

Proposed Gazetting under the Foreshore and Sea-bed (Reclamations) Ordinance (Cap. 127)

**Asia Direct Cable System – Hong Kong Segment
from Chung Hom Kok to the Eastern Boundary
of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

Purpose

1. This paper briefs Members and seeks their views on the proposed installation of a new optical-fibre submarine telecommunications cable system, the Asia Direct Cable System – Hong Kong Segment (“ADC-HK”), before gazettal under the Foreshore and Sea-bed (Reclamations) Ordinance (Cap. 127) (“the Ordinance”).

Background

2. The proposed Asia Direct Cable System (“ADC”) involves the construction of a submarine optical-fibre cable landing across seven countries and regions, connecting Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and China. China Telecom Global Limited (“CTG”) is the cable landing party in Hong Kong.
3. The cable system within Hong Kong waters is about 34.6 kilometres in length and 38 millimetres in diameter. An area of approximately 1.73 hectares on the existing foreshore and sea-bed of the Hong Kong waters would be affected by the project (hereinafter referred to as “the Reclamation Scheme”). The Reclamation Scheme is shown on Figure 1 at Annex to this paper.
4. Lands Department is now processing the gazettal of the Reclamation Scheme and the application for the Licence for laying the proposed ADC-HK. If Members have no objection to the proposed ADC-HK, the Reclamation Scheme will be gazetted for public inspection in accordance with the Ordinance.
5. For details of the ADC-HK, please refer to the Information Sheet prepared by SMEC Asia Limited (CTG’s consultant) at Annex.

Advice Sought

6. Members’ comments and suggestions are invited for the proposed ADC-HK.

District Lands Office/Hong Kong West and South
Lands Department

July 2021

Information Sheet

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1. Application

China Telecom Global Limited (“CTG”) has applied to the Government for the grant of Licence for the installation of the proposed Asia Direct Cable System – Hong Kong Segment (“ADC-HK”). Lands Department is responsible for processing the Licence and arranging the gazetting under the Foreshore and Sea-bed (Reclamations) Ordinance (Cap.127) (“the Ordinance”). No adverse comments have been received from the relevant Government departments during departmental circulation and application for permission to apply directly for an Environmental Permit for the project has been submitted to Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) on 21 June 2021. The proposal is now submitted for Members’ comments.

2. Purposes

The Asia Direct Cable System (“ADC”) is a 38mm diameter submarine telecommunications optical fibre cable that will feature multiple pairs of high capacity optical fibres enabling high capacity transmission of data across the East and Southeast Asian region. The cable system will connect Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and China. It will provide seamless connectivity for key information hubs in the region, in support of the sustainable development of external telecommunications services of the carriers and service providers in the region. The proposed installation is scheduled to be completed in 2022.

The total length of ADC is 9,400km, of which ADC-HK is about 34.6km in length within Hong Kong waters. Buried below sea-bed, the ADC-HK Cable enters the eastern waters of Hong Kong and lands at an existing beach manhole on the Chung Hom Kok peninsula, which is at the southern side of Hong Kong Island.

3. Review by Government Departments

An environmental assessment has been undertaken and CTG will submit a Project Profile to the EPD seeking permission to apply directly for an Environmental Permit under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance on 21 June 2021.

Other Government departments including Drainage Services Department, Marine Department (“MD”), Civil Engineering and Development Department, Highways Department, Transport Department, Water Supplies Department and the Office of the Communications Authority (“OFCA”) have reviewed the project details and no adverse comments from departments on the project have been received.

A Marine Traffic Impact Assessment was carried out by CTG and has been submitted to MD on 27 November 2020 for approval prior to project construction.

4. Licence and Gazettal under the Ordinance

Lands Department has been processing the application for the licence for laying the proposed ADC-HK. The proposed licence has been circulated among relevant Government departments and no adverse comments have been received. Departmental comments have been considered and have been addressed in the design and future cable laying works as appropriate. During local consultation, 1 objection was received and OFCA had provided response to the objector.

5. Details of the Proposed Asia Direct Cable System – Hong Kong Segment

a) Dimensions of the Proposed Submarine Cable

The overall diameter of the proposed submarine cable is about 38 millimetres. Its total length is about 34.6 kilometres.

b) Method of Construction

The installation of ADC-HK is from the sea-bed offshore at Chung Hom Kok to the eastern boundary of Hong Kong Waters. A cable-laying barge will be employed to simultaneously lay and bury the submarine cable at a depth of about 5 metres below the sea-bed within a narrow trench of about 0.5 metres in width. At the cable section approaching the existing conduit and beach manhole, the cable will be installed by a diver and protected by articulated pipe.

When crossing the Hong Kong Electric Gas Pipeline in the eastern waters, which is buried around 3 metres below sea-bed, the cable will be laid by either the burial tool or divers at a depth possible/agreed with the facility owner over the top of the Gas Pipeline for a section of approximately 200 metres to avoid any interference. Additional cable protection by URADUCT will be employed. At crossings with existing submarine cables along the route, the cable will be buried to 3 metres below sea-bed on top of the existing cables as far as possible, subject to the as-built depth of the existing cables.

c) Period of Construction

It is anticipated that the overall installation works will take about four months to complete. The cable installation is tentatively scheduled to start in the second quarter of 2022 and expected to be completed within four months.

6. Conclusion

Various technical aspects regarding the location of cable laying and landing point at Chung Hom Kok, as well as the design and construction of the Reclamation Scheme have been thoroughly studied, and the engineering, environmental and public safety aspects have also been examined to the satisfaction of respective Government departments.

As recommended by Lands Department, comments on the Reclamation Scheme shall be sought from the relevant District Councils. In addition, under Section 6 of the Ordinance, any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and seabed may, by notice in writing delivered to the Director of Lands before the expiration of two months from the date as shall be specified in the notice, object to the Reclamation Scheme.

Attachment

Figure 1 Layout Plan of the Proposed ADC-HK

SMEC Asia Limited
Environmental and Permitting Consultant of CTG
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