

中華人民共和國
香港特別行政區政府
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
of the People's Republic of China

政府總部
運輸及物流局
香港添馬添美道 2 號
政府總部東翼



Transport and Logistics Bureau
Government Secretariat

East Wing, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

本局檔號 Our Ref.

電話 Tel : (852) 3509 8197

來函檔號 Your Ref.

傳真 Fax : (852) 2523 0030

13 October 2023

Legislative Council Secretariat
Council Business Division,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Shirley CHAN)

Dear Ms CHAN,

**Government's Response to the Views Expressed by the Public to the
Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered
Anchorage through Written Submission**

At the meeting of the Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages, the Chairman agreed to members' suggestions to invite written views from the public on issues relating to typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages. In June and September, 16 submissions were received.

Having consulted Development Bureau, Environment and Ecology Bureau, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Marine Department, Transport Department and Water Supplies Department, we provide the consolidated written response to the submissions at **Annex**.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carmen Chan', written over a white background.

(Carmen CHAN)

for Secretary for Transport and Logistics

The Government's Response to the Views Expressed by the Public to the Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages through Written Submission

Purpose

This paper sets out the Government's consolidated response to the 16 written submissions from various organisations and individuals on matters relating to typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages.

Demand and supply of sheltered spaces in Hong Kong

2. It is the established policy of the Government to provide sheltered spaces in Hong Kong on a territory-wide basis and assess the demand for sheltered spaces in a holistic approach. The Marine Department (MD) carries out regular assessments of the territory-wide supply and demand situation of sheltered spaces. The latest round of the Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements 2022-2035 was conducted in two phases.

3. In the first phase, MD commissioned a survey company to conduct a survey on locally licensed vessels through telephone interviews and questionnaires to collect the latest information regarding their sheltering practices during typhoons. In the second phase, MD commissioned the Department of Logistics and Maritime Studies of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) to estimate the supply of and demand for sheltered spaces. This assessment took into account different types and sizes of vessels, expected changes in size and future projected supply. Objective statistical methods were employed to calculate the discrepancy between supply and demand in sheltered spaces in Hong Kong on a territory-wide basis up to 2035. The assessment results were reported to the Local Vessels Advisory Committee (LVAC) in December 2022.

4. In general, MD conducts assessments approximately every five years, and the next round of assessment is expected to commence in 2025. Irrespective of their natures of business, all local vessels engaged in marine activities in Hong Kong waters which need sheltered spaces therein will be taken into account during regular assessments by MD. In addition, during the passage of typhoon, MD will promulgate information on which typhoon shelters are in full through radio and television broadcast so that coxswains, shipowners and relevant stakeholders can be well informed in a timely manner. Vessels can be moored at places such as nearby typhoon shelters, sheltered anchorages or waters, where it appears to be safe for them taking into account the actual situation at that time.

The feasibility of “finger pier type berthing”

5. When conducting the Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements 2022-2035, MD has commissioned PolyU to conduct a study on the feasibility of adopting finger pier type berthing (finger pier berthing) in typhoon shelters. PolyU simulated the adoption of finger pier berthing in Aberdeen South and Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelters. The findings have revealed that finger pier berthing requires a larger area of water to accommodate the same number of vessels, otherwise the number of vessels berthing in a typhoon shelter will be reduced by half. Meanwhile, as finger pier berthing facilities have to be planned and designed in advance according to the sizes of vessels to be berthed, they provide lower flexibility to users and are not suitable for common use by local vessels of different classes and sizes in a typhoon shelter on a first-come-first-served basis

Reviewing the wind protection capacity of typhoon shelters

6. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) has completed the review of the capability of typhoon shelters against wave attack. Most of the typhoon shelters are located in relatively sheltered locations, and the existing breakwaters are generally effective in mitigating the effects of waves in extreme weather conditions. In comparison with other typhoon shelters, Hei Ling Chau, Aberdeen South and Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelters are relatively more exposed to wind. Therefore, CEDD has completed the construction of wave walls of about one metre high on the existing breakwaters to enhance the capability of the typhoon shelters against wave attack in phases from 2021 to mid-2022. In addition, as a pilot project, CEDD has constructed additional concrete pontoon floating barriers with a total length of about 700 metres at suitable locations within Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelter for mitigating wave actions in the shelter. The improvement works were completed in March 2023. The Government will continue to review the effectiveness of the improvement measures.

7. Regarding the proposal to set up “overlapping breakwaters”, the relevant departments have analyzed the situation of the Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter and concluded that there are many onshore and subsea facilities on the sea surface west of the typhoon shelter, including large private housing estates, designated bunkering areas, submarine sewage discharge outfall and submarine cables. If a breakwater were established, several technical restrictions would be encountered. Surrounding land uses shall also be taken into consideration and the impact on the shore and marine environment needs to be assessed. It may also involve the expropriation of private land. If we make reference to the breakwater arrangement of Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter for building a breakwater in Magazine Island area, it is not advisable to build a breakwater there given the presence of submarine cables in the waters for the protection of the public and engineering safety considerations.

Moreover, the deep seabed also increases the difficulty and cost of building a breakwater.

Optimizing and providing more landing facilities

8. CEDD is responsible for the structural maintenance of over 190 nos. of public landing facilities, including about 50 nos. public landing facilities located within typhoon shelters. The steps of these public landing facilities are equipped with rough cast finish and non-slip yellow nosing. Also, regular inspections and cleaning are arranged to maintain their performance. CEDD will continue to closely inspect the steps surface conditions of the public landing facilities and enhance the cleaning of steps at the respective landing facilities if necessary to safeguard the public safety.

9. Moreover, regarding the industry's proposal for building a landing facility in the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter for use by small vessels, the then Transport and Housing Bureau together with MD, CEDD and the Invigorating Island South Office (IISO) have conducted site visits with relevant stakeholders and carried out consultation on the design proposal. It was agreed that three sets of additional landing facilities would be provided: the one located at Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter on Ap Lei Chau Praya Road (near Ap Lei Chau Bridge) has been completed and opened for public use since 8 August 2023; the other two sets will be located at Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter on Ap Lei Chau Praya Road (near Marina South), and the construction works notice was gazetted in accordance with the Foreshore and Sea-bed (Reclamations) Ordinance (Cap. 127) on 6 January 2023. The opinion of some owners of small vessels received during the gazettal consultation period are being addressed by the Government in accordance with established procedures.

10. Currently, five public landing steps are provided at the northern coast of Ap Lei Chau in Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter for passengers to embark and disembark. According to the utilisation survey of the concerned landing steps conducted by the Transport Department (TD) previously, the concerned landing steps still have spare capacity to cope with more vessels. TD will continue to monitor the utilisation situation, and to review and take appropriate follow-up actions when necessary.

11. Regarding the reconstruction of the Cheung Chau Ferry Pier in Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter, the Transport and Logistics Bureau, together with MD and CEDD, will continue to communicate with relevant stakeholders on the impacts of the reconstruction on embarkation of fishermen, and the unique geographical environment, sea conditions and landing modes in the local area. To facilitate embarkation of fishermen, CEDD and various departments are studying the proposal to provide more landing facilities in Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter and its technical feasibility. Local stakeholders will be consulted in due course.

Expansion of typhoon shelters

12. The “Invigorating Island South” initiative announced in the 2020 Policy Address aims at developing the Southern District on Hong Kong Island into a place suitable for people to work, live, explore new ideas and have fun. One of the major projects under the initiative was the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter. CEDD commenced in April 2023 a consultancy on investigation, design and construction for the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter to support tourism, leisure and recreation development in the Southern District, and to address the strong demand in the district for sheltered spaces, particularly from pleasure vessels. The proposed expansion area is about 24 hectares. Site investigation works have just been completed, and various detailed impact assessments, gazetting and detailed design will be carried out. Construction works are expected to commence in 2025 tentatively. All Bureaux and Departments can initiate the procedure for expanding typhoon shelters to tie in with the implementation of relevant policies.

13. In addition, according to MD’s record on the “highest occupancy rates” of the 14 typhoon shelters during the passage of typhoons in the past five years, several typhoon shelters with higher occupancy rates (i.e. Tuen Mun, Rambler Channel, New Yau Ma Tei and To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelters) are hard for expansion due to geographical constraints. For the Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter, there are relatively more works vessels berthing therein at this stage due to the major infrastructure projects in recent years.

14. As a matter of fact, certain demand that is not on a long-term basis, such as that from works vessels during major marine works, may push up the occupancy rates of individual typhoon shelters near the work sites (as in the case of the Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter). To alleviate this situation, MD will draw on the experience of the construction of the third runway of the Hong Kong International Airport during which some works vessels were arranged to take refuge within the waters of the site area and explore allowing project teams to lay moorings within work sites during major marine works so that large works vessels can be safely sheltered within the waters of the site area, so as to relieve the pressure imposed by major marine works on the adjacent typhoon shelters. This arrangement may also reduce marine traffic in the waters near the work sites before the onset of typhoons, which helps enhance marine safety. For example, in the marine traffic impact assessment on the reclamation works for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, MD has requested the project proponent to submit a report on the feasibility for the reclamation works vessels to take shelter within the site area during the passage of typhoons. This sheltered arrangement, if feasible, will be extended to other major marine works.

The restrictions imposed on vessels entering typhoon shelters

15. At present, among the 14 typhoon shelters in Hong Kong, the length limit of seven typhoon shelters is 30.4 metres, six is 50 metres, and the remaining one is 75 metres. With reference to the statistics of MD, as of end-2022, the number of various classes of locally licensed vessels in Hong Kong was 20 752. Breaking down by length overall, there were 19 391 vessels with the length overall not exceeding 30.4 metres; 1 219 with length overall exceeding 30.4 metres but not more than 50 metres; 127 with length overall exceeding 50 metres but not more than 75 metres; and 15 with the length overall exceeding 75 metres (including two floating docks for maintenance of large vessels). According to the statistics of the past decade, the number of vessels with the length overall exceeding 75 metres decreased from 20 in 2013 to 15 in 2022. When planning and designing a typhoon shelter, it is necessary to take into consideration of factors such as the location and size of the proposed typhoon shelter, size of vessels that are allowed to berth at and navigate inside the typhoon shelter, width of the passage area, etc. Hence, upon its completion, each typhoon shelter will impose a limit on length overall against vessels entering and remaining in the typhoon shelter having regard to the prevailing situations. MD will continue to monitor the situation and maintain communication with the maritime industry.

16. On the other hand, having considered the fishing operations of fishing vessels, especially large fishing vessels that have to fish in waters outside Hong Kong for a prolonged period, MD may issue permits to overlength fishing vessels to enter typhoon shelters under special circumstances, mainly to allow those fishing vessels to enter typhoon shelters for berthing during the Lunar New Year or fishing moratorium, or for replenishment and settlement of fishing harvest on other days. In addition, other classes of overlength vessels can also apply for permits to enter typhoon shelters for carrying out marine works, berthing at shipyards in typhoon shelters for repairing works, or providing ferry services. The validity period of the permit is usually one week. However, in order to facilitate the berthing of fishing vessels, in case they enter typhoon shelters during the Lunar New Year or fishing moratorium, the validity period of the issued permit will be extended until the end of the Lunar New Year or fishing moratorium.

Designating different berthing areas for vessels

17. At present, MD has designated two berthing areas for different classes of local vessels within the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter by administrative measures, namely Area A in the north for Classes I to IV vessels and Area B in the south for Classes I to III vessels. Based on observation, some pleasure vessels (i.e. Class IV vessels) chose to berth in Area B with vacancies when they could not find berths in

Area A. If MD officers found that there are berths available in Area A during the patrol of the typhoon shelter, they will encourage suitable-sized pleasure vessels in Area B to move to Area A. MD will keep in view the situation in the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter and maintain communication with relevant stakeholders. At this stage, MD does not have any plan about designating different berthing areas for vessels in any particular typhoon shelter.

18. Drawing on the experience of Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter in the designation of different berthing areas and in response to requests, a consensus on the trial-run arrangements for the designation of different berthing areas was largely reached after several rounds of discussion among MD and various stakeholders (including LegCo member(s), fishermen's groups and other marine users of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter). The trial-run arrangements for the designation of different berthing areas in the Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter have been implemented from 30 June this year, which will be reviewed in one year's time upon implementation. Since most fishing vessels have currently sailed out of Hong Kong waters for fishing operations after the fishing moratorium ended, MD will continue to observe the berthing situation of vessels in the Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter.

19. In fact, irrespective of the way in which the berthing areas are designated, it is necessary to maintain a close engagement of the relevant stakeholders so as to handle the berthing arrangements flexibly, in the light of the different characteristics of each typhoon shelter and the varying needs of that at different times, so as to make the best use of the berths available at the typhoon shelters.

Adjustments to the passage areas in typhoon shelters

20. Under the existing marine legislation, all local vessels may enter and remain in any typhoon shelter at any time according to their operational needs on a first-come-first-served basis, provided that they do not anchor within the passage areas of the typhoon shelter or obstruct the free passage of other vessels to any unoccupied berths therein. MD will patrol the typhoon shelters on a regular basis to ensure unobstructed fairways and orderly berthing of vessels.

21. To enhance the capability in responding to fire incidents at typhoon shelters and to ensure the execution of duties by fireboats during emergency, MD and the Fire Services Department (FSD) reviewed the layout of 14 typhoon shelters across the territory last year and proposed adjustments to and widening of the passage areas of five of the typhoon shelters, including Aberdeen South, Kwun Tong, Shau Kei Wan, Tuen Mun and Hei Ling Chau, so that FSD will be able to deploy the most suitable fireboats within the typhoon shelters (including allowing the largest fireboats to reach every corner of the typhoon shelters) to perform the firefighting

and rescue work required. The relevant proposal was endorsed by LVAC in December 2022. The adjustments to the passage areas in the four typhoon shelters of Kwun Tong, Shau Kei Wan, Tuen Mun and Hei Ling Chau were implemented on 31 January 2023, while adjustments to the passage area of Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter were implemented on 5 June 2023. Regarding reservation of space for passenger carrying vessels to berth alongside Tai Pak Floating Restaurant to pick up and drop off passengers, the current berthing location of Tai Pak Floating Restaurant is sufficiently far away from the passage areas, allowing ample space for vessels to temporarily berth alongside and pick up diners from the restaurant.

Development of recreational fisheries

22. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been promoting the development of local recreational fisheries and facilitating the trade's development of new types of activity and new business models through financial support from the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF). SFDF has provided financial support to 32 projects so far, including four projects that are related to recreational fisheries (e.g. eco-tours). AFCD will continue to promote and publicise recreational fisheries with Hong Kong characteristics through various appropriate channels.

Collecting marine waste oil and large refuse

23. Noting that fishermen may net marine refuse during their operation, MD has set up 24-hour hotlines through which fishermen can request MD to arrange for a relatively large refuse collection vessel to collect the netted refuse in the typhoon shelter where their fishing vessels are located as early as possible. After reviewing the operation of the hotlines, MD has added other notification channels for fishermen or other marine users to provide contact information, i.e. by email or fax in a way to facilitate the arrangement for refuse collection services.

24. Regarding the collection of waste oil from local vessels, any local motor vessels, including fishing vessels, will produce waste oil during operation and maintenance. These waste oils are usually mixed with various oil products and that are considered to be Class 3 dangerous goods (i.e. flammable liquids). The collection, conveyance and storage of these waste oil must therefore comply with the relevant safety regulations and safety standards for the handling of the dangerous goods. In addition, the personnel responsible for handling dangerous goods must receive relevant safety training while the contractor responsible for collecting and conveying these waste oils must also be qualified and licensed as chemical waste collector by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). EPD currently provides waste

oil collection services to ocean-going vessels through locally licensed oil carriers. However, the vessels and personnel collecting floating refuse at sea in typhoon shelters do not meet the relevant safety standards nor have received any relevant safety training, and are therefore not fitted for collecting these local vessels waste oil. In addition, the original design of the Marine Refuse Collection Point facilities onshore did not take into account the collection or storage of vessel waste oil, and therefore did not meet the relevant safety requirements. In order to set up a long-term mechanism for the collection of local vessel waste oil, the government and the contractors will take time and resources to meet the relevant safety requirements, including hardware construction and personnel training. Before a long-term mechanism is established, fishing vessels can hand over their waste oil to the shipyard for collection and delivery to EPD for disposal during regular maintenance and repairs at the shipyard. In the meantime, MD will work with EPD to explore the feasibility of incorporating the additional local vessel waste oil collection services into the next marine cleansing service contract or other viable options.

Water selling kiosks

25. In meeting the demand for water supply for shipping purpose, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has set up seven water selling kiosks. In addition, WSD accepts applications for water supply to piers or berths for shipping purpose. At present, there are over 90 related water accounts distributed in typhoon shelters, piers and other locations for mooring.

26. In response to the demand of water supplies for shipping purposes from the fisheries trade, WSD conducted the “Review of Water Supply for Shipping Purposes” (the Review) in mid-2022 to holistically assess the water consumption and supply for shipping across the territory and in different districts. The Review was completed in September 2022. Result of the Review indicated that the number of vessels and water consumption by vessels across the territory had been largely steady during the period from 2017 to 2021. Nevertheless, WSD noted that demand for water supplies in some districts and typhoon shelters is higher than that in others. That might necessitate vessels sailing to water selling kiosks in other districts or relying on water boats for procuring fresh water. In view of the higher demand in some districts, WSD plans to provide additional water selling facilities at Aberdeen, Sai Kung, South Lantau, Tai Po, Kowloon East and Tai O to facilitate vessels in those districts to procure fresh water.

27. To further enhance the existing services, WSD is planning to set up an automatic water selling machine at the Tuen Mun Water Selling Kiosk for trial to provide 24-hour water selling service. Installation of the automatic water selling machine is close to completion. The fisheries trade will be invited to provide

comments on the operation of the relevant machine subsequently and the machine is expected to be commissioned at the end of October 2023. Subject to positive feedback from the trade and satisfactory trial operation, WSD would consider setting up more similar machines at other existing and future water selling kiosks to better address the water demand for shipping. WSD would also keep in view the situation of water supply and demand for shipping.

Combating illegal activities by vessels berthing in typhoon shelters

28. MD carries out patrols in typhoon shelters from time to time to ensure that fairways and passage areas inside typhoon shelters are unobstructed and vessels are berthed in a safe and orderly manner. If a vessel is found to have breached the marine legislation, MD will take follow up actions as appropriate. Meanwhile, MD also conducts joint operations with FSD and the Hong Kong Police Force to crack down on illegal activities and irregularities by local vessels. In the past six years (as of August 2023), of the 69 successful prosecutions by MD against pleasure vessels being used for non-pleasure purposes, 17 cases involved pleasure vessels being used as guesthouses.

Water and electricity connection problems for vessels in typhoon shelters

29. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) provides for safety requirements for electricity supply, electrical wiring and products in accordance with the Electricity Ordinance (Cap. 406) and WSD controls the waterworks and of all water therein according to the Waterworks Ordinance (Cap. 102).

30. In the past two years, MD together with EMSD and the power companies carried out 24 inspections in Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, Sam Ka Tsuen Typhoon Shelter, Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter, Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter and Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter. EMSD and the power companies issued a total of 68 improvement notices in relation to electricity safety while MD also found five vessels suspected of violating marine legislation with prosecutions initiated. In addition, MD and WSD also conducted 12 joint inspections in the typhoon shelters at Aberdeen, Tuen Mun and Sam Ka Tsuen as well as Sai Kung Sheltered Anchorage. During the joint inspection in the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, two vessels were respectively found to be suspected of operating without a licence or breaching licence conditions. During the joint inspection in the Sam Ka Tsuen Typhoon Shelter, WSD discovered a situation of illegal pipe connection to the water meter. MD and WSD are taking follow-up actions on the irregularities.

Vessel survey and application for alteration

31. To ensure marine safety, all local vessels should be built in accordance with the application class and type of vessel submitted by owners, and should comply with the safety standards and licensing requirements of the relevant maritime legislation for different classes and types of vessels. According to the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) stipulates that all local vessels including pleasure vessels shall hold a valid operating licence. When applying for the licence, vessel owners shall attach relevant information (e.g. the engine, vessel size, structure) for endorsement by MD. A relevant condition will also be attached to the operating licence of a pleasure vessel, such as “Except with the written permission of the Director of Marine, no alteration to the hull, structure or fitted engine shall be made to the vessel”. In addition, pursuant to the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Safety and Survey) Regulation (Cap. 548G), only pleasure vessels that are smaller in tonnage and size, not for hire and of low risk do not require regular survey. If alteration needs to be made to any class and type of vessel, the owner shall submit an application to MD by completing the “Notification of Change of Particulars in Certificate of Ownership / Operating Licence” to facilitate MD’s approval. Hence, it is illegal to make alterations to vessels without permission, MD will institute prosecutions against suspected offenders.

Change of purpose of vessel under its licence

32. Every local vessels has its class and type clearly stated when it obtains the certificate of ownership and operating licence. If the owner wants to change the original purpose of the vessel, the owner shall submit an application to MD for approval as mentioned in paragraph 31 above before carrying out alternation. Besides, if meals are provided on board the vessels, they must comply with the food safety and hygiene requirements of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and obtain relevant licences. FEHD issues relevant food business licences under the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X) to safeguard the food safety and environmental hygiene. For instance, a food factory licence must be obtained for the food business which involves the preparation of food for sale for human consumption off the premises; a restaurant licence must be obtained for the food business which involves the sale of meals for consumption on the premises; a fresh provision shop licence must be obtained for the food business which involves the sale of fresh, chilled or frozen fish (including live fish). The above food premises also include vessels. In addition to complying with the licensing requirements imposed by relevant departments, premises applying for a food business licence must also comply with the Government lease conditions and statutory plan restrictions. If the food business only involves the sale of restricted

foods, such as fresh, chilled and frozen shell fish, a written approval from FEHD is also required.

33. Stationary vessels are allowed to engage in fishing related trades only, viz live fish dealing, fish drying, fish storage, ice dispensing, water dispensing or landing businesses in accordance with the licensing requirements. There are 142 vessels of such kind in the territory, and they are mostly stationed in typhoon shelters in various districts. In the event that an area in the typhoon shelters has to be designated for those stationary vessels engaging in non-fishing related commercial activities, such as running floating restaurant and cafes, allocation of such area should be conducted fairly like through open tender. The setting aside of an area in the typhoon shelter for designated purposes will inevitably result in the forced relocation of some vessels originally berthed within the area. Moreover, the Government need to carefully consider ways to tackle issues relating to marine safety, insurance and food hygiene, etc. in order to ensure that the interests of patrons and the vessel owners are properly protected. As a principle that is applicable to all local vessels, any relaxation in the licensing regime must be conducted fairly and fulfill relevant safety requirements.

34. Besides, outboard open sampans (sampans) are originally intended to be used between fish rafts in fish culture zones as support crafts. Under the licensing conditions, an sampan can only be fitted with an engine not exceeding 15 horsepower, carry no more than four persons (including crew members), and is prohibited from entering a typhoon shelter (except Cheung Chau and Shuen Wan Typhoon Shelters). In addition, considering that the sea traffic in the water area of sampans is not busy, and the natural geographical environment serves as a barrier, the waters are sheltered and the sea surface is relatively calm, the overall skills requirement for operators of sampans is not high. To ensure the safety of the operators themselves and other marine users, the Local Certificate of Competency (Master) held by an operator of a sampan confines to the operation within the specified sheltered waters.

35. Over the years, MD has conducted three reviews with the industry on the regulatory policy of sampans. Various factors have been taken into consideration, including marine accidents and traffic management, the structural stability of outboard open sampans, the original licensing intention, as well as the opinions of other port users. Following the review, the licensing condition of operation of outboard open sampans has been maintained so as to protect marine and navigational safety.

Handling of Wreckage in the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter

36. According to the records of MD, there are currently four sunken vessels in the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter. Among them, two sank in late 2022 and the remaining two sank in 2018 and 2021 respectively. MD was informed earlier that there is suspected existence of other sunken vessels in the typhoon shelter. Subsequently, an on-site inspection with relevant parties of the maritime industry was conducted on 11 July, and an underwater inspection by the contractor was arranged to be held on 24 July. As per the report submitted by the contractor, a total of seven locations with suspected existence of sunken vessels were identified. MD has gazetted a notice of seizure of vessels on eight of the sunken vessels on 22 September, and is seeking legal advice regarding options for handling the remaining sunken vessels so that the matter can be handled according to established procedures as early as possible.

37. MD has placed wreck marking buoys at the locations with sunken vessels to allow vessel operators to identify the locations of the wrecks, so as to enhance navigational safety. Officers from MD will also patrol the typhoon shelter every day to ensure safe and orderly traffic in the typhoon shelter.

The impact of swells on Ma Wan Fishing Rafts

38. The waters near Ma Wan are principal waterways for large vessels to access Hong Kong ports and the Western Shenzhen ports. In view of the complex factors including navigable width, currents, vessel density and marine traffic conditions of the waters, MD has established a number of statutory principal fairways in these waters, including Ha Pang Fairway, Kap Shui Mun Fairway and Ma Wan Fairway, with a view to ensuring the safe passage of vessels. At present, there are dozens of large ocean-going cargo vessels and cross boundary passenger vessels navigating through these waters every day. The masters of vessels navigating in these waters shall comply with the requirements of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, and pay attention to matters such as marine traffic, tidal flows, currents and weather, so that they can ensure effective control of their vessels whilst navigating at a safe speed.

39. MD conducted a two-day site visit in the waters near Ma Wan on 27 and 28 September 2023 together with AFCD. A total of 13 large ocean-going cargo ships were noticed passing through the waters near Ma Wan, the largest of which was a cargo ship of 353 metres in length. It was observed that the fish rafts in the waters near Ma Wan would go up and down with the waves in a normal manner after a cargo ship passed by, and no rafts were found damaged as a result. AFCD also

learnt from the mariculturists on-site about the impact of swells on fish rafts, and how the intensity of swells would vary with the length, cargo capacity, navigational speed, and movement of cargo ships, as well as with the tidal condition. MD and AFCD will continue to monitor the situation closely and maintain close liaison for timely updates on the development of the situation.

Road Transport Facilities for Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter

40. Along Shum Wan Pier Drive of Aberdeen, there are pick up/drop off points for coaches. Besides, there are several car parks near Shum Wan Pier Drive including the Aberdeen Marina Club Car Park, Broadview Court Car Park and Jumbo Court Car Park, etc. Furthermore, TD is working with IISO to enhance the transport facilities such as widening footpath and designation of layby for pick-up/drop off and loading/unloading activities etc. at Shum Wan Pier Drive to facilitate visitors going to the nearby leisure facilities and tourist spots. At present, there are suitable informatory signs and directional signs in the district to guide visitors to the pier near Shum Wan Pier Drive. TD will keep monitoring the pedestrian and traffic situation, and consider installing suitable signs according to the needs of motorists and pedestrians.

41. There are pick up/drop off points for vehicles along the public roads near the northern coast of Ap Lei Chau including Ap Lei Chau Main Street, Yuet Hoi Street and Wah Ting Street. The width of the carriageway complies with the design requirements. TD is working with IISO to explore the feasibility of providing more parking spaces in the vicinity for the convenience of motorists and improvement of the walking environment in the Ap Lei Chau Main Street area. TD would keep monitoring the traffic conditions of the road sections concerned and timely consider suitable traffic management measures where appropriate.

42. TD will continue to work with IISO and the relevant government departments, and provide comments on the planning and development in the district. This includes exploring the provision of an elevated pedestrian walkway system under the Redevelopment and Enhancement of Recreation and Sports Facilities in Wong Chuk Hang for connecting to the nearby MTR Stations, as well as improving the walking environment in the Wong Chuk Hang area.

43. In addition, TD has been inviting applications from interested operators of waterborne transport services to provide kaito ferry services regularly, and process them in accordance with the established procedures when relevant applications are received.