

LCQ22: Shatin to Central Link project

Following is a question by the Hon Lam Cheuk-ting and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (June 27):

Question:

During the period from July 2010 to May 2012, the Finance Committee of this Council approved the allocation of funds respectively for carrying out a number of works under the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project, including: (a) Protection Works at Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (58TR), (b) Protection Works in Wan Chai Development Phase II (59TR), (c) Construction of Railway Works – Advance Works (63TR), (d) Construction of Non-railway Works – Advance Works (64TR), (e) Construction of Railway Main Works (61TR), and (f) Construction of Non-railway Main Works (62TR). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) regarding each of the aforesaid works, of (i) the original estimated expenditure and a breakdown of the expenditure, (ii) the latest estimated expenditure/ the final outturn expenditure and a breakdown of the expenditure, and (iii) the reasons leading to differences between the two sets of figures;

(2) of the names of the (i) main contractor(s) and (ii) subcontractor(s) of each of the works; and

(3) given that the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has been entrusted by the Government to undertake the construction, testing and commissioning of SCL, and to provide management and supervision services, how the Government monitors such work undertaken by MTRCL; of the mechanism in place for MTRCL to report to the Government the works progress and irregularities of the works?

Reply:

President,

In response to the three parts of the Hon Lam Cheuk-ting's question, the reply is now as follows:

(1) As regards each of the works under the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project, (i) the original estimated expenditure and a breakdown of the expenditure, (ii) the latest estimated expenditure/ the final outturn expenditure and a breakdown of the expenditure, and (iii) the reasons leading to differences between the two sets of figures are listed at Annex 1.

As regards items 61TR and 62TR of the SCL project, after the Government received the latest cost estimate of the main works of the SCL project from the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) last December, the Highways Department

(HyD), in collaboration with the monitoring and verification (M&V) consultant, has held several meetings with the MTRCL, and has reviewed rigorously the information given by the MTRCL. The HyD has also scrutinised the assumptions and background of the estimates according to the usual practice for government public works projects to ascertain whether there are sufficient reasons for the estimate of the MTRCL. As the SCL project involves many works contracts and there is substantial amount of information for detailed examination, the HyD has requested the MTRCL to provide more information for its detailed review. The review concerned is still under way. Upon completion of the detailed review, the Government will apply for additional funds from the Legislative Council to continue with the works under the SCL project.

(2) Item 58TR is "Shatin to Central Link – construction of railway works – protection works". The main contractor is China State Construction Engineering (HK) Limited and the main subcontractor is Richwell Engineering Limited.

Item 59TR is "Shatin to Central Link – construction of railway works – protection works in Wan Chai Development Phase II". The main contractor is Chun Wo – Leader Joint Venture and the main subcontractors are Sambo E & C Company Limited, Falcon Foundation Engineering Company Limited, Chung Ming Construction Engineering Limited and Tin Wo Engineering Company Limited etc.

Items 63TR and 64TR are "Shatin to Central Link – construction of railway works – advance works" and "Shatin to Central Link – construction of non-railway works – advance works" respectively. The list of major contractors under main contracts and the major sub-contractors are at Annex 2.

Items 61TR and 62TR are "Shatin to Central Link – construction of railway works – remaining works" and "Shatin to Central Link – construction of non-railway works – remaining works" respectively. The list of major contractors under main contracts and the major sub-contractors are at Annex 3.

(3) The Government has had a mechanism to closely monitor the work of the MTRCL, including through the Project Supervision Committee led by the Director of Highways, holding monthly meetings with the Projects Director of MTRCL to review the progress of the SCL project, as well as monitoring procurement activities, post-tender award cost control and resolution of contractual claims. The MTRCL submits monthly progress report to the HyD updating the latest progress and the financial situation of the SCL project. In addition, the HyD and the MTRCL hold monthly Project Coordination Meetings and Project Progress Meetings to monitor the progress of every item of works under the project and to deal with matters relating to design, construction and environment which may have potential impact on the progress and programme of the project and interface with other projects. Through the above arrangement of three-tier framework, the MTRCL needs to report to the HyD on matters which have substantial impact on the SCL project such as works progress, cost and safety etc. The HyD has also engaged a M&V consultant to assist the department in monitoring and auditing the works. The M&V

consultant will also report on whether there are risks of slippage in the progress of the projects and advise the HyD on the appropriateness of the delay recovery measures proposed by the MTRCL. The Director of Highways also holds project progress meetings with the Secretary for Transport and Housing (the Secretary) on a monthly basis and submits reports to the Secretary on the progress of the project and to raise any important matters relating to the project as required.

SCS visits Immigration Department (with photos)

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, visited the Immigration Department today (June 27) to learn more about the upcoming work plan of the department and meet with its management and front-line staff to exchange views on matters of concern.

Accompanied by the Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Thomas Chow, Mr Law met with the Director of Immigration, Mr Erick Tsang, and the directorate staff to get an update on their work in immigration control, visa policies, issue of travel documents, law enforcement and the like.

Mr Law then visited the 24-hour Enterprise System Management Centre to learn more about how the department employs the Centre to monitor the operation of all computer systems for flexible deployment of its front-line manpower.

He later proceeded to the International Co-operation Section, where he was briefed by staff of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit on the work of providing assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress outside Hong Kong.

Before concluding his visit, Mr Law met with staff representatives of various grades at a tea gathering to exchange views on matters that concerned them. He expressed appreciation for colleagues' dedication and encouraged them to continue to provide efficient and quality services to members of the public and visitors.



EDB launches consultation on extension of retirement age for newly joined aided school teachers

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (June 27) launched a consultation exercise on a proposal to extend the retirement age for newly joined teachers of aided schools from 60 to 65.

Views will be sought from the education sector and stakeholders on, among other things, the target group of the new retirement age policy and the necessary adjustments to the arrangements for government donation to teachers' provident funds. The consultation period will last until September 7.

The Consultation Document on Extension of Retirement Age for Newly-joined Aided School Teachers has been uploaded to the EDB website (www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/openconsultretireage/index.html) for public viewing.

Views can be submitted by post (Education Bureau, 2/F, Trade and Industry Tower, 3 Concorde Road, Kowloon), by fax (2520 0065) or by email

(consultretirementage@edb.gov.hk).

The EDB will also conduct three open consultation sessions to gather feedback from the education sector and stakeholders. The details are as follows:

Date: July 4 (Wednesday), July 9 (Monday) and July 18 (Wednesday)

Time: 6.30pm to 8pm

Venue: Room WB, 4/F, West Block, EDB Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre, 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong

Language: Cantonese

Reservations for seats at the open consultation sessions can be made on a first-come, first-served basis on the following website:

<http://survey2.hkedcity.net/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=92L07o7>. Enquiries about the open consultation sessions can be made by calling the EDB on 3467 8281 or 3467 8282.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley today (June 27). The arrangements will come into effect one and a half hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp outside Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) will be closed except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the up-ramp outside HKJC will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Vehicles from eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road except for vehicles heading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to

Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and

- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements during the race meeting

1. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- The up-ramp on Wong Nai Chung Road outside HKJC leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the Public Stands of HKJC;
- Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East; and
- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of HKJC will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

The following traffic arrangements will be implemented from 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
- Vehicles from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Vehicles from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic on southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of

time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

LCQ6: Leak of public examination papers

Following is a question by the Hon Regina Ip and a reply by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (June 27):

Question:

In recent years, there have been a number of incidents of suspected leak of public examination papers. Although the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) has repeatedly stated that it attaches great importance to preserving the secrecy of examination papers and a mechanism is in place to tightly monitor and control the processes of design, review, printing, packing and distribution of examination papers, and that all personnel appointed or employed by HKEAA shall, under the law, preserve secrecy with regard to all matters coming to their knowledge in the performance of any function, some members of the public have indicated that they remain doubtful. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows if HKEAA, in the past three years, enhanced the mechanism for monitoring and preventing the leak of examination papers as

well as for reporting suspected cases to the Independent Commission Against Corruption;

(2) whether the Education Bureau (EDB) will review the mechanism for its monitoring the performance of HKEAA; if EDB will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it knows the number of incidents of a leak of examination papers in the past five years in which HKEAA had obtained evidence on the leak; whether it has assessed if such incidents have reflected a dereliction of duty on the part of the personnel of EDB or HKEAA; if it has assessed, of the outcome?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) was set up under the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Ordinance (HKEAAO) (Hong Kong Ordinances, Cap. 261) in 1977. It is an independent statutory body. Its major function is to administer public examinations in Hong Kong and to conduct various professional and international examinations. The HKEAA utilises its own income and assets to support its daily operation according to the HKEAAO and does not receive any recurrent subvention from the Government. It enjoys autonomy in its day-to-day operation. The members of the HKEAA are drawn from various sectors, including tertiary institutions, schools, business and the Government. Apart from ex-officio members and members nominated by the Heads of Universities Committee, other members are appointed by the Chief Executive to perform the statutory functions of the HKEAA, which include monitoring the work of its Secretariat.

My reply to the questions raised by the Hon Regina Ip is as follows:

(1) The HKEAA has put in place a series of stringent measures and clear guidelines to ensure that public examinations are arranged and administered by examination personnel with strict confidentiality in accordance with the guidelines. According to Section 15 of the HKEAAO (Note), every person appointed or employed by the HKEAA shall preserve secrecy with regard to all matters coming to his knowledge in the performance of any function. Any person who contravenes the secrecy requirements commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine and to imprisonment for six months. This provision is applicable to examination personnel appointed by the HKEAA to assist in the administration of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), including centre supervisors and invigilators nominated by school principals who are also abided by the secrecy requirements. Markers, oral examiners and other examination personnel hired by the HKEAA must sign a confidentiality agreement and declare interest when they are appointed. The HKEAA also reminds examination personnel to maintain the confidentiality requirement during briefing sessions and in the guidelines for markers/oral examiners. Fairness and confidentiality in public examinations are of the utmost importance to the HKEAA. HKEAA staff would report to law enforcement agencies according to the established mechanism and

guidelines should there be any suspected cases identified.

The HKEAA has also put in place a rigorous mechanism to ensure confidentiality of examination questions. Stringent security protocols and processes of designing, reviewing, printing, packing and distributing examination papers are established and implemented on the recommendations of the Corruption Prevention Department of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). Each year, the HKEAA conducts comprehensive post-HKDSE reviews on the relevant arrangements and processes. These post-examination reviews and different types of internal audits are carried out to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that different risks associated with the HKDSE can be monitored and managed at a satisfactory level. To maintain the fairness, integrity and reliability of public examinations, the HKEAA seeks and heeds advice on improvement from the Corruption Prevention Department of ICAC from time to time. For example, on the advice of ICAC, the HKEAA has enhanced the guideline on nomination of invigilators by schools for the 2018 HKDSE. School principals have been advised against nominating as invigilators any person who has any association with tutorial schools.

(2) The HKEAA is an independent statutory body, performing its statutory function to conduct public examinations in Hong Kong in accordance with the HKEAAO. The HKEAA Council is the highest governing body for making decisions on and approving major plans, budgets, policies and regulations of the HKEAA, as well as appointing senior executives of the Secretariat. It also appoints standing committees which carry out their work in accordance with their prescribed terms of reference to support the governance of the HKEAA, or set up working groups and sub-committees to take on important tasks. The Permanent Secretary for Education or his representative serves as an ex-officio member of the HKEAA and the Education Bureau is also represented on different committees to take part in its governance. Besides, under the HKEAAO, the HKEAA is required to submit its annual estimates of income and expenditure and programme of its proposed activities to the Government for approval, and to table its annual audited accounts and report of activities at the Legislative Council every year.

The above governance structure serves to effectively monitor the daily operation of HKEAA. The HKEAA Council supervises the operation and conduct of examinations from a strategic and macro perspective. Its relevant standing committee (namely the Public Examinations Board) oversees the implementation of public examinations.

The statutory function of the HKEAA is to plan and administer public examinations. The HKEAA is committed to ensuring the conduct of public examinations in a fair, effective and reliable manner. Under the supervision of the HKEAA Council, there is a stringent and well-proven mechanism in place to monitor the conduct of public examinations. The HKEAA will continue to strictly enforce procedures to safeguard confidentiality and will report any suspected breach to law enforcement agencies according to the existing guidelines.

(3) According to the latest information provided by the HKEAA, there is no incident of suspected leak of examination questions before examinations take

place since the implementation of the HKDSE in 2012, and there is no dereliction of duty on the part of any staff. As to suspected incidents of not preserving secrecy, the HKEAA pointed out that there were only one confirmed case (involving uploading the marking schemes and oral questions of the 2012 HKDSE onto a tutorial website) while the few other suspected cases had been handled by the HKEAA in accordance with the established mechanism.

Thank you, President.

Note: Section 15(1) of the HKEAAO prescribes that "every person who has been appointed under or who is or has been employed in carrying out or assisting any person to carry out the provisions of this Ordinance –

(a) shall preserve and aid in preserving secrecy with regard to all matters coming to his knowledge in the exercise or performance of any duty or function under this Ordinance;

(b) shall not communicate any such matter to any person; and

(c) shall not suffer or permit any person to have access to any records in the possession, custody or control of any person to whom this subsection applies."