

Site formation works for Kai Tak Cruise Terminal begin

The ground breaking ceremony of the site formation for Kai Tak Cruise Terminal was held today (December 23), marking a significant milestone in developing Hong Kong into a premier regional cruise hub.

Upon the commissioning of the new cruise terminal, together with the Ocean Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong will have a total of four berths for cruise vessels. Conveniently located, these terminal facilities can berth cruise vessels of different types and sizes, providing high quality infrastructure for the long term development of the cruise industry in Hong Kong and in the region.

Today's ground breaking ceremony was officiated by the Chief Executive, Mr Donald Tsang. Other officiating guests were Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mrs Rita Lau; Secretary for Development, Mrs Carrie Lam; Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), Miss Yvonne Choi; Permanent Secretary for Development (Works), Mr Mak Chai-kwong; Acting Commissioner for Tourism, Miss Joey Lam; and Acting Director of Civil Engineering and Development, Mr Adrian Ng.

The Government will fund, design and build the cruise terminal, and lease the terminal to a cruise terminal operator for a rent, while retaining the ownership of the site and the terminal. The new cruise terminal will have two alongside berths with no air draft limit. Upon completion, it will be able to berth the world's largest cruise vessel with a gross tonnage of 220 000 tonnes.

The Government is developing the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal through two works contracts. The first one is the site formation works contract, which involves the construction of berthing facilities. The second contract is for the design and build of the cruise terminal building.

The site formation for Kai Tak Cruise Terminal is implemented by Civil Engineering and Development Department. The scope of works comprises the construction of a sloping seawall of about 1 100 metres and a 35-metre wide and 850-metre long apron area for berthing of cruise vessels of different sizes and capacities, as well as the dredging of about 1.38 million cubic metres of marine sediments to allow manoeuvring and berthing of mega cruise vessels.

The first berth is expected to commence operation in mid-2013 and will be capable of berthing the world's largest cruise vessel. The second berth will be available in 2014 to berth medium-sized cruise vessels and will begin to accommodate mega cruise vessels after the relocation of submarine gas mains.

The Government is assessing tenders for the design-and-build contract for the cruise terminal building. The construction is expected to begin in 2010 and complete in 2014/15. The cruise terminal building will be iconic, and highly functional and efficient to facilitate the operator to provide world-class services.

Apart from hardware development, the Government has continued to strengthen liaison with the cruise market and neighbouring ports, as well as improve the service standards to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong in the regional cruise market.

The Advisory Committee on Cruise Industry, comprising representatives from the Hong Kong Tourism Board, four key international cruise operators and the tourism trade, was established to advise the Government on policies to develop Hong Kong as a regional cruise hub. The Committee focuses on strengthening co-operation with neighbouring coastal Mainland provinces to develop cruise itineraries, promoting cruise tourism in the region, and encouraging manpower training in the cruise market and related industries.

In addition, the Central Government introduced a measure in April to allow Mainland tour groups travelling to Taiwan to take cruise vessels homeporting in Hong Kong, bringing the development of cruise tourism in the Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong to a new stage. The first sailing was completed smoothly in August. About 20 sailings from Hong Kong to Taiwan with a total capacity of some 30 000 passengers will be launched next year.

The Government is committed to enhancing tourism infrastructure and supporting software to further strengthen Hong Kong's position as a premier cruise hub in the region. The ground breaking of Kai Tak Cruise Terminal today marks a milestone in the development of Hong Kong's cruise tourism.

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