

Advisory Committee on the Quality of Water Supplies
Minutes of Meeting No. 15

Date: 22 September 2006 (Friday)

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, 48/F, Immigration Tower, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Members Present

Prof. HO Kin Chung

Mr. CHAN Chi Chiu

Mr. CHEUNG Yan Hong

Mr. LAW Wei Tak, Victor

Prof. TSO Wung Wai

Dr. CHAN Hon Fai

Prof. CHEN Yongqin, David

Ms. LEE Yoke Shum, Sam

Dr. NG Cho Nam

Mr. WONG Kwok Hay, Samuel

Mr. CHAN Sheung Yan, Kenneth

Ms. HO Siu Fong, Betty

Ms. KWAN Miu Mei, Anita

Mr. LIN Mark

Dr. WONG Chun Yu

Mr. YU Chai Mei, Jimmy

Mr. CHAN Shiu On, James

Ms. LO Yuet Yee, Rhonda

Dr. TSE Lai Yin

Mr. WONG Bay

Mr. LIU Tso Wing, Jerry

Chairman

Vice-Chairman, Director of Water Supplies

Association of Engineering Professionals in
Society Ltd.

The Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and
Mechanical Contractors Limited

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Cinotech Consultants Limited

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong

The University of Hong Kong

Wong & Fok Solicitors

Chun Lee Engineering Co. Ltd.

The Conservancy Association

Yau Tsim Mong District Council

Central and Western District Council

The University of Hong Kong

Friends of the Earth (HK)

Principal Assistant Secretary, Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau

Assistant Director, Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department

Consultant, Department of Health

Assistant Director, Housing Department

Secretary, Senior Engineer, Water Supplies
Department

Members Absent with Apologies

Ms. WONG Choi Mei

Dr. CHIU Tak Lun, Michael

Yuen Long District Council

Deputy Director, Environmental Protection
Department

In attendance

Mr. CHAN Kwong Wei, Samuel

Mr. NG Mang Tung, Bobby

Ms. HO Suet Mei, Daisy

Mr. TAM Yat Hung

Deputy Director, Water Supplies Department

Assistant Director, Water Supplies Department

Chief Chemist, Water Supplies Department

Senior Engineer, Water Supplies Department

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone for attending Meeting No. 15 of the Advisory Committee on the Quality of Water Supplies (ACQWS). In particular, he welcomed the new Secretary Mr. LIU Tso Wing, Jerry, the successor to Mr. LAU Chi Ming, Stephen who had been transferred to other post. The Chairman expressed special thanks to Mr. LAU for his contribution to the Committee in the past.
2. The Chairman reminded Members that a site visit to the pilot desalination plant at Ap Lei Chau would be organized immediately after the Meeting. He said that the representatives of the Consultant responsible for the pilot desalination plant study would do a presentation on the pilot plant before the visit.
3. Agenda Item 1 : Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes were confirmed without any amendment.
4. Agenda Item 2 : Matters Arising
- 4.1 Quality of water in buildings

Fresh Water Plumbing Quality Maintenance Recognition Scheme (FWPQMRS)
- 4.1.1 **WSD** reported that the consultant employed by WSD to carry out the opinion surveys in June 2006 had completed about 40% of the public telephone survey as at 19 September 2006. He thanked Members who gave comments on the questionnaire for the public telephone survey. Regarding the survey on building management companies, the draft questionnaire would be available in October 2006 for discussion in the Working Group on Quality of Water in Buildings (WGQWB). Following the completion of the survey in early 2007, a draft final report of the survey would also be submitted to the WGQWB for discussion.
- 4.1.2 **WSD** stated that the WGQWB had discussed the proposed extension of the validity period of the FWPQMRS certificates to two years and changing the water examination requirement for renewals from once a year to once in every two years. He thanked Members for their comments on these issues in the last Working Group Meeting. ACQWS Paper No. 18, based on Members' comments in the Working Group Meeting and the recommendations of the Working Group, had been prepared and issued to all Members before the Meeting. **WSD** briefed Members on the details of the ACQWS Paper No. 18. The Chairman thanked **WSD** and the Working Group for their

WSD

contributions in promoting this scheme.

- 4.1.3 In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the submission of renewal applications beyond the allowable period of 3 months after the expiry of the current certificate, WSD replied that the applications would be considered as new applications.
- 4.1.4 A Member suggested that while the validity period might be extended, we should consider maintaining the water examination frequency at once a year. WSD stated that although the water examination requirement was not specifically stated in the Waterworks Ordinance, it was understood that most consumers regularly cleaned their water tanks. WSD's regular monitoring of the water quality including random sampling at consumer taps revealed that failure cases were extremely rare. The Working Group's proposal to change the water examination requirement for renewal cases from once a year to once every two years was to save the operation costs of participants without undue risk of compromising the water quality. The Chairman agreed that one of the main objectives to revise the water examination requirement was to reduce the heavy financial burden for the renewal of certificates particularly for those main supporters to the Scheme (e.g. Housing Department) managing a very large number of buildings.
- 4.1.5 A Member enquired whether the design of the water tank would be a concern under the Scheme. WSD replied that the application process would include an inspection check-list for applicants to conduct self-checking of their plumbing system and water tanks. The requirements included among other things, raised-neck access manholes for water tanks and double-sealed access manhole covers to effectively prevent the contamination of the water inside the tanks. The Member agreed that as the water tank would not be a watertight type, measures to minimize contamination of the water inside would therefore be important.
- 4.1.6 In response to the Chairman's concern, WSD explained that a renewal application could be submitted within three months before or after the expiry of the existing certificate and therefore in effect there would be a six-month time slot to apply for renewals. The Vice-Chairman observed that this would give the applicants flexibility to plan for their applications. Nevertheless, the application would not be so complicated that the applicants would need a very long time for preparation. Nor would WSD need a long time to complete the assessment.
- 4.1.7 A Member suggested that enabling applications for renewals

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	through the internet might simplify the processing. WSD stated that WSD would consider this suggestion in order to improve the application efficiency.	WSD
4.1.8	A Member pointed out that the future targets for the promotion of the Scheme should be those buildings that had no or less intention to participate. He suggested that WSD should consider to simplify the procedures further in order to attract or motivate more people to participate in the Scheme.	WSD
4.1.9	The Chairman and all Members endorsed the recommendations in the ACQWS Paper No.18.	
4.1.10	As requested in the last Meeting, the results of the analysis for the trend and the statistics regarding the process of the Scheme had been compiled and tabled for Members' information (see Appendix I). WSD presented the results of the analysis and statistics of the progress of the Scheme to the Meeting.	
4.1.11	In response to a Member's observation that there was no increase in the participation of commercial building, WSD stated that it was because there was no good reason for the owners of commercial buildings to join the Scheme. He added that WSD would concentrate the study of this part in the coming opinion survey aiming to explore how to promote participation by more commercial building owners in future.	WSD
4.1.12	Regarding a Member's concern that the low participation rate for hotels might affect the image of Hong Kong in the eyes of tourists, WSD explained that although WSD had promoted this Scheme to hotels through the Hong Kong Hotels Association, as most of the hotels did not expect their customers to drink water directly from the tap, their motivation to participate in the Scheme was therefore very low.	
4.1.13	A Member commented that although this Scheme had been considered to be carried out quite successfully, the participation appeared to have become saturated now. It would be more and more difficult to have further substantial increase in participation. The Chairman agreed and suggested WSD to keep up the promotion of the Scheme aiming to attract more participants in particular for hotels and commercial buildings.	WSD
4.1.14	WSD reported that as requested in the last Meeting, WSD had carried out an initial analysis to compare the quality of water in different districts in Hong Kong in August 2006. Due to the limited resources in WSD, approximately one hundred buildings	

were randomly selected for the analysis. In view of the small sample size, the results might not be representative from a statistical point of view. However, the results of the analysis would still be used for reference purpose.

4.2 Publication of Water Quality Data

- 4.2.1 **WSD** reported that the latest water quality data published in the WSD website in May 2006 covered the period from 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006. The forthcoming updating of the water quality data would be for the period from 1 October 2005 to 30 September 2006. For the treated water, full compliance with the World Health Organization Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality (1993) had been achieved. She added that the significantly improved quality of Dongjiang water received after the commissioning of the dedicated close aqueduct system in June 2003 had stabilized.

4.3 Visit to Guangdong

- 4.3.1 **WSD** thanked Members for giving comments on the coming visit to Guangdong in the last Meeting. Having considered those comments and initially discussed with the Guangdong side, the visit was scheduled to be held on 7-8 November this year. The proposed locations to visit would include Taiyuan Pumping Station, Shima River Sewage Diversion Works, Jinghu Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works Exhibition Centre, Dongguan Zhangcun Water Purification Plants, Bio-nitrification Plant in Shenzhen Reservoir, Shenzhen Reservoir Catchment Area Sewage Interception Works and Shenzhen Municipal Water Resources Bureau and/or the associated water company. **WSD** would notify Members regarding the details of coming visit separately after the Meeting. **WSD**

4.4 Reclaimed water reuse project at Ngong Ping

- 4.4.1 **WSD** reported that the Ngong Ping Sewage Treatment Works (NPSTW) had already been commissioned in March 2006 and the reclaimed water was used for flushing in the toilets of NPSTW and the cable car development as well as the public toilets in Ngong Ping. The reclaimed water was also used for controlled irrigation and filling the aqua fishing pond inside NPSTW. Due to the postponement of the opening of the cable-car Ngong Ping 360, **WSD** proposed and Members agreed to defer the visit for ACQWS to the NPSTW as agreed in the last Meeting to early 2007, when there should be sufficient throughput of the NPSTW. **WSD**

- 4.4.2 In response to the enquiry raised in the last Meeting, WSD reported that the current operation and maintenance costs of the NPSTW as advised by DSD was about \$6.0 per m³ with an additional \$1.0 per m³ for adding chlorine to the treated effluent to produce the reclaimed water. A Member commented that the production costs appeared to be quite high and WSD suggested that the current low production rate of the sewage treatment works was probably a significant factor for this.
- 4.4.3 Regarding the review on strategies in relation to other possible usage of reclaimed water in Hong Kong, WSD told the Meeting that WSD had employed a Consultant to carry out the review on the use of reclaimed water at Ngong Ping. The Consultant had been collecting useful information and statistics from the Ngong Ping pilot scheme for analysis. Based on the operational experience gained from the scheme, the Consultant would assess the different aspects related to technologies, cost effectiveness and public acceptance for consideration on the wider use of the reclaimed water in Hong Kong.
- 4.4.4 WSD further supplemented that in addition to the above, WSD was carrying out another consultancy study on “Total Water Management” aiming to map out the long term strategies and implementation plans for Total Water Management in Hong Kong. The major goal of the strategies would be to achieve sustainable water resources utilization and management plans for the future of Hong Kong in a cost-effective manner. This study would be completed by the end of 2007.
- 4.5 Pilot desalination plant study
- 4.5.1 WSD briefed Members on the latest development of the pilot desalination plant study. With the pilot plant study in Tuen Mun completed, the pilot plant had been moved to Ap Lei Chau since February 2006. The study at Ap Lei Chau would be completed in February 2007 and the final report would be issued around mid 2007. A site visit to the Ap Lei Chau pilot desalination plant was arranged for all Members after the Meeting and WSD briefed Members about the detailed arrangements for the visit.
- 4.6 Water Safety Plan
- 4.6.1 WSD briefed Members on the latest development on Water Safety Plan. She informed Members that WSD had carried out most of the preparatory works including the purchase of new equipment, setting up new laboratory facilities and setting inspection/monitoring programmes for catchment areas. Method

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	development of the new parameters in WHO 2004 was in progress and the current WSD target was to commence monitoring of these parameters in early 2007.
5.	Any Other Business
5.1	No item was raised by Members.
6.	There being no other business, the Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.