

LCQ13: Kai Tak Cruise Terminal

Following is a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, to a question by the Dr Hon Elizabeth Quat in the Legislative Council today (May 28):

Question:

It has been nearly one year since the commissioning of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal (Terminal) in June 2013. Regarding the facilities, design and transport link of the Terminal, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as it was reported that, notwithstanding the reply by the Government to a question raised by a Member of this Council on May 7 this year that "[t]he remedial works and water tightness tests are substantially completed", water leakage still occurred in the terminal building after the rainstorm on the next day, of the details of the remedial works and water tightness tests conducted by the authorities regarding the water leakage; whether they can give a clear account of the completion time for the relevant works and tests, and whether they have taken any measure to ensure that leakage problems will not arise again in this rainy season; if they have, of the details of such measures; if not, the reasons for that, and whether they have drawn up any interim remedial measures;

(2) given the Government's indication in October last year that the Terminal had received 59 applications from cruise vessels for berthing at the Terminal between October last year and the end of 2016, totalling about 103 days of berthing, whether it knows the latest figures; if the figures have dropped, of the reasons for that;

(3) as it has been reported that there are some problems with the design of the rooftop park on the terminal building (e.g. the planting beds obstruct the access by members of the public to the fences to enjoy the sea view, the signage is not clear enough, and some directional signs have the left-right directions reversed), whether the authorities will review the design of the rooftop park and draw up improvement proposals, and whether they have comprehensively inspected the signage within the Terminal; if they have not, of the reasons for that;

(4) as some members of the public have pointed out that Wi-Fi signals at some locations (such as the rooftop park) in the Terminal are weak, whether the Government

has tested, at various locations of the Terminal, the signal strength of the free Wi-Fi service provided under the Government Wi-Fi Programme; if it has, of the outcome; if not, the reasons for that;

(5) given that at present quite a number of Hong Kong people visit the Terminal during holidays, but it has been reported that facilities such as restaurants and shops are not yet available in the Terminal, whether it knows the timetable for and details about the opening for business of the restaurants and shops in the Terminal;

(6) given the report that some taxi drivers are unwilling to drive their taxis to the Terminal to take disembarking visitors to their destinations because they are dissatisfied that the shuttle bus services provided by the Terminal operator, vessel companies and shopping arcades have vied for patrons with the taxi trade, resulting in visitors having to wait in a long queue for taxis, whether the Government has examined the situation and co-ordinated among the parties concerned;

(7) given that the second berth of the Terminal will be commissioned within this year, whether the Government has any concrete plan to further improve the transport arrangements to and from the Terminal; if it does, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(8) as it has been reported that the Terminal operator has suggested the Government to build a public pier in the vicinity of the Terminal to provide visitors with ferry services to and from the urban areas, whether the Government has received any document submitted by the operator concerning this proposal; if it has, of the progress of the authorities in studying this proposal; if not, the Government's current stance on this proposal?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the eight parts of the question is as follows:

(1) Water leakage occurred in some parts of the terminal building of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal (KTCT) during a heavy rainstorm under the black rainstorm signal in May last year, and the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) has already urged the terminal building contractor to follow up comprehensively. As observed from the

condition of the KTCT during the adverse weather under the black rainstorm signal at the end of March and early May this year, the water leakage problem has improved considerably as compared with the condition before. Yet, further follow-up works are needed at individual locations of leakage, including improvement works to the rainwater drains on the rooftop park to ensure that the drains are clear without being blocked by leaves or debris; as well as continuing with inspections for connecting joints between building modules and, where necessary, strengthening leak-proof materials at those locations. The ArchSD will continue to urge the terminal building contractor to closely inspect and follow up the above locations, with a view to completing the outstanding follow-up works within the next few months.

(2) The latest number of berthing applications for the KTCT has risen from that of October last year. In 2013, there were nine ship calls at the KTCT, with a total of 15 days of berthing. As for 2014, according to the latest information from the terminal operator, there will be a total of 27 ship calls (totalling 48 berthing days). To date, the terminal operator has received 27 bookings for berthing slots (for an estimated total of 44 berthing days) in 2015 and 17 bookings (for an estimated total of 26 berthing days) in the first half of 2016. As many international cruise companies are actively considering increasing the number of ship calls at the KTCT in 2015 and thereafter, we are confident that the utilisation rate of the KTCT will continue to rise in the coming years.

(3) Occupying an area of 23 000 square metres, the rooftop park at the KTCT is equipped with various amenities for recreational use by the public, including a central lawn, viewing platform, water garden, and fountain plaza, etc. It is also designed to offer visitors a 360-degree panoramic view of the Victoria Harbour, making it a popular holiday spot for the general public.

The ArchSD has installed additional directional signs at the rooftop park after its opening. In the next few months, more directional signs will be installed at the rooftop park and the terminal building based on actual needs. During ship calls or when special events are held, the terminal operator will as appropriate put up dedicated directional signs and use the electronic display panels inside the terminal building to provide information on transport and other information to cruise passengers and visitors.

As mentioned in the question, planters are placed in front of the railings at the side of the rooftop park. Under the rooftop park is the berthing apron, with a level difference of 25 metres between the two. Visitors should not walk too close to the railings of the

rooftop park to minimise the chances of accident or disruption to the operation of cruise ships. The railings and planters concerned would not bring significant visual impact to visitors in enjoying the view of the Victoria Harbour.

(4) As for the provision of Wi-Fi services, free Wi-Fi service is available at the baggage halls on the ground floor, the waiting halls on the second floor and part of the rooftop park of the terminal building under the Government Wi-Fi Programme. The Wi-Fi signals inside the terminal building have been stable all along, and many cruise passengers stayed inside the terminal to enjoy the free Wi-Fi service during ship calls. As for the rooftop park, incidents of weak signals occurred at some parts of the park. After the follow-up actions taken by the relevant departments, the Wi-Fi signals have largely resumed normal.

(5) The ancillary commercial areas of the KTCT, measuring about 5 600 square metres, are located at both ends of the second floor and the rooftop park and are managed by the terminal operator. The commercial areas at both ends of the second floor have been fully leased out. There will be a high-end retail shop-cum-cafe, with in-store counters for various brands. The other tenant is a catering company that will operate a Chinese restaurant and other eateries. As for the commercial areas at the rooftop park, one of the shops has been leased to a marriage registration service company that provides wedding services. These tenants are carrying out design and fitting out works and it is expected that they will commence business operation by phases from mid this year onwards.

(6) and (7) The KTCT needs to handle a large number of cruise passengers within a short period of time and therefore the support of various modes of transport is important. Taxi services as well as other transportation services of high passenger capacity are needed. In this connection, the terminal operator and cruise companies have arranged various shuttle bus routes for passengers.

The Administration and the terminal operator understand the views about shuttle bus services raised by individual taxi trade practitioners, and will maintain close communication with the taxi trade to explain to them the transport needs of the KTCT. The terminal operator will continue the practice of giving advance notification to the taxi trade on the ship call schedule of cruise vessels and calling for taxis via taxi call centres on days of berthing. The terminal operator will also arrange to meet with the taxi trade again to step up communications and explore ways to induce more taxis to go to the KTCT to pick up passengers.

As regards public transport, a green minibus route No. 86 operates a daily service between the KTCT and Kowloon Bay (Telford Gardens) to serve the public. Also, the Kowloon Motor Bus operates a recreational route No. 5R running between the KTCT and Ngau Tau Kok/Kwun Tong MTR Stations during Sundays and public holidays. Taxi stands and fee-charging parking facilities for private cars are also available at the KTCT to facilitate the public to visit the park. With the anticipated increase in the number of visitors upon opening of the shops at the KTCT by phases from mid-2014 onwards, the relevant government departments will closely monitor the actual demand for public transport services going to and from the KTCT, and step up the services having regard to the increase in visitor flow. When events are held at the KTCT, individual event organisers concerned will also make special traffic arrangements.

(8) The terminal operator has raised to the Administration the idea of developing a ferry pier near the KTCT. We have preliminarily explored the feasibility of setting up a ferry pier as well as other options with the terminal operator. In ascertaining the feasibility of setting up a ferry pier or other facilities, we have to take into account various factors, such as passenger safety, technical issues (including considerations relating to works and nearby water currents), supporting transport services, expected passenger demand as well as the business and financial viability of the proposal. The Administration will continue to liaise with the terminal operator on the matter.

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