

**Paper No. 1/2010
For Discussion
on 20 January 2010**

**Harbour-front Enhancement Committee
Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review**

**Implementation of the Proposal to
Allow Commercial Helicopter Operators
to Use the Wan Chai Temporary Helipad**

Purpose

This paper briefs members of the implementation of the proposal to allow commercial helicopter operators to use the temporary helipad at the former Wan Chai Public Cargo Working Area (“Temporary Helipad”).

Background

2. We briefed members on a proposal to allow commercial helicopter operators to use the Temporary Helipad on 19 November 2008 and 21 January 2009 (vide papers no. 24/2008 and 2/2009). We undertook to brief members on the implementation of the proposal in about four months’ time after the commencement of operations.

3. As stated in our letter to the Subcommittee on 19 May 2009, HeliServices (Hong Kong) Limited (“HeliServices”) indicated interest in using the Temporary Helipad and signed a licence agreement with the Government. It began to share the use of the Temporary Helipad with the Government Flying Service (“GFS”) for the provision of domestic helicopter services on 24 July 2009. When using the helipad, the company needs to observe the following –

- (a) operating hours – from 8 am to 6 pm in general and from 9 am to 6 pm for Sundays and public holidays;

- (b) number of flights –
 - (i) for the first three months of operation, not more than 15 flights per day on average;
 - (ii) for the second three months of operation, not more than 20 flights per day on average;
 - (iii) afterwards – to be reviewed;
- (c) operation of flights –
 - (i) should not affect the GFS's operations, including no shut-down of helicopters;
 - (ii) flight schedules should be filed with the GFS in advance and the GFS will coordinate the schedules, taking into account its own operational needs; and
 - (iii) use the western helipad with designated flight paths; and
- (d) the passenger waiting lounge and car parking spaces – a container may be installed to be used as a passenger waiting lounge, and two of the existing car parking spaces on the site may be used by the company.

4. The licence agreement was granted for three months and is renewable quarterly thereafter. The company has also been asked to achieve neighbour-friendly operations, thereby alleviating the impact on nearby users.

Present Situation

5. Since the commencement of operations and up to end November 2009, HeliServices has operated 314 flights or about 74 flights per month on average. Most of the flights operated were for sight-seeing purposes. The number of flights operated each month is shown in the table below –

	Jul 09*	Aug 09	Sep 09	Oct 09	Nov 09
No. of flights	7	16	32	138	121
No. of passengers carried	37	129	247	676	735

Note: * Since 24 July 2009

6. The Government received a complaint in October 2009, alleging that two commercial helicopter flights operated between 4:00 pm and 4:30 pm on 14 October 2009 had deviated from the designated flight paths. The Civil Aviation Department (“CAD”) looked into the case and considered that the complaint could not be substantiated. Nevertheless, CAD has brought the case to the attention of HeliServices and reminded it of the need to observe the designated flight paths except for flight safety considerations.

7. No other complaints have been received concerning the commercial helicopter flights at the Temporary Helipad.

Way Forward

8. In general, the shared-use between the GFS and commercial helicopter operators at the Temporary helipad has been smooth. Meanwhile, the Government obtained funding approval from the Legislative Council in July 2009 for the development of a permanent government helipad at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (“HKCEC”). Works are expected to begin in January 2010 for completion in about two years’ time. The Temporary Helipad will cease operations once the permanent helipad at the HKCEC is ready for operation.

Advice Sought

9. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
January 2010**