

**Confirmed Minutes of the 128th Meeting of
the Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee
held on 13 August 2014 at 9:30 am**

Present:

Dr Dorothy CHAN, BBS (Chairperson)
Dr HUNG Wing-tat, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Gary ADES
Prof CHAU Kwai-cheong, BBS, JP
Prof FUNG Tung
Dr Billy HAU
Prof John NG
Miss Yolanda NG, MH
Prof Nora TAM, BBS, JP
Dr Eric TSANG
Mr Luther WONG
Prof Ray YEP
Dr Eric YIP
Miss Evelyn LEUNG (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Prof LI Xiang-dong

In Attendance:

Non-EIASC Members

Prof Paul LAM, SBS, JP
Mr Oscar CHOW
Dr Carrie WILLIS, SBS, JP
Prof Jonathan WONG, MH, JP

Government Officials

Mr Andrew LAI	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Mr K F TANG	Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment), EPD
Dr SO Ping-man	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Mr Louis CHAN	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Regional Assessment), EPD
Mr Ken WONG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Metro Assessment), EPD
Mr Lawrence NGO	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional Assessment)1, EPD
Mr Steve LI	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Metro Assessment)3, EPD
Ms Joanne CHIN	Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Ms Daicie TONG	Executive Manager (CBD), EPD

Project Proponent Team

Mr John CHAI	Executive Director, Projects, Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK)
Mr Kevin POOLE	Deputy Director, Projects, AAHK
Mr Peter LEE	General Manager, Environment, Projects, AAHK
Mr Eden NGAN	Senior Manager, Environment, Projects, AAHK
Mr Martin PUTNAM	Senior Manager, Environment, Projects, AAHK
Mr James TSUI	General Manager, Corporate Communications, AAHK
Ms Gigi CHONG	Manager, Project Liaison, Projects, AAHK
Dr Anne KERR	Director, Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Ltd. (Mott MacDonald)
Mr Eric CHING	Director, Mott MacDonald
Ms Dulcie CHAN	Senior Environmental Consultant, Mott MacDonald
Mr Sandy DUGGIE	Managing Director, Urbis Ltd.
Mr LEUNG Ho Fai	Senior Consultant, Atkins China Ltd.
Dr Jasmine NG	Principal Consultant, ERM Hong Kong Ltd.

Action

Item 1: EIA Report on “Expansion of Hong Kong International Airport into a Three-Runway System”
(ACE-EIA Paper 3/2014)

Internal Discussion Session

The Chairperson advised that based on the discussion on 11 August 2014 as well as inputs from three Members, the Secretariat had compiled a list of supplementary information requested by Members which was tabled at the meeting.

2. The Chairperson recapped that the list included questions under the following aspects –

- (a) conservation of Chinese White Dolphins (CWDs) and the proposed marine park;
- (b) fisheries and coral communities;
- (c) air quality, noise and impact on health; and
- (d) comparative analysis of the Two-Runway System (2RS) vs. Three-Runway System (3RS) scenarios

3. The Chairperson said that the above issues would form the basis for discussion on 18 August 2014. She invited Members to comment on the list so that the Secretariat could issue it to AAHK for response before EIASC met on 18 August 2014.

4. Members gave the following comments on the supplementary information to be required from AAHK –

- (a) sustainability and effectiveness of the mitigation measures for the fisheries loss during the construction and operation phase of the 3RS;
- (b) justification on the assumption regarding the use of newer models of aircrafts with lower emission level and fitting engines in the EIA assessment;
- (c) explanation on the lower nitrogen oxides (NO_x) level in Tung Chung/Shalo Wan as compared with the assessment results in the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) projects and the corresponding impacts for the Tsuen Wan/Ting Kau/Siu Lam/Tuen Mun areas; and
- (d) information on the Marine Ecology and Fisheries Enhancement Strategy (MEFES) proposed in the EIA report.

5. The Chairperson advised that the list of supplementary information would be sent to AAHK for their response after the meeting while the newly added questions would be sent to AAHK as the second batch of supplementary information requested by Members.

6. The Chairperson reminded Members on the meeting arrangements and the need to observe confidentiality of the discussion on the EIA report. The Presentation and Question-and-Answer Sessions would be opened to the public, whereby the Internal Discussion Session and all other parts of the meeting would remain closed.

7. The Chairperson asked Members if they had any interest to declare which they had not done at the last meeting. A Member declared that the green group which he was a Director had submitted comments on the EIA report. Another Member declared that she was a student of a member of the AAHK presentation team in her college years. The meeting agreed that they could stay and continue participating in the discussion.

8. For a more structured and focused discussion, the Chairperson suggested and Members agreed to raise questions on the subject areas of the EIA report in the order of –

- (a) Water Quality
- (b) Sewerage and sewage treatment
- (c) Waste management
- (d) Hazards to human life
- (e) Land contamination
- (f) Landscape and visual quality
- (g) Cultural heritage

[The project proponent team joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Presentation Session (Open Session)

9. Mr Eric Ching gave a powerpoint presentation on the findings and

mitigation measures in respect of the impacts of the 3RS project on water quality and landscape and visual.

Question-and-Answer Session (Open Session)

Water quality

10. A Member asked about the technical specifications of the proposed double layer silt curtains and silt screen and their projected performance and suitability under the assumed hydrodynamic model. He was also concerned about their effectiveness in times of inclement weather e.g. typhoon. Mr Eric Ching said that double layer silt curtains (Type II and Type III) would be deployed at selected active works areas around the reclamation site where there was a potential sediment release as identified by the water modelling result. Sites selected for deploying the silt curtains, type of silt curtains to be deployed and proper maintenance of the silt curtains were all essential factors to determine the efficiency on reduction of suspended solids (SS). The double layer silt curtains could be used to further reduce the sediment plumes as well as serving as a backup in case one of the layers was damaged. Mr Ching said that the silt curtains were more effective when they were confined to active areas and closer to the shore as they were easier to maintain and operate. Silt curtains could be deployed from one area to another. It was expected that silt curtains would be removed for example when a typhoon was approaching. Marine works typically would stop when Typhoon Signal Number 3 or above was hoisted.

11. On a Member's enquiry about the supporting evidence for the assumption that up to 80% of SS could be screened out, Mr Eric Ching said that use of silt curtains in previous projects showed silt reduction rate from 60% to 96%. The 61% reduction adopted in the 3RS EIA report was on the conservative end and represented the worst case in 2016. The 80% overall reduction of sediment loss was calculated based on the 61% reduction of sediment loss by deploying the double layer silt curtains and the remaining 39% sediment loss which was discounted by a further 60% of sediment loss by deploying silt screen which would potentially enter into the seawater intake.

12. A Member enquired about the on-site monitoring and contingency plan in the event that the silt curtains and silt screen failed to achieve the reduction target. Mr Eric Ching said that silt curtains had been used extensively in other marine works and the assumed value of 61% was at the conservative end. Apart from setting up impact monitoring stations around the reclamation area as proposed in the EM&A programme, water quality monitoring would be conducted at sensitive locations to ascertain any potential changes to water quality.

13. A Member enquired about the precautionary measures to avoid release of SS during seawall construction particularly if silt curtains were to be used when building the seawall. Mr Eric Ching explained that construction method for seawall construction would include rock fill, with minimal fine content, as the seawall core, and non-dredge method such as steel casing and stone compaction

piles for ground improvement, and laying of sand blankets on top of the seabed to minimize release of SS. Silt curtains might not be required around construction of new seawalls, except where sand blankets were being deployed for ground improvement works. Mr Kelvin Poole said that the ground improvement works would not involve removing the marine mud and a sand blanket of 2 metre would be applied on top of the existing marine mud. A 5-km seawall would be constructed around the runway and sand fill be deposited directly into the steel cell structures. No SS release would result from these activities.

14. In response to two Members' further questions about the impact of sand blanket laying, Mr Kevin Poole said there was no disturbance to the marine mud and no contaminants would be released during the improvement process as a 2-metre sand blanket would be placed above the seabed and all the ground improvement works be carried out below the sand blanket. He said that more site investigations (SI) would be conducted in the detailed design stage. Mr Eric Ching informed that they had conducted water quality monitoring for preliminary SI and Deep Cement Mixing (DCM) trial works before the EIA process and scheme design to determine any potential water quality impact on a voluntary basis. The investigation result showed that there was no measurable water quality impact during the SI and DCM trial works. He said that year 2016 was chosen as the worst case scenario period during which time the sand blanket laying process would be at a maximum rate. According to the modelling assessment, it was assumed that sand used for the sand blanket would have a maximum of 10% of fines content and the limit of the 10% fines content would be incorporated in future construction contracts as a precautionary measure to confine the release of SS.

15. Concerning a Member's enquiry about the feasibility of setting up more water quality control stations and impact monitoring stations before, during and after the construction phase in view of the large work site area, Mr Eric Ching said that pre-construction phase water quality monitoring would be adopted to establish the baseline for subsequent water quality impact monitoring work. Three control stations and 12 impact monitoring stations would be set up at strategic locations to cover the entire reclamation area to provide concurrent background water quality information to alert whether the construction works had caused any unacceptable impacts on water quality when compared to the water quality measured at the control stations. No additional merit could be expected from setting up more stations for the purpose. Action and limit levels would be set based on the baseline data and data from the control stations for comparing and identifying any exceedance of water quality impact. He explained that there were three sets of data, namely (i) data from the immediate control station; (ii) data from the impact monitoring stations which demonstrated the impact on water quality due to the construction works; and (iii) baseline monitoring results which would be carried out prior to any construction works. The action level would be based on the baseline data and the data from the control stations, whichever was higher, to be determined as the yardstick for comparing and identifying any exceedance of the impact on water quality.

16. In reply to a Member's further question on the chance of manipulation of

data, Mr Eric Ching confirmed that all data would be reported to EPD according to the actual results being measured. Under the EM&A Manual, the baseline monitoring would be carried out before the construction works commenced and the data would generate a historic baseline. During the construction works, water quality would be monitored by the control stations which would provide instantaneous baseline of water quality. Regarding the action level, either 95% percentile of the baseline result or 120% of the control result, whichever was higher, would be adopted in terms of SS as the level could be fluctuating in the marine environment and that the daily activities around the area could vary. On this basis, relying merely on the historic baseline would not be as representative as the instantaneous baseline to assess whether the construction works would result in an unacceptable impact on water quality.

17. A Member asked for information on the activities of barges and construction vessels to be deployed in the reclamation area which might increase the release of SS and sediment plumes contaminating the surrounding waters. Mr Eric Ching said that sediment plumes so generated and impact on water quality were considered to be temporary and insignificant in view that many of the vessels would be in a relatively stationary position or requiring slow position shift. Construction vessel movements would be restricted to 10 knots or below and with designated routings and designated entry/exit points in the works areas. Sediment released by the vessels should be limited and any disturbance to the seabed would be temporary. With the mitigation measures in place, the volume of vessels traffic within and around the reclamation site had been assessed to be not significant enough to result in potential adverse impact on water quality. Mr Peter Lee supplemented that relevant technical guidelines for construction vessel management and control would be drawn up as part of the EM&A programme and AAHK's management and control practices for strict observance/compliance by contractors.

18. A Member asked for information on the full list of pollutants and contaminants collected by storm water drains and surface runoff as well as the assessment on the potential impacts of such pollutants on marine life. He expressed concern that the impact of heavy metal pollutants on the airport runway had not been assessed in the EIA study. Mr Eric Ching said that the source of water to be discharged to the storm drains were mainly surface runoff and rainwater. No significant concentration of heavy metals and other contaminants were expected to be collected as the airport apron and fuelling areas would be equipped with an oil interception system to prevent storm water runoff carrying fuel oils from being discharged into the marine environment. Also, aircraft maintenance and washing areas were equipped with separate drainage systems to collect, treat and discharge water into the sewer and hence would not form part of storm water discharge. Based on the information of the review of the previous water monitoring results, there were no other traceable pollutants other than the main pollutants in storm water runoff as assessed in the EIA report, i.e. SS, Biological Oxygen Demand and nutrients. Mr Ching confirmed that all the potential pollutants had been assessed in the EIA study and information about the storm water runoff records could be provided for reference.

19. In response to a Member's question about making reference from the EIA study of the HZMB projects, Mr Eric Ching said that the 3RS EIA study had taken into account the HZMB projects for cumulative assessment of marine works when developing the water quality model. For the baseline established for water quality impact assessment, Mr Ching said that the monitoring data provided by EPD were adopted.

20. Two Members were concerned on the locations of the proposed monitoring stations and the frequency of monitoring near the ecologically sensitive areas in Lantau such as San Tau Beach Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI), Sha Chau Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (SCLKCMP) and other potential marine parks in north and west of Lantau before, during and after the construction phase in order to ensure that the marine ecology of these areas would not be affected by changes in hydrodynamics and water quality due to the construction and operation phase of the 3RS project. Mr Eric Ching advised that there were minimal changes in the operation phase water quality between dry and wet seasons with and without the 3RS project with the worst case in 2026. Exact locations of the proposed monitoring stations had been detailed in the EM&A Manual. Apart from the usual parameters such as measuring Dissolved Oxygen, SS and turbidity, they would also carry out monitoring for heavy metals, nutrients and alkalinity of the waters in those areas in order to ascertain any potential contaminants released during ground improvement works.

Landscape and visual quality

21. A Member asked for information on specific landscape and visual quality criteria to be adopted in the overall visual environment of the project to confirm sustainability of the 3RS. He remarked that there should be broad-brush targets to be adopted for greening and planting in the overall 3RS project, and that AAHK should provide quantitative environment targets/pledges to be benchmarked against international standards and best practices adopted in other world-renowned airports. This view was shared by another Member.

22. Mr Sandy Duggie explained that general language was adopted in the EIA report to define the mitigation measures without detailed prescription in order to give flexibility for detailed design planning. While there was no specific percentage or area requirement of greening and planting at this stage, detailed assessments on existing landscape resources had been made during the EIA study. Relevant legislation/guidelines/standards of Hong Kong would also be followed to address the landscape and visual impacts identified. Based on the Landscape and Visual Mitigation Arrangement Plans presented as part of the EIA report, some of the quantifiable greening and planting measures would include (i) greening of the reclamation edge estimated to measure 13 km long; (ii) airside soft landscape to be grassed estimated at 270 ha; and (iii) full reinstatement of all streetscape areas and hard and soft landscape areas disturbed during the construction phase to equal or better quality. Mr Kevin Poole advised that the Third Runway Concourse would form a central feature of the 3RS project and would balance operational efficiency of the airport with AAHK's pledge of having HKIA as the world's greenest airport.

Green amenities would include open air courtyard and sunken gardens with landscape area. AAHK would benchmark the 3RS project against the best practices and international standards for airports, and was targeting to achieve the BEAM Plus Gold or equivalent certification.

23. A Member asked about the experience on the visual and landscape impacts to be gained having regard the planning and operation of the existing HKIA which could be of reference for mapping out the landscape and greening plans of 3RS. He commented that landscape design should not be limited to those in relation to mitigation measures, and that thematic landscape could also be considered to showcase Hong Kong characteristics. A Member also suggested the grass species *Zoysia Japonica* to be used for airside soft landscaping. Mr Kevin Poole replied that experience and comments received from the landscape and greenery measures in the early years of HKIA operation, among others, would be of good reference for planning the 3RS project. He thanked the Member's suggestion on the choice of grass species for airside landscape in meeting the operational requirements of the airport. Mr Poole pointed out that while Terminal 2 would be developed with the surrounding area, much area to be provided in the 3RS project was airside area with more restrictions on the landscaping design due to aerodrome operational requirements. He recapped AAHK's commitment to benchmark the 3RS project against the best practices and international standards for airports and their target to achieve the BEAM Plus Gold or equivalent certification.

24. A Member was concerned about the design of the external area and the treatment of the new formation edges such as areas that were visually affected. He suggested AAHK to provide a target percentage of tree planting area which would generate a unique natural environment for Hong Kong in the new development. He also requested for illustrations of the visual quality and photomontages of the future landscape environment of the new airport facilities including the sensitive streetscape, paving and aesthetic planting.

25. Regarding the information on the planting area of the project, Mr Peter Lee said that according to the mitigation arrangement plan in the EIA report, while most of the development provided in the project was of operational need such as taxiways, runways and parking stands, they would try to maximize greenery coverage in the remaining area. While AAHK could provide a broad estimate of the greening area of the whole project, there was no prescribed percentage of the relevant area at this stage so as to provide flexibility for the detailed design stage.

26. In reply to a Member's question about the benchmark for the environmental performance of the 3RS project, Mr Kevin Poole said that the project would aim for a BEAM Plus Gold certification as the local assessment standard on environmental performance of buildings or equivalent international standard. However, there were challenges in the attainment of BEAM Plus as airport facilities could not readily fit in with the existing categories of the assessment which was less applicable for buildings with large public space. Mr Poole said that AAHK would make reference to other benchmarking schemes e.g.

the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design in USA which the Member had mentioned, which were equivalent to the local green building award under BEAM Plus.

Waste management

27. Five Members raised questions/concerns regarding (i) information on waste management plan for building design and operation phase which should drive towards a stricter waste minimization and recycling strategy; (ii) building design to factor in waste management design with zero-carbon as the target; (iii) projected increase in food waste generated from food and beverage (F&B) outlets and the plan for handling and reducing waste so generated; (iv) green purchase during the construction and operation phase of the project; and (v) possible plans on banning the use of disposable containers and utensils in the catering outlets in the terminal building.

28. Mr Peter Lee said that AAHK would continue their discussions with existing retail tenants and caterers on a more vigorous waste management plan, taking into account the operational and physical constraints of the existing HKIA buildings/facilities and the associated arrangements. Green building design as well as energy and resource use efficiencies, together with waste minimization and recycling strategy, had factored in the 3RS project to allow AAHK to work towards the achievement of the BEAM Plus Gold certification or equivalent. He advised that active waste management and minimization initiatives were on-going at the HKIA and these would be rolled out in all new AAHK facilities. On food waste, AAHK was proactive in addressing food waste separation and re-use. They had made public their targets for waste recycling and reduction and these targets were relevant for the entire HKIA including the future 3RS facilities. Regarding green purchase, Mr Kevin Poole said that they would follow the design process as required under the BEAM Plus requirements, e.g. to use sustainable timber for construction. They would constantly refine their measures and keep in view the latest development during the operation phase. He also advised that they were working closely with retail stores as well as F&B tenants, with good progress towards reducing the use of disposable utensils for fast food operators. The waste reduction arrangement would be adopted for the whole HKIA, including the 3RS facilities when in operation.

29. A Member was concerned about the large volume of public fill materials to be imported for land formation. She asked AAHK to map out a more efficient works schedule to minimize the use of construction and demolition (C&D) materials to be disposed of so as to reduce the net volume of inert C&D materials to be generated. Her views were shared by two Members. A Member suggested re-using the fills generated from the golf course on the airport island upon its removal for the purpose. Mr Eric Ching said that due to the large size of the reclamation site, some 10.9 million m³ of public fill materials would need to be imported. There would be a rolling arrangement on the use of C&D materials as surcharge materials to achieve the required settlement of the reclamation activities. The estimated quantity of inert C&D materials to be generated on a quarterly basis

had been set out in the EIA report. Mr Kelvin Poole supplemented that AAHK would work to maximize the amount of fill materials to be taken from public fills reception facilities (PFRF) to supplement the need of import of these materials. They would work for optimal re-use of the C&D materials as an effective environmental green measure during the construction phase. Net inert C&D materials so generated would be re-directed for use by other concurrent projects in Hong Kong or for off-site delivery to PFRF for use by future projects. He advised that no fill materials would be put to the landfills.

Sewerage and sewage treatment

30. A Member asked if AAHK had established any contingency plan in the event that both the Tung Chung pumping station and the treatment plant in Siu Ho Wan failed in operation. Mr Eric Ching advised that the public sewage treatment works were managed by the Drainage Services Department (DSD) which would upgrade both facilities in future when the 3RS project was developed. Mr K F Tang confirmed that sewage treatment was public service under the purview of DSD and EPD. Works plans were in hand to provide sufficient sewage flow capacity for the 3RS project.

Hazards to human life

31. In reply to a Member's question on safety concern for staff working in the open environment during inclement weather conditions, e.g. lightning and gale wind, Mr Kevin Poole advised that there were adequate shelters and lightning conductors as well as lightning protection system to provide early warnings for staff working in open areas like aprons and taxiways.

32. Regarding a Member's question on the design, alignment and laying of fuel pipelines to comply with the Government's risk guidelines, Mr Kevin Poole said that the replacement future aviation fuel pipelines using the Horizontal Directional Drilling method would be laid between 40-120 m below the seabed in the reclamation area to ward off chances of damage to the pipelines and possible spills or accidents.

Cultural heritage

33. A Member asked about chances of discovery on relics and antiques of archaeological significance in the works areas, and suggested AAHK to draw up a rescue plan to resurrect items of conservation value/significance. A Member shared this view. Mr Eric Ching replied that they had conducted a full-scale archaeological investigation for the entire project area employing sonar scanning, metal detecting technique and dive surveys to screen out spots with potential relics and finds. Based on the survey results, no item of archaeological value had been identified in the study area. AAHK would include in the contract a requirement to draw up a Relics and Antiques Rescue Plan in the event of archaeological discovery during the project construction.

34. Mr John Chai thanked Members for their valuable advice and insightful comments on the 3RS EIA report. He appealed to the Members to consider the positive environmental elements which the 3RS project had incorporated at the design, construction and operation stage. Opportunities had been taken to include improvements in reducing aircraft emissions and aircraft noise impact to the populated areas, enhanced conservation measures for CWDs through the designation of the proposed marine park, re-design of the SkyPier HSF service and collaboration with other conservation projects.

Internal Discussion Session (Closed Session)

35. The Chairperson summarized Members' questions and set out the following list of follow-up issues for AAHK's response:

Water quality

- Further information on the use of barges and construction vessels to be deployed in the project area which might increase the release of SS contaminating the surrounding waters as well as technical guidelines for the contractors in minimizing such impacts;
- Information on the full list of pollutants and contaminants collected by the storm water surface runoff; assessment on the potential impacts of such pollutants on the marine environment;
- Information on the technical specifications of the proposed double layer silt curtains and silt screen and their projected performance and suitability under the assumed hydrodynamic model; and supporting evidence on the assumption that 80% of SS could be screened out;
- Information on how the proposed seawall will be constructed; and precautionary measures to suppress the release of SS during construction of seawall, in particular if silt curtains were to be used when building the seawall;
- Feasibility of setting up more water quality control stations and impact monitoring stations before, during and after the construction phase in view of the large site area; and
- Locations of the proposed monitoring stations and the frequency of monitoring near the ecologically sensitive areas in Lantau such as SCLKCMP and other potential marine parks in north and west Lantau before, during and after the construction phase to ensure that the habitats of these areas would not be affected by the changes in hydrodynamics and water quality due to the construction and operation of the 3RS project.

Landscape and visual quality

- Specific visual quality criteria to help elaborate on the overall visual environment of the 3RS project;
- Information on whether "future users" of the airport and "coastal users" had been taken as visual sensitive receivers and incorporated in the study; and elaboration on the meaning of "moderately" or "significantly affected";
- Experience on visual and landscape impacts learnt from the planning and

operation of the existing HKIA which could be of reference for mapping out the landscaping and greening plans of the 3RS project;

- Broad-brush targets to be adopted for greening and planting;
- Photo montages for the landscape design; and
- Quantifiable environmental targets/pledges and benchmarks against international standards and best practices if applicable.

Waste management

- Information on waste management plan for building design and operational phase which should drive towards a stricter waste minimization and recycling strategy;
- Possibility of mapping out a more efficient works schedule to minimize the use of C&D materials to be disposed of (including those generated from the golf course on the airport island upon its removal) so as to reduce the overall volume of C&D materials required to be imported; constraints of further reducing the net generation of C&D materials; and
- Projected increase in food waste generated from F&B outlets and plan for handling and further reducing food waste generated.

36. In response to a Member's question about the number of EPD monitoring stations, Mr K F Tang said that EPD has a monitoring programme for marine waters in Hong Kong which was divided into 10 water control zones. An annual report would be issued to review the quality of marine waters. There were currently one to two stations around the airport area which could provide useful information to AAHK. For the baseline monitoring since the marine environment would fluctuate due to seasonal changes, Mr Tang suggested that AAHK could conduct monitoring for a longer period, say, 9 to 12 months as compared to the general 3-6 months' requirement for other projects before conducting the EM&A monitoring work during the construction stage. He agreed that the location of the impact monitoring stations should be carefully selected to ensure that the data collected would accurately reflect the ambient condition.

37. Regarding a Member's enquiry about the standard of "marginally acceptable" in terms of landscape and visual impact, Mr K F Tang said that PlanD was the authority of visual and landscape matters, and the standard would depend on individual guidelines and content of a project. Mr Andrew Lai added that Members could request elaboration of the supplementary information for a more thorough understanding of the EIA report such as the guidelines in relation to the acceptable levels of landscape and visual impact as set out by PlanD. Notwithstanding this, Members had to follow the EIAO and the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process (EIA-TM) when drawing up the proposed conditions and recommendations for consideration by ACE.

38. On a Member's question on AAHK seemingly using the public sewage treatment facilities for the development of the 3RS project, Mr K F Tang clarified that it was Government policy to provide treatment facilities to all public or private developments in Hong Kong. DSD and EPD were to provide the public service

and upgrade the capacity of treatment further taking into account the town planning process as required.

39. A Member advised that, on the assumption that Members agreed not to reject the EIA report, they had to identify and suggest conditions which were considered essential for AAHK to take forward the 3RS project whereas recommendations were views and comments for AAHK to improve on.

40. In response to a Member's comments that AAHK's experts had given subjective assessments in the EIA study, another Member said that the proposed conditions would involve professional judgment requiring Members' deliberations. A condition so proposed should be robust, fair and enforceable on the part of AAHK.

41. Concerning Members' general concern on the legal implication of the comments tendered by ACE/EIASC on the EIA report, Mr K F Tang said that in case there were legal proceedings on the 3RS project, EPD as the EIA authority would take up the matter. ACE and Council Members would not be involved. He supplemented that the conditions and recommendations to be proposed by ACE needed not refer to particular sections of the EIA report or the EIA-TM.

42. Regarding a Member's enquiry about conducting social and environmental impact assessment, Mr K F Tang advised that the EIAO and the EIA-TM had not provided for the need and the relevant arrangements under the current EIA process.

43. Concerning a Member's question on whether ACE had the duty to examine the need and objectives of an EIA project, Mr K F Tang said that the primary objective of the EIAO was to ensure that the designated project was environmentally acceptable and had met the requirements of the EIA-TM and the Study Brief of the project. It was beyond the scope of the EIAO for ACE to consider issues specific to the need and objectives of a designated project.

Item 2 : Any other business

44. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

Item 3 : Date of next meeting

45. The Chairperson reminded that EIASC will meet on 18 August 2014 to continue the discussion on the 3RS EIA report regarding the supplementary information from AAHK.

EIA Subcommittee Secretariat
August 2014