

**For discussion on
28 June 2005**

**Islands District Council
Arrangements for the Opening of
Hong Kong Disneyland & Penny's Bay**

Purpose

This paper briefs members on the framework of the arrangements for the opening of the Hong Kong Disneyland (HKD) and associated facilities at Penny's Bay.

Background

2. The Government started discussions with the Hongkong International Theme Park Limited (HKITP) in late 2004 arrangements for the opening of HKD and associated facilities in Penny's Bay. All parties involved agreed to a phased operation approach. The idea is to give the theme park, public transport operators and relevant departments a familiarisation period to adjust their operation before the Grand Opening on 12 September, 2005.

3. The framework of measures outlined in this paper is the result of joint efforts by the Tourism Commission (TC), Environment, Transport and Works Bureau, Transport Department (TD), Hong Kong Police Force, Civil Engineering and Development Department, HKITP, MTR Corporation Limited (MTRC) and other relevant departments.

Operation Phases

4. There are three key phases in the operation sequence-
- (a) From early August 2005 – Disneyland Resort Line (DRL) is scheduled to run between Sunny Bay Station and Disneyland Resort Station (DRS). A section of the Park Promenade, linked to the DRS will be open to public;
 - (b) 16 August 2005 – Operation of all public facilities at Penny's Bay. Franchised bus and taxi will commence service. This period covers the Rehearsal Days of the theme park and hotels, which will be open to invited guests only.

- (c) 12 September 2005 – Opening of the theme park and hotels to the public.

Communication Strategy

5. We need to devise a Communication Strategy to ensure that both the general public in Hong Kong and our visitors are well informed of the operation sequence and the facilities and services opened/provided in each phase. Apart from providing general information, the Strategy also needs to provide a mechanism for HKITP, government authorities and public transport operators to make a coordinated response to any transport and crowd management contingency situation.

6. The strategy comprises three key components: communication systems, a communication plan and a transport and crowd control plan.

A. *Communication systems*

(a) Joint Command Centre

7. To ensure effective communication and swift response, TC, the Police, TD, HKITP and MTRC have agreed to set up a Joint Command Centre for the Opening of HKD (JCCOHKD). The Police will be the overall coordinator. Responsible for monitoring the crowd and traffic condition in the Penny's Bay, JCCOHKD will maintain regular communication with HKITP's security control, DRL's control room, TD's Emergency Transport Coordination Centre (ETTC) and, from 12 September, the Border Division of Immigration Department. When necessary, the JCCOHKD will trigger contingency measures. Once JCCOHKD makes a decision, representatives will be responsible for communicating the decision to respective departments and organizations for follow up actions in accordance with their respective emergency mechanism.

8. JCCOHKD will be activated on the first day of all key phases and the intervening weekends up to 9 October, i.e. the end of the National Day Golden Week. It will be activated on other dates on a need basis.

(b) Communication channels

9. Relevant departments and operators have agreed to set up various communication channels for visitors to get essential information for planning their trips to the theme park: –

- (i) HKD's website and hotline to give information on the latest ticketing situation;
- (ii) TC's dedicated website on the opening of HKD to act as a one-stop gateway for information on the phased opening, corresponding transport arrangements and travel tips for local residents and visitors alike;
- (iii) TD's website and telephone hotline on transport arrangements for HKD;
- (iv) On-board broadcasting systems of public transport to disseminate information on traffic and transport matters; and
- (v) An Information booklet containing information on all the facilities, opening hours, transport services, travel tips, etc.

10. Communication channels for dissemination of emergency alerts and contingency measures include: –

- (i) Police Public Relationships Branch on crowd control and other contingency measures;
- (ii) TD's ETCC to disseminate traffic and transport information to public transport operators through direct telephone lines/multi-fax and to the public through the media;
- (iii) MTRC's broadcasting system at MTR stations and on MTR trains;
- (iv) Tunnel radio break-ins and variable message signs in the Tsing Ma Control Area to inform motorists of emergency and traffic- and transport-related messages; and
- (v) HKD's website.

11. Hong Kong Disneyland is also studying the feasibility of setting up information sign boards at Lo Wu and Huanggang to inform Mainland visitors of the ticketing situation.

B. Public communication plan

12. The opening of HKD and the Penny's Bay Development Area, a major tourism infrastructure project, calls for a well-coordinated publicity

campaign to keep the public well informed. Prompt dissemination of contingency transport and crowd control measures to the public during emergency is also necessary.

(a) Pre-Grand Opening preparation stage

13. During the preparation stage, the theme park is not yet open to the public. The main objective to phase in the operation of public facilities and transportation service is to enable the public to be familiarised with the facilities and services. It also offers an important window for operators to make adjustments to improve their operation and iron out any initial teething problems.

14. Communication will centre around details regarding the facilities and services open to the public, and the availability of different means of transport. Visitors intending to visit the park will be advised to make use of the month-long period to plan their visit and encouraged to pre-book park tickets. As regards invited guests to the Rehearsal Days, HKITP will provide information on transport and park admission to them separately.

15. The main feature of the communication plan will be TC's dedicated website as a one-stop gateway to information relating to the phased opening, TD's website for information specific to transportation services to HKD. Visitors interested in ticketing information or other corporate information of HKD will also find the hyperlinks to the official websites of HKD and TD. Plans are also in place to produce a booklet to serve people with no internet access. A series of TV and radio APIs to draw wider public attention to essential information will also be launched in August.

(b) Post Grand Opening operation stage

16. After the HKD comes into operation, in addition to the communication arrangement set out in paragraphs 13-15 above, there is the need to disseminate information on transport and crowd management contingency.

17. Meanwhile, TD and the Police have agreed with the operator of the Tsing Ma Control Area that urgent traffic and transport messages related to HKD will be shown to motorists heading for HKD as and when necessary. In addition, we will also utilise established channels of the Police and TD to disseminate emergency and traffic and transport information through the media.

18. While the Government will encourage all visitors to pre-book

theme park tickets and plan ahead, there will still be impromptu visitors (particularly Mainland visitors under the Individual Visit Scheme). In order that these visitors can receive real-time ticketing information before entering Hong Kong, the Government has explored with the Shenzhen authorities and HKITP the suggestion of setting up an information board at control points across the boundary. The Government has put HKITP in direct communication with the relevant parties to take the proposal forward.

C. Transport and Crowd Control

Phase 1 (early August to 15 August 2005) – Disneyland Resort Line (DRL) is scheduled to run between Sunny Bay Station and Disneyland Resort Station (DRS).

19. The crowd control measure during this period will be a one-way flow arrangement. On arrival at the Disneyland Resort Station (DRS), DRL passengers will be directed to leave the station to walk to the end of the open section of the Park Promenade and back to the Station for departure. The Police, HKITP and MTRC will join hands to monitor the crowd situation inside and outside DRS. If necessary, contingency measures will be implemented, including amongst others, suspension of inbound DRL service. Warning message will also be broadcast at MTR Tsing Yi station.

Phase 2 (16 August – 11 September 2005) – Operation of all public facilities at Penny's Bay. Franchised bus and taxi will commence service.

20. From 16 August 2005, all facilities at Penny's Bay, except for the theme park and the hotels, will be open to the public. Inspiration Lake Recreation Centre (ILRC) will be the key recreational facility, and therefore a major attraction at Penny's Bay. According to the agreed crowd management plan, HKITP will be responsible for monitoring the patronage to ILRC. Once the patronage reaches the capacity of the facility (about 5,000 people), further entry to the ILRC will be temporarily suspended and bus routes adjusted accordingly to provide uni-directional service only from ILRC to Disneyland Resort Public Transport Interchange. Additional staff from HKITP will be deployed to give visitors information about the adjusted transport arrangements.

21. For crowd management consideration during this testing period, recreational amenities such as boat and bicycle rental will not be opened initially and the start of service will be announced separately, having regard to the visitor pattern and volume.

22. Another major concern during that period is the possible bunching of motorists heading to Penny's Bay. As a standing arrangement, the Police will strictly enforce the no stopping restriction on route to the car park. When the car park (1,000 bays) is full, HKITP will open the coach park to private cars (300 additional bays maximum) and, if necessary, turn the Emergency Vehicle Holding Ground at Sunny Bay Public Transport Interchange into a temporary car park. In case there are already too many vehicles in both Penny's Bay and Sunny Bay), the Police may bar further vehicular entry into the area. The Police and TD already have standard procedures to handle serious congestion.

Phase 3 (12 September 2005) - Opening of the theme park and hotels to the public.

23. The theme park and hotels will be open to visitors. During the initial opening period, Immigration Department will closely monitor the situation at the Boundary Control Points. 60 new cross-boundary coach quotas for the Lok Ma Chau crossing will be issued to cope with anticipated increase in demand. The tendering process for the new quotas is underway and the quotas would be allocated before end June 2005.

24. Shortly after the Grand Opening, there will be two major public holidays, i.e. the Mid-Autumn Festival and the National Day Golden Week. We expect that many Mainland tourists will visit the theme park on these occasions. The established arrangements for handling the cross-boundary people flow during festive periods have been proven effective and will continue. The JCCO HKD will also be activated.

Next Step

25. The Government will keep in view the operation of the phased opening and the corresponding public communication plan, and make necessary adjustment as necessary.

Tourism Commission
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