

18 May 2005

Constitutional Development Task Force Secretariat
Constitutional Affairs Bureau
3/F, Main Wing, Central Government Offices
Lower Albert Road, Central
Hong Kong

By Mail and by Fax: 25233207

Dear Sirs,

Functional Constituency For Maritime Transport In 2008

In response to the invitation in the fourth report of the Constitutional Development Task Force for the method for forming the Legislative Council (LegCo) in 2008, we would like to petition the Government to re-establish or create a new seat for the Maritime Transport in the LegCo in 2008.

Before 1997, there was a seat for the Maritime Sector in the LegCo. However, with the establishment of HKSAR on 1 July 1997, the Maritime Sector was substituted by functional constituency "Transport Sector" which is composed of bodies not only from the maritime sector, but also from all other sectors including bus companies, franchise buses, airport, freight and cargo operators, pilots, taxi associations, tunnel companies, other public transport operators, freight associations and carpark companies, etc, a total of 191 bodies. With such a board and wide based representation including all transport related bodies of diversified nature, we feel that it has always been difficult for the functional constituency of Transport Sector to represent views for all, and especially our concern on the Maritime Transport industry.

With increasing growth in social and economic links and integration to the Mainland and continued development of Hong Kong as part of the Greater Pearl River Delta (PRD), as it has always been in the past ten to twenty years, Hong Kong relies heavily on the efficient and effective maritime transportation within local Hong Kong waters and cross boundary traffic to ports in the PRD. Passenger throughput and number of trips at cross-boundary ferry terminals are remarkable in 2004 with over 20 million and over 160,000 trips per annum respectively, while for local ferry services in 2004, over 56 million passenger journeys per annum were recorded, both making Hong Kong as one of the busiest and most unique ports in the world. Aside from investing and operating billions of assets on fast ferries, ferries, containers, lighters, freighters,

and maritime transport equipment etc., ferry operators collectively support various sectors of employment, contribute expertise, resources and effort in pursuing greater effective transport networks for Hong Kong and its integration with PRD.

Within the maritime community, there are tens of thousands of employees working diligently for the prosperity and stability of HK. Many of them are managerial staff and professionals like masters, chief officers and engineers. Marine professionals voiced their urge to the Secretary for Constitutional Affairs via the Task force for a separate functional constituency seat in 2004, demonstrating a common view that Interest of Maritime Sector should be better represented.

We are of the opinion that it is necessary to re-create a seat for the Maritime Transport Sector and we believe that our inclusion will definitely help for a more coordinated planning on domestic and cross-boundary marine transport infrastructure and related facilities to keep pace with current and future passenger movement, as well as a continuous balance development of mass ferry transportation service in Hong Kong.

We are very willing to participate in consultation to determine the proper representation of the Maritime Transport Sector in LegCo election. We sincerely hope to seek HKSAR Government's recognition of our contribution to the community so that a new Functional Constituency seat will be re-established for Maritime Transport and through such direct participation assist with our utmost to the Government in defining its vision, long term policy and plans in provision of developing the Maritime Transport Sector, as an integral part of development of Hong Kong economy.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
Chu Keng Passenger Transport Co Ltd

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
Shun Tak – China Travel Ship Management
Limited

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
China Merchants Shipping & Enterprises
Co, Ltd.

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
New World First Ferry Services (Macau)
Limited

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
Discovery Bay Transportation Services Ltd.

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
Xiamen United Enterprises (H.K.) Limited

(Signed)

For and on behalf of
Export Fortune Limited.