

Transcript of remarks by STH

Following is the transcript of remarks at a media session by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, after attending the Legislative Council meeting today (October 21):

Reporter: Can you talk about the response to Cathay Pacific's restructuring plan? Looking at the size of the layoff plan, there have been suggestions on whether the Government could have done more. Did your observers make concrete suggestions as to things like, specifically, why not put the staff on furlough and what about plans to maintain the pilots that Cathay Pacific has invested a lot to train? Did they make specific recommendations on these, your observers? That's my first question. And my second question is that you seemed over-emotional when you talked about the development and the state of the aviation industry here in Hong Kong. So do you have any personal feelings towards this company, like whether it can be recovered to its previous glory days at all?

Secretary for Transport and Housing: I would suggest that you ask the Cathay Group because they are going to hold a press conference at 1pm. I have just mentioned the kind of requests or suggestions as to how the Cathay Group should take into account when they make up any enterprise or corporate restructuring, and the reason to protect Hong Kong being the international aviation hub and to take good care of the welfare of the staff, minimising impacts upon them and to maintain a core competence group and the necessary staff force to ensure sustainable operation as well as to prepare for future at times when the aviation sector is going to pick up again. This is clear and loud. Maybe you can tell from the package that they are now offering to their staff as to whether these kinds of requests or suggestions have been considered and entertained. I think these facts will speak louder than my voice.

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