

Task Force on Water-land Interface

For discussion
on 12 July 2018

TFWL/01/2018

An Update on the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme

PURPOSE

This paper provides an update of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS) and the improvement it brings to the water quality of Victoria Harbour.

BACKGROUND

2. The HATS, formerly known as the Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme (SSDS), is the largest sewerage infrastructure project in Hong Kong. Aimed at improving the water quality of Victoria Harbour, the Scheme comprises 16 preliminary treatment works (PTWs) across the districts around Victoria Harbour, a total of 44 km length of deep sewage conveyance tunnels, the Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works (SCISTW) and a submarine outfall for the discharge of treated effluent (**Figure 1**). The system serves over 5.7 million population, and can handle 2.45 million cubic metres of sewage per day, equivalent to the volume of 1,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

3. The project was implemented in two Stages. Stage 1, which serves the Kowloon, Tseung Kwan O, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung, Chai Wan and Shau Kei Wan areas, was commissioned in December 2001. Stage 2A of the project was subsequently commissioned in December 2015, extending the areas served to cover northern and western Hong Kong Island. In between these, the disinfection system in the SCISTW was put into operation in March 2010.

4. Further details about the implementation of HATS are detailed in the paper ref. TFWL/03/2016 presented to the Task Force on 24 October 2016 at **Annex 1**.



Figure 1 – The Harbour Area Treatment Scheme

IMPROVEMENTS FROM HATS

5. With the progressive commissioning of HATS, water quality in Victoria Harbour has seen marked improvement over time. As compared with the five-year average levels before HATS (1997-2001), there have been an overall 15% increase in dissolved oxygen (DO) and substantial reduction of pollutants, including a 94% decrease in *E. coli*, 54% decrease in unionized ammonia nitrogen (UIA) and 11% decrease in total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) during the two-year period after the commissioning of Stage 2A (2016-2017), as shown in **Figure 2**. In 2017, the overall Water Quality Objectives (WQOs) compliance rate for the Victoria Harbour Water Control Zone (VHWCZ)¹ was 83%. The government is conducting a post-project monitoring which also covers biological monitoring² to assess the long-term trend of water quality improvements in Victoria Harbour and neighbouring waters.

¹ The overall WQO compliance rate in the VHWCZ is calculated based on the compliance rates for the key numeric parameters including DO, TIN and UIA applicable to the VHWCZ.

² Biological monitoring includes benthic and coral surveys to gauge up-to-date conditions for assessing the effect and improvements to the ecological resources in Victoria Harbour and neighbouring waters brought about by HATS Stage 2A.

Task Force on Water-land Interface

TFWL/01/2018

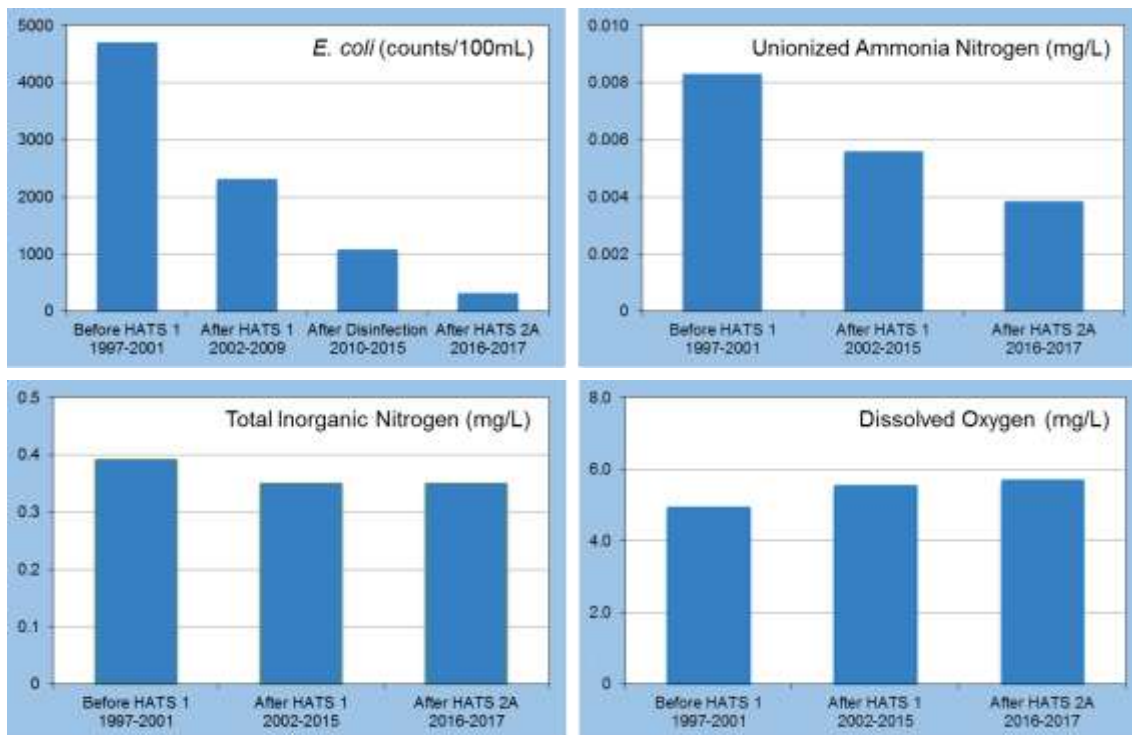


Figure 2 – *E. coli*, unionized ammonia nitrogen, total inorganic nitrogen and dissolved oxygen levels in the Victoria Harbour Water Control Zone

6. The implementation of HATS has enhanced public enjoyment of the Harbour and nearby coastal waters. With the *E. coli* level in the western part of Victoria Harbour significantly reduced, all gazetted beaches in the area have been able to meet the *E. coli* WQO for bathing waters. This has led to the gradual re-opening of all previously closed bathing beaches in Tsuen Wan.

7. In particular, the commissioning of HATS Stage 2A in December 2015 has *per se* brought about some 90% reduction in the *E. coli* level in the central harbour area. In 2017, the cross-harbour swimming race resumed its route some forty years ago in the central part of the Victoria Harbour between Tsim Sha Tsui and Wanchai.

SUSTAINING THE IMPROVEMENTS – ENHANCING SYSTEM ROBUSTNESS AND PLANNED MAINTENANCE OF HATS STAGE 1

8. As aforementioned, the HATS system was implemented via two Stages, namely 1 and 2A. For each Stage, essentially, flows collected from the respective sewerage catchment is conveyed via deep sewerage tunnels to the SCISTW for further treatment and disposal. As the flow enters the SCISTW, it has first to be raised by pumps to the

Task Force on Water-land Interface

TFWL/01/2018

ground level, at the Main Pumping Station No. 1 (MPS1) for the Stage 1 flows, and Main Pumping Station No. 2 (MPS2) for the Stage 2A flows.

9. To increase system robustness and operation flexibility, after the commissioning of HATS Stage 2A in December 2015, DSD has completed the construction of an Interconnection Tunnel in 2017 to connect MPS1 with MPS2, which will thereby allow flow switching between different facilities.

10. At the connection point between the Interconnection Tunnel and MPS1 are two large flow-control penstocks installed under the HATS Stage 1 works. Since Stage 1 commissioning in 2001, these penstocks have been in round-the-clock operation unceasingly, and were approaching the end of their service life. It was necessary for DSD to carry out replacement of the two penstocks as part of the planned equipment maintenance.

11. The replacement of these two penstocks would necessitate the short-term bypass of full sewage treatment at SCISTW and part reversion to Pre-HATS arrangement to discharge some screened sewage at some PTWs. Such bypass would be conducted in accordance with the provisions contained in the discharge licence of the HATS system under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance. Among other measures, all the bypasses will be confined to the non-bathing season, when beaches are less patronized and sewage flows are relatively low. The bypass will be limited to not more than five episodes, each lasting not more than two weeks, in three consecutive dry seasons, and closely monitored.

12. The potential water quality impact of the proposed bypass has been assessed through detailed water quality modeling by an independent consultant. The modelling outcome indicates that the potential impact on water quality in the Harbour is transient, with water quality resuming normal within a few days after cessation of the bypass.

13. The penstock replacement proposal had been submitted for consideration to the Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE) as well as the LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel) in December 2017. Both the ACE and the EA Panel acknowledged the need for the penstock replacement works and took note of the mitigation and monitoring measures associated with the bypass.

14. DSD has already completed the first stage of the penstock replacement works to remove the existing penstocks in the 2017/18

dry season, during which the first bypass took place from 20 February to 4 March 2018. Water quality monitoring conducted throughout the period indicated that the situation was in line with and generally slightly better than the model prediction.

15. Manufacturing of the replacement penstocks are underway for the subsequent stages of the works in the coming non-bathing season, with the next bypass episodes scheduled for early November 2018 and early March 2019. After completion of the penstock replacement works, and together with the Interconnection Tunnel, the robustness and reliability of the HATS system will be further enhanced.

ADDING TO THE IMPROVEMENTS – FURTHER ENHANCEMENT OF COASTAL WATER QUALITY

16. In addition to the successful implementation of the HATS Stage 1 and Stage 2A, we are now utilizing other measures to further enhance the quality of the coastal waters. These include the provision of Dry Weather Flow Interceptors at strategic locations to reduce polluted storm water flowing into the coastal water, some of which are already under construction; and the launching of a major territorial wide sewer rehabilitation programme to rectify the leakage problem of aged and broken sewers. We are also collaborating with local research institutes to develop odour reduction measures for storm water systems and conducting trials on new methods to desilt sediments to minimize their accumulation and contamination by polluted storm water.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

17. The implementation and commissioning of HATS have brought about significant improvement to the water quality of Victoria Harbour. For some coastal areas, other measures are also being taken to further enhance the quality of nearshore waters. DSD will continue to operate the HATS effectively and conduct timely maintenance to the system components to sustain the water quality improvements.

Task Force on Water-land Interface

For discussion
on 24 October 2016

TFWL/03/2016

Harbour Area Treatment Scheme Stage 2A

PURPOSE

This paper provides an overview of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme Stage 2A project and its benefits to Victoria Harbour.

WHAT IS HARBOUR AREA TREATMENT SCHEME (HATS)?

2. To improve the water quality of Victoria Harbour, the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS), formerly known as Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme, was launched in late 1980's and was implemented in stages to provide treatment for the sewage collected from the urban areas on both sides of the Harbour. Stage 1 and Stage 2A of this world-class environmental infrastructure project are now in operation.



Figure 1 – HATS Timeline

Task Force on Water-land Interface

TFWL/03/2016

3. HATS Stage 1 costs \$8.2 billion and comprised the construction of Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works (SCISTW) and 23.6km of deep tunnels for treating sewage collected from Kowloon, Kwai Tsing, Tseung Kwan O and north-eastern Hong Kong Island. The project commenced in 1994 and was commissioned in December 2001 providing treatment to 75% of sewage from both sides of the Harbour.

4. Figure 2 shows the SCISTW in 2001 and was widely recognised as one of the largest and most efficient Chemically Enhanced Primary Treatment (CEPT) plants in the world with a design capacity of 1.7 million cubic metres per day.



Figure 2 – Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works in 2001

5. HATS Stage 2A provides treatment to the remaining 25% of sewage from the northern and south-western parts of Hong Kong Island. The works include:-

- Upgrade 8 preliminary treatment works (PTW) in northern and south-western parts of Hong Kong Island
- Construct 21km long of deep sewage tunnels to SCISTW
- Upgrade SCISTW and add disinfection facilities

6. Stage 2A commenced in 2009 and was commissioned in end 2015. It costs \$17.5 billion and together with Stage 1, HATS can treat 2.45 million cubic metres sewage per day, equivalent to the volume of 1,000 nos. standard Olympic swimming pools per day. The full commissioning of HATS helps to enable the sustainable development of the harbour area and also allows the public to better enjoy Victoria Harbour with improved water quality.



Figure 3 – HATS Overall Scheme

BENEFITS OF HATS

7. Upon the commissioning of HATS 1 and Stage 2A, it stops sewage from being directly discharged into Victoria Harbour and southwestern parts of Hong Kong Island by means of proper

collection and treatment, hence greatly improved the water quality of the Harbour:

- Remove 70% of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), 80% of Suspended Solids (SS) and over 99% of E.coli from sewage before discharge
- Increase Dissolved Oxygen (DO) of the Harbour by 13%
- HATS stage 1 reduced the E.coli level in the Harbour by 50%, and HATS stage 2A further reduced the E.coli level by 75%

8. Besides, the commissioning of HATS also helps to maintain a healthier marine environment whilst meeting future development needs. With an improved water quality, the cross-harbour swimming race was resumed since 2011. Tsuen Wan beaches which were closed in the past are all re-opened.



Figure 4 – Resumption of Cross-Harbour Swimming Race

IMPLEMENTATION OF HATS STAGE 2A

How is the sewage treated in HATS 2A?

9. HATS Stage 2A collects sewage from catchments located at the northern and southwestern parts of Hong Kong Island. The

sewage within these catchment areas is first collected by the 8 newly upgraded Preliminary Treatment Works (PTWs) along the coast for preliminary treatment, i.e. with only screening and degritting, and then it is conveyed to SCISTW via the deep sewage tunnels. Sewage will receive Chemically Enhanced Primary Treatment (CEPT) at SCISTW and finally undergoes disinfection to remove over 99% *E. Coli* in sewage. The treated effluent is then discharged to Western part of Victoria Harbour.

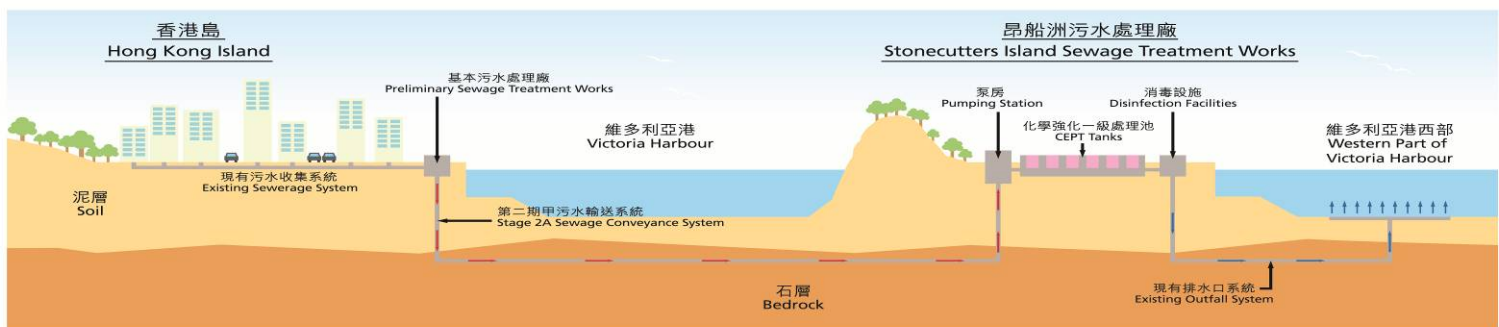


Figure 5 – Sewage treatment under HATS 2A

Sewage Conveyance System

10. A network of 21 km long deep tunnels was constructed as the sewage conveyance system to collect and convey sewage from the eight PTWs to the SCISTW. Figure 6 shows the alignment of the deep tunnels and the locations of the 8 PTWs.



Figure 6 – Alignment of the Deep Tunnels under HATS Stage 2A

11. At the planning stage, various options for the design of the conveyance systems, such as deep tunnel, shallow tunnel or open cut method of construction were investigated. In order to minimize the disruption to the public, possible conflicts with utilities and building foundations, MTR tunnels, programme risks and constraints on future development, the deep tunnel option was finally adopted. The tunnels were constructed in hard rock with 30m rock cover. The depths of the tunnels range from about 70m to 160m below sea level with the deepest section at the upstream end at North Point.

12. Critical review had also been conducted on the tunnel construction method. It was considered that drill and blast method would effectively and efficiently limit groundwater inflows, which could be under very high pressure up to 16 bar in HATS's case, by

pre-excavation grouting. It also allowed maximum flexibility for installing different kinds of temporary ground supports to stabilize difficult geological conditions such as fault zones and fractured ground.

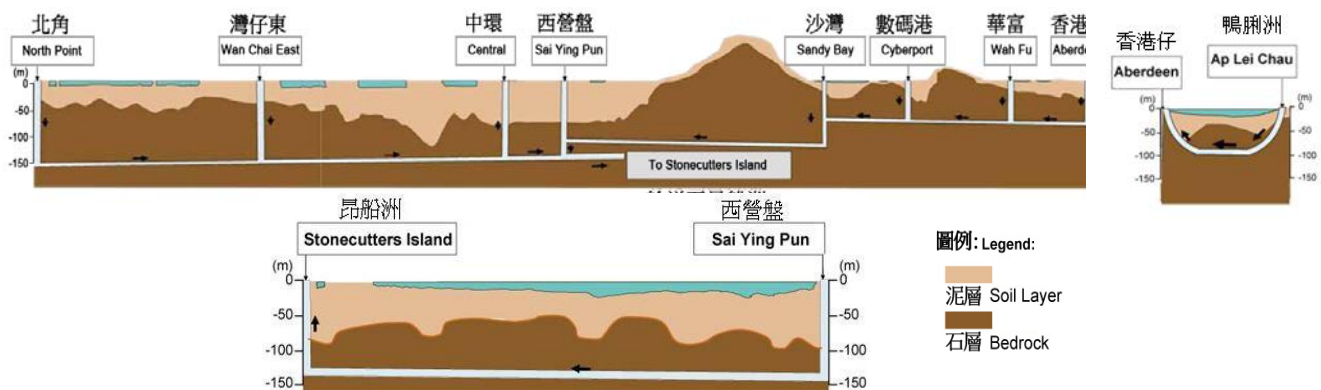


Figure 7 – Vertical Profile of Deep Tunnels

Upgrading of SCISTW

13. The SCISTW was upgraded with a new main pumping station (MPS), eight new sedimentation tanks, an effluent tunnel and disinfection facilities. The upgrading also includes the provision of covers and deodourization units (DOU) to all CEPT tanks. SCISTW is the World's largest CEPT plant.

New Main Pumping Station (MPS2)

14. MPS2 is one of the World's largest underground sewage pumping stations. The MPS2 is circular in shape, with an internal diameter of 55m and depth of 40m. 8 sets of mega size sewage pumps have been installed inside MPS2. Each pump has a capacity of 4m³/s. The combined design capacity of the 8 pumps can fill up a standard swimming pool in about 1 minute.



Figure 8 – New Main Pumping Station



Figure 9 – Pump No.7 inside MPS2

Sedimentation Tanks

15. The sewage entering the system is pumped to the sedimentation tanks at which ferric chloride is added for CEPT. SCISTW adopts a space-saving, double-tray sedimentation tanks design to reduce its footprint. The total footprint of SCISTW is only 10 ha (about half of the size of Victoria Park) but can serve up to 5.7 million people.

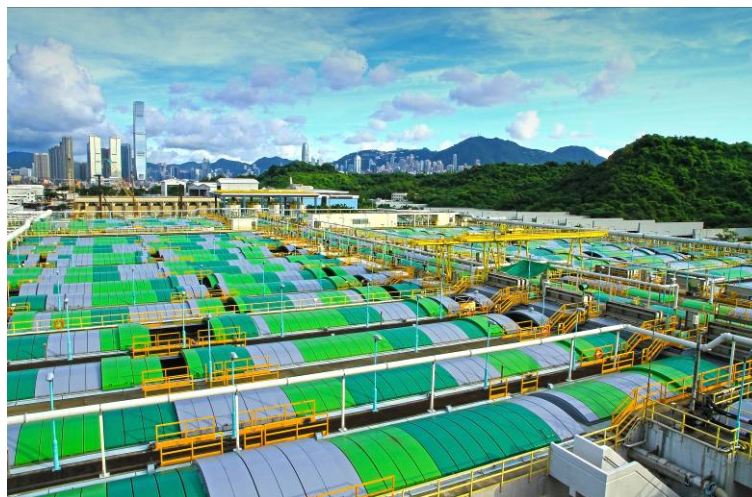


Figure 10 – CEPT in SCISTW

Dedicated sludge transport facilities

16. Sludge treatment is an important feature of a CEPT plant. Under HATS Stage 2A, two dedicated marine vessels were built (namely “Clean Harbour 1” and “Clean Harbour 2”). Sludge is first dewatered, stored in silos, unloaded into containers and transported via the two dedicated marine vessels from the treatment works to the Western New Territories (WENT) landfill reception area, where the sludge cake is taken to be incinerated at the T-Park (sludge treatment facility at Tuen Mun Nim Wan). A system using a gantry crane on the vessel was adopted to maximise the lay-down and manoeuvring areas at the SCISTW. A key environmental benefit for marine transportation of sludge is that it minimises land-based traffic and potential odour nuisance.



Figure 11 – Clean Harbour 1

Disinfection Facilities

17. The effluent tunnel and disinfection facilities are an integral system under HATS Stage 2A. Disinfection is by means of chlorination. The scheme, as shown in Figure 12, comprises an 8.5m diameter and 880m long effluent tunnel at 90m below ground to convey the effluent from the SCISTW to the submarine outfall and at the same time provides sufficient retention time for disinfection to reduce over 99% of *E. Coli*. The effluent then undergoes a dechlorination process to neutralize the residual chlorine, before discharging to the waters southwest of Stonecutters Island.

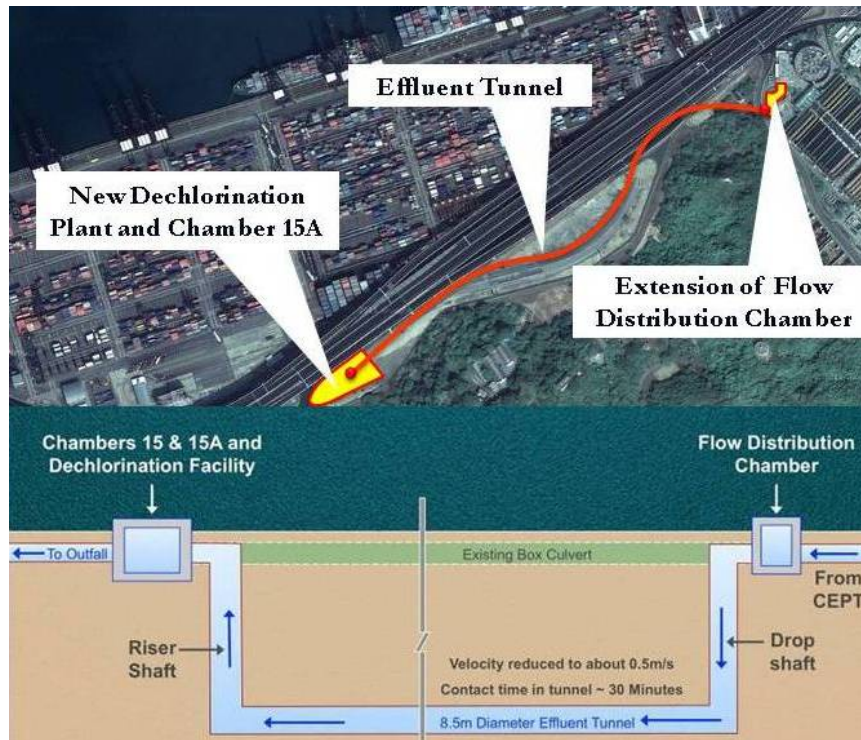


Figure 12 – Effluent Tunnel and Disinfection Facilities

Odour Control Enhancement

18. Odour control is always given a high priority in the operation of a sewage treatment works. Opportunity was hence taken to enhance odour control during the upgrading of SCISTW. All potentially odorous facilities at SCISTW, including the pumping stations, sludge dewatering buildings, sludge cake silos, sedimentation tanks, etc. are enclosed to ensure that the odour is contained inside the facilities. The odorous gas inside the enclosures is extracted and ducted to designated deodourization facilities to undergo treatment before discharge.



Figure 13 – Odour Control Enhancement

Greening and Beautification under HATS Stage 2A

19. In addition to providing a cleaner Victoria Harbour under the HATS Stage 2A, it also endeavours to include substantial greening and beautification measures despite the congested sites of the SCISTW and the PTWs to enhance the living environment for our neighbours. These include vertical and roof greening, and a well-considered outlook of the facilities to allow a better blend with the environment.



Figure 14 – Photomontage for the Future SCISTW upon completion of the Upgrading Works



Figure 15 – Photomontage of upgraded Wan Chai PTW

CONCLUSION

20. HATS is a major initiative of the Government to provide a cleaner Victoria Harbour. It intercepts, conveys and treats all sewage from both sides of the Harbour in an efficient, effective and environmentally sustainable manner. The full commissioning of HATS helps to enable the sustainable development of the harbour areas and also allows the public to better enjoy Victoria Harbour with improved water quality.

**Drainage Services Department
October 2016**