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11 February 2021

Ms Shirley CHAN  
Clerk to Panel on Economic Development  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms CHAN,

**Panel on Economic Development**  
**Letter from Hon Steven HO Chun-yin**  
**dated 20 January 2021**

Thank you for your letter of 25 January 2021 enclosing the letter from Hon Steven HO Chun-yin to the Chairman of the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development dated 20 January 2021. Having consulted the Marine Department, our response to the questions raised by the Hon HO on typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages is set out below.

**Supply and Demand of Sheltered Spaces in Hong Kong**

The Government is committed to ensuring that sufficient sheltered spaces are provided within the Hong Kong waters for local vessels to take refuge during typhoons or inclement weather, so as to safeguard the safety of vessels and their crew members. Subject to no obstruction being made to marine traffic, vessel owners are free to choose a safe and suitable space in a typhoon shelter for mooring based on the size and draft of their vessel.

There are currently 14 typhoon shelters<sup>1</sup> located in different parts of the Hong Kong waters, providing a total of 419 hectares of sheltered space for use by local and small visiting vessels.

It is the established policy of the Government to provide sheltered spaces on a territory-wide basis and assess the demand of typhoon shelters in a holistic approach. Based on the Marine Department's Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements released in 2017, the overall territory-wide supply of sheltered space from now till 2030 can meet the demand from local vessels. Besides, according to the Marine Department's records, among the 14 typhoon shelters in Hong Kong, three (namely Rambler Channel, To Kwa Wan and Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelters) reached their full occupancy when super typhoon Mangkhut hit Hong Kong and tropical cyclone warning signal No. 8 was hoisted. There were still sheltered spaces available for use in the remaining 11 typhoon shelters, including the Aberdeen West, Cheung Chau and Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelters which were more frequently used by fishing vessels, as well as the Yim Tin Tsai Typhoon Shelter in Sai Kung. Having regard to the aforementioned utilisation, there are sufficient sheltered spaces across the territory in Hong Kong for local vessels to take refuge during typhoons.

The Marine Department is now conducting a new round of assessment of sheltered space requirements. The assessment will consider the number of sheltered spaces, the trends in the number and size of vessels, the latest pattern of sheltering during typhoons as well as the needs of the trade. During the assessment, we will take into account the suggestions made by the trade and all relevant factors which may have implications on the sheltered spaces, including the regional development and major marine works.

### **Management of Typhoon Shelters**

During normal days, typhoon shelters are open to all classes of local vessels on a first-come-first-served basis, except for vessels carrying dangerous goods or exceeding the permitted lengths overall of typhoon shelters. Owing to the specific modus operandi of various classes of local vessels, vessels of the same class are more concentrated in certain typhoon shelters. For example, fishing vessels are more inclined to berth in Tuen

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<sup>1</sup> The 14 gazetted typhoon shelters include Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter, Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter, Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter, Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter, Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelter, Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter, New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter, Rambler Channel Typhoon Shelter, Sam Ka Tsuen Typhoon Shelter, Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter, Shuen Wan Typhoon Shelter, To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter, Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter and Yim Tin Tsai Typhoon Shelter.

Mun and Aberdeen Typhoon Shelters, whereas dumb lighters prefer New Yau Ma Tei and To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelters. Even in the same typhoon shelter, different classes of vessels cluster in their respective areas out of habit or because of their modus operandi.

In recent years, with the increasing number of local vessels, there has been growing demand among different classes of local vessels for berthing spaces within typhoon shelters. To minimise disputes and compensation claims caused by close berthing by vessels of different classes, members of the fisheries trade in the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter have reflected their wishes to the Government for designating different berthing areas within the typhoon shelter for operational vessels and pleasure vessels respectively.

In the light of the above, the Secretary for Transport and Housing, together with the Secretary for Food and Health and Hon Steven HO visited the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter in November 2020 so as to learn about the actual berthing situation of vessels in that typhoon shelter. Subsequently, the Marine Department followed up closely and studied the proposal of designating different berthing areas in the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter for different vessels. Nevertheless, meetings between the Marine Department and fisheries organisations were postponed due to the pandemic. The Transport and Housing Bureau, the Marine Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department later met with Hon Steven HO's Office and the representatives of the Hong Kong Fishermen Consortium on 1 February 2021 to hear the concerns and opinions of members of the fisheries trade so as to formulate appropriate and practical plans. Having listened to the opinions of the trade and making reference to the experience of designating different berthing areas for different classes of vessels in the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter, the Government initially plans to designate the Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter as a non-pleasure vessel berthing area for the exclusive berthing of local vessels used for operations (Classes I to III) while the Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter will be designated for the berthing of all classes (Classes I to IV) of local vessels.

The Government is working on the detailed arrangements for the above plan. It is expected that the stakeholders will be consulted in the first quarter of 2021. We will report to the Panel on Economic Development in the first half of 2021 after detailed implementation measures have been finalised.

## **Expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter and Providing More Landing Facilities for Small Vessels**

The Chief Executive announced the “Invigorating Island South” initiative in the Policy Address 2020 which includes enhancing the cultural and leisure facilities in the vicinity of Aberdeen and Wong Chuk Hang and exploring the expansion of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter area and the vessel berthing area as well as providing more landing facilities along the coastal area. The Development Bureau is setting up a multi-disciplinary professional team to co-ordinate and study the relevant details. The Transport and Housing Bureau and the Marine Department will liaise closely with the Development Bureau on the issues and provide appropriate assistance.

Furthermore, in response to the trade’s request, the Government has agreed to construct a landing facility near Tuen Mun Area 27 Breakwater in Castle Peak Bay to facilitate embarkation of fishermen. In June 2020, the Marine Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department consulted the Traffic and Transport Committee of Tuen Mun District Council, fishermen organisations and resident representatives on the works programme including location of the site for the landing facility. The construction works will commence in early 2021 and are expected to be completed in 2022.

Thank you again for Hon Steven HO’s interest in the above matters.

Yours sincerely,



(LAW Lap-keung)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing