

**Concern about the road safety hazards arising from tourists’ “photo-taking”
behaviour in the Central and Western District**

Reply From Hong Kong Police Force (Western District) :

As far as Western District is concerned, upon recommendations of some mainland key opinion leaders on “Xiaohongshu”, the waterfront area of Kennedy Town, Sai Wan, has become a popular check-in spot for many IVS visitors since the resumption of quarantine-free travel between Hong Kong and the mainland in early 2023. The Police were aware that some tourists stepped onto carriageway for taking “check-in” photos at a closer range, which posed danger and increased road safety hazards. In response to the situation, Western District has deployed additional manpower specifically to control pedestrian flow and curb illegal parking at the place for some time. In fact, no traffic accidents involving pedestrians were recorded there since 2023 [as of June 2024]. For the same period, the Police received 51 complaints relating to check-in activities in the vicinity, mainly about the obstruction to pedestrians and vehicles passing by.

However, with the post-pandemic normalcy and the concept “Tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong” advocated by the government, mainland visitors have adopted a new mode when touring Hong Kong. They now prefer exploring the local culture in “self-guided tours”, visiting some internet-famous check-in spots, coffee shops and restaurants for photo-taking and food-sampling. With a view to facilitating local tourism while more effectively planning and managing road safety hazards arising from the massive number of tourists in the waterfront area of Kennedy Town, Western District is taking a dynamic approach, through systematic implementation of measures based on the actual number of visitors, circumstances at the scene, and the real-time traffic data in the district. These measures include organizing inter-departmental efforts [by including Community Care Teams, the Home Affairs Departments, and members of the local community] in publicity and educational campaigns, filming short videos for “Xiaohongshu” on checking-in safely on the waterfront of Kennedy Town, deploying uniform presence to advise the crowd, imitating ad hoc crowd management or traffic control arrangements, all in an effort to safeguard both visitors and local residents while making for better travel experiences for visitors where possible. In fact, visitors stepping onto carriageway for photo-taking have substantially abated recently.

The Police also noticed that “the Stonewall Trees” , situated at the junction of Forbes Street and Davis Street, Kennedy Town, have become a popular check-in spot of late. The Police will closely monitor the check-in activities at the location, supported by deployment and crowd control arrangements as appropriate, to contain the situation.

To conclude, Western District is taking a series of effective measures to ensure road safety and improve mobility while balancing the needs of local residents and visitors.

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