

LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Subsidy Scheme for Installation of Radar on Local Passenger Vessels

Purpose

This paper sets out the details of the subsidy scheme for installation of radar on local passenger vessels.

Background

2. To prevent the recurrence of similar vessel collision incidents, the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Collision of Vessels near Lamma Island on 1 October 2012 recommended that all vessels permitted to carry more than 100 passengers should be equipped with radar.¹

3. At its meeting on 25 April 2014, the Local Vessel Advisory Committee endorsed the proposal of requiring local vessels to install Automatic Identification System ('AIS'), radar and Very High Frequency radiotelephone, and noted that the Marine Department ('MD') would provide full and half subsidy for installation of AIS and radar on local vessels respectively.²

Details of the Subsidy Scheme for Installation of Radar

Application Period

4. The application period will be from 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2017 (both dates inclusive).

¹ See para. 443(3) of "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Collision of Vessels near Lamma Island on 1 October 2012" at <http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/edev/papers/edev0527-rpt20130430-e.pdf>

² See paras. 3 to 8 of the minutes of the meeting at http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/aboutus/pdf/lvac_m140425.pdf and para. 11 of LVAC Paper No. 3/2014 at http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/aboutus/pdf/lvacp03_14.pdf

Eligibility Criteria

5. Any vessel owner or his/her agent may apply to MD for subsidy if his/her vessel fulfills the following criteria ('eligible vessel') :

- (a) Class I vessel licensed by MD to carry more than 100 passengers;
- (b) the vessel is not certificated as a "floating restaurant" or "stationary vessel";
- (c) the vessel is not subject to any restrictions of any licence or permit that it may only ply within typhoon shelters;
- (d) the vessel does not conform with that of items (i) to (iii) below:
 - (i) the vessel is subject to any restrictions of any licence or permit that it may only ply within the boundaries of the Victoria port;
 - (ii) the vessel is operating a franchised service or licensed service as defined in the Ferry Services Ordinance (Cap. 104); and
 - (iii) the vessel is not granted with any exemption from speed restriction;
- (e) the vessel is not subject to any statutory provisions or conditions of any licence or permit requiring the installation of radar on board; and
- (f) the vessel has been equipped with, on or after **25 April 2014**, a radar which complies with the technical specifications as stated in Annex I-4 to Code of Practice – Safety Standards for Class I, II and III Vessels.

Subsidy Limit

6. Each eligible vessel will be provided with half subsidy for the installation of conformed radar on an accountable basis (i.e. covering half the expenses on procurement and installation of conformed radar on board), subject to a ceiling of \$31,000.

Application Arrangement

7. The applicant should provide the following supporting documents together with the application form:

- (a) receipts of procurement and installation of radar on board;
- (b) statement or certificate issued by the supplier or installer of radar for the confirmation of installation of radar on board; and
- (c) statement or certificate issued by the manufacturer, supplier or installer of radar to confirm that the radar installed on vessel is in compliance with the technical specifications of conformed radar.

8. The vessel owner or his/her agent may apply to MD at least three working days before the immediate next scheduled survey or audit check. MD staff will inspect if the vessel is equipped with conformed radar during the immediate next survey or audit check conducted after three working days upon receipt of the application. For application made in less than three working days before the immediate next survey or audit check, MD will defer the inspection until the next survey or audit check thereafter. Payment of subsidy will only be made to the applicant by MD when it is to the satisfaction of MD staff after the inspection that the installation of conformed radar is in full compliance with the conditions of the subsidy scheme.

Undertaking

9. The applicant shall undertake upon receipt of the subsidy that the conformed radar on board shall not be removed without a good cause and ensure that crew members qualified to operate radar are on board the vessel for radar operation during navigation. The applicant is also required to maintain and repair the conformed radar on board and inform MD when it becomes unserviceable.

Sub-committee on Survey Works of Local Vessels³

10. At the meeting of the Sub-committee on Survey Works of Local Vessels held on 22 October 2015, some members were concerned about the feasibility of training or recruiting sufficient qualified radar operators before the application deadline and considered that the application deadline should be extended.

11. On training, MD understands that a training course on radar operation (Hong Kong Waters) with an adjusted syllabus has been launched since October 2014. According to the course provider, about 91 candidates have successfully completed the course as at October 2015. MD estimates that about 40 to 50 local vessels may apply for the subsidy and considers that qualified radar operators are gradually in place for the industry. As such, ample time for application has been given to eligible applicants under the existing application period. MD will closely monitor the development and, subject to the legislative progress, consider extending the application period if necessary. At the present stage, MD urges eligible applicants to make early application

Way Forward

12. The sample application form and guidance notes of the subsidy scheme are at **Annex** and will be uploaded to the website of MD prior to the commencement of the subsidy scheme.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to comment on this paper.

Local Vessels Safety Branch
Shipping Division
Marine Department
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³ http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/aboutus/lvac_subcom_survey.html