

PROVISIONAL LOCAL VESSEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Optimisation of Water Space to the West of Lamma Island

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek members' endorsement on the proposal to optimise the usage of the water area to the west of Lamma Island, as shown in the attached drawings. This involves : -

- (a) establishment of a West Lamma Anchorage;
- (b) re-alignment of the South Cheung Chau Traffic Separation Scheme; and
- (c) establishment of a West Lamma Traffic Separation Scheme.

Background

2. Traffic conditions have changed quite substantially in the past few years. It is necessary for the Marine Department to reconsider the existing arrangement of anchorages and to establish new one in order to cater for the future growth of vessel traffic and to maintain and improve the effectiveness of our strategic waterway management.

The Proposal

3. The proposal is depicted in the attached drawings. The main features are explained below : -

- (a) West Lamma Anchorage : the establishment of this anchorage will provide approximately 821 ha of additional anchoring space, i.e. 1,060 ha of the new anchorage, offset by a reduction of 239 ha of the North West Lamma Anchorage. The new anchorage will be used for short-stay vessels with draft up to 7m, thus help relieve the congestion at the existing Western Anchorages and cater for future traffic growth.

(b) South Cheung Chau Traffic Separation Scheme : to facilitate the establishment of the West Lamma Anchorage, it is necessary to re-align part of the South Cheung Chau TSS. This TSS was established some twenty years ago for use by high speed Macau ferries on their night sailing in-bound trip, or as an alternative route for these vessels during restricted visibility. Normal traffic within the TSS is minimal, with less than 10 movements per day (mainly small mainland coasters). The re-alignment of the TSS will result in an increase of 0.7 nautical miles in the travel distance, but this is insignificant in terms of the vessels' total steaming time.

(c) West Lamma Traffic Separation Scheme : at present the stretch of waters situated immediately to the west of Lamma Island is generally referred to as the "West Lamma Channel". It is an alternative route for entering and leaving Hong Kong, especially for some Chinese coasters and small tankers coming from the south. The establishment of the West Lamma TSS will enable a better control of vessel movements and facilitate an orderly traffic flow in this area, thus minimising unnecessary vessel encounters and the risk of collisions.

Impacts on Traffic Safety

4. The proposed West Lamma TSS will run in a north-south direction, and merge with the re-aligned South Cheung Chau TSS at the south-eastern corner of the West Lamma Anchorage. This should not have any adverse effect on the safety of navigation within the area for the following reasons : -

(a) normal traffic volume within this TSS is small, with less than 30 movements per day at present, including small tankers and other cargo vessels. Most of these movements take place during the day time;

(b) high speed Macau Ferries will only use this TSS at night or in restricted visibility. Normal traffic is minimal during these times (tanker movements within port are stopped during restricted visibility); and

(c) the frequency of encounters between the high speed ferries and small tankers proceeding to/from the Kau Yi Chau Dangerous Goods

Anchorage will not increase significantly as compared with the present situation, except that the location of the encounters will be different.

Consultation

5. The mid-stream operators and ship agents were consulted on the proposed establishment of the West Lamma Anchorage in 1997. Informal discussions were also held with the high speed ferry operators and the pilots earlier this year on the re-alignment of the South Cheung Chau TSS and the establishment of the West Lamma TSS. They were in support of the proposal.

Recommendation

6. Members are recommended to endorse the proposal as described in para. 3 above. Subject to members' endorsement, legislative amendments and promulgation of notices will be arranged accordingly.

Presentation

7. This paper will be presented by Mr C.K. YEUNG of Marine Department at the PLVAC Meeting to be held on 29 July 1999.

**Vessel Traffic Services Branch
Port Control Division
Marine Department**

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