolling out of the scheme in December 2019, 155 in-service practitioners have benefitted from the new scheme.

Aviation Operations Training Incentive Scheme (“AOTIS”)

10. To further demonstrate the Government’s support to aviation manpower development and planning, a new scheme AOTIS under the MATF was launched in June 2019 to groom and nurture young people in developing a career in the aviation industry. The AOTIS is delivered under the principle of tripartite collaboration where the Government, the HKIAA and the aviation industry all play a part. Specifically, the HKIAA developed a full-time Diploma in Aviation Operations, integrating structured learning and on-the-job training for Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (“HKDSE”) graduates. Students will study foundation courses in a classroom setting at the HKIAA during the first month (the full-time study period), learning the basic knowledge of work requirements of the airport and the aviation industry. They will then take up placement provided by the aviation industry for a period of 12 months whilst studying for two full days at the HKIAA in each of the 12 months (the study-cum-work period). The 13-month programme is accredited as Level 3 under the Qualifications Framework in Hong Kong. Apart from providing placement positions, the aviation industry provides each student with a guaranteed minimum monthly salary of \$7,000 during the study-cum-work period for a maximum of 12 months and a one-off study allowance of \$24,000. On top of the above, the Government provides each student with a monthly incentive allowance of \$2,000 through the MATF also during the study-cum-work period for a maximum of 12 months.

Nurture of maritime professionals and specialists

11. For the effective utilisation of funds, the MATF would conclude two maritime law-related schemes, namely “Maritime Law Scholarship Scheme” and

the “Hong Kong Maritime Law Scholarship Scheme”, respectively administered by the University of Hong Kong (“HKU”) and the City University of Hong Kong (“CityU”). The two schemes provide scholarships to law students who would undertake to work in the maritime sector for one year after graduation. However, it was found that both universities have encountered difficulties in recruiting suitable teaching staff in maritime law on the one hand, law students are hesitated to engage a specialised stream in early stage of their legal professional development on the other hand. The MATF hence plan to redeploy the resources to other initiatives.

12. To support and enhance the manpower development for high value-added maritime services in Hong Kong, such as maritime lawyers and in particular those not readily available in the job markets or qualifications which are not locally available, two new schemes, namely “Maritime Services Traineeship Scheme” and “Maritime Specialist Scholarship Scheme”, are being contemplated under the MATF.

13. The main objective of the Maritime Services Traineeship Scheme is to incentivise the maritime user companies or associations to provide bespoke traineeship for young recruits, through MATF partial subsidy, in designated maritime-related regimes for adding values to their businesses and ultimately further developing the maritime services of Hong Kong and enhancing Hong Kong’s status as an International Maritime Centre. Having considered that the legal profession has already adopted an established and structured training mechanism which is regulated by professional bodies such as the Law Society of Hong Kong and the Bar Council, we propose to designate maritime legal profession as the first regime for launching the Scheme on a pilot basis. Subject to successful implementation of the scheme, traineeships in other high value-added service sectors, like marine insurance underwriter, shipbroker, average adjuster and marine surveyor, etc. may subsequently be introduced. It is believed that with MATF subsidy, the maritime services companies or associations may recruit more competitive job-seekers and the general competencies of the maritime services sector will also be enhanced by the training so provided under the Scheme.

14. At present, there is only one publicly funded taught postgraduate programme on maritime or logistics which is inadequate to cover the vast variety of maritime professions that are needed by Hong Kong. The proposed Maritime Specialist Scholarship Scheme aims to enlarge and enrich the talent pool of maritime professional specialists of Hong Kong by encouraging young professionals through scholarships to pursue post-graduate maritime degrees in leading and established non-local universities, with specialties that are not offered in Hong Kong, for further advancement. To meet the training needs of the

industry, the Secretariat will work with the MDC in devising the selection criteria and course requirements for devising a list of non-local degree courses for this scheme. Similar to other MATF scholarship schemes, beneficiaries have to undertake to work in Hong Kong maritime-related positions for a period of 12 consecutive months after obtaining the sponsored qualification, otherwise have to refund MATF the entire scholarship amount.

New blood for local vessels trade

15. In late 2020, the MATF provided a sponsorship to Hong Kong Sea School¹ (“HKSS”) for developing a training programme for Maritime Studies, which will be made a compulsory subject for all its students from Secondary 1 through Secondary 6. To make graduates work-ready in the local vessel trade, the revised curriculum aims at enabling students to acquire the necessary skills and actual shipboard experience, as well as the eligibility to sit for the Coxswain Grade 3 Certificate Examination, through a well-mixed of theory and practical training programme. With a view to providing a steady and sustainable supply of competent new blood to the local vessel trade, the THB, in consultation with the MDC, will consider further support to be provided under MATF to facilitate the implementation of the new training programme being developed by HKSS.

Enhancement Measures

Professional Training and Examination Refund Scheme (“ProTERS”)

16. The ProTERS aims to encourage in-service practitioners of both sectors to pursue continuous career development through taking training courses and obtaining professional qualifications. Successful applicants would be refunded 80% of the fees for completing / passing the pre-approved courses / examinations, subject to a cap which has been set at the level of \$18,000 per person since the inception of the Scheme in 2014. There has been call from both industries for an increase in the refund ceiling of the ProTERS so as to provide better support to the in-service practitioners to acquire qualifications and enhance professional competency. Moreover, to alleviate manpower shortage in the two sectors, the industries have been urging to include practitioners-to-be as eligible applicants for the ProTERS so that those who plan to equip themselves with the relevant knowledge through training for entering the industries may also benefit from the Scheme.

¹ HKSS is an aided secondary school for boys offering full boarding service and academic curriculum leading to the HKDSE. With a mission to nurture the students in pursuing maritime career since its inception in 1946, HKSS has been providing students with maritime studies curriculum though elective for senior students.

17. Noting that many courses / examinations in maritime and aviation industries are highly specific or professional in nature and having examined the fee level, the refund ceiling was raised from \$18,000 to \$30,000 with a view to incentivising practitioners in the two industries to pursue career development and professional advancements. With regard to the call for including practitioners-to-be as eligible applicants, it is considered that the expanded eligibility can help attract new blood and reduce attrition rate as persons who have acquired some basic knowledge about the industry are found to have a lower turnover and/or may have advantages in job-seeking. After extending the eligibility, practitioners-to-be are eligible for the Scheme provided that they are employed in the respective sectors at the time of application, which should be made within four months after completing / passing the pre-approved course / examination².

Maritime and Aviation Internship Scheme (“MAIS”)

18. The MAIS aims to offer the young generation an early exposure to the wide spectrum of career opportunities in the maritime and aviation industries so as to encourage them to pursue career in the two industries after graduation. Having regard to the feedback of the industries, following the fund injection in 2019, the subsidy level for internship under the MAIS has been adjusted from \$6,000 to \$7,000 since the Summer programme in 2019. MATF covers up to 75% of the intern’s monthly honorarium, or \$7,000, whichever is lower, for an internship period of up to three months. The revised rates are much welcome by both the maritime and aviation sectors.

Partial Tuition Refund Scheme for the Specialised Aircraft Maintenance Programme (“Refund Scheme”)

19. The Refund Scheme was launched in 2014 to encourage young people to choose specialised aircraft maintenance programmes offered by the VTC, namely the Higher Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering or the Diploma in Vocational Education (Aircraft Maintenance), and join the aircraft maintenance industry after graduation. The Refund Scheme offers a 50% refund of the total tuition fee, subject to a certain cap, paid by the student for the programme. To provide better financial incentive to students taking the specialized programmes especially the Higher Diploma programme, the refund ceiling per applicant under the Refund Scheme has been adjusted from \$30,000 to \$50,000 since October 2019.

² On the aviation side, the enhancement measures concerning the refund ceiling and eligibility have been put in place since April 2021 and September 2020 respectively.

Hong Kong Aviation Scholarship Scheme (“HKASS”)

20. HKASS aims to encourage continuous professional enhancement for the aviation sector by providing full scholarships to selected students to complete aviation-related degree or higher degree programmes. There were only four postgraduate/undergraduate programmes covered under the HKASS when the Scheme was introduced in 2015³. In the academic years of 2016/17 and 2018/19, six more bachelor and master programmes were included under the Scheme⁴. After the funding injection, another bachelor programme offered by the THEi has further been included under the Scheme⁵.

PROMOTION INITIATIVES

21. Apart from supporting young people and in-service practitioners to receive training and enhance competency, part of the MATF was set aside to support industry associations to organise promotional and outreaching programmes to raise the awareness and touch up the understanding of the maritime and aviation sectors among young people and members of the general public. Up to end-March 2021, MATF has provided sponsorships of around \$7 million to different industry associations to host promotional and publicity initiatives for the two industries. These sponsored events had been attended by around 39 800 participants so far.

SUPPORT MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

22. The global aviation industry and the maritime industry have both been severely hit by COVID-19 since early 2020. We see a need for more support measures to the practitioners of the two industries lest the manpower development of the two industries in the longer run would be affected. With the endorsement of the Tripartite Taskforce, we have implemented support measures for three of the MATF schemes, viz. Hong Kong Aviation Scholarship Scheme, the Refund Scheme and the AOTIS since September 2020. The measures provided for

³ Four programmes include (1) Master of Science (MSc) in Mechanical Engineering (Aeronautical Engineering); (2) MSc in Mechanical Engineering (Aviation), and (3) Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) in Air Transport Engineering offered by PolyU, and (4) BEng in Aerospace Engineering offered by HKUST.

⁴ Six new programmes include (1) BEng in Aviation Engineering; (2) Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Management and Logistics; (3) Bachelor of Science in Aviation Operation and System offered by PolyU; (4) MSc in Aeronautical Engineering; and (5) MSc in International Air Transport Operations Management offered by HKUST; as well as (6) Advanced Master in Air Transport Management offered by HKIAA.

⁵ The new programme refers to the BEng in Aircraft Engineering offered by THEi.

extension of job acquisition time period and allowed continuous education in lieu of employment given that the pandemic has seriously affected the opportunities of securing an employment in the sector. We will continue to engage the academia and industry and consider appropriate support measures under the respective funding schemes.

23. With the prolonged impact of COVID-19 on the maritime and aviation industries, we will soon put in place another support measure under the ProTERS to incentivise the industry practitioners to upgrade their skills for self-enhancement during the economic downturn. The eligibility of the Scheme will be expanded to cover those practitioners who have left their job in respective sector during the pandemic period but subsequently re-join the industry. These re-joining practitioners will be eligible for seeking reimbursement of fees of courses / examinations completed during the relevant period. This will not only help preserve the talent pool for the various maritime-related or aviation-related services, but also nurture higher quality practitioners to support the recovery of the maritime and aviation sectors after the pandemic.

FINANCIAL POSITION

24. Funding under the MATF is used flexibly between the maritime and aviation sectors to support the various incentive, scholarship and internship schemes as well as the promotion initiatives. In 2021-22, the estimated expenditure of the MATF is about \$30.8 million. The expenditure and balance of the MATF since 2014 are set out below for reference –

Year	Expenditure (\$million)	Balance (\$million)
2014-15	5.58	94.42
2015-16	8.61	85.81
2016-17	12.27	73.54
2017-18	22.08	51.46
2018-19	23.05	28.41
2019-20 Injection		200
2019-20	26.31	202.10
2020-21	23.30	178.80

ADVICE SOUGHT

25. Members are invited to note the latest progress of the MATF as set out in the paper.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
May 2021**

**Details and Implementation Progress
of the 14 Existing MATF Schemes**

The implementation progress of each funding scheme as well as enhancement measures made in individual scheme are summarised in the ensuing paragraphs.

(a) Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme (“SGTIS”)

2. SGTIS was launched in 2004 to entice more local young people to take up sea-going training and to become qualified to fill a wide range of marine and shore-based positions in the maritime and shipping industry. The Scheme, which came under MATF since April 2014, offers a monthly subsidy of \$6,000 to deck cadets on ocean-going vessels (“OGVs”) for a maximum period of 18 months; or to engine room cadets for a maximum period of 12 months.

3. To strengthen support for OGVs deck cadet and engineering cadet beneficiaries under the Scheme, a special monthly financial subsidy to these cadets has been introduced since January 2019. The special subsidy covers two parts, including a monthly subsidy of \$3,000 during the period while the applicants are preparing for the professional examinations ashore after their completion of cadetship for up to six months, and a monthly subsidy of \$6,000 during the period when they return to OGVs after having acquired the required professional qualification but are yet to be promoted to officer rank for a maximum of six months (whichever is shorter). Up to end-March 2021, a total of 317 cadets have received subsidy under the Scheme, involving a total funding of \$16.78 million.

(b) Ship Repair Training Incentive Scheme (“SRTIS”)

4. SRTIS was first introduced in 2006 and later came under MATF in April 2014. With an objective to attract new blood to join the ship repair industry, the Scheme offered a monthly subsidy for a maximum period of 36 months to eligible graduates of the VTC who have enrolled for apprenticeship in the ship repair industry. To effectively attract people to join the sector given the relatively strenuous working conditions and physically demanding nature of the ship repair industry, the monthly subsidy was adjusted upwards from \$1,500 to \$3,000 per apprentice with effect from 1 April 2018. Since the launch of MATF in 2014, a total of 50 apprentices had benefitted from the Scheme. The total amount of subsidy granted under the MATF is about \$1.6 million¹

¹ Since there is still outstanding balance of the grant first approved for the SRTIS when it came under MATF in April 2014, MATF funds are deployed not until February 2019.

(c) Local Vessel Trade Training Incentive Scheme (“LVTTIS”)

5. The Scheme was introduced in 2014 to attract more young people to join the local vessel trade. Through the provision of an allowance of up to \$30,000 per person to those who are newly employed by the local vessel trade, the Scheme aims to provide incentive to them to acquire their first professional qualification as coxswains or engine room operators on local vessels. To encourage local vessel employees to stay on the job until acquiring the Grade 3 Local Certificate of Competency (“CoC”) in a year’s time, \$12,000 of the \$30,000 is set aside for claiming by the employees upon their passage of the relevant CoC examinations for Coxswain/Engine Operator. As at end-March 2021, 181 applications for the allowance, involving \$4.24 million, have been approved under the Scheme.

(d) Hong Kong Nautical and Maritime Scholarship Scheme

6. To encourage more students with good academic results to enroll in the International Shipping and Transport Logistics (“ISTL”) Undergraduate Programme of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (“PolyU”)² and to attract university graduates to consider a seafaring career, the Government rolled out the Scheme in September 2017 under MATF. It consists of two prongs, namely the “Seafaring Scholarship” which encourages students to enroll in nautical courses to pursue a seafaring career, and the “Maritime Scholarship” which attracts students with good results in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination to enroll in the ISTL Undergraduate Programme. Recipients of “Maritime Scholarship” have to undertake to work full-time in the maritime industry for at least one year after graduation, whereas “Seafaring Scholarship” recipients have to work on board OGVs for 18 months upon graduation. The Scheme aims to help build a local pool of seafarers and maritime professionals, in particular degree-holding talents, for the maritime industry. So far, 17 students (12 for seafaring and five for maritime scholarship) were awarded the scholarships under the Scheme, involving a total funding of around \$1.4 million.

(e) HKU – Dalian Maritime University (“DMU”) Academic Collaboration Scheme

7. Implemented since 2008 with a view to nurturing more professionals well-versed in the Hong Kong and Mainland legal systems as well as the specialised field of maritime law, the Scheme provides scholarship to selected students of DMU to undertake the Master of Common Law course at the HKU. Scholarship recipients have to undertake to work in a maritime-related field in

² Currently, ISTL Programme of PolyU is the only undergraduate programme in Hong Kong providing training in international shipping and logistics.

Hong Kong for at least one year upon successful completion of the programme. As at end-March 2021, a total of 27 DMU students have received scholarships from MATF under the Scheme.

8. Separately, in-service practitioners in the maritime law field in Hong Kong as well as law students of HKU may also apply for sponsorship to undertake summer programmes at DMU and professional seminars conducted by DMU teaching personnel at HKU. Since the launch of MATF in 2014, over 280 students and in-service practitioners have participated in these programmes and seminars. A total funding of about \$5.17 million has been expended for the Scheme.

(f) HKU – Shanghai Maritime University (“SMU”) Academic Collaboration Scheme

9. The Collaboration Scheme was launched in 2017 between HKU and SMU having regard to the good response of the collaboration with DMU. Under the Scheme, scholarships are provided to selected students of SMU who undertake the Master of Common Law course at the HKU. Scholarship recipients have to undertake to work in a maritime-related field in Hong Kong for at least one year upon successful completion of the programme. As at end-March 2021, 11 students have been awarded the scholarships amounting to \$2.03 million.

(g) Hong Kong Maritime and Logistics Scholarship Scheme

10. To attract local, Mainland and overseas talents to undertake maritime studies in Hong Kong who might stay and serve the Hong Kong maritime sector, the Government launched the Scheme in 2007 to provide scholarships to selected local, Mainland or overseas students to study the Master of Science in the ISTL programme of the PolyU. Scholarship recipients have to undertake to work in the maritime-related field in Hong Kong for at least one year upon successful completion of the programme. As at end-March 2021, 65 students have been awarded the scholarships with total funding of \$12.15 million.

(h) Overseas Exchange Sponsorship Scheme

11. To provide students with the opportunity to learn more about the maritime industry so as to attract them to join the maritime sector upon graduation, the Government launched the Scheme in 2015 to provide financial support to undergraduate (\$30,000) or postgraduate (\$50,000) students of selected maritime-related disciplines in PolyU, CityU, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to attend one semester of credit-bearing maritime-related overseas exchange courses. As at end-March 2021, over 60 students have received sponsorships of a total amount of \$2.04 million under the Scheme.

(i) Local Vessel Competency Enhancement Scheme (“LVCES”)

12. To encourage in-service practitioners to take examinations for higher qualifications with a view to alleviating the manpower shortage problem in the local vessel trade sector, the LVCES was rolled out in December 2019 to encourage more local Coxswain/Engine Operator Grade 3 Certificate of Competency (“CoC”) holders to acquire Grade 2 CoC qualification. A one-off financial incentive of \$12,000 will be granted to any Grade 3 CoC holder who passes the examination and successfully obtains the relevant Grade 2 CoC. Since the launch of the Scheme, a total of 155 applications have been approved with total funding of \$1.86 million.

(j) Partial Tuition Refund Scheme for the Specialised Aircraft Maintenance Programme

13. Launched in 2014, the Scheme aims to encourage young people to choose specialised aircraft maintenance programmes and join the aircraft maintenance industry after graduation. Eligible applicants undertaking the Higher Diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering or Diploma in Vocational Education (Aircraft Maintenance) offered by the VTC and joining the aircraft maintenance industry after graduation are refunded 50% of the total tuition fee, subject to a cap of \$50,000 which was adjusted with effect from October 2019. As at end-March 2021, over 290 applicants have successfully applied partial tuition refund totaling about \$5.26 million under the Scheme.

(k) Hong Kong Aviation Scholarship Scheme

14. To encourage the continuing professional enhancement of the aviation sector, the Scholarship Scheme which has been introduced since 2015 aims to provide scholarships, capped at \$100,000, to selected students who have completed aviation-related degree or higher degree programmes. As of academic year of 2020/21, eleven master and bachelor programmes offered by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the Hong Kong International Aviation Academy (“HKIAA”) and the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong have been identified as eligible for the scholarship scheme. As at end-March 2021, 90 students were awarded the scholarship totaling \$8.35 million.

(l) Aviation Operations Training Incentive Scheme (“AOTIS”)

15. In order to encourage young people to receive training on aviation operations with a view to developing their future careers in the aviation industry,

the AOTIS has been rolled out since June 2019. Registered students of the Diploma in Aviation Operations conducted by the HKIAA will receive a monthly incentive allowance of \$2,000 during the study-cum-work period for a maximum of 12 months from the MATF. HKIAA provides structured classroom training at the beginning to equip students with the basic knowledge of the work at the airport and in the aviation industry and provide guidance and support throughout the programme. The aviation industry, apart from providing placement positions, also provides each student with (i) a guaranteed minimum monthly salary of \$7,000 during the study-cum-work period for a maximum of 12 months; and (ii) a total amount of study allowance of \$24,000. As at end-March 2021, a total of 111 students have been benefitted from the Scheme, involving a total funding of \$2.54 million.

(m) Professional Training and Examination Refund Scheme (“ProTERS”)

16. Launched in 2014, the ProTERS aims to encourage practitioners in both maritime and aviation sectors to pursue continuous career development through taking approved training courses and obtaining professional qualifications. On the aviation side, apart from in-service practitioners, those about to join the industry have become eligible to make an application for the courses / examinations taken on or after 1 September 2020. Currently over 150 and 230 approved courses or examinations are included in the two lists of pre-approved maritime- and aviation-related courses / examinations respectively under the ProTERS. Course providers and examination authorities can apply for inclusion of courses / examinations into the pre-approved lists, subject to the endorsement of the Steering Group of MDC and the Tripartite Taskforce. There are prescribed criteria to determine eligible courses or examinations to be included under the ProTERS.

17. Successful applicants are refunded 80% of the fees after satisfactory completion of an approved course or passing an approved professional examination. Each individual may apply for fee reimbursement for courses and examinations taken subject to a cap of \$18,000 per applicant. The refund ceiling on the aviation side has been raised to \$30,000 since April 2021. As at end-March 2021, the ProTERS has disbursed about \$18 million to over 7 300 applicants.

(n) Maritime and Aviation Internship Scheme (“MAIS”)

18. To provide early exposure for the students and young people in Hong Kong to the wide spectrum of career opportunities in the maritime and aviation sectors, MAIS provides internship opportunities for students to encourage them to pursue careers in the maritime and aviation industries after graduation. Through the tripartite collaboration among the Government, industries and

academic institutions, MATF will cover up to 75% of the intern's monthly honorarium or \$7,000 (raised from \$6,000 since May 2019), whichever is lower, for an internship period of up to three months. Having considered the feedback of the aviation industry, the eligibility of the Scheme has been further extended from tertiary students to secondary six school-leavers on the aviation side since 2017. Besides, the list of institutions joining the Scheme was also expanded to cover self-financing institutions on top of UGC-funded institutions and VTC since 2015.

19. Since the launch of Scheme in 2014, over 2 800 students have participated in the Scheme and worked as interns in some 140 companies in the two industries with a total expenditure of about \$31.74 million as of end-March 2021.