

High Speed Craft Consultative Committee

**Vessels Traffic Problem in the Area
between Qing Zhou Traffic Separation Scheme
and the Entrance of Macau Harbour**

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek members' views on the proposal to set up two roundabouts, one near the entrance of Macau Harbour and the other in the east of Qing Zhou Traffic Separation Scheme (QZTSS), to resolve the traffic problem encountered by vessels operated in the area.

Background

2. The QZTSS established and enforced by the Mainland authority specifically for high-speed craft (HSC) has been adopted as part of the designated route for Hong Kong registered HSC plying between Hong Kong and Macau. As the QZTSS extends in a east-west direction across the Pearl River estuary, high speed passenger vessels engaging in the Hong Kong-Macau run on this route would very often encounter cross-traffic of other vessels such as river-trade cargo vessels or fishing vessels etc.

3. The rapid economic growth and development of tourist business in the areas of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau booms the operations of cargo vessels and HSC in the region of Pearl River Delta. There are 54 Hong Kong registered HSC currently plying between Hong Kong and Macau and is expected to increase to 61 this year. The large number of vessels operated in the region causes the traffic more congested and more complicated. Amongst others, two accidents involving Hong Kong registered HSC were happened in the area between QZTSS and the entrance of Macau Harbour in 2008.

4. The issue was brought to the attention of Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration (GDMSA) and Macau Maritime Administration (MMA) in March 2008 and subsequently discussed at the HSCCC meeting held in April 2008.

5. A working group meeting organized by GDMSA and participated by the representatives of MMA and this Department was held in Zhuhai on 21 August 2008 to discuss the concerned vessel traffic problem. The meeting concluded that setting up a roundabout near the entrance of Macau harbour would be a feasible solution to control the traffic direction of vessels approaching and leaving Macau Harbour. The representatives of MMA agreed to conduct a study on this proposal

The Proposal

6. GDMSA recently advised this Department that apart from the proposed roundabout near the entrance of Macao harbour, they also suggested to set up another roundabout in the east of QZTSS. With these two roundabouts, vessels sailing from different directions in the area concerned could be directed in an orderly pattern. When vessels traveling at safe speed and keeping proper lookout, in principle, this proposal could reduce the risk of collision of vessels. The sketch of the proposed roundabouts is in the Annex attached to this paper for reference.

Consultation

7. It is the view of this Department that GDMSA's proposal is technically feasible. However, the location and size of the proposed two roundabouts are two important factors affecting the effectiveness of vessel traffic control in that area.

8. Members' views are sought by **7 April 2009 (Thursday)** on the proposal in paragraph 6 above.

Encl. Annex – Sketch of the proposed roundabouts

Marine Department
Shipping Division
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