

Status Report on Sand Dredging and Mud Disposal in Hong Kong

Purpose

This paper provides a status report to Members on sand dredging and mud disposal in Hong Kong covering the period from September 2003 to February 2004. The last six-monthly status report was issued to Members in August 2003 (ACE Paper 26/2003).

Overview of Marine Fill Sources, Mud Disposal Areas and Major Reclamation Areas

2. The locations of marine fill sources, mud disposal areas and major reclamation areas in Hong Kong are shown in the drawing MFC-001H (Attachment A). During the reporting period, there was no sand dredging activity at marine borrow areas in Hong Kong. Disposal of mud suitable for open sea disposal continued at South Cheung Chau, East of Ninepin, East Tung Lung Chau and South of Tsing Yi, and for capping the mud Pit CMP IVb at East Sha Chau. Confined disposal of mud continued at the dedicated facility at East Sha Chau.

Open Sea Disposal of Mud

4. The open sea floor mud disposal areas at South Cheung Chau and East of Ninepin were being used for disposal of mud suitable for open sea disposal from various projects in Hong Kong. Mud suitable for open sea disposal was also used for capping the mud pit CMP IVb at East Sha Chau. Mud suitable for open sea disposal arising from the CT9 Project continued to be disposed of in the exhausted marine sand borrow pits at South of Tsing Yi. The disposal of mud at the East Tung Lung Chau exhausted marine sand borrow pit resumed in October 2003.

5. The results of water quality monitoring at the active disposal areas have so far indicated no unacceptable impact on the environment. The monitoring work will continue, and mitigation measures will be implemented where necessary, in order to ensure that the impact on the environment is kept within acceptable limits.

6. The environmental study for the proposed year-round open sea disposal in the exhausted marine sand borrow pits at North of the Brothers is approaching its final stage. The proposal is for disposal of Category M¹ sediment that passes biological screening test in the sand borrow pits which will be capped by Category L² sediment. The results of the environmental assessment together with the Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A) Manual will be submitted to the EIA-Subcommittee for discussion later this year.

Confined Marine Disposal of Mud

7. Disposal of mud requiring confined marine disposal from various projects in Hong Kong continued at the mud Pit CMP IVc at East Sha Chau. With implementation of a comprehensive EM&A programme and appropriate mitigation measures, the results of the monitoring indicate that the disposal activities have not caused any unacceptable impact on the environment.

8. The consultancy study to identify a suitable site for a new confined marine disposal facility commenced in June 2002 and is progressing according to the study programme. The consultant is studying two potential sites, one at Airport East and another at the East of Sha Chau area. The consultant has suggested that the contained aquatic disposal method, similar to that currently being used for the disposal of contaminated mud at East Sha Chau, be adopted. Environmental impact assessments are being carried out for the potential sites, and the findings are expected to be available in mid-2004.

Attachment

Attachment A: Drawing No. MFC-001H – Marine Fill Resources, Mud Disposal Areas and Major Reclamations

Civil Engineering Department
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¹ Category M: Sediment with any one or more contaminant levels exceeding the Lower Chemical Exceedance Level and none exceeding the Upper Chemical Exceedance Level as defined under Environment, Transport and Works Bureau Technical Circular (Works) (ETWB TCW) No. 34/2002.

² Category L: Sediment with all contaminant levels not exceeding the Lower Chemical Exceedance Level as defined under the ETWB TCW No. 34/2002.