



Room 2006, 20th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel: 848 2551 Fax: 845 3489
香港中環花園道美利大廈20樓2006室 • 電話: 848 2551 傳真機: 845 3489

(ACE Paper 64/96)
For Information

Construction Waste Disposal

Introduction

Members requested a paper on construction waste disposal at the ACE meeting on 25 March 1996.

Policy on Construction Waste Disposal

2. It is government policy to dispose of solid waste, which includes construction waste, generated in Hong Kong in as efficient and environmentally friendly a way as possible. We aim to both minimise the amount of waste produced and to maximise the beneficial uses so that it takes up less public dump and landfill space.

Background

Strategic Landfills

3. These are designed to take municipal waste and non-inert construction waste. There are three strategic landfills -

- the North East New Territories (NENT) Landfill at Ta Kwu Ling with a capacity of 35 million cubic metres.
- the West New Territories (WENT) Landfill at Tuen Mun with a capacity of 61 million cubic metres.
- the South East New Territories (SENT) Landfill at Tseung Kwan O with a capacity of 39 million cubic metres.

4. In addition to the strategic landfills, there is one old landfill still in operation. The Pillar Point Valley Landfill (PPVL) at Tuen Mun will be closed by the end of 1996.

Refuse Transfer Stations (RTS)

5. Members will be aware that municipal waste is collected at the RTSs and transferred to strategic landfills. There are at present three RTSs, at Kowloon Bay, Chai Wan and Shatin. Two new RTSs will be commissioned in 1997 at Kennedy Town and the West Kowloon Reclamation. RTSs are not suitable for disposing of construction waste.

Public Dumps/Public Dumping Barging Points

(a) Public Dumps

6. These are established for the disposal of inert construction waste directly into sites where land reclamation or site formation is taking place. There are two existing public dumps, namely the Tseung Kwan O Public Dump and the Tuen Mun Public Dump. Future public dumps are being investigated at Tseung Kwan O, Tuen Mun, Pak Shek Kok and North Tsing Yi.

(b) Public Dumping Barging Points

7. These are set up to barge construction waste to public dumps from areas that produce large quantities of construction waste, but where no public dump sites are available. The intention is to provide convenient dumping sites for construction waste producers in order to reduce problems associated with large numbers of heavy goods vehicle movements.

8. The only existing barging point is located at Aldrich Bay, transferring construction waste from Hong Kong Island to Tseung Kwan O Public Dump. We are examining the potential for additional barging points in future. The more barging points we can establish, the less adverse impact will be felt at any particular location.

Availability of Public Dumps

9. Although the overall capacity of public dumps is adequate, if no public dumps are added to our current programme, we are likely to experience a shortage of capacity after 1999. Annex I shows the monthly intake of construction waste at various public dumps from 1994 to 1996. There is also a geographical imbalance with no public dumps in the north-east New Territories nor on Hong Kong Island. Annex II shows the amount of construction waste disposed of at various public dumping outlets and their areas of origin.

10. We are examining measures to ensure the long term provision of public dumping facilities. The most promising has been the reaction to a request to works departments to consider more positively the acceptance of inert construction waste as fill materials for their projects. It has been agreed, in principle, that all new reclamations requiring over 300,000 cubic metres of fill will, unless there are good reasons to the contrary, accept inert construction waste. A detailed mechanism is being worked out to implement this agreement.

Construction Waste Minimisation and Recycling

11. As stated in paragraph 2, it is government policy to minimise the amount of construction waste produced. The following paragraphs outline the efforts made so far.

12. The Civil Engineering Department has commissioned a consultancy study on the long term strategic planning of public dumping facilities. The nine-month study will, in particular, advise on alternative disposal methods and the reuse and recycling of inert construction waste.

Sorting of Construction Waste

On-site Sorting

13. The Environmental Protection Department, through the environmental impact assessment process, advises the project proponents to exercise on-site sorting of construction waste.

14. The Housing Department has included the requirement of on-site sorting in all its demolition works contracts. The Works Branch is considering ways to encourage such practice in other relatively smaller scale construction projects.

Off-site Sorting

15. Ideally, construction waste should be sorted at source (i.e. on-site sorting) so that inert materials would not be mixed with non-inert ones to occupy landfill space. However, in reality, it is often difficult to do so at small urban construction sites. In view of the physical constraints in conducting on-site sorting at many construction sites, the Environmental Protection Department has set up a pilot Intermediate Sorting Plant (ISP) at the SENT Landfill to provide off-site sorting service. If proves to be technically and economically viable, we will consider setting up more ISP's at various strategic locations. The feasibility and effectiveness of ISP's will also be examined by the consultancy study, mentioned at paragraph 13 above, commissioned by the Civil Engineering Department.

Landfill Charging

16. We believe that charging for construction waste being disposed of in the strategic landfills will be an effective way to encourage the sorting of construction waste because disposal of inert construction waste at public dumps is free of charge. The Waste Disposal (Charges for Disposal of Waste) Regulation was passed by the Legislative Council in June 1995. Unfortunately, we were unable to implement the charging scheme because of practical difficulties involving the truck drivers. We then introduced the Waste Disposal (Amendment) Bill to the Legislative Council in July 1996. This will allow for the establishment of an account billing charging mechanism, which will satisfy the truck drivers' concerns. The Legislative Council has decided that a Bills Committee is necessary to consider this Bill, but the Committee has not yet been established.