

Opening remarks by SEN at press conference on new Development Plans of two power companies

Following are the opening remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, at today's (June 3) press conference on new Development Plans of two power companies:

The Executive Council (ExCo) approved today the Development Plans (DPs) of the two power companies.

The new Scheme of Control Agreements (SCAs) reached with the two power companies are the greenest SCAs ever, offering key features on energy efficiency and conservation (EE&C) as well as renewable energy.

In the new DPs under the SCAs, the power companies have included essential capital projects to change the fuel mix for electricity generation which will help combat climate change and further improve air quality, enhance the reliability and security of local electricity supply and assist in turning Hong Kong into a smart city.

The new DPs are also expected to provide an opportunity for us to advance our achievement of the carbon intensity reduction target for 2030, and further improve Hong Kong's air quality.

To support the EE&C initiatives under the new SCAs, both power companies will introduce smart meters to help customers achieve energy saving by providing them with instant power consumption information and enable implementation of demand response schemes. This project will help turn Hong Kong into a smart city.

With the increasing use of natural gas for power generation in the coming years, the power companies have planned to jointly build an offshore liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Hong Kong waters. This will be crucial to the diversification of their source of natural gas and enhancement of their supply security. It will also help them secure natural gas at a more competitive price and hence mitigate the pressure on tariff increase.

Unlike in the past two decades when there have been no plant replacements by the power companies, about ten coal units would reach their scheduled retirement life by 2030. The new DPs include key investment proposals to construct two additional new gas-fired generating units (gas units) to replace coal units which have been operating for over three decades. The overall gas-fired generation of the power companies will increase from the present 26% for CLP Power Hong Kong Limited and Castle Peak Power Company Limited (collectively CLP) and about 34% for Hongkong Electric Company Limited (HKE) to over 50% for CLP and about 70% for HKE by 2023.

Another key project is CLP's enhancement of the clean energy transmission system (CETS) with China Southern Power Grid and Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station. When completed in 2025, the strengthened network will give us the capability and flexibility to use more zero-carbon energy from the Mainland to manage our local fuel mix, thereby enabling us to advance our achievement of carbon intensity reduction target for 2030 (i.e. reduction of carbon intensity by 65% to 70% as compared to 2005) by as much as five years. In addition, the CETS will delay the plans for and/or reduce the capital investment on new gas units to replace the coal units which are due to retire in 2025 and beyond.

Possible options of utilising more zero carbon energy will be covered by the Public Engagement exercise on Long-term Decarbonisation Strategy to be carried out by the Council for Sustainable Development later this year.

The ExCo has also approved the new average tariff rates on commencement of the new SCAs as part of the power companies' new DPs. CLP's new tariff adjustment covers 15 months from October 1, 2018 to December 31, 2019 whereas that of HKE covers 12 months from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

Both the power companies will reduce their Basic Tariff Rates, CLP by 3.7% and HKE by 7.1%, as a result of the reduction of the permitted rate of return from 9.99% to 8% on commencement of the new SCAs.

The average Basic Tariff Rate during the entire new DP is projected to increase at an annual rate of 1.4% for CLP and 1.2% for HKE while the average Net Tariff Rate before rebates is projected to increase at an annual rate of 3.5% for CLP and 2.8% for HKE. The actual tariff level payable will depend on a number of factors including the actual fuel cost at the time.

To help alleviate the impact of tariff increase on households during the transition to a lower carbon future, the Government proposes to grant an electricity charges relief of \$3,000 over 60 months (i.e. \$50 per month) to each residential electricity account when the new SCA period commences, i.e. from October 1, 2018 for CLP and from January 1, 2019 for HKE.

The electricity charges relief is expected to roughly cover the projected cumulative tariff increase over the five-year period for about half of the households in Hong Kong.

The Government plans to seek funding of about \$8.7 billion from the Finance Committee of Legislative Council before the summer recess with a view to distributing the electricity charges relief to residential electricity accounts when the new SCA period commences, with a hope to make Hong Kong greener, low carbon while balancing the environmental concerns with the tariff pressures. We hope to have your support. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the opening remarks.)

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HyD's response to media enquiries on water leakage at basement of Passenger Clearance Building of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port (with photos)

Regarding media enquiries made yesterday (July 2) on a news report about water leakage previously found at the basement of the Passenger Clearance Building (PCB) at the Hong Kong Port (HKP) of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB), the Highways Department (HyD) today (July 3) responded as follows:

The basement of the PCB at the HKP of the HZMB does not only house the electrical and mechanical equipment for the PCB, but also accommodates the district cooling system for the HKP. The district cooling system supplies chilled sea water via underground conduits to the air conditioning systems of the building cluster in the vehicle clearance plaza, so as to achieve the energy saving objective. Therefore, it is a reasonable arrangement to house the plant room of the PCB at its basement.

Soon after the contractor and the HyD's resident site staff discovered the leakage problem at the PCB in early 2018, they had swiftly followed up the issue and arranged rectification works. According to the records kept by the resident site staff of the consultant appointed by the HyD, after the structural and fitting-out works of the PCB were completed, some underground cable ducts had not been sealed up timely after cable installation, thus leading to leakage of rainwater into the basement via these ducts on April 15, 2018. The contractor had subsequently rectified the problem by properly sealing up the relevant ducts. After recent rainstorms, including the amber rainstorm yesterday (July 2), the HyD has not observed any noticeable water leakage during site inspections at the basement of the PCB.

As regards the news report about smoke emission from the pillar box, the incident occurred on June 20, 2018 according to the records. During testing and commissioning for the PCB, the resident site staff found that there had been smoke emission from the pillar box of the air conditioning system. The incident was believed to have been caused by malfunctioning of a component, leading to over-heating of the equipment and subsequently smoke emission. The contractor has completed the rectification works for the malfunctioned component and the system is currently in normal operation. The HyD emphasised that this incident of smoke emission from the pillar box and the earlier water leakage incident at the basement are two independent incidents which are completely unrelated to each other.

The PCB is undergoing testing and commissioning at present. The HyD will strictly conduct the testing and commissioning with a view to ensuring that

the works would only pass the acceptance procedures if their qualities meet the required standards.

For the present conditions inside the PCB basement, please refer to the photographs attached.



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Events held to celebrate 40th anniversary of Netherlands Hong Kong Business Association and commend HK team at finish of Volvo Ocean Race in The Hague (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) co-hosted a series of events in The Hague, the Netherlands, on June 29 (The Hague time) to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Netherlands Hong Kong Business Association (NHKBA) and commend Hong Kong's Team Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag for completing the Volvo Ocean Race. The team was the first from Hong Kong to enter the round-the-world sailing race, and tributes were paid during the events to the late teammate John Fisher.

The events were jointly organised by HKETO, Brussels; the Hong Kong Trade Development Council; Invest Hong Kong; and the NHKBA. The first was a business seminar with two themes, namely the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area development and circular economy. In her welcoming remarks at the business seminar, the Deputy Representative of HKETO, Brussels, Miss Fiona Chau, said that aspirations for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area development are very high. "Within the Bay Area, we will work with each other to achieve a win-win situation, and the key co-operation areas in the Bay Area will include infrastructure connectivity in order to achieve a living circle that is very convenient for people; market integration, whether in trade, commerce, financial services or investment; and in technology and innovation," Miss Chau said.

She added that the aspiration to build an international innovation and technology hub in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area on par with, or even exceeding, Silicon Valley stems from the complementarity of the three places. Hong Kong has very strong research and development capacity with four universities in the world's top 100, while Shenzhen has advanced manufacturing capability and other cities in the Bay Area are also boosting manufacturing and electronic production capacity. Dutch companies are welcome to partner with Hong Kong in seizing the opportunities of this very important Bay Area, Miss Chau said.

To tie in with the Volvo Ocean Race's support of clean seas, the business seminar also looked at how Dutch, Hong Kong and Mainland companies can prepare for the circular economy, a new economic model in which waste generation is minimised, and the value of products, materials and resources is maintained for as long as possible.

One of the speakers at the business seminar was the General Manager of Keppel Seghers, Mr Ivan Christiaens. The Belgian engineering firm will, in a joint venture, construct integrated waste management facilities at an island in Hong Kong. The project will be capable of producing enough green energy for 100,000 households and help to reduce Hong Kong's carbon emissions by 440,000 tonnes per annum.

The business seminar was followed by a cocktail reception and a dinner, both attended by crew members of Team Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag, which was supported by Brand Hong Kong. In January 2018, Hong Kong was a host city for the first time in the Volvo Ocean Race's 44-year history. The Volvo Ocean Race has provided a good opportunity for Hong Kong to showcase its vibrancy and cosmopolitan aspects as Asia's world city to visitors to the Scallywag Team Base at each of the 12 stopover locations, including the stopover in Hong Kong and the finish at The Hague. Speaking at the dinner, Miss Chau commended the Hong Kong team for its determination to finish the Volvo Ocean Race in honour of their late teammate and friend John Fisher. The team's accomplishments have reflected the "never give up" spirit of Hong Kong in facing difficult times and challenges, she said.

