

Works contractors of Central-Wan Chai Bypass Project convicted for repeatedly causing noise nuisance and discharging substandard wastewater

The construction sites for the Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) project had illegally carried out construction works during restricted hours seven times and discharged substandard muddy water twice. The main contractors concerned, Chun Wo Construction and Engineering Company Limited and China Railway Group Limited, and subcontractor Wah Keung Metal Engineering Limited and the related workers were convicted and fined \$157,500 by Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (November 22) for a total of 16 offences under the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO) and the Water Pollution Control (General) Regulations (WPC(G)R).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a number of complaints from May last year to January this year about noise nuisance generated by the construction works of the CWB project during Sundays and at night. After investigation, the EPD confirmed that the construction sites for eastern tunnel works of the CWB project (HK/2009/02) and Tunnel (North Point Section) and Island Eastern Corridor Link (HY/2009/19) illegally carried out construction works by using non-permitted powered mechanical equipment or exceeded the permitted number of equipment, and illegally carried out prohibited prescribed construction works a number of times during restricted hours at night and on Sundays.

In addition, during the EPD's inspections in June and August last year, it was found that the construction sites of the CWB Tunnel (North Point Section) and Island Eastern Corridor Link had discharged wastewater without proper treatment into storm drains twice. The wastewater samples showed that the concentrations of suspended solids exceeded the discharge standards stated in the licence by 172 times and 32 times respectively.

After investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD prosecuted the contractors, the sub-contractor and the related workers for seven cases of noise nuisance and two cases of illegal wastewater discharge. The EPD has contacted the Civil Engineering and Development Department and the Highways Department and requested them to step up their supervision on contractors and to follow up the cases.

The spokesman stressed that construction contractors must abide by the law and comply with environmental legislation and requirements. According to the NCO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

The spokesman also reminded all construction site contractors to install

appropriate wastewater treatment facilities and properly collect and treat wastewater to ensure that the discharge complies with the license requirements under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance. It is an offence for any person to discharge wastewater that does not comply with the license requirements. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.