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31 December 2009

Ms Debbie YAU
Clerk to Panel on Economic Development
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Yau,

Panel on Economic Development
Reporting mechanism of the Ngong Ping ropeway

Thank you for your letter of 15 December 2009.

As requested, I enclose information on the reporting mechanism of the Ngong Ping ropeway from the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department for the Panel's reference.

Yours sincerely

(Ms Doreen KWAN)

for Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

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For information

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development

Reporting mechanism of Ngong Ping 360 ropeway

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the reporting mechanism of Ngong Ping 360 ropeway.

Reporting mechanism

2. According to the Aerial Ropeways (Operation and Maintenance) Regulations, the controller of an aerial ropeway is required to notify the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) of any major incident happened within the site of the ropeway, e.g. incident involving the death of or injury to any person occurring within the site of ropeway, failure of the main drive, etc.

3. Before the Ngong Ping 360 ropeway commenced service in September 2006, EMSD had established a reporting mechanism with Ngong Ping 360 to monitor the operation and maintenance of the ropeway. In accordance with the established reporting mechanism, Ngong Ping 360 Limited is required to, within 30 minutes of occurrence, inform EMSD verbally of any incident stipulated in the Aerial Ropeways (Operation and Maintenance) Regulations, as well as other incidents due to equipment breakdown that may affect the safe operation of the ropeway system, including breakdown of rescue carrier. The verbal report should be followed by a written report within 24 hours. The reporting mechanism remains in operation.

4. During the rescue drill in the evening of 18 November 2009, a rescue carrier of Ngong Ping 360 was damaged after colliding with the tower of the ropeway system. Ngong Ping 360 Limited informed EMSD of the incident on 20 November 2009 (i.e. two days after the incident).

5. After receiving the notification, EMSD inspected the rescue carrier involved in the incident on site immediately. The inspection revealed that the rescue carrier had been repaired and functioned properly. On the same day, EMSD requested Ngong Ping 360 Limited to submit a report on the details of the incident. As Ngong Ping 360 Limited only informed EMSD two days after the incident, it had not complied with the established reporting mechanism.

Improvement measures

6. In view of Ngong Ping 360 Limited's failure to follow the reporting mechanism, EMSD issued a warning letter to Ngong Ping 360 Limited reiterating the need to comply with the established mechanism for making incident reports to EMSD in future. As Ngong Ping 360 Limited is a subsidiary company of MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), EMSD also requested MTRCL to strengthen the monitoring of Ngong Ping 360 Limited in order to improve the latter's performance.

7. Moreover, having reviewed the reporting mechanism implemented since 2006, EMSD, in exercise of its power under the Aerial Ropeways (Operation and Maintenance) Regulations, has clearly spelt out that the ropeway controller should notify EMSD of any incident relating to the rescue carrier. Any person who contravenes the requirement shall be legally liable for the non-compliance, and subject to the maximum fine of \$2,000 and imprisonment of three months.

8. Ngong Ping 360 Limited has fully briefed all relevant staff members to ensure strict compliance with the reporting requirements as stipulated by EMSD. Ngong Ping 360 Limited undertakes to pay full regard to and comply with all statutory requirements at all times.

9. EMSD will continue to monitor closely the operation of the Ngong Ping 360 ropeway and its implementation of the necessary improvement measures to prevent recurrence of similar incidents.