

Local Vessels Advisory Committee

Proposal to amend Cap. 413L to align with the current normal office hours for provision of services

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek members' views on the proposal to amend the relevant provisions in the Merchant Shipping (Prevention and Control of Pollution) (Fees) Regulation, Cap. 413L to align with the normal office hours of Marine Department for provision of services.

Background

2. Under the existing Merchant Shipping (Prevention and Control of Pollution) (Fees) Regulation, Cap. 413L, Marine Department provides ship survey services to the public within office hours between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday to Friday inclusive and between 9 a.m. and noon on Saturday (excluding general holidays) at a fixed hourly rate charge. Charges for services outside office hours are at a higher rate.

The proposed change and its implications

3. As a result of the implementation of 5-day working week from 1 July 2006, Marine Department opens only 5 days a week and closes on Saturday. In order not to unduly affect the services to the public, normal office hours on weekdays have been extended from 8:30 a.m. until 5:45 p.m. The proposed amendment to Cap.413L would align the office hours with the current practice and allow Marine Department to provide services under Cap.413L to be charged at normal rate in extended hours on weekdays. Of course, the proposed amendment on the other hand would incur higher charges for services rendered on Saturday morning.

4. In respect of local vessels, Cap. 413L would only apply to survey services provided under MARPOL Annex VI (the relevant regulation for prevention of air pollution is expected to be in place early next year). Only those self-propelled local vessels of 400 gross tonnage and above, for which an International Air Pollution Prevention (IAPP) Certificate or a Hong Kong Air Pollution Prevention Certificate is required, would be affected by the above-mentioned amendments. It should be noted that the office hours as defined in the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels)(fees) Regulation, Cap. 548J, which provides the fees and charges for various services to local vessels, are already in line with the Marine Department's new working hours.

Action requested

5. Members are invited to comment and endorse the above proposal.

Marine Department
Shipping Division
13 August 2007