

LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 10th Meeting

Date : 29 August 2011 (Monday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Place : Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building

Present

Chairman:	Mr. Francis LIU	Deputy Director, Marine Department (MD)
Members:	Mr. LO Ngok-yang, Ken	Representing Ship Building and Repairing Industry
	Ms. Vivian HO	Representing Marine Insurance Industry
	Mr. LUK Pak-hung	Representing Seafarers' Training
	Mr. LAI Hoi-ping	Representing Seafarers' Associations
	Mr. WONG Miu-sang	Representing Cargo Vessels' Operations
	Mr. KWOK Tak-kee	Representing Launch & Excursion Vessels' Operations
	Mr. CHAK Kwok-leung	Representing Ferry Vessels' Operations
	Mr. TSUI Wai-hung	Representing Hong Kong Police Force
	Mr. WONG Chi-kin	GM/LVS, MD
	Mr. CHAN Hon-bun	GM/Ops (Ag.), MD
Secretary:	Ms. Ivy CHAN	EO(C&G), MD

In Attendance

Mr. Roger TUPPER, JP	Director of Marine (DM)
Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai	Hong Kong & Kowloon Floating Fisherman Welfare Promotion Association
Mr. WONG Yiu-kan	Hong Kong Cargo-Vessel Traders' Association Ltd
Dr. HO Chi-shing, David	Hong Kong Ferry (Holdings) Co Ltd
Mr. PANG Wah-kan	Hong Kong Fishermen's Association
Mr. KWOK Chi-hong	Marine Excursion Association Ltd
Mr. CHEUNG Yau-kwong	Marine Excursion Association Ltd.
Ms. CHING Ngon-lai	Small Craft Workers Union
Capt. WU Ka-shun	Hong Kong Shipping Staff Association
Mr. CHAN Wo-pak	Hong Kong Apleichau Machinery Traders Association
Mr. WEN Tsz-kit, Bondy	Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Ltd.

Mr. Walter LEUNG	Senior Engineer, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Mr. Terry CHUNG	Engineer, CEDD
Mr. Peter LEE	Technical Director, AECOM Asia Company Ltd.
Mr. Johnny LEUNG	Senior Resident Engineer, AECOM Asia Company Ltd.

Absent with Apologies

Mr. TAM Mo-pun	Representing Naval Architects
Mr. LANG Aimin	Representing Ship Survey Work
Mr. ZENG Ji-wei	Representing River Trade Cargo Operations
Mr. Ambrose LO	Representing Pleasure Boating Operations
Hon. WONG Yung-kan, S.B.S, J.P.	Representing Fishing Industry

Presentation of Papers

No. 4/2011	Mr. LEUNG Siu-chee	SMO/PSA, MD
	Mr. Frank F H LAU	General Manager (Projects), The Hongkong Electric Co., Ltd. (HEC)
	Ir. Y L KWAN	Chief Mechanical Engineer, HEC
	Mr. Richard COLWILL	Managing Director, BMT Asia Pacific Ltd.
	Mr. Wilson KWAN	Senior Marine Engineer, BMT Asia Pacific Ltd.
No. 5/2011	Mr. Jonathan HSU	Consultant, BMT Asia Pacific Ltd.
	Mr. NG Kwok-cheung, Norman	Engineer, CEDD
	Mr. CHAN Siu-yuen	Associate Director, Arup Hong Kong Ltd.
No. 6/2011	Mr. YIP Man-kit	Senior Engineer, Arup Hong Kong Ltd.
	Mr. WONG Chi-kin	GM/LVS, MD
No. 7/2011 and No. 8/2011	Mr. LAI Ying-keung	SS/CRT, MD

I. Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He said that Mr. Roger TUPPER, DM would retire soon and would like to take the opportunity to express his thanks to members. Mr. TUPPER expressed his heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all members for their efforts made and their time given for serving this Committee. He was very grateful to have members representing different industries/sectors tendering their valuable advice through this Committee as MD had to rely very much on these advice

so as to gain a more comprehensive appreciation of the needs of the industry and various issues related to local vessels (e.g. safety practices in the industry and technical aspects of different operations). In spite of various challenges ahead, he believed that the work of this Committee would continue to be very helpful and useful, and the industry and MD could continue to work together closely through this Committee.

[Mr. Roger TUPPER, DM left the meeting at this juncture.]

2. The Chairman then extended welcome to the following attendees:

Member

- Mr. CHAN Hon-bun, GM/Ops (Ag.) of MD, attending the meeting for the first time vice Mr. BUTT Lee-yuen

Attendees for discussing the Kai Tak Development Project

- Mr. Walter LEUNG
- Mr. Terry CHUNG
- Mr. Peter LEE
- Mr. Johnny LEUNG

Attendees who would present the LVAC Papers at the meeting

- Mr. LEUNG Siu-chee
- Mr. Frank F H LAU
- Ir. Y L KWAN
- Mr. Richard COLWILL
- Mr. Wilson KWAN
- Mr. Jonathan HSU
- Mr. NG Kwok-cheung, Norman
- Mr. CHAN Siu-yuen
- Mr. YIP Man-kit
- Mr. WONG Chi-kin
- Mr. LAI Ying-keung

II. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

3. The minutes of the 9th meeting held on 30.3.2011 had been circulated to members for endorsement. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without any amendments.

III. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

LVAC Paper No. 14/2009 – “Review of Air Quality Objectives”

4. The Chairman said that as advised by the Environmental Protection Department, the report of the trial had been submitted to the Monitoring Committee for consideration. It was expected that the report would be finalized around the third quarter of 2011.

LVAC Paper No. 4/2010 – “Kai Tak Development – Kai Tak Approach Channel and Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter Improvement Works (Phase 1)”

5. The Chairman said that members had raised concern at the last meeting that the use of calcium nitrate might affect the efficiency of the cooling systems of ship engines. He invited CEDD and the AECOM Asia Company Ltd. to further explain the effect of calcium nitrate so as to address the members’ concern. Mr. Peter LEE explained that there might be two concerns (i.e. problems of corrosion and scaling) arising from the use of bio-remediation treatment of sediment. For the problem of corrosion, CEDD had explained in their previous memo that there would be no direct chemical reaction between calcium nitrate and aluminum/copper alloy in the presence of seawater in Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter of alkaline nature with pH range from 7.4 to 8. The above explanation should be able to address the concern about corrosion. As for the concern of scaling, the potential of scaling would be largely related to the mineral (mainly calcium and magnesium) contents of the water body, which are normally at relatively high levels in seawater. For the proposed bioremediation works, the calcium nitrate would be injected into the sediment direct but not into the seawater and the biochemical reaction would occur within a short period of time. In accordance with the results of the field trials conducted in 2006 and 2008, the amount of calcium nitrate loss into the seawater was negligible. The results showed that for the worst scenario, the total concentration of mineral elements in seawater had only increased by about 0.3%. As the problem of scaling would hinge on the mineral (mainly calcium and magnesium) composition of the seawater, he considered the above supplementary information should have addressed members’ concern about the impacts of bioremediation treatment works. Members had no further comment on the explanations by the CEDD’s consultant.

[Mr. Walter LEUNG, Mr. Terry CHUNG and representatives of AECOM Asia Company Ltd. left the meeting at this juncture.]

LVAC Paper No. 2/2011 – “Proposal to Set up an Enhanced Management Mechanism for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Locally Licensed Vessels”

6. The Chairman said that a briefing session would be held in late 2011 to inform the industry and all parties concerned of the finalized details of the notification system. It was planned that the notification system would be implemented in mid-2012. A letter would then be issued to shippers and companies concerned to inform them of the new requirements and to request their cooperation to provide the requisite information to the operators.

LVAC Paper No. 3/2011 – “Inspection Arrangements and Requirements for Class IV Vessels Carrying Not More Than 60 Passengers but Let for Hire or Reward ”

7. The Chairman said that DM had issued the extension of the current authorization with the Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration to cover the survey of local pleasure vessels with effect from 20.4.2011. As regards the one-off exceptional arrangements concerning the requirement of on-slip inspections for pleasure vessels carrying not more than 60 passengers and let for hire as agreed at the last meeting, MD had notified the industry of the arrangements and the arrangements had been implemented on 1.4.2011.
8. Mr. WONG Chi-kin said that there was so far no reported problem from the industry regarding the implementation of the above arrangements. However, he had received an enquiry from Mr. SHEK Wah-yau concerning the number of required person(s) for operating a Class IV vessel. Mr. CHAN Hon-bun clarified that according to the “Code of Practice – Safety Standards for Class IV Vessels”, Class IV vessel could be operated by combined coxswain and engine operator depending on the vessel’s length and number of passengers permitted to carry. However, the Code also stipulated that for Class IV vessel engaged in let for hire or reward service, there should be at least one additional crew member on board to assist the coxswain and thus the minimum number of crew for operating the vessel should be two. When the vessel was not engaged in let for hire or reward service, the minimum number of crew should be one.

Sufficiency of shipyards in Hong Kong

9. Mr. WONG Chi-kin said that shipyards used for repairing wooden vessels could be converted into shipyards for repairing glass reinforced plastic vessels provided that the conversion could meet the requirements of classification society. MD actually

had no specific requirements on the conversion. As mentioned at the last meeting, the subject would be further discussed at the meeting of the Sub-committee on Survey Work of Local Vessels to be held on 20.9.2011.

Membership of LVAC Sub-committees

10. The Chairman said that the Secretary had sent the proposed membership lists of the six LVAC Sub-committees to LVAC members for endorsement on 7.6.2011. All LVAC members had endorsed the proposed membership and the members of the six Sub-committees had been appointed/re-appointed for a period of two years with effect from 20.7.2011.

IV. New Discussion Items

LVAC Paper No. 4/2011 – Offshore Wind Farm in Hong Kong

11. Mr. Wilson KWAN briefed members on the details of the offshore wind farm that was proposed for development to the southwest of Lamma Island. Members were invited to give their views and comments on the proposed development.
12. Mr. LAI Hoi-ping asked if the electro-magnetic interference from turbines would affect the radio communication of vessels. He would also like to know the areas of the proposed safety zone and whether it would affect safety of navigation in the areas. Mr. Wilson KWAN responded that based on research and operational practice in Europe, there should be no adverse impact on radio communications of vessels. As for the concern of the safety zone, it was only advisory for vessels not to enter the areas within 50m of turbines and actually no mandatory exclusion zone had been proposed. Mr. LAI requested the consultant to provide additional information on the impact of the electro-magnetic interference on the radio communications of vessels. Mr. KWAN said that there was relevant information which could be made available for members' reference later.

[Post-meeting note: The consultant advised that members could visit the following link for more information about the effects of offshore wind farms on marine radar, navigation and communication systems:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/mca/mcga-safety_information/nav-com/offshore-renewable_energy_in_stallations/mcga_north_hoyle_windfarm_report.htm]

13. Mr. KWOK Chi-hong, Mr. LAI Hoi-ping and Mr. KWOK Tak-kee raised concerns about the location of the proposed wind farm as it was very close to an anchorage which was just 3 km away. They considered that the risk of developing a wind farm there was very high, as there might be drifting vessels from the anchorage, especially in case of engine failure during typhoons, and this was uncontrollable. As there were many large vessels (including oil barges) which dropped anchors in that anchorage, the consequence could be very serious and might result in oil spills in case of oil barges. The Chairman also shared that this practical concern had to be addressed and some measures had to be worked out (e.g. arranging tugs to standby in that areas). Mr. Wilson KWAN responded that the wind farm was “porous” and the actual areas for turbines only covered less than 10% of the wind farm site. Having said that, he agreed to further examine the potential hazard. He added that HEC was currently developing emergency response framework and examining the required resources (e.g. operation & maintenance vessels with oil spill clean-up capabilities) for management of such incidents.
14. Mr. PANG Wah-kan said that according to the paper, the traffic activities across the proposed wind farm were approximately three to four movements per hour. He enquired the basis of this survey data. Mr. Wilson KWAN replied that they had captured the traffic over a month in accordance with the MD’s criteria. Various information including data from visual surveys, MD’s radar data and automatic identification system data had been collected and cross-referenced so as to understand the traffic patterns across the proposed wind farm.
15. Dr. David HO asked about the distribution of cables under the water and whether there would be an anchor exclusion zone. Mr. Wilson KWAN replied that no exclusion was proposed. There were different ways of protecting the cables and the details would be worked out at a later stage. Ir. Y L KWAN added that normally the cables would be buried 3-5m below the seabed and suitable protection of cables would be provided.
16. Dr. David HO raised the concern about the noise level of the turbines and asked whether the noise generated would affect residents of Lamma Island and Cheung Chau. Ir. Y L KWAN responded that the noise would be at an acceptable level as an environmental impact assessment had been conducted for the proposed wind farm and an Environmental Permit had been granted on 8.6.2010.
17. Capt. WU Ka-shun asked whether there would be a contingency plan for the operation of the proposed wind farm and if yes, whether the plan would be submitted

for members' comments once ready. Ir. Y L KWAN said that HEC was developing a contingency plan and would consider consulting the parties concerned when necessary. The Chairman pointed out that in case the plan had any impacts on port operations and the industry, consultation of the relevant parties had to be arranged.

18. Mr. TSUI Wai-hung noted that the areas within 50m of turbines were only an advisory safety zone. He considered that without any legal basis, it would be very difficult to carry out enforcement to limit waterborne access to areas of the turbines. Mr. Wilson KWAN responded that HEC actually had no authority to restrict waterborne access around turbines and actions could only be taken in case someone climbed up the turbines which were the assets of HEC. It was proposed to raise the access above sea level to make "casual" access more difficult. HEC would monitor the wind farm site by CCTV and send vessels to the site to take necessary actions when required. An Emergency Response framework would also be worked out to manage the activities within the wind farm site.
19. Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai suggested HEC to arrange members to pay a visit to the wind farm in other countries so as to facilitate members' understanding of the operation of the wind farm. The Chairman said that it would be up to HEC to consider what was the best way to facilitate members' understanding of the subject.
20. In response to Mr. KWOK Chi-hong's enquiry on the project stage of the proposed wind farm, Ir. Y L KWAN responded that the site selection had been completed and an Environmental Permit had also been obtained. The next stage was to collect the relevant data (such as wind and wave) at the site.
21. Mr. LEUNG Siu-chee said that concerning the risk management, the consultant had conducted risk assessment and recommended various control measures (e.g. set-up of control room, monitoring the site with CCTV surveillance and deployment of regular support vessels at the site) in order to detect any risks as early as possible and take appropriate follow-up actions. He agreed that the consultant should further examine the potential risks associated with its proximity to the anchorages south of Lamma Island and propose corresponding mitigation measures.
22. Mr. KWOK Tak-kee suggested the consultant to further develop the issues contained in the paper for members' re-consideration as members had raised various concerns and comments on the proposal. The Chairman said that the consultant should examine members' concerns and comments in detail and take these into account when working out the details related to the operation of the wind farm.

[Mr. LEUNG Siu-chee, Mr. Frank F H LAU, Ir. Y L KWAN, Mr. Richard COLWILL, Mr. Wilson KWAN and Mr. Jonathan HSU left the meeting at this juncture.]

LVAC Paper No. 5/2011 – Cross Bay Link, Tseung Kwan O

23. Mr. YIP Man-kit briefed members on the details of the proposed project of Cross Bay Link (CBL) in Tseung Kwan O (TKO). Members were invited to give their views and comments on the proposal.
24. Mr. WONG Yiu-kan said that Junk Bay was previously considered to be suitable as typhoon shelter space for local vessels of length more than 50m. He expressed concern about the sufficiency of typhoon shelter space for these vessels after the construction of CBL. Besides, to cater for the transit of local barges (e.g. dumb steel lighters near the dumping site), he suggested that the net navigable height of CBL should be at least 43m. He also proposed that to ease the heavy road traffic in TKO, CEDD should consider facilitating the water-borne transport by setting up some port facilities (e.g. piers for loading and unloading).
25. Mr. YIP Man-kit responded that the proposed CBL was sited in an area of little traffic activity. Despite this, to cater for vessels which might transit under CBL in future (e.g. rivertrade coastal cargo vessels), a charted vertical clearance of at least 17m would be provided. As the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) had proposed to set up a water sports centre in that area, it appeared that cargo handling or the suggested typhoon shelter activities might not be compatible with these facilities. Mr. CHAN Siu-yuen added that given the technical constraint of the gradient of CBL, the proposed charted vertical clearance of 17m was already the allowable maximum height. As Sai Kung District Council had requested to have a cycle track in CBL, the gradient of CBL could not exceed 3% incline. Besides, with no carriageway in that area, there was no road infrastructure to support loading and unloading activities even though piers had been set up there.
26. The Chairman asked whether there were more concrete details of the proposed water sports centre and whether CBL could cater for the transit of various kinds of sailing boats for different activities. Mr. Norman NG replied that LCSD had asked Architectural Services Department to conduct a feasibility study of the proposed water sports centre and the details of the project were not yet available at this stage. Mr. YIP Man-kit said that CBL could cater for the transit of sailing boats for the International Sailing Federation – Olympic Class with height of around 9m to 10m.

27. Capt. WU Ka-shun enquired whether there would be public pier for pleasure vessels in view of the set-up of the proposed water sports centre. Mr. YIP Man-kit replied that there were existing public landing steps for boarding for pleasure vessels. Mr. Norman NG said that the project of CBL would take into account the requirements and concerns arising from the operation of the proposed water sports centre. However, the proposed water sports centre was actually not part of the project of CBL. He then elaborated more on the background of the proposed CBL and said that the proposed CBL would link to Lam Tin Tunnel with an objective to ease the heavy traffic flow of the existing TKO Tunnel and TKO town centre generated from further developments in TKO.
28. Capt. WU Ka-shun said that having regard to the possible traffic congestion in future, the setting up of public pier for passengers to facilitate water-borne transport might also be considered. Mr. YIP Man-kit confirmed that they had taken this scenario into account when conducting the navigation simulation and fast ferry (if any) would be able to pass comfortably underneath CBL.

[Mr. Norman NG, Mr. CHAN Siu-yuen and Mr. YIP Man-kit left the meeting at this juncture.]

LVAC Paper No. 6/2011 – Amendments to the “Code of Practice – Safety Standards for Class IV Vessels”

29. Mr. WONG Chi-kin presented the paper in detail. He highlighted that the Code of Practice (the Code) for Class IV vessels published in late 2006 was modelled on the requirements of Classes I, II & III vessels. After implementation of the Code, MD had received comments from the industry that they had practical difficulties in following some of the requirements and thus there was an imminent need to amend the Code for Class IV vessels. The Sub-committee of Survey Work of Local Vessels, the Sub-committee on Class IV Vessels and relevant pleasure vessels associations had been consulted in April/May 2011 and objection to the proposed amendments had not been received so far. However, some comments concerning the Code for Classes I, II & III vessels had been received. He said that the review of the Code for Classes I, II & III vessels was underway and these comments would be taken into account during the review. Members were invited to give their views and comments on the proposed amendments of the Code for Class IV vessels.

30. Mr. KWOK Tak-kee said that safety should be a prime concern in revising the Code. He noted that the requirement of noise level (not exceeding 85 dB(A)) for passenger space for Class IV vessels had been waived. In view of this and the fact that there was no such restriction for other public transportations, he suggested such requirement should also be exempted for Classes I, II & III vessels. If it could not be exempted, MD should consider relaxing the limit of noise level. Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai said that once the review of the Code for Classes I, II & III vessels had been completed, the proposed amendments should be sent to the industry for comments as early as practicable. He also suggested that the proposed amendments for different classes of vessels be bound into different sets for easy reference. Mr. WONG Chi-kin responded that the above comments would be taken into account when reviewing the Code for Classes I, II & III vessels.
31. Ms. CHING Ngon-lai said that there were discrepancies between the vessel operator requirements set out in the revised table under paragraph 2.1, Chapter IX of the Code (e.g. the mention of 300 tons in item (c)) and the requirements under the new legislation (i.e. Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance, Cap. 548). Mr. KWOK Chi-hong said that there should be a table clearly setting out the equivalence between the requirements under the previous and new legislation. Mr. WONG Chi-kin undertook to further check with the Seafarers' Certification Section and to amend the table accordingly, if required.
32. Mr. KWOK Tak-kee commented that in view of the safety concern, the Seafarers' Certification Section should be more prudent in issuing the Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Certificate. Mr. CHEUNG Yau-kwong said that the operator was only required to attend a written examination and the existing procedures for applying the Certificate were quite simplified. He agreed that the requirements for issuing the Certificate could be enhanced. Mr. LAI Ying-keung said that there were two parts of the written examination (Part A: Navigation, Seamanship and Safety and Part B: Engineering Knowledge) and the examination was carried out through an interactive multiple-choice computer system. There was no practical examinations. In response to the enquiry from Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai on the design of multiple-choice questions of the examination, Mr. LAI responded that the examination questions were issued to applicants by the computer system randomly and thus the questions varied for different candidates in an examination. Mr. KEUNG suggested MD to consider imposing mandatory practical training requirements for operators so as to enhance their familiarity of the operations of pleasure vessels.

33. The Chairman said that the current format of examinations had made reference to the practices of other countries. Besides, based on the investigation of the related accidents of pleasure vessels, there was no evidence to suggest that the accidents were caused by the new operators' unfamiliarity with the operation of pleasure vessels. In pursuing any changes of the examination system which required legislative amendments, supporting figures (e.g. the number of accidents involved) were required to justify the need of such change. Having said that, MD would continue to closely monitor the related figures and review the system if required.
34. Member had no further comments on the paper. The Chairman concluded that except the vessel operator requirements in the table under paragraph 2.1 which required further clarification, other proposed amendments of the Code were endorsed.

LVAC Paper No. 7/2011 – Result of Consultation on an Additional Grade to Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificate of Competency

35. Mr. LAI Ying-keung presented the paper in detail. He pointed out that in view of the comments from Sub-committee members, the proposal of introducing a new Grade 3 Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificate for small pleasure vessels operating within marinas would not be further pursued. The Chairman invited members to offer their comments on the paper. Members agreed with the recommendation and had no further comments on the paper.

LVAC Paper No. 8/2011 – Amendments to the Examination Rules for Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificate of Competency

36. Mr. LAI Ying-keung presented the paper in detail and explained the background of the proposed amendments of the Examination Rules to allow candidates holding Hong Kong and Macau Travel Permit (thereafter referred as “permit holders”) to sit for the Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificate of Competency examinations. Members were invited to give their views and comments on the proposed amendments.
37. Mr. CHEUNG Yau-kwong opined that allowing permit holders to sit for the examination would cause competition to local pleasure vessel operators. Ms. CHING Ngon-lai commented that there would be great implications of allowing Mainland residents to sit for examinations as Mainland residents, after getting the certificates, might work in Hong Kong operating pleasure vessels which would affect local labour. She proposed that permit holders had to prove their ownership of pleasure vessels before applying for the examinations.

38. Mr. TSUI Wai-hung said that as passport holders who were not local residents were permitted to take the examinations, he considered that permit holders could also sit for the examination for the sake of fairness. He opined that getting a Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificate and working in Hong Kong to operate a vessel were two separate matters. Mainland residents working in Hong Kong would need to apply for employment visa and failure to do so would breach the conditions of stay.
39. The Chairman said that the existing examination rules did allow non-local residents to take examinations. The proposed amendments to the Examination Rules for allowing permit holders to apply for examinations were only technical amendments. Such amendments were required in view of fairness so that all non-local residents with approved identity document (passports or Hong Kong and Macau Travel Permits) could also sit for the examinations. He added that while he understood the concern raised by Ms. CHING, requiring permit holders to prove their ownership of vessels before being allowed to sit for examinations would discriminate against them as there was no such requirement for other applicants. He stressed that there was legislation in place to govern Mainland residents working in Hong Kong, and the employment issue and the criteria for applying for examinations should not be lumped together. Mr. KWOK Tak-kee supported the proposed amendments as it would be fair to the permit holders.
40. Mr. LUK Pak-hung asked whether the proposal would affect the waiting time of Hong Kong residents in applying for examinations. Mr. LAI Ying-keung replied that examinations would be arranged regularly and the examination schedules were uploaded to the Internet. Applications would be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis. Presently, no complaints had been received concerning the waiting time of examinations. He added that for Classes I, II & III vessels, only local residents were permitted to apply for the certificates which were different from the requirements of pleasure vessel operators.
41. Mr. LO Ngok-yang, Ken asked if a Macau resident holding Macau Identity Card could also take the examination. Mr. LO was informed that Macau Identity Card was considered as one of the approved identify documents and thus the above-mentioned Macau resident could also apply for the examination.
42. Capt. WU Ka-shun expressed his concern over the safety of operating pleasure vessels as non-local residents might not be familiar with the environment in Hong Kong. The Chairman said that there was already an established examination system

so as to ensure the standard of pleasure vessel operators. An applicant who could pass the examination should meet the required standards for operating the pleasure vessels.

43. Members had no further comments on the paper and the paper was endorsed.

V. Any Other Business

Land to the east of Ap Lai Chau Praya Road

44. Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai expressed his thanks to MD for its support to retain the industrial use of the above land at a meeting of the Town Planning Board. He appreciated MD's support to the industry and hoped that MD would continue to be supportive in industry-related issues in future. The Chairman said that MD had all along considered the needs of the industry and expressed MD's support when required.

Land use of several typhoon shelters

45. A letter from the Joint Conference of Hong Kong Marine Sectors expressing its views concerning the preservation of the existing use of the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter (KTTS) and To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter (TKWTS) was tabled at the meeting. Mr. WONG Yiu-kan said that recently, there were proposals of changing the existing use of these two typhoon shelters to other uses (e.g. for recreational use). As typhoon shelters which could be used by barges with length from 30m to 50m were limited, KTTS and TKWTS were very important to them. Altering the use of KTTS and TKWTS would have a great impact on the industry. In view of the limited typhoon shelter space in east Kowloon, he considered that the existing use of KTTS and TKWTS should be retained. Apart from this, he would also like to express his views on a case concerning the land use of a site at Hoi Fai Road fronting the New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter discussed at a Town Planning Board meeting on 24.6.2011. The industry objected to the proposed change of land use of this site and would like to retain the existing use of "Government, Institution or Community" so that the site could be developed as permanent ship inspection areas. However, representative of MD advised at the meeting that there was no need to utilize the site for relocation of MD's Harbour Patrol Section's (HPS) Office or for other marine-related uses. Consequently, the Town Planning Board rejected the representation from the industry and the industry was disappointed with this. He suggested MD to communicate with the industry beforehand in related issues in future.

46. The Chairman responded that as regards the recent proposals of changing the existing use of KTTS and TKWTS, MD was of the view that these typhoon shelters were crucial for the industry as these were safety facilities to protect the life and safety of workers of the marine-related industry during typhoons. Assessment of typhoon shelter space requirements was conducted regularly so as to assess whether the existing typhoon shelters could adequately meet the demand of sheltered space for local vessels. However, there were parties quoting that the utilization rate of typhoon shelters was low and thus the use of typhoon shelters should be reviewed. While MD had argued that these figures might not reflect the actual utilization, the industry should pay attention to the utilization rate and make effective use of the typhoon shelters. For KTTS, as the utilization rate during normal days was relatively low, MD intended to support the proposal of “co-use” of the sheltered areas within KTTS (i.e. typhoon shelter use during inclement weather and recreational use at other times).
47. As regards the case of New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter, the Chairman said that the existing space of MD’s HPS Office was insufficient and expansion of office space was therefore required. The expansion proposal had been discussed for a few years and had been raised at the meeting of Harbourfront Commission. However, in view of operational need, the additional areas should be in proximity to the existing HPS’s office and thus the site discussed at the Town Planning Board meeting was considered not suitable for the purpose. He pointed out that there were different views concerning the use of that site and the Town Planning Board, in deciding the zoning proposal, had considered all the representations as a whole. He added that the comments concerning the use of the typhoon shelters raised at this meeting would be forwarded to the Development Bureau for consideration.
48. Mr. KWOK Tak-kee expressed concern over the safety of the proposal of “co-use” within KTTS as accidents might easily happen with different kinds of vessels in the typhoon shelter during typhoons. The Chairman responded that yachts could use the areas near the ex-airport runway and thus such problem should not arise. In response to Mr. KWOK’s enquiry as to whether public ferries were allowed to lay mooring buoys in the typhoon shelters, the Chairman replied that the proposal might be considered as it could facilitate public ferries to provide services until the last moments prior to the approach of a typhoon.

VI. Date of Next Meeting

49. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:50 p.m. The date of next meeting would be announced in due course.