

**Advisory Committee on the Quality of Water Supplies  
Report No. 2 – Visit to Dongjiang Water Supply  
(12-13 September 2001)**

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**SECTION A - INTRODUCTION**

1. The Advisory Committee on the Quality of Water Supplies endorsed a proposal in its fourth meeting on 12 July 2001 that a visit should be arranged for members of the Advisory Committee to visit the Dongjiang (東江) water supply again. This was the second Guangdong (廣東) visit the Advisory Committee had made since its formation in April 2000.

2. The first visit was arranged in August 2000 through which members were able to see the real picture on the major spots of the Dongjiang water supply system from the source at Xingfengjiang (新豐江) to Shenzhen Reservoir (深圳水庫). This time the Advisory Committee was able to see more on the efforts of the Guangdong side in protecting the quality of Dongjiang water and the progress of the project entitled “Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works (東深供水改造工程)”.

**SECTION B - PARTICIPANTS**

3. The delegation led by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee comprised 15 members of the Committee (including 9 non-official members and 6 official members) and 8 government officials, as detailed in **Annex 1**.

**SECTION C - ITINERARY**

4. In this 2-day visit (12-13 September 2001), the delegation visited a number of installations of the Dongjiang water supply system and the construction sites of the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works as detailed below:

- i. Huizhou Meihu Sewage Treatment Works (惠州市梅湖水質淨化中心),
- ii. Huizhou Automatic Water Quality Monitoring Sub-Station (惠州市水質自動監測子站),
- iii. Taiyuan Pumping Station (太園抽水站) at Dongguan (東莞),
- iv. Construction sites of Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works,

- including the Qiling Pumping Station (旗嶺泵站), Zhoumagang Tunnel (走馬崗隧洞), Guangyinshan Tunnel South Portal (觀音山隧洞南面洞口), Bijiashan Tunnel North Portal (筆架山隧洞北面洞口), Shishan Tunnel South Portal and Open Aqueduct (石山隧洞南面洞口及明槽), and Jinhu Pumping Station (金湖泵站),
- v. Project Command Centre of the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works (東深供水改造工程指揮部),
  - vi. Quanlang River Contingency Sewage Treatment Works (觀瀾河污染治理應急工程),
  - vii. Pinghu Sewage Treatment Works (平湖污水處理廠).

A record of the itinerary of the visit is enclosed in **Annex 2**.

## **SECTION D – DETAILS OF VISIT**

5. Details of the visit including observations of the delegates, briefings, commentaries and speeches made by the Guangdong officials and discussions are recorded in **Annex 3**.

## **SECTION E - FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS**

6. After the visit and returning to Hong Kong, a media briefing was held in the Conference Room of the Mainland South West Regional Office. A video that highlighted the visit was shown at the beginning of the briefing as an introduction. The Chairman, Mr FANG Hung accompanied by five members, viz. Mr WU Sai Him, Professor LAM Kin Che, Ms CHEUNG Lai Ping, Mr HO Kin CHUNG and Mr CHEUNG Yun Hing gave accounts of the 2-day visit. Their comments made in the media briefing and the feedback from all members after the visit are consolidated below.

8. During the first visit in August last year, construction of the Huizhou Meihu Sewage Treatment Works was idle due to the lack of funding. But in this visit, the plant had already commenced operation since April this year. The delegation was very impressed with the strong commitment of the local government to improve the environment and that they had allocated nearly one third of their revenue to finance the project at the moment of economic recession.

9. Members understood that the main function of the sewage treatment works

was to treat domestic effluent disposed of by major developments along Dongjiang and the Dongshen Water Supply Scheme (東深供水工程) before being discharged to the nearby watercourses. They emphasised that the people of Hong Kong should understand that the water so delivered to Hong Kong would be further treated to drinking water quality at water treatment works in Hong Kong.

10. Members appreciated that the Guangdong officials were frank to admit that the pollution situation still existed. They had acted very decisively to improve the water quality. In the case of the Quanlang River, Members were pleased and surprised to note that the local government had poured in so much money and effort to construct a large-scale contingency sewage treatment works. Besides, Members also noted that many pig farms were removed away and industrial developments were strictly controlled in water protection zones. These measures had improved not only the water quality but also people's life indirectly by creating a cleaner environment.

11. Although the purpose of this visit was not to inspect water quality along the Dongjiang, Members did notice the quality data of water sampled at Huizhou Automatic Water Quality Monitoring Sub-Station. Based on general observations, members agreed that the quality of Dongjiang water had improved significantly over the last couple of years.

12. Members agreed that the sewage treatment works, located at badly polluted spots, would be effective to reduce the pollutant loading. Apart from that, Members expected that upon completion of the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works, the major polluted inflows would be separated from our water supply route and the quality of water supply to Hong Kong would further be assured.

13. The delegation visited several construction sites of the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works and the Project Command Centre at Jinhu (金湖) on the second day of the visit. Members were extremely pleased with the quality of work and the progress of the project.

14. Members were convinced that the Guangdong Authorities had worked extremely hard to shorten the construction period of the project. They were pleased with the plan to commission the section from Taiyuan to Jinhu by the end of 2002 thereby reducing up to about 70% of the pollutant loading. They noted that the programme to construct in phases was a realistic and cost-effective approach adopted by most advanced countries. They understood that a rush for earlier completion might not be wise if quality standards were lowered or if other environmental factors were neglected. They were told that the project was a high profile project receiving

recognition from high-level government officials and would become a showpiece for the whole nation.

15. Members noted that, apart from construction costs, the hidden costs for the relocation of polluting industries, removal of pig farms, restriction of developments, etc. would be very high. The work would not be possible without strong support from the People's Government of Guangdong Province.

16. As it is a concern that the water discharged to Dongjiang from Shima River (石馬河) might flow upstream to pollute the water abstracted by Taiyuan Pumping Station and hence affect the quality of water supply to Hong Kong. The delegation was given a report on the relevant hydraulic model analysis for the pumping station under different flow conditions. The report concluded that discharges from Shima River would not flow upstream along Dongjiang to the intake. The delegation also conducted a simple flow test in the afternoon on the first day and was satisfied that the chance of any reverse flow would be extremely low.

17. In retrospect, a few members noted that some kinds of social injustice were apparent. While Hong Kong cried for the protection of their water supply, many cities in the water protection zone of the Dongjiang water supply system, e.g. Heyuan (河源) and Quanlang, had experienced severe restrictions in developing their own economy.

18. With greater understanding of the Dongjiang water supply system, particularly the route of water supply to Hong Kong, Members were aware that a few sensational media reports on Dongjiang water were incorrect. Those reports might not be fair but had accidentally raised the attention of the Guangdong Authorities calling up their early actions to combat the pollution problem.

## **SECTION F – CONCLUSION**

19. The Advisory Committee agreed that the visit was informative and successful. Members were impressed by the work done by the Guangdong Authorities in combating pollution and protecting Dongjiang and the environment. Members appreciated the strong commitment and the tremendous efforts made by the Guangdong side. Members also admired the professionalism of the management of the project team involved in the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works, and the good quality and progress of their work. Members agreed that the visit has strengthened further their understanding of the work of the Guangdong side and their confidence that the Guangdong Authorities will strive hard to achieve high service standard in the delivery of safe and clean water.