

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (June 25):

Reporter: Good morning Mr Lee. The Government has ordered a probe into Sunday's disruption at the airport and that incident comes within days after one of the runways failed to operate. So, would the Government consider the two incidents are individual events or there's a need to take a holistic look of the overall operation of the airport? And second, parts of Hong Kong recently experienced a voltage dip and CLP Power said it might be affected by bad weather. So would you say the power firm is too late to upgrade its system or weatherproof its facilities? And will the Government take a look at other public utilities firms about their system readiness to deal with severe weather? Thank you.

Chief Executive: I am concerned over the flight information display system failure on Sunday at the Hong Kong International Airport. Although no flights were cancelled, a lot of passengers were affected. The Transport and Logistics Bureau has already immediately met with the Airport Authority Hong Kong's management team and expressed our concern on the incident. They have heard a briefing by the management team regarding the preliminary finding of the incident and also the immediate measures that were taken. The Transport and Logistics Bureau has already asked the Airport Authority to conduct a detailed investigation, review the relevant contingency plans, and submit a full report to the Bureau on the causes of the incidents, the contingency plans and also prevention plans against similar incidents. We have asked the Airport Authority to conduct a comprehensive review of the system, including its backup system, to upgrade its capacity in activating the system and to review its risk management measures amid the completion of the Three-Runway System.

Hong Kong International Airport is an international aviation hub. It is of paramount importance to provide high-quality and stable services to passengers. We have therefore asked the Airport Authority to investigate in detail and prevent similar incidents from happening again. It is important that we look at all of the system comprehensively so that their working-in-concert is smooth, and we have confidence in a good system that is working together, well maintained, regularly checked, together with good contingency plans worked out, which will be improved according to experience, increased manpower and ensuring good communication is made to passengers. I think the Airport Authority takes this matter seriously, and they have always been keen on promoting their services. So we will look at the investigation report in detail and ensure that there will be a good system in place, good responses and also good communication for people to be able to respond to different incidents.

In regard to the series of power failure incidents of CLP Power Hong Kong Limited in the past few months, I must emphasise once again how important a stable and reliable supply of electricity is to citizens and also to businesses. And the stable and smooth supply is also essential to the economic development of Hong Kong. The voltage dip incident that occurred on June 23 affected the stability of power supply in different areas in Kowloon and the New Territories. Although the preliminary investigation indicates that the cause of this voltage dip might have been caused by unstable weather, CLP must quickly identify the actual cause of the incident. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has asked CLP to identify the cause of the power supply incident as soon as possible, formulate improvement plans and submit a detailed report within four weeks. The EMSD has also formed a task force to follow up on the improvement plans proposed by CLP. The Secretary for the Environment and Ecology has asked CLP to enhance the capability of the power supply system as a whole to withstand the impact of inclement weather. The Director of the EMSD will follow up the matter with CLP immediately with a view to reducing the risks brought about by the high frequency of thunderstorm warnings during these few months.

I reiterate that a stable and reliable power supply system is important for the well-being of the people, and also for our economic activities. It is necessary for CLP to identify the root causes of the problem, make fundamental improvements to reduce the chances of similar incidents in the future, and maintain the stable and reliable power supply that Hong Kong has always been proud of. Some systems may have been running for a long time. So it is important that they are always well maintained; that there will be a good system to ensure that periodic checks take place. There is also a system for the improvement of staff performance and knowledge in this regard. And what is also essential is the emergency response capability of CLP, including setting up teams with stronger manpower and with more support, so that when an incident does occur, the quickest response is offered. So the power stoppage is reduced to the minimum so that people can get back to their normal activities as soon as possible. I have asked CLP to do a comprehensive review in this regard because it is in the power company's interests, it is in the power supply interest of Hong Kong as a whole, and I think CLP will take this matter seriously.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)