HKCTOA stresses the importance of digitalization and the continuous support from Government in the future development of the Port of Hong Kong

(20 April 2018, Hong Kong) The Hong Kong Container Terminal Operators Association (HKCTOA) today stressed the importance of digitalization in enhancing the competitiveness of the Port of Hong Kong among industry stakeholders at a luncheon officiated by Mr Frank Chan Fan, Secretary for Transport and Housing, HKSAR. A plan to fully implement Electronic Release Order (eRO) for import containers was launched in January this year as one of the key steps on HKCTOA's digitalization roadmap.

HKCTOA also took the opportunity to show Mr Chan around different features of the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals (KTCT) after the luncheon.

Ms Jessie Chung, Chairperson of HKCTOA said, "Digitalization is the key to the future growth of the shipping and logistics industry, and HKCTOA spares no efforts in promoting this important aspect of the port industry. In addition, the industry has been facing a number of challenges in recent years. While container terminal operators have been working hard to maintain the competitiveness of the Hong Kong Port, we seek the continuous support from the HKSAR Government in taking the necessary steps to facilitate the future development of the Port of Hong Kong in order to enhance the position of Hong Kong as an international shipping centre and transshipment hub."

Mr Frank Chan Fan, Secretary for Transport and Housing said, "International shipping is dynamic and ever-changing. To survive the test of time, we have to constantly equip ourselves to move ahead and stay competitive. One of the key developments besetting the container shipping industry is the use of digitalization and automation technology, to improve not only the efficiency of the port, but also the working environment and occupational safety. Major ports in the world are now becoming automated and Hong Kong is no exception."

Under the eRO project, members of HKCTOA plan to fully implement eRO for import containers before December 2019 and phase out the paper handling process by 2020. Over 1,000 containers have been released by eRO securely from the trial since October 2016. The process can be shortened from 3 days to 1 day. As a result, the industry can get rid of the current paper-heavy process and achieve enhanced efficiency with proven security features.

Members of HKCTOA have engaged OnePort to jointly collect industry views and requirements for eRO implementation. In order to minimize the industry's efforts in developing individual eRO systems, OnePort has enhanced its platform to provide fast, convenient and secured online exchange of import documents and instructions for paperless release of laden containers at container terminals. The eRO system enables consignee to prepare electronic Letter of Indemnity (eLOI), receive eRO and forward the eRO to the trucker via the same platform. The trucker can then present the eRO QR code at the container terminals and collect the container.

Members of HKCTOA include Asia Container Terminals Limited, COSCO-HIT Terminals (Hong Kong) Limited, Goodman DP World, Hongkong International Terminals Limited, and Modern Terminals Limited.

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