

Installation of an Automatic Fog Horn
North Of Kap Shui Mun Bridge

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek members' endorsement concerning a proposal of installing an automatic fog horn in the vicinity of Kap Shui Mun Bridge.(KSMB)

The Problem

2 July 1998 will see the opening of the new airport at Chek Lap Kok. As the only road link between the new airport and the urban area is provided via the Airport Link Bridges, there is concern over the possible consequences of these bridges being hit by over-height vessels passing underneath and the need to have in place an audio warning system to alert port users about the presence of the KSMB during restricted visibility.

Current situation

3 At present, there are more than 300 local derrick barges with derrick length over 38 meters operating in Hong Kong waters. If one of these barges approaching KSMB with its derrick hoisted up in a nearly vertical position, its air-draught may exceed the height restriction of 41 meters, thus the KSMB would be at risk of being hit by this over-height vessel.

4 Last year, KSMB was rammed twice by passing over-height vessels during the construction period and the re-occurrence of this kind of incident might be possible especially in foggy season or restricted visibility. If this incident happens when the Airport Railway comes into operation, it will generate adverse societal and economical consequences.

Mitigation Actions

5 In order to reduce the above possible risk, a number of mitigation measures would be established by Marine Department which include a reporting system for these barges if they have the intention to pass Kap Shui Mun Fairway, a marking system to identify these barges as well as stepping up the physical control of the local craft traffic activities by our patrol boats etc.

Automatic Fog Horn

6 Apart from the measures mentioned above, the installation of an automatic fog horn north of the bridge is also proposed. This device will be fitted with a detector which will activate the fog horn automatically if the visibility drops to a prescribed level. It can also be operated manually. At present, there is a fog horn installed at Tang Lung Chau (south of Ma Wan Island) which is operated manually by the Vessel Traffic Centre of Marine Department if the visibility is below 2 nautical miles, whereas the other two fog horns at Waglan Island and Tathong Point are operated automatically. The specifications of those 2 fog horns at Waglan Island and Tathong Point were developed in accordance with the IALA standards.

7. Since the purpose of installing a fog horn at Tang Lung Chau in the Sixties was to give audio warning to Ma Wan north bound vessels during restricted visibility, the proposed fog horn at KSMB would enhance the safe navigation of south bound vessels via Kap Shui Mun Fairway as well as reminding these vessels about the presence of the KSMB in the vicinity.

8. The installation of this device will be done by the bridge authority i.e. Highways Department; whereas the physical operation and maintenance responsibilities of this fog horn belongs to the bridge owner i.e. Transport Department.

Advice Sought

8 Members are invited to express their views and support the proposal of installing an automatic fog horn north of Kap Shui Mun Bridge.

Presentation

9 This paper will be presented by Mr. C. Y. Tsang of Marine Department.

HKSAR

Marine Department

Development Section

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