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**Report of the Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to  
Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages**

**Purpose**

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages (“the Subcommittee”).

**Background**

2. The Transport and Logistics Bureau (“TLB”) has advised that the Government is committed to ensuring that sufficient sheltered spaces are provided within the Hong Kong waters for local vessels (including working vessels and pleasure vessels)<sup>1</sup> to take refuge during typhoons or inclement weather, so as to safeguard the safety of the vessels and their crew members. There are currently 14 typhoon shelters<sup>2</sup> located in different parts of Hong Kong waters, providing 423 hectares of berthing space for vessels. Apart from typhoon shelters, local vessels can also choose to berth at 18 sheltered anchorages.

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<sup>1</sup> Locally licensed vessels are categorized into four classes. Class I vessels mainly include launches and ferries; Class II vessels include dry cargo vessels, dumb lighters, dredgers, barges, pilot boats, tugs; Class III vessels include fishing vessels; and Class IV vessels include pleasure vessels.

<sup>2</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.

3. Under normal weather conditions, local vessels may be anchored at any safe and suitable locations within Hong Kong waters (except for certain areas of waters where anchoring is prohibited), including typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages, according to their daily business and operational needs provided that no obstruction is made to marine traffic, and no permission from the Marine Department (“MD”) is required. MD regulates the activities in typhoon shelters pursuant to existing legislation. There are designated passage areas and anchorage areas within typhoon shelters to ensure safe navigation and orderly anchoring of vessels. In general, vessels can berth at the anchorage areas within typhoon shelters on a first-come-first-served basis. During its daily patrols, MD strives to keep the passage areas unobstructed and conducts inspections on any vessel-related safety issues. Apart from assisting and instructing the vessels concerned to rectify the situation, MD also carries out relevant investigations and appropriate follow-up actions when necessary.

4. MD conducts regular assessments of the territory-wide supply and demand situation of sheltered spaces provided. The latest round of the Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements 2022-2035 (“the Assessment”) was completed in 2022. The results of the Assessment indicate that the overall territory-wide supply of sheltered space can meet the berthing needs of local vessels throughout the period up to 2035.

### **The Subcommittee**

5. At the House Committee meeting on 8 April 2022, Members agreed to appoint the Subcommittee under the House Committee to study matters relating to typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages. The Subcommittee is chaired by Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, and the terms of reference and membership list of the Subcommittee are set out in **Appendices 1 and 2** respectively.

6. The Subcommittee has held a total of five meetings since its commencement of work in May 2023, and has received views from organizations and individuals on related matters at one of the meetings, with a total of 19 organizations and individuals attending the meeting to present their views. In order to study the related matters in depth, the Subcommittee has requested the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat to study the regulations governing typhoon shelters and typhoon anchorages in Hong Kong as well as the policies on sheltered berthing facilities for vessels in other places. The Subcommittee has also posted notices on the website of the Legislative Council to invite submissions, and a total of 38 submissions have been received. A list of organizations and individuals which/who have

presented their views and made submissions to the Subcommittee is in **Appendix 3**.

7. In addition, the Subcommittee conducted a site visit to Aberdeen South and West, Kwun Tong and New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelters on 5 December 2023 to better understand the management of typhoon shelters.

### **Deliberations of the Subcommittee**

8. In the course of deliberation, the Subcommittee has conducted in-depth studies on the demand of local vessels for sheltered spaces, as well as the planning of berthing spaces, capability against typhoon and wave attack, management and ancillary facilities of typhoon shelters. To tie in with the country's development of the marine economy and to increase the economic spots of typhoon shelters, the Subcommittee has also explored ways to develop typhoon shelters and their neighbouring sites into sites with economic value and tourism-related functions. As the matters discussed by the Subcommittee cut across various policy areas of the Government, the departments attending the discussions, in addition to TLB and MD, are the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (represented by the Tourism Commission), the Development Bureau (represented by the Invigorating Island South Office ("IISO"), Energizing Kowloon East Office and Harbour Office), the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD"), the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD").

9. The major concerns and recommendations of the Subcommittee are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

#### **Demand of local vessels for sheltered spaces**

10. Members in general have expressed reservations about the conclusion of the Assessment that the supply of sheltered space for local vessels will be sufficient to meet the demand throughout the period up to 2035. There is a view that in the Assessment only the number and size of vessels and the total area of sheltered spaces in the territory were used as factors, and the aerial photography verification adopted was only undertaken when the vessels were neatly arranged in normal weather. It failed to give due consideration to the habits of using typhoon shelters of different types of vessels and the views of users of typhoon shelters, such as the preference of working vessels to berth in typhoon shelters relevant to their operation and segregate themselves from pleasure vessels in order to avoid collision. The Assessment also failed to

take into account the actual utilization of individual typhoon shelters and typhoon anchorages during typhoons, including the fact that some typhoon shelters are situated at remote locations and the routes thereto are relatively more exposed to wind, making them unsuitable for vessels to travel to for berthing during typhoons. There is also a view that the Assessment did not attend to the community's expectation for the development of the typhoon shelter economy.

11. The Administration has explained that the Assessment assessed the demand for sheltered spaces in a holistic approach. The total supply of sheltered spaces in Hong Kong waters comprises all statutory typhoon shelters, sheltered anchorages and marinas with berthing facilities in their own premises. The Assessment was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, MD commissioned a survey company in August 2020 to conduct a sample survey on locally licensed vessels through telephone interviews and questionnaires. The selected samples for the survey included all Class I and Class II local vessels, one-third of Class III vessels and one-quarter of Class IV vessels. The survey company collected information from around 5 500 local vessels of different types (about one-quarter of the total number of locally licensed vessels) regarding their actual sheltering practices during typhoons. The response rate of working vessels was 83% while the overall response rate was 74%. In the second phase, MD commissioned the Department of Logistics and Maritime Studies of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University ("PolyU") in June 2021 to estimate the supply of and demand for sheltered spaces. This assessment took into account the data gathered and analysed in the first phase, the numbers of different sizes and types of vessels, their expected changes and projected supply. Aerial photography was undertaken in different sheltered locations to study different types of mooring for different types of vessels, for the purpose of examining and updating various parameters used in calculating the demand. Objective and scientific statistical methods were employed to calculate the discrepancy between the supply of and demand for sheltered space in Hong Kong on a territory-wide basis up to 2035. The assessment results reveal that the current overall territory-wide supply of sheltered space (including the proposed expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter) can meet the berthing needs of local vessels throughout the period up to 2035. The assessments are conducted every five years, and the next round of assessment will commence in 2025. The Administration will explore how to take on board the views from different stakeholders more effectively.

12. The Administration has also advised that during the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut and hoisting of typhoon signal No. 8 in 2018, only three (i.e. Rambler Channel, To Kwa Wan and Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelters) amongst the 14 typhoon shelters in Hong Kong reached their full occupancy, while there were still sheltered spaces available for use in the remaining

11 typhoon shelters, including Aberdeen West, Cheung Chau, and Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelters which were more frequently used by fishing vessels, as well as Yim Tin Tsai Typhoon Shelter located in Sai Kung. The occupancy rates of the 14 typhoon shelters across Hong Kong were similar during typhoon periods in 2022; during typhoon periods in 2023, the occupancy rates of all typhoon shelters did not reach 100%. During typhoons, MD will maintain order in various typhoon shelters and monitor their occupancy rates, as well as make broadcasts to disseminate important information to the persons in charge of vessels so that they can seek shelter in suitable waters nearby according to the actual circumstances at the time. Moreover, the Administration is also exploring ways to improve the ancillary facilities in typhoon shelters in some of the more remote areas to facilitate vessels' use of such typhoon shelters.

13. The Subcommittee expresses concern about the potential inability of certain working vessels to return early to enter a typhoon shelter due to work-related reasons. They include ferries providing public transport services before typhoons and fishing vessels operating in remote waters. The current first-come-first-served basis for the use of typhoon shelters makes it difficult for these vessels to find suitable sheltered spaces during typhoons. Members suggest that the Administration reserve sheltered spaces in designated areas for such vessels to take shelter. The Administration has indicated that, in response to the operational needs of ferries, ferry service providers has been granted permission to lay private moorings in New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter, Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelter and Tsuen Wan Private Mooring Area, allowing their ferries to berth and take shelter during typhoons. The Administration is also actively exploring with ferry operators the availability of berthing space near the piers on the outlying islands. The work is expected to be completed before the typhoon season in 2024. Furthermore, to tie in with the introduction of a new generation of ferries by ferry operators, MD has reserved sheltered spaces in the Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelter for ferry berthing purposes.

14. There is a view that the Administration should arrange for large work barges to berth outside typhoon shelters during typhoons so as to release spaces within for smaller vessels. The Administration has advised that certain demand which is not long-term, such as that from works vessels during major marine works, may push up the occupancy rates of individual typhoon shelters near the work sites. 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, to explore allowing project teams to lay mooring facilities 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 and so help enhance marine safety. 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 of the reclamation works vessels taking shelter within the site area during the passage of typhoons. This sheltering arrangement, if feasible, will be extended to other major marine works.

15. Apart from the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter under the Invigorating Island South (“IIS”) initiative, some members have asked whether the Administration would consider expanding other typhoon shelters with higher occupancy rates during typhoons. The Administration has advised that, according to the records of the past five years, it would be difficult to expand several typhoon shelters with higher occupancy rates, namely, Tuen Mun, Rambler Channel, New Yau Ma Tei and To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelters, due to geographical constraints. MD will continue to monitor the overall supply and utilization of typhoon shelters. In the next round of assessment of the supply and demand situation of sheltered spaces, if it is expected that the sheltered space is unable to meet the future berthing needs of local vessels, MD will explore the feasibility of expanding the existing typhoon shelters or constructing additional ones.

#### Planning of sheltered spaces in typhoon shelters

16. There is a suggestion that the Administration should consider adopting finger pier type berthing (“finger pier berthing”) or floating pontoon berths in typhoon shelters to allow for orderly arrangement of vessels and to facilitate unobstructed access for fire boats to reach fire scenes within the typhoon shelters. The Administration has responded that in the Assessment, MD also commissioned PolyU to conduct a study on the feasibility of adopting finger pier berthing. PolyU simulated the adoption of finger pier berthing in Aberdeen South and Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelters. The findings reveal that finger pier berthing requires a larger area of waters 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 berthing vessels, 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.

17. Regarding the comment that the narrow passage areas in typhoon shelters hinder speedy arrival of fire boats, the Administration has advised that

in order to enhance the capability in responding to fire incidents in typhoon shelters and to ensure the execution of duties by fire boats in case of emergency, MD and the Fire Services Department (“FSD”) reviewed the layout of 14 typhoon shelters across the territory in 2022. They proposed adjustments to and widening of the passage areas of Aberdeen South, Kwun Tong, Shau Kei Wan, Tuen Mun and Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelters, to allow FSD’s deployment of the most suitable fire boats for firefighting and rescue work within the typhoon shelters. The relevant proposal was endorsed by the Local Vessels Advisory Committee 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 the adjustments to that of Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter were implemented on 5 June 2023.

18. The Subcommittee notes that at present, restrictions are imposed on the length overall of vessels allowed to enter all 14 typhoon shelters in Hong Kong. Among them, seven typhoon shelters have a length limit of 30.4 metres, six have a limit of 50 metres, and one has a limit of 75 metres. Vessels with length overall exceeding 75 metres cannot enter typhoon shelters without a permit. Urging the Administration to relax the restriction on vessels with length overall exceeding 75 metres to enter typhoon shelters, some members suggest that the Administration should allow admission of such vessels when planning for the construction of new typhoon shelters and inform the trade in a timely manner to facilitate its preparation. There is also a view that the prohibition of outboard open sampans (“sampans”) from entering typhoon shelters has caused considerable inconvenience to crew members in boarding and obtaining water and ice.

19. The Administration has advised that under normal circumstances, large vessels will choose to take shelter from typhoons in safe waters away from coasts. MD will issue permits to overlength fishing vessels to enter typhoon shelters under special circumstances. If vessels with length overall exceeding 75 meters are given access to the existing typhoon shelters, the number of vessels that can be accommodated therein will be greatly reduced. 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, and width of the passage area. Upon its completion, each typhoon shelter will impose a limit on length overall of vessels entering and remaining in the typhoon shelter having regard to the prevailing situation. In response to members’ enquiry about the data on vessel length, the Administration has advised that as at the end of 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 length overall not exceeding

30.4 metres; 1 219 vessels with length overall exceeding 30.4 metres but not more than 50 metres; 127 vessels with length overall exceeding 50 metres but not more than 75 metres; and 15 vessels with length overall exceeding 75 metres. The number of vessels with the length overall exceeding 75 metres decreased from 20 in 2013 to 15 in 2022.

20. Regarding the regulation of sampans, the Administration has pointed out that sampans are originally intended to be used as support crafts between fish rafts in fish culture zones. Under the licensing conditions, a 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, since the water area of sampans is relatively calm and the overall skill requirement for operators of sampans is not high, the Local Certificate of Competency (Master) held by an operator of a sampan is confined to the operation within the specified sheltered waters. MD has conducted three reviews with the trade on the regulatory policy of sampans. Various factors have been taken into consideration, including marine accidents and traffic management, their structural stability, the original licensing intention, as well as the opinions of other port users. Following the reviews, the licensing conditions of operation of sampans have been maintained to protect marine and navigational safety.

#### Capability of typhoon shelters against typhoon and wave attack

21. Expressing concern about the capability of typhoon shelters against typhoon and wave attack, the Subcommittee notes that CEDD has completed a review of the capability of typhoon shelters against wave attack, the results of which show that 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. In this connection, CEDD has completed, in phases from 2021 to mid-2022, the construction of wave walls of about one metre high on the existing breakwaters of Aberdeen South and Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelters, with the aim of enhancing their capability against wave attack. Separately, CEDD has completed construction of additional concrete pontoon floating barriers with a total length of about 700 metres in Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelter as a pilot project to attenuate the waves generated within the shelter. The improvement works were completed in March 2023. In reply to members' enquiry about the effectiveness of the pilot project, the Administration has advised that, having analysed the experience of the onslaught of Typhoon Talim and Super Typhoon Saola in 2023, the floating barriers are able to play a role in reducing



waves. The Subcommittee has requested the Administration to continue to review the effectiveness of the improvement measures and consider installing suitable measures against typhoon and wave attack in other typhoon shelters.

22. There is a suggestion that the Administration should consider introducing overlapping breakwaters in typhoon shelters or conducting feasibility studies on other wind protection designs to enhance their wind protection capacity. The Administration has responded that the relevant departments, after analysing the situation of Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter, concluded that given the many onshore and subsea facilities on the sea surface west of the typhoon shelter, the establishment of a breakwater will not only encounter numerous technical constraints, but also warrant consideration of surrounding land uses and an assessment of impact on the shore and marine environment. Furthermore, the expropriation of private land may also be necessary.

### Management of typhoon shelters

#### *Illegal activities of vessels*

23. The Subcommittee notes that in response to the trade's request, MD launched a pilot scheme through administrative arrangements in 2018 for the exclusive mooring of non-pleasure vessels within Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter ("Pilot Scheme"). Under the Pilot Scheme, arrangements are made for non-pleasure vessels to berth in the southern area of Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter, whereas the northern area is for the berthing of all classes of vessels. Drawing on the experience of the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter in the designation of different berthing areas and after several rounds of discussion with the stakeholders of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, MD has launched a one-year trial of the designation of different berthing areas in Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter. The trial commenced on 30 June 2023 and a review will be conducted thereafter.

24. Some members have pointed out that while typhoon shelter users generally support the arrangements for working and pleasure vessels to berth in different areas, the designation of different berthing areas are merely administrative arrangements and there is no penalty under the existing legislation for vessels' non-compliance with such arrangements. Since the Administration can only give advice to vessels that do not comply with the arrangements of designating different berthing areas, there are still situations of indiscriminate berthing of vessels in typhoon shelters, which worsen especially during passage of typhoons, making it more difficult for late-returning vessels to find suitable berths. In order to effectively manage the designated different areas, it is suggested that the Administration should

make reference to the regulation of land traffic and consider introducing legislative amendments to empower the Director of Marine to delineate designated areas within typhoon shelters for the exclusive berthing of certain class of vessels and provide for penalties. There is also a view that the Administration can consider allocating berthing spaces of typhoon shelters by leasing, instead of on the existing first-come-first-served basis.

25. The Administration has advised that while the Director of Marine has the power under existing legislation to direct a vessel to berth at a specified location, such power has to be exercised with considerable prudence. Irrespective of the way in which the berthing areas are designated, it is necessary to maintain close engagement of the relevant stakeholders to handle the berthing arrangements flexibly having regard to the different characteristics of each typhoon shelter and its varying needs at different times, so as to make the best use of the berthing spaces available at the typhoon shelters. At present, the administrative arrangements for the designation of different berthing areas are still under trial. The Administration has stepped up patrols and will explore the feasibility of implementing the Pilot Scheme in other typhoon shelters. If the Pilot Scheme is found to be ineffective, the Government will not rule out the possibility of amending the legislation to give the Director of Marine more power.

26. The Subcommittee expresses concern about the acute shortage of berthing spaces in typhoon shelters near urban areas due to the upsurge in the number of pleasure vessels in recent years and the practice of most owners of such vessels who berth their vessels in those typhoon shelters. Some stakeholders have reflected that some people have been occupying berthing spaces in these typhoon shelters to solicit rewards from vessel owners for the berths. Members consider that such acts of seeking private gains out of public resources are unacceptable and the Administration should step up enforcement efforts, raise the penalties and amend the legislation where necessary to effectively combat such acts. Members are also concerned about the illegal use of pleasure vessels for non-recreational purposes such as guesthouses and the illegal connection of water and electricity supply in typhoon shelters.

27. According to the Administration, in order to ensure smooth navigation in the passage areas of typhoon shelters and crack down on irregularities by local vessels, MD not only carries out patrols in typhoon shelters from time to time, but also periodically conducts special operations and fire drills in typhoon shelters with the Police Force and FSD. To strengthen law enforcement, MD regularly conducts joint operations in typhoon shelters with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, WSD, FEHD and the power companies. During routine inspections or joint operations, if any

vessels are suspected of violating the Electricity Ordinance, the Waterworks Ordinance or the Food Business Regulation, MD will refer such cases to relevant departments for follow-up. In addition, MD has also purchased drones in recent years to support investigation and law enforcement, and will review the availability of suitable smart technology solutions in the market for related purposes. According to records, in the past five years MD conducted a total of about 49 000 inspections in various typhoon shelters and initiated 2 038 prosecutions against irregularities of vessels, including vessels being let for hire or reward without permission and pleasure vessels being used for non-pleasure purposes. As at 31 December 2023, a total of 1 843 cases have been convicted while another 195 cases were still being processed.

28. The Subcommittee notes a number of sunken vessels in the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter which have remained unhandled for many years and thus pose a danger to the vessels navigating in the vicinity. In order to safeguard the safety of vessels navigating in and out of the typhoon shelter, members have urged the Administration to expedite the handling of wreckage. The Administration has advised that according to records, there are four sunken vessels in the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter, two of which sank in late 2022 and the remaining two in 2018 and 2021 respectively. MD has been 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 2023, and an underwater inspection by the contractor was arranged to be held on 24 July 2023, which revealed seven more locations of suspected existence of sunken vessels. MD has gazetted a notice of seizure of vessels on eight of the sunken vessels on 22 September 2023, and is seeking legal advice on options for handling the remaining sunken vessels so that the matter can be dealt with as soon as possible in accordance with established procedures. MD has placed wreck marking buoys at the locations with sunken vessels to enable vessel operators to identify the wreck locations, so as to enhance navigational safety. As it is the responsibility of the vessel owners to salvage the sunken vessels but the vessel owners concerned may not be proactive in handling the wreckage, there is a suggestion that the Administration considers amending the legislation to allow owners of sunken vessels to be charged for wreck salvage where necessary, or to reserve a certain percentage of the insurance and licence fees paid by vessel owners to cover the expenses on wreck salvage on their behalf. The Administration has advised that MD can handle the matters relating to sunken vessels inside typhoon shelters pursuant to the existing ordinances and enforcement procedures, and it is not necessary to reserve a sum to cover such expenses.

*Ancillary facilities in typhoon shelters*

29. The Subcommittee has urged the Administration to review the usage and safety of public landing facilities throughout the territory and install a number of additional landing facilities for the convenience and safety of users. The Administration has advised that, in response to the request of the fishermen community in the Tuen Mun district, an additional landing facility outside Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter has been opened for public use since November 2021. Regarding the trade's proposal for building a landing facility in Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter for use by small vessels, the former Transport and Housing Bureau, together with IISO, MD and CEDD, had conducted site visits with relevant stakeholders and consultation on the design proposal. Agreement was reached for building three sets of additional landing facilities: the one located at Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter near Ap Lei Chau Bridge has been opened for public use since 8 August 2023; and the other two sets are located at Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter near Ap Lei Chau Praya Road, the construction works notice of which was gazetted on 6 January 2023. The opinions received during the consultation period had been addressed by the Government in accordance with established procedures. It is expected that the works will commence in the third quarter of 2024. At present, five public landing steps are provided on the northern coast of Ap Lei Chau in Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter for passengers to embark and disembark. The utilization survey on the concerned landing steps previously conducted by the Transport Department ("TD") indicates that there remains spare capacity to cope with more vessels. Moreover, in November 2022, TLB, together with MD and CEDD, met with representatives of fishermen organizations in Cheung Chau to discuss the impact of the reconstruction of the Cheung Chau Ferry Pier in Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter on embarkation of fishermen. Subsequently in September 2023, CEDD and TD consulted representatives of fishermen organizations in Cheung Chau on the project planning for the reconstruction of the Cheung Chau Ferry Pier. 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. Stakeholders will be consulted in due course.

30. As regards water supply in typhoon shelters, the Administration has advised that, in meeting the demand for water supply for shipping purpose, 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 throughout typhoon shelters, piers and other locations for mooring. WSD conducted the Review of Water Supply for Shipping Purposes in mid-2022 to holistically assess the water consumption and supply for shipping purpose across the territory and in different districts. The review was completed in September

2022 and its results showed that the number of vessels and water consumption by vessels across the territory had largely been steady during the period from 2017 to 2021. Nevertheless, WSD has noted that demand for water supply in some districts and typhoon shelters is higher. That might necessitate vessels sailing to WSD's water selling kiosks in other districts or relying on water boats to procure fresh water. In view of the higher demand in some districts, WSD plans to provide additional water selling facilities in Aberdeen, Sai Kung, South Lantau, Tai Po, Kowloon East and Tai O to facilitate procurement of fresh water by vessels in those districts. To further enhance the existing services, WSD is in the process of setting up an automatic shipping water selling machine at the Tuen Mun Water Selling Kiosk under trial to provide a 24-hour water selling service and has invited representatives of the fisheries trade to participate in the trial operation. Subject to positive feedback from the trade and satisfactory trial operation, WSD would consider setting up more similar machines at other water selling kiosks.

31. On the collection of large marine refuse, according to the Administration, MD, noting that fishermen may net marine refuse during their operation, has set up 24-hour hotlines through which fishermen can request MD's arrangement for a refuse collection vessel to collect the netted refuse in the typhoon shelter where their fishing vessels are located. In addition to the hotlines, MD has added other notification channels for fishermen or other marine users to provide contact information by phone or fax for the arrangement of refuse collection services.

32. Given that any local motor vessels, including fishing vessels, will produce waste oils during operation and maintenance, members have expressed concern about the existing arrangements for the collection of waste oils from local vessels. The Administration has explained that these waste oils are usually mixed with various oil products and thus considered Class 3 dangerous goods. The collection, conveyance and storage of these waste oils must therefore comply with the relevant safety regulations and safety standards for the handling of the dangerous goods. The personnel responsible for handling must have undergone relevant training while the contractor concerned must also be qualified and licensed as a chemical waste collector by the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD"). EPD currently provides waste oil collection services to oceangoing 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 they received any relevant safety training, and are therefore not fitted for collecting waste oils. Moreover, as the original design of the onshore Marine Refuse Collection Point facilities did not factor in the collection or storage of vessel waste oils, they did not meet the relevant safety requirements. Therefore, to establish a mechanism for the collection of

waste oil, the Government and the contractors will need time to arrange resources to meet the relevant safety requirements, including hardware construction and personnel training. Before a mechanism is established, fishing vessels can hand over their waste oils to the shipyard during regular maintenance and repairs for collection and delivery to EPD for disposal. In the meantime, MD will work with EPD to explore the feasibility of including in the next marine cleansing service contract the additional services of collecting waste oils from local vessels or other viable options.

33. The Subcommittee has enquired how the Administration would address the problems of poor water quality and odour in typhoon shelters. In response, the Administration has advised that significant resources have been devoted over the years to handle and follow up related water pollution and odour problems, including rectification of sewer misconnections, improvement of the sewage collection and treatment system, and application of Malodour Control Hydrogel at stormwater outfalls with odour problems along the coastal areas of Victoria Harbour and their vicinity on a regular basis. These efforts have brought progressive improvement in both the water quality and odour conditions in the typhoon shelters. The overall water quality of all typhoon shelters in Hong Kong has seen continuous improvements over the past decade. Some of the typhoon shelters located near densely populated areas, such as Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter, New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter and Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter, have all shown long-term increasing trends of dissolved oxygen content in seawater. The Administration will continue to carry out water quality and odour monitoring in various typhoon shelters, review the effectiveness of the aforementioned measures, and implement pragmatic and cost-effective measures taking into account different environmental settings and situations of individual districts, so as to ensure sustainable improvement in water quality and odour conditions in the coastal areas of Victoria Harbour, which encompasses various typhoon shelters.

#### Developing the typhoon shelter economy

34. In the light of the country's vigorous efforts to promote the high-quality development of the marine economy and the development of new energy vessels in recent years, members are concerned about the availability of sufficient berthing spaces in Hong Kong to accommodate future development, in particular that of the pleasure vessel industry. There is an enquiry about the details of Hong Kong's planning for the development of blue tourism and the individual yacht travel scheme, as well as a suggestion that more marina facilities and yacht club sites be provided. It has also been suggested that the Administration should consider requesting yacht clubs to vacate part of their space for public use and the development of recreational

fisheries under the principle of sharing the ocean. There is a call for the Administration to consider providing additional marina areas and other marine facilities at suitable locations, including those in the waters within the inner bay of Tseung Kwan O Cross Bay Link, Yau Tong Bay and Ma Wan.

35. According to the Administration, the IIS initiative announced in the 2020 Policy Address aims to develop the Southern District into a place full of vibrancy for people to work, live, explore new ideas and have fun. One of the main projects under the initiative is the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, with a proposed expansion area of about 24 hectares (including the passage area), to support tourism, leisure and recreational development in the Southern District as well as address the strong regional demand for sheltered spaces, particularly from pleasure vessels. CEDD commenced in April 2023 a consultancy on the investigation, design and construction for the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter. Site investigation works have been completed, and detailed impact assessments, gazetting, detailed design and other related work will be carried out in due course. Construction works are tentatively scheduled to commence in 2025. IISO has formulated proposals for enhancing the waterfronts on both sides of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, including improvement to the leisure facilities at Aberdeen Promenade near the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market, which will provide space that is more flexible for organizing different activities.

36. The Administration has also advised that IISO is collaborating with the Environment and Ecology Bureau, AFCD, the Fish Marketing Organization and other relevant government departments to take forward revitalization of the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market, the project of which include: retail and food and beverage elements as well as a viewing deck to promote the sale of local fisheries products at the retail level and add more leisure and tourism elements to the area; and workshop and exhibition areas to promote local fisherfolk culture and support the sustainable development of fisheries. The Administration has consulted stakeholders on the design concept of the project, and strives to complete the technical feasibility study within 2024.

37. The Subcommittee notes that apart from the IIS initiative, Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter and the adjacent Kai Tak Approach Channel are also envisaged to accommodate a wide range of water sports or recreational activities. Since the promulgation of the Guidelines for Co-using Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter by the Energizing Kowloon East Office and MD in 2017 to promote the safe co-use of Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter by vessels and for water recreation activities during non-typhoon days, a number of organizations have started to organize water sports activities and training courses for the public in the waters there. Now Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter has already been used for dragon boat races, with events such as the 15th Asian Dragon Boat Championships to be held in 2024.

38. To expedite the development of the pleasure vessel industry, the Subcommittee recommends that the Administration relax the restrictions on the navigation of foreign yachts in Hong Kong waters and provide more marina facilities for pleasure vessels. According to the Administration, new measures have been implemented since December 2016 to allow visiting pleasure vessels to apply to MD for the permission to navigate in the waters of Hong Kong after providing MD in advance with details of their berths in Hong Kong and complying with other requirements. For the period from 2017 to October 2023, MD issued 1 690 Permissions to Navigate in the Waters of Hong Kong to visiting pleasure vessels. In addition, the Airport Authority Hong Kong is developing the Airport City Cove, which will comprise of an additional pier and vessel mooring facilities. As regards the suggestion of the provision of a vessel berthing area at Yau Tong Bay, the Administration has indicated that most of the waterfront area at Yau Tong Bay falls within private lots, whose land owners are required to provide public waterfront promenade in their future developments in accordance with the relevant Outline Zoning Plan (“OZP”). Amendments will also be made to such OZP to allow the land owners of designated land lots to provide marina-related landside facilities through planning application. The Administration has explained that any proposal to provide additional berthing facilities at sea would warrant the consideration of various factors, such as the availability of natural barrier protecting the waters against strong winds, water depth and current, the impact imposed on marine traffic in the vicinity, and marine safety. Various government departments will maintain close liaison with the relevant stakeholders to strike a balance between the functions of typhoon shelters as sheltered spaces for local vessels and those of public participation in water sports activities.

39. The Subcommittee is of the view that Hong Kong has an excellent coastline, expansive waters and a distinctive fishing port culture. Hong Kong’s typhoon shelters have economic development potential, making them suited for being developed for cultural and recreational uses and into tourist attractions and fish markets. The Administration should step up its efforts to promote to tourists characteristic itineraries and projects with the themes of the local fishing village culture and typhoon shelters. There is a view that, while focusing its current promotional efforts for typhoon shelter economic activities mainly on the publicity of existing projects, the Government maintains a rather conservative attitude towards providing policy support and making legislative amendments to remove red tape for new tourism products to be created. In order to develop more tourism products with the theme of typhoon shelters, the Administration should not only proactively reach out to stakeholders or members of the local communities to learn about their innovative proposals, but also take the lead in formulating the



strategies and directions for fostering the development of the typhoon shelter economy with the trade. Under the overriding principle of fairness and transparency, the Administration may consider collaborating with organizations to launch commercial projects on a trial basis, so as to actively drive forward the sustainable development of the typhoon shelter economy and related industries.

40. According to the Administration, division of work is different for different bureau and, in respect of the planning and management of typhoon shelters, there is also clear division of work among departments. Whether an individual site can be developed into a tourism spot hinges on its distinctive features and activities that appeal to visitors, as well as adequate ancillary facilities. The Hong Kong Tourism Board has promoted and suggested various itinerary routes, especially in-depth travel which has become popular in recent years, on its website and social media platforms such as Xiaohungshu. Moreover, the Tourism Commission has introduced the Characteristic Local Tourism Incentive Scheme with a view to incentivizing the trade to develop more thematic tourism products. Furthermore, the development of leisure fisheries is one of the focuses in the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries published by the Administration in 2023. Through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund, AFCD has provided funding support for The Fisher, a leisure fisheries programme, in the Southern District. The Administration will continue to organize characteristic touristic activities through the fund. It will also, taking into account navigational and marine safety, explore the feasibility of the dual uses of fishing vessels in the long run so that they can be used for leisure purpose at the same time, as well as the establishment of facilities such as fisheries protection areas and fisherman's wharfs.

41. Some members are of the view that, in order to develop the typhoon shelter economy, the Government should allow greater flexibility for vessels berthing in typhoon shelters to be used for diversified purposes, instead of regulating economic activities on board the vessels in a rigid manner. In Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, for example, there is a suggestion that IISO should engage in more communication with stakeholders and coordinate with various government departments to, subject to food safety, allow vessels to incorporate food and beverage elements (e.g. production of simple snacks or beverages).

42. The Administration has indicated its open stance towards the conduct of economic activities on board vessels berthing in typhoon shelters. That said, pursuant to the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X), a restaurant licence must be obtained from FEHD for the food business which involves the sale of meals or unbottled non-alcoholic drinks for consumption on the premises. For the operation of restaurant business on board a vessel, a

marine restaurant licence is required. Moreover, any locally licensed vessel shall operate in accordance with the terms and restrictions of its licence. A shipowner wishing to change the purpose of the vessel shall submit a fresh application for an appropriate licence to MD. The Administration has also advised that individual organizations with particular ideas about the development of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter can put forward their proposals to IISO, which will play a coordinating and facilitating role.

## **Recommendations**

43. The Subcommittee recommends that the Government should:

### Overall direction of work

- (1) set up a dedicated department to take charge of formulating policies on typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages, as well as coordinating and handling the work involving various bureaux/departments in this area. In formulating the relevant policies, the dedicated department shall:
  - (i) on the basis of complementing the country's high-quality development of the marine economy, comprehensively and macroscopically review the strategy for the development of typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages, and formulate long-term objectives and promotion measures to address the new economic situations;
  - (ii) comprehensively review the needs of different trades for typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages, actively promote the sustainable development of the relevant trades with an open and innovative mindset, and explore ways to make corresponding legislative amendments;
  - (iii) step up public engagement efforts and proactively take on board the professional views of stakeholders and the diversified viewpoints of people from different backgrounds to ensure the formulation of effective and widely recognized policies;

Demand for sheltered spaces and capability of typhoon shelters against typhoon and wave attack

- (2) continue to review and strengthen the capability of various typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages against typhoon and wave attack to prevent the risk of natural disasters, and expeditiously add suitable measures to cope with the trend of increasingly frequent extreme weather in the future;
- (3) enhance the marine emergency response capability of MD and various departments during extreme weather, issue early warnings to and strengthen communication and coordination with vessels, so as to ensure that all vessels can, under all circumstances, safely seek shelter in suitable waters in the vicinity;
- (4) in conducting a new round of the Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements, in addition to giving due consideration to and addressing the views and aspirations of various stakeholders (including the habits of using typhoon shelters of different types of vessels and the actual situations during typhoons), consideration should also be given to assessing the demand for sheltered spaces in the vicinity of urban areas and in remote areas respectively, in order to reach a conclusion that can better meet the actual demand;
- (5) explore all possible measures that can increase the number of berthing spaces for vessels and alleviate the demand for sheltered spaces to cope with future demand. Apart from arranging large works barges to take shelter in safe area of the work sites during typhoons, the feasibility of expanding or optimizing existing typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages and constructing new typhoon shelters should also be actively explored;
- (6) explore measures to facilitate the use of typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages in remote areas by vessels, such as upgrading the relevant ancillary facilities and support services;
- (7) reserve sufficient sheltered spaces in designated areas for use by all working vessels that are unable to return to the typhoon shelters early due to work or other reasons during typhoons;

Management of typhoon shelters

- (8) study the adoption of a modernized management approach to address the management issues of typhoon shelters, step up enforcement, increase penalties, as well as introduce smart technologies to combat various types of illegal activities (including occupation of berthing spaces for private gains, use of pleasure vessels for other purposes and illegal connection of water and electricity supply) through inspection, prosecution, publicity and education, so as to maintain order in typhoon shelters;
- (9) review the effectiveness of the existing operation modes of “first-come-first-served” and “random berthing” adopted for berthing spaces in typhoon shelters, and the effectiveness of the administrative arrangements for the designation of different berthing areas in typhoon shelters for working vessels and pleasure vessels. To enhance management, legislative amendments should be considered to empower the Director of Marine to designate waters for allocation of berthing spaces and provide for penalties for non-compliance;
- (10) review and modify the layout of fairways in typhoon shelters throughout the territory to ensure that all fire boats are able to execute their duties promptly in case of emergency so as to enhance their capability of responding to fire incidents in typhoon shelters;
- (11) expedite the handling of sunken vessels in typhoon shelters and place clear wreck marking buoys at the locations with sunken vessels to enable vessel operators’ identification of the wreck locations to enhance the navigational safety of vessels;
- (12) improve and strengthen various ancillary facilities in typhoon shelters, including increasing or enhancing public landing facilities, fresh water supply kiosks, and collection services for large marine refuse and waste oils from vessels;
- (13) continuously monitor and make improvements to the water quality and pollution in typhoon shelters, especially those near densely populated areas;
- (14) when planning for the construction of new typhoon shelters, study the relaxation of restrictions on the admission of vessels

with length overall exceeding 75 metres and explore ways to implement facilitation measures for sampans, and inform the trade in a timely manner;

Developing the economy of typhoon shelters and their neighbouring sites

- (15) examine the economic development potential of various typhoon shelters and sheltered anchorages, actively promote the development of related industries, and take the lead in formulating the development strategies and directions with the trade;
- (16) step up the promotion of characteristic itineraries and projects covering local fishing village culture, typhoon shelter precincts, etc., and collect innovative ideas for introducing more new projects by proactively reaching out to stakeholders and organizing public engagement activities. Under the overriding principles of fairness and transparency, consideration may be given to collaboration with private organizations to launch projects with creative features;
- (17) allow more flexibility for vessels in typhoon shelters to be used for diversified commercial purposes, and provide relevant facilitation measures and coordination arrangements to enable vessel owners to obtain the relevant operating licences; and
- (18) proactively promote blue tourism and the individual yacht travel scheme, and consider providing additional berthing spaces for yachts and other marine recreational facilities at suitable locations.

**Way forward**

44. The Subcommittee has concluded its work. Members are invited to note the deliberations and recommendations of the Subcommittee set out above.

**Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to  
Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages**

**Terms of reference**

To review the berthing spaces, embarking and disembarking facilities, planning and wind protection capacity of typhoon shelters in Hong Kong, and make recommendations for improving the policies, management, planning and legislation relating to the typhoon shelters in Hong Kong.

**Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to  
Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages**

**Membership list \***

**Chairman** Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS, JP

**Members** Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, GBS, JP  
Hon Judy CHAN Kapui, MH, JP  
Hon CHAN Hok-fung, MH, JP  
Hon Benson LUK Hon-man

(Total : 6 members)

**Clerk** Ms Shirley CHAN

**Legal Adviser** Mr Timothy WU

\* Changes in membership are set out in **Appendix 2A** ◦

**Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to  
Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages**

**Changes in membership**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Relevant date</b>
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP	Up to 18 June 2023



**Subcommittee to Study Matters Relating to  
Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages**

List of organization/individuals which/who have given views to the Subcommittee

1. Designing Hong Kong Limited
2. Hong Kong Fishermen's Youth Association
3. New Bond Limited
4. Hong Kong Cargo Vessel Traders' Association Ltd
5. Mr WONG Chun-wing
6. 香港漁業聯盟
7. Tai Pak Sea-Food Restaurant Limited
8. Mr LEUNG Chi-yan
9. Marine Excursion Association Ltd
10. Mr WONG Yan-hung
11. Asia Boating Ltd
12. Hong Kong Boating Industry Association
13. Hong Kong Fishermen Consortium
14. Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association
15. Tsui Wah Ferry Service (H.K.) Ltd
16. Coral Sea Ferry Service Company Limited
17. 屯門漁民近岸作業協會
18. 香港有機養殖業協會
19. 榕樹凹養魚業協會
- \* 20. 海上業界聯席會議
- \* 21. Eastern Ferry Company Limited
- \* 22. LEUNG Yin-lung
- \* 23. Aberdeen Promenade Fishery's Association
- \* 24. 香港釣網養殖漁民聯會
- \* 25. Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Holdings Limited
- \* 26. Cheung Chau Shore Fishermen Association
- \* 27. Randy CHAN
- \* 28. Liberal Party
- \* 29. N.T. Cargo Transport Association Limited
- \* 30. Hong Kong and Kowloon Fishermen Association Limited
- \* 31. Ma Wan Fisheries Rights Association Limited

- \* 32. 新界大埔漁民合作社有限責任聯合總社
- \* 33. Chinese Dream Think Tank
- \* 34. Mr TANG Wing-chun of Kwun Tong District Council Member
- \* 35. 楊子熙先生
- \* 36. Mr CHUNG Chak-fai, Mr LUK Tsz-fung, Mr GUAN Weixi and Ms Michelle TANG Ming-sum of Yau Tsim Mong District Council Members
- \* 37. Mr TSUI Ming-tak
- \* provided submissions only