(Question Serial No. 1057)

Head: (100) Marine Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (2) Port Services
Controlling Officer: Director of Marine (Maisie CHENG)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:
The actual container throughput by ocean-going vessels (OGVs) (13.9 million twenty-foot equivalent units) for 2018 fell by 8% when compared with the estimated figure (15 million twenty-foot equivalent units). Are there any factors contributing to it other than the trade war between China and the United States? While the estimated container throughput by OGVs is only an indicator and the actual figure depends on the specific situation of the economy, the Marine Department has exceptionally stated that it is not possible to estimate the container throughput by OGVs for 2019. What is the reason for this?

Asked by: Hon YICK Chi-ming, Frankie (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:
The maritime sector is highly affected by global economy. Hong Kong Port is also subject to severe competition from other ports in the region. Around 70% of the containers handled at the Hong Kong Port are conveyed by ocean-going vessels (OGVs). In addition to the Sino-American trade tension, the growth in a number of economies has slowed down during the year. As such, the actual container conveyed by OGVs in 2018 was lower than the estimated figure.

The trading environment and outlook for container throughput by OGVs in 2019 is expected to be more challenging amid moderating global economic growth and increasing downside risk. The uncertainty surrounding the Sino-American trade relations is still high. The uncertain direction of the US monetary policy and the rise of trade protectionism continue to affect the global market. Given the uncertainties surrounding the various external factors and severe competition from other ports in the region, it is not possible to provide a good estimate for the container throughput by OGVs for 2019.

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