

**PROVISIONAL LOCAL VESSEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Control of Bunkering Operation in Hong Kong Waters**

**Purpose**

1. This paper seeks member's endorsement on the proposal to introduce legislation for controlling bunkering operations in Hong Kong waters.

**Background**

2. Bunkering operation is the transferring of marine fuel oil from a supply oil barge to a receiving vessel. This operation is presently unregulated and can be conducted freely at floating marine fuelling points or by mobile oil barges. The floating marine fuelling points are oil barges anchored at fixed locations established by trade practice. The client vessels go alongside these oil barges for fuel replenishment. The mobile oil barges deliver fuel to ships berthed in the port or elsewhere in Hong Kong waters. The distinction between the two modes of operation is often blur because the same vessel can engage in both trades.

**Problems Emerged**

3. Recently, due to sharp increase in the extra-territory demand for diesel oil, bunkering operations by mobile oil barges have proliferated near the boundary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. At these exposed locations, both the oil barge and the oil receiving vessel may suffer from excessive motion caused by the sea and swell. The associated high tension may part the mooring ropes and oil transferring hose leading to pollution and accidents. During one of the special patrols to identify the source of repeated oil pollution affecting the Tung Wan Beach in Cheung Chau, patrol officers witnessed four vessels fleeing away from an oil barge south of Cheung Chau and the oil barge crew was hurry to disconnect the fuel hose attached to a mainland fishing vessel. A small quantity of oil has fallen into the sea. Moreover, oil transferring has been reported in the Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park. Any oil spills therein will pose significant threat to the white dolphins.

4. Non-local vessels can legitimately take bunkers in Hong Kong provided they comply with port formalities. However, the present situation is that a lot of mainland vessels buy diesel oil without reporting inwards. They are violating the marine legislation and avoiding to pay port dues. On one occasion, a mainland cargo vessel in transit through Victoria Harbour was seen to receive bunkers while making way alongside a moving oil barge. The purpose of conducting such an operation is believed to circumvent the requirement for reporting arrival. Transferring of oil while underway is highly risky in terms of navigation safety and pollution to the environment.

### **Proposed Controls**

5. In order to minimise the risk of marine pollution or accidents caused by these operations, a new regulation is proposed under the General Regulations of The Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance, Chapter 548 to put in place the following controls: -

- (i) Delivering bunker to ships is permitted within the Victoria Port and the service anchorages as defined in Paragraph 3 (a) to (g) of the Seventh Schedule in the Shipping and Port Control Regulations, Chapter 313. These service anchorages are the Ma Wan Anchorage, Pun Shan Shek Anchorage, Western Anchorage No.1, Western Anchorage No.2, and Western Anchorage No.3, North Lamma Anchorage and North West Lamma Anchorage.
- (ii) Delivering bunker to ships outside the Victoria Port and the above service anchorage which are not berthed alongside any jetties or pier can take place after obtaining permission from the Director;
- (iii) Floating marine oil filling stations are permitted to operate within Designated Bunkering Areas. The Designated Bunkering Areas will be specified in an annex to the General Regulations;
- (iv) Transferring of oil while underway is prohibited in the waters of Hong Kong.

## **Designated Bunkering Areas**

6. The proposed Designated Bunkering Areas (DBAs) are listed in Annex 1 and delineated in the attached drawing. They are established according to the trade patterns and demand of local vessels. Oil barges can anchor freely within the areas to conduct their business.

## **Intended Results**

7. When the bunkering operations are regulated, oil transferring outside the permitted areas will be unlawful. Vessels found bunkering at or near the boundary and other open waters will be prosecuted thus reducing the risk of oil pollution. Replenishment of fuel to ocean-going ships and local vessels will not be affected. With bunkering operations concentrated in Victoria Port, service anchorages and the DBAs, anti-oil pollution patrol can be tasked to the permitted areas regularly thereby increasing the efficiency to prevent and tackle oil spills.

## **Recommendation**

8. Members are recommended to endorse the proposed controls on bunkering operations.

## **Presentation**

9. This paper will be presented by Mr. S.M. Chung of the Marine Department.

Vessel Traffic Services Branch  
Port Control Division  
Marine Department  
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**Designated Bunkering Areas**

## 1. Yau Tong

Area bound by straight lines joining the positions: -

22 ° 17.702' N	114 ° 13.798' E	22 ° 17.480' N	114 ° 14.032' E
22 ° 17.433' N	114 ° 14.001' E	22 ° 17.581' N	114 ° 13.630' E

## 2. Cheung Sha Wan

Area bound by straight lines joining the positions: -

22 ° 19.603' N	114 ° 08.826' E	22 ° 19.558' N	114 ° 08.900' E
22 ° 19.518' N	114 ° 08.870' E	22 ° 19.580' N	114 ° 08.772' E

## 3. Outside Aberdeen west Typhoon Shelter

Area bound by straight lines joining the positions: -

22 ° 14.885' N	114 ° 08.248' E	22 ° 14.779' N	114 ° 08.248' E
22 ° 14.743' N	114 ° 08.653' E	22 ° 14.852' N	114 ° 08.607' E

## 4. Outside Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter

Area bound by straight lines joining the positions: -

22 ° 12.520' N	114 ° 00.960' E	22 ° 12.408' N	114 ° 01.220' E
22 ° 12.137' N	114 ° 01.078' E	22 ° 12.355' N	114 ° 00.795' E

## 5. Outside Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter

Area bound by straight lines joining the positions: -

22 ° 22.30' N	113 ° 58.48' E	22 ° 22.16' N	113 ° 58.52' E
22 ° 22.20' N	113 ° 58.68' E	22 ° 22.34' N	113 ° 58.64' E

## 6. South of Tuen Mun Immigration Anchorage

Area bound by straight lines joining the positions: -

22 ° 21.46' N	113 ° 57.50' E	22 ° 21.14' N	113 ° 57.50' E
22 ° 21.14' N	113 ° 58.54' E	22 ° 21.46' N	113 ° 58.54' E

## 7. North of Yaumatei Anchorage

22 ° 19.135' N 114 ° 08.972' E

## 8. Sai Kung Harbour

22 ° 22.82' N 114 ° 16.40' E

# DESIGNATED BUNKERING AREAS

