

PORT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

**Establishment of Traffic Separation Schemes and
Pilot Boarding Stations in Mirs Bay**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks members' comments on the establishment of a set of Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs) and three pilot boarding stations in Mirs Bay.

BACKGROUND

Marine Traffic Situation in Mirs Bay

2. The marine traffic in Mirs Bay consists of a mix of large container ships, coastal and river trade vessels, tankers and LNG/LPG carriers. Over the past 7 years, i.e. from 2008 to 2015, marine traffic movement of the Mirs Bay area has increased from 38,260 vessel trips to 53,800 vessel trips per year. It is anticipated that the number of vessel trips will further increase to about 65,190 per year by 2030.

3. On top of existing port facilities in Mirs Bay, 3 LNG terminals are being developed in eastern Shenzhen. Accordingly, it is anticipated that LNG carrier movements would increase significantly from about 150 vessel trips to about 440 vessel trips per year by 2030.

Concerns of Mirs Bay

4. Mirs Bay is a major marine reserve with three designated marine parks namely, Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and Tung Ping Chau Marine Park. These marine parks are within close reach of main shipping routes in Mirs Bay, any

marine pollution caused by marine incidents could have disastrous impact to the marine environment and eco-system of the area.

5. According to Hong Kong Marine Department's (HKMD) incident record, there were 24 marine incidents occurred in the vicinity of Mirs Bay during the period from 2012 to 2016. Fortunately, these incidents were of minor nature and had not caused any pollution in the area. However, giving the planned development of LNG terminals in eastern Shenzhen that coupled with high level of marine traffic in Mirs Bay, it is necessary to tighten the regime of marine traffic regulation in this area.

THE PROPOSAL

6. In order to better organise the marine traffic in Mirs Bay and to cope with the growing number and size of vessels navigating in the area, in particular the LNG carriers, it is considered necessary to establish a set of TSSs to bind the behaviour of marine traffic and to separate dangerous goods (DG) carriers, including LNG carries, from other stream of vessels.

7. The proposed routeing system comprises of 2 TSSs lying side by side, span across both Hong Kong and Shenzhen waters and run in a general northwest-southeast direction between Ping Chau and Shek Ngau Chau with buffer distance of 1,400 metres and 950 metres from the aforementioned islands. The eastern TSS will be designated for DG carriers and the western TSS for other vessels. The design of the proposed TSSs is generally in line with the current traffic flow in Mirs Bay.

8. As a result of introducing the proposed TSSs, the Mirs Bay Dangerous Goods Anchorage ('MBDGA') at southwest of Ping Chau would need to be re-located. A chart showing the proposed TSSs, existing general direction of traffic flow of vessels and the _____ MBDGA is attached at the *Annex*.

ENHANCEMENT OF PILOT SERVICES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT BOARDING STATIONS IN MIRS BAY

9. In view of environmental sensitivity and the ever increased number and size of vessels in Mirs Bay, it is also considered necessary to enhance pilotage services in Mirs Bay area. To facilitate embarkation and disembarkation of pilots, it is proposed to _____ establish three pilot boarding stations as indicated in the *Annex*.

IMPLEMENTATION

10. Subject to members' comments on the proposed TSSs, relocation of the MBDGA and locations of pilot boarding stations, HKMD would commence the process of :-

- (i) establishing the 2 TSSs;
- (ii) legislative amendment to amend Schedule 7, of the Shipping and Port Control Regulations (Cap. 313A) and Schedule 3 of the Pilotage Ordinance (Cap. 84) on relocation of MBDGA; and
- (iii) legislative amendment to amend Schedule 2, of the Pilotage Ordinance (Cap. 84) on Pilot Boarding Stations.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to comment on the proposal of establishment of TSSs, relocation of the MBDGA and establishment of pilot boarding stations in Mirs Bay.

PRESENTATION

12. This paper will be presented by Mr. W H Wong, General Manager / Vessel Traffic Services.

Port Control Division
Marine Department
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Chart Showing Proposed Traffic Separation Schemes and Pilot Boarding Stations

