

2021 Environmental Report of the Transport Branch

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INTRODUCTION

The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) headed by the Secretary for Transport and Housing (STH) is responsible for transport and housing policy matters. This environmental report covers the environmental performance of its Transport Branch (TB).

Under the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport), TB oversees the operation of four departments, namely, the Civil Aviation Department (CAD), the Highways Department (HyD), the Marine Department (MD) and the Transport Department (TD).

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRANSPORT

BRANCH

We are responsible for the formulation of policies relating to the development of transport infrastructure, provision of transport services, traffic management, maritime transport and logistics, air services and civil aviation management. In the process of policy formulation, sustainability is a key consideration.

The major areas of policy responsibilities include –

- planning for and implementing the construction and improvement of our transport infrastructure, with emphasis on railways;
- promoting the use of public transport services by improving their quality and co-ordination;
- improving cross-boundary rail and road interchanges;
- managing road use, reducing traffic congestion and promoting road safety;
- supporting environmental improvement measures in transport-related areas;
- enhancing and promoting Hong Kong as an international transportation and regional logistics hub;
- enhancing, in partnership with the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA), the competitiveness of the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and promoting Hong Kong as an international and regional aviation centre;
- promoting shipping safety, preventing pollution from ships and ensuring continued compliance with applicable international standards of vessels registered in or visiting Hong Kong; and
- enhancing the competitiveness of the Hong Kong Port and strengthening Hong Kong's position as an international shipping and maritime centre.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS OF THE TRANSPORT BRANCH

We are committed to –

- ensuring that our policies are environment friendly;
- ensuring that all programmes and operations under our purview are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner; and
- enhancing environmental awareness of staff.

We have set the following objectives in order to achieve the above committed goals -

LAND AND WATERBORNE TRANSPORT

- We will continue to provide transport infrastructure and promote uses of transport services in an environment friendly manner.

CIVIL AVIATION

- We aim to ensure that the legislative framework and administrative measures are effective in minimising the environmental impact of airport operations.
- We will continue to work with AA and CAD to ensure that the environmental impact of airport development and operations is minimised and that parties concerned are proactive in minimising pollution and disturbance from activities at HKIA.

LOGISTICS, PORT AND MARITIME SERVICES

- We will continue to work, in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the logistics, port and maritime community, to minimise the environmental impact generated from logistics, shipping, port development and operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND

PERFORMANCE

To achieve the environmental goals of the Transport Branch, we continue to take forward various environmental management initiatives together with our housekeeping departments, and in collaboration with our partners in the transport, aviation and maritime industries.

LAND AND WATERBORNE TRANSPORT

Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated cities in the world. A safe, efficient, reliable and environment friendly transport system is important to the sustainable development of the city. On environmental management, we continue to press ahead with the following initiatives -

☐ ***Promotion of Environment Friendly Transport Modes***

Railways are the backbone of our public transport system. They are environment friendly, safe and efficient mass carriers in Hong Kong, carrying some 41% of our public transport passengers. As at 31 December 2021, the total length of our railways under operation is about 266 kilometres (km), with a total track length of 773 km. Upon the commissioning of the cross-harbour extension of the East Rail Line in mid-May 2022, the total length of railways in operation in Hong Kong would be more than 270 km.

Having regard to transport demand, cost effectiveness and the development needs of New Development Areas and other new development projects, the Railway Development Strategy 2014 (RDS-2014) recommended seven new railway projects to be completed in the planning horizon up to 2031. When all the new projects recommended in RDS-2014 are completed, the total length of the railways will increase to over 300 km.

□ ***Alleviation of Traffic Congestion and Better Inter-modal Co-ordination***

The Government coordinates the roles played by the various public transport modes, including the rail, bus, tram, public light bus, taxi, ferry, etc, so as to achieve the highest possible overall efficiency of the public transport system. This includes rationalising public transport services to improve accessibility whilst avoiding duplication and raising the level of service to improve attractiveness.

Various measures such as rationalisation of bus routes, provision of bus-bus interchange schemes, bus-rail interchange and green minibus (GMB)-rail interchange schemes, GMB-GMB interchange schemes, and provision of Park-and-Ride Schemes have been implemented. In the end, it helps to reduce vehicular traffic and mitigate air pollution.

The Government attaches great importance to alleviating road traffic congestion. It has been taking forward progressively a host of short, medium and long-term measures recommended by the Transport Advisory Committee in its Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong. Examples in this regard include the study on Electronic Road Pricing Pilot Scheme in Central, using technology to facilitate enforcement against illegal parking and other traffic offences as well as putting in place a host of measures to provide more car parking spaces to respond to public aspirations, with priority accorded to meeting the parking needs of commercial vehicles.

□ ***Promotion of Non-mechanised Transport Mode***

It is the Government's policy to, where road safety considerations and circumstances permit, foster a "bicycle-friendly environment" by constructing cycle tracks and related facilities in new development areas and new towns, and improving existing facilities for the public to use bicycles for recreational or short-distance commuting purposes, thereby reducing the use of mechanised transport.

The opening of the 11-km-long cycle track linking Yuen Long with Sheung Shui in 2020 has marked the completion of the entire 60-km-long cycle track backbone between Tuen Mun and Ma On Shan. The 22-km-long cycle track between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun is being implemented in phases. The Tsuen Wan waterfront section (Advance Works) was opened for public use in July 2021. The Government will also continue its commitment to implement relevant improvement measures, including providing more public bicycle parking spaces and additional safety facilities at some sharp bends, steep ramps and pedestrian crossings in order to ensure the safety of cyclists and pedestrians.

Meanwhile, the Government has formulated the overall walkability strategy for Hong Kong in 2020, and will select suitable new development areas and built-up areas for implementing the comprehensive pedestrian planning framework. We will continue to take forward “Walk in HK” and encourage people to walk more by launching a series of measures under four themes:

- “Make it smart” by providing user-friendly information on walking routes;
- “Make it connected” by enhancing pedestrian networks;
- “Make it enjoyable” by making walking a pleasant experience; and
- “Make it safe” by providing a safe and quality pedestrian environment.

For example, the Government will continue to take forward various hillside escalator links and elevator systems projects which can improve pedestrian accessibility to uphill areas and to reduce dependence on vehicular access to these areas via congested, steep and narrow access roads.

Our aim is to enhance the overall walkability of our city for people to commute, connect and enjoy, making walking an integral part of Hong Kong as a sustainable city. Promoting walkability is not only a key element in the Government’s efforts to combat climate change, but will also help encourage a healthy lifestyle, strengthen community interaction and build an age-friendly environment.

☐ ***Application of Innovation and Technology in Traffic Management***

We aim to reduce the journey times of motorists, and hence the consumption of vehicle fuel and emission of air pollutants from vehicles, through the enhancement of the efficiency of the transport network by promoting the application of intelligent transport systems. We have been taking forward Smart Mobility initiatives.

The Government has been developing the Intelligent Transport Systems under a three-pronged approach: dissemination of traffic information to the public, traffic control and supporting traffic enforcement. Examples of such systems include Journey Time Indication System, Area Traffic Control System, Speed Map Panels as well as Traffic and Incident Management Systems. With a view to disseminating additional real-time traffic information to the public, major roads and all strategic routes have been equipped with traffic detectors, thereby enhancing

TD's capability and efficiency in monitoring and handling traffic incidents.

To help passengers, motorists and other road users better plan their journeys, we have been providing information on road network, traffic conditions and public transport services on the Internet and mobile application. TD's mobile application "HKeMobility" enables one-stop and more convenient search for traffic and transport information, including routes, fares and estimated time of arrival of various transportation modes, driving routes, real-time parking vacancy information and walking route information.

CIVIL AVIATION

We strive to minimize the disturbance caused by aircraft operations to the local communities.

☐ ***Aircraft Noise Mitigation***

Being conscious of the noise impact that aircraft operations may have on local communities, a series of noise mitigating measures, such as Continuous Descent Approach procedures, arrivals from Southwest over water to reduce the number of aircraft overflying populated areas, and noise abatement departure procedures stipulated by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), have been implemented in a bid for quieter arrivals and departures.

Besides, only aircraft meeting stipulated requirements in Chapter 3 of Annex 16, Volume 1, Part II, to the Convention on International Civil Aviation ("Chapter 3 noise standards") are allowed to operate at HKIA. Starting from March 2019, CAD has taken the initiative further to impose more stringent requirements with additional operating restrictions on aircraft which do not comply with the noise standards in Chapter 4 of Volume I, Part II of Annex 16 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chapter 4 Noise Standards), or equivalent, to operate at the HKIA from 10 pm to 7 am.

☐ ***Carbon Reduction***

ICAO decided in October 2016 to implement a Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation as one of the measures to contribute to carbon neutral growth from 2020 onwards. The scheme is expected to

complement a broader package of measures to be implemented by the aviation sector including the technological advancement on fuel efficient aircraft, improvement on operational procedures to reduce fuel consumption and promotion of the use of sustainable alternative fuels. As part of the scheme, aeroplane operators in Hong Kong have already started monitoring their CO2 emissions from international flights and reporting the relevant statistics since 2019. CAD will closely monitor the implementation of the scheme.

☐ ***Green Airport***

We, in partnership with AA, strive to enhance the competitiveness of the HKIA and promote Hong Kong as a global and regional aviation hub. HKIA is committed to long-term sustainable growth and becoming a leading environmental performer in Hong Kong. AA has pledged to make HKIA the world's greenest airport. AA has established an ISO 14001-certified environmental management system (EMS) which provides a systematic framework for managing, measuring and continuously improving HKIA's environmental performance. AA adopts an airport-wide approach to work closely with its business partners, suppliers and contractors, passengers, the local community, regulators and other stakeholders to accelerate the rate of environmental footprint reduction across HKIA. In particular, in November 2021 AA launched with its key aviation-related business partners the 2050 HKIA Net Zero Carbon Pledge, with a midpoint target to reduce absolute emissions by 55% by 2035 from a 2018 baseline which aligns with the HKSAR Government 2050 carbon neutrality target. Details of AA's environmental management approach, programmes and performance are available in the "Greenest Airport" section of its Sustainability Report at <https://www.hongkongairport.com/en/sustainability/sustainability-report.page>.

LOGISTICS, PORT AND MARITIME SERVICES

We recognise that the protection of the marine environment is not only important in its own right but also instrumental in enhancing Hong Kong's position as a world-class port. In the course of port planning and development, we will continue to work with EPD and the Sustainable Development Division/Environment Bureau to comply with relevant environmental impacts and sustainability assessment requirements.

☐ ***Proactive Port Control***

MD monitors and regulates the movement of vessels within Hong Kong waters round-the-clock through an advanced vessel traffic surveillance system to protect the marine environment from pollution caused by marine traffic accidents. In addition, MD patrols Hong Kong waters to ensure that all vessels navigating in Hong Kong are in compliance with our marine legislation, which includes detection of offences that may cause pollution to the environment, such as littering, illegal discharge of oil, and dark smoke emission from vessels.

☐ ***International Conventions and Local Legislation***

MD implements applicable international conventions on marine pollution prevention through the enactment and enforcement of legislation. These conventions include the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, 2001, the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004, the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990 and the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances, 2000.

We also work closely with operators of container terminals, mid-stream and river trade operators to preserve a clean and safe environment for sea transport.

More information about the environmental management initiatives and performance in respect of transport portfolio under the purview of TB can be found in the homepage of TD (www.td.gov.hk), HyD (www.hyd.gov.hk), CAD (www.cad.gov.hk), and MD (www.mardep.gov.hk).

GREEN OFFICE MANAGEMENT

PAPER SAVING, ENERGY SAVING AND RECYCLING

It is our mission to improve and conserve our environment, and to optimise the use of resources to reduce pollution and waste. We strive to implement various green housekeeping measures in daily office operation with a view to maintaining a green workplace. We would minimise waste creation and recycle as far as practicable.

With the advocacy of environmental conservation over the past few years, staff awareness in this respect has been greatly enhanced and staff members have developed good practices by adopting the following green initiatives -

☐ ***Paper Saving***

- to use recycled paper in office operation;
- to print and photocopy on both sides of paper;
- to reuse single-side used paper for drafting, printing and receiving fax;
- to reuse envelopes and loose minute jackets for internal transmission of documents and correspondence;
- to communicate and disseminate information by electronic means within bureaux / departments as well as with members of the public;
- to re-use decorations and backdrops for festive events;
- to avoid printing or photocopying unless hard copy is absolutely necessary;
- to use virtual fax;
- to distribute soft copies by emails or CD-ROMs instead of print-outs;
- to upload reports, circulars and other publicity materials on e-bulletin board, intranet and internet websites for general reference;
- to serve drinks in glasses or reusable cups; and

- to use electronic greeting cards.
- to put forward the project of electronic recordkeeping system for records management with a view to reducing paper consumption.

□ ***Energy Saving***

- to turn off some lighting when the occupancy is low, e.g. during lunch and after office hours;
- to turn off air-conditioning and lighting in conference rooms immediately after use;
- to use motion sensors for lighting control in office and public communal areas such as reception counters, corridors, lift lobbies, etc.;
- to maintain office temperature at 25.5°C during the summer time;
- to activate the standby or hibernation mode features of personal computers;
- to switch off personal computers (including both monitor and computer processing unit) after office hours;
- to switch off non-essential servers at night, on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays;
- to use electric lamps / tubes with Energy Efficiency label and sensor-controlled water taps;
- to check the effectiveness of energy saving measures regularly; and
- to encourage staff to use staircase instead of taking the lift for inter-floor traffic.

□ **Recycling**

- to collect used fluorescent lamps, batteries and CD-ROM discs for recycling; and
- to dispose of all recyclables, such as waste paper and plastics, in separate recycling boxes.

GREEN PURCHASING

“Green” stationery items supplied by designated contractors of the Government Logistics Department (GLD), such as clutch pencils, refillable ball pens, recycled pencils and box files made of recycled paper, are now widely used in TB.

For items not available from the GLD designated contractors, we would source for green items by issuing quotation invitations with the green specifications promulgated by EPD to potential suppliers.

In procuring Information Technology related equipment, we would also source for green items such as recyclable printer toner cartridges, photocopiers and printers with Energy Efficiency labels.

CLEAN AIR CHARTER

The Government has endorsed and signed the Clean Air Charter to join forces with the business sector and the community to reduce emissions. To implement the commitment under the Charter, we have adopted the following measures in our operation -

- Drivers of our departmental vehicles are required to switch off engines while waiting in order to avoid idling emission and achieve fuel saving; and
- Our departmental vehicles use unleaded petrol as specified in the GLD's contract.

STAFF AWARENESS

The support and co-operation of staff members are always the key to the success of our green office management. We will continue to work closely with colleagues with a view to fostering a green culture and ensuring that our offices operate in an environmentally responsible manner.

VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS

Views or suggestions in connection with this Environmental Report can be sent to us via email at environmentalreport@thb.gov.hk, by fax (fax no.: 2868 4643), or in writing to 20/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong.