

Islands District Council

Paper IDC 54/2013

Transport Department

Traffic and Transport Working Plan 2013-14

Purpose

This Paper presents the Traffic and Transport Working Plan of the Transport Department for Islands District in 2013-14.

Work Objectives

2. We hope that the work programmes planned for implementation in 2013-14 can achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To monitor and improve the traffic and transport facilities to cope with the local development needs;
- (ii) To adjust existing public transport services to meet the demand of the public; and
- (iii) To coordinate different public transport modes in order to provide efficient public transport services to the public.

Brief Description of Work

A. Traffic Management

3. One of the major objectives of traffic management is to improve the traffic flow and to ensure the road safety. We will continue to closely monitor the overall traffic situation and to design and implement suitable traffic management scheme, if necessary, to improve the efficiency, performance and safety of the road network. The following traffic management programmes have been planned for implementation in 2013-14:

(a) Monitor the Traffic Network and Management Measures

4. We will continue to monitor the traffic network of Islands District to enhance the safety and improve its efficiency. The major items include:

- (i) To monitor and review the road traffic situation of Tung Chung Road and south Lantau, and to implement suitable traffic management measures, if necessary;
- (ii) To monitor and review the operation of major junctions in the district, including the operational efficiency of road and pavement junctions, and to enhance their safety; and
- (iii) To regularly meet the project contractors in the district for the assessment of temporary traffic arrangement.

(b) Road Network and Traffic Facilities Improvement Projects

5. We will continue to follow up the following projects (some projects are in progress) to improve the road network and traffic facilities:-

- (i) Minor improvement works to some bends at Keung Shan Road;
- (ii) Minor improvement works to some bends at South Lantau Road near Pui O Au and San Shek Wan;
- (iii) Extensions of bus-laybys at South Lantau Road near Pui O and San Shek Wan, Keung Shan Road near Sham Wat Road, Tai O Road near Ling Yan Monastery and Lung Tin Estate;
- (iv) Road facility improvement works from Chung Yan Road roundabout to Tung Chung Road North;
- (v) Provision of footpath along Cheung Tung Road (Pak Mong to Tung Chung section);
- (vi) Widening of Tung Chung Road near San Shek Wan roundabout;
- (vii) Provision of cycle parking spaces near Peng Chau Pier; and
- (viii) Provision of additional cycle parking spaces near Cheung Chau Pier.

B. Public Transport Service

6. Railways are environmentally friendly and efficient mass carriers. It is the Government's transport policy to develop railways as the backbone of Hong Kong's public transport system. Therefore, we will promote maximum utilisation of railways supplemented by feeder public transport services. We will also continue to

encourage other public transport operators to improve the quality of their services. On the premises of environmental protection and efficient use of resources, we will continue to enhance the public transportation network, review and coordinate various public transport services to avoid route duplication and vicious competition.

(a) Franchised Bus

7. Franchised bus services will continue to play an important role in public transport system. We will consider the following factors in planning bus route development:

- (i) the existing and planned public transport services in the district;
- (ii) the development of the district;
- (iii) the completion of transport infrastructure;
- (iv) the impact of the programme on traffic, environment, the public transport operators and passengers concerned;
- (v) the cost-effectiveness of the programme; and
- (vi) the comments and suggestions from the public.

8. To better understand the service demand and consider improvement measures, we will continue to conduct surveys regularly and collect opinions from the public through district councils and other channels. We will encourage franchised bus companies to provide more bus-bus interchange schemes at appropriate and feasible locations to facilitate passengers to travel to different destinations with concessionary fares. This will reduce the demand for long haul and direct “point-to-point” bus services. As a result, the road space and bus resources will be better utilised and the efficiency of the bus network will be enhanced. The congestion and environmental problems caused by the overlapping of bus services can also be relieved.

9. To meet the passenger demand, the bus companies have implemented a number of bus service improvement measures in 2012-13, of which 31 items involve increase in bus departures, frequency adjustment or deployment of additional buses while 7 items involve expansion of service coverage, introduction of special bus services and route rationalisation.

10. At the meeting on 18 March 2013, the Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) under the Islands District Council (“IDC”) was briefed on the Bus Route Development Programme for Islands District in 2013-14. There are 2 items of route

adjustment and 12 items of deployment of additional buses and adjustment of frequency in the Programme.

(b) Ferry Services

11. The new licences of the six major outlying island ferry trunk routes (viz. “Central – Cheung Chau”, “Inter-islands”, “Central – Mui Wo”, “Central – Peng Chau”, “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan” routes) have respectively commenced from April and July in 2011 for a period of three years. The Finance Committee (“FC”) of the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) has approved a commitment of about \$120 million to facilitate the Government to provide the six ferry routes with Special Helping Measures (“SHM”) during the three-year licence period (i.e. from mid-2011 to mid-2014), with a view to enhancing the long-term financial viability of these services and maintaining fare stability. In order to monitor the service levels of the six routes and the proper spending of public funds involved, the Government has completed a Mid-term Review on the above routes and briefed the IDC on the outcome at its meeting on 22 April 2013. Having regard to the outcome of the review, the Government proposes to continue to provide SHM to the six major outlying island ferry routes and adjust upwards the caps for SHM as appropriate to \$191 million in the next three-year licence period (i.e. from mid-2014 to mid-2017) due to rising operating costs. Furthermore, since the overall services provided by the six ferry routes are generally satisfactory, the Government considers that the option of extension of the existing licences to maintain the operation of the routes is more preferred. The incumbent ferry operators have indicated that, if the Government maintains the SHM policy and offers appropriate upwards adjustment of the financial caps for SHM, they are interested to apply for extension of their existing ferry licences. The Panel on Transport of the LegCo expressed their support for the above proposal at its meeting on 24 May 2013. The Government plans to seek funding approval for the provision of the SHM from the FC in July 2013. We will proceed formally with the licence extension exercise after funding approval and report to the TTC of the IDC in due course.

12. Having consulted the IDC, the Government sought the views of the Panel on Transport on the proposal to construct additional floors at Central Piers Nos. 4, 5 and 6 on 24 May 2013 and received their support. The project is a longer-term helping measure to further improve the financial viability of the six major outlying island ferry routes on a sustained basis. The scope of the project comprises the construction of one-and-a-half additional floors at and improvement of the existing

facilities for each of Central Piers Nos. 4, 5 and 6 for dining, retail and other waterfront related uses to generate more non-fare box revenue for cross-subsidising the ferry operation, in addition to their original function to support ferry operation. The Government will proceed to consult the Public Works Subcommittee on the project and seek funding approval from the FC. It is expected that the work will commence by end 2013 for completion in phases from 2015 to 2018. A report will be made to the TTC of the IDC later and the relevant rural committees will be consulted on the temporary relocation arrangements for ferry piers during the construction period.

13. To better cater for the needs of the passengers, we will conduct surveys on ferry services with ferry operators as and when necessary to provide reference for service improvement. We will continue to monitor the performance of ferry operators to ensure that the ferry services can meet passengers' needs and comply with the conditions of licences.

14. We will continue to liaise closely with members of the District Council, listen to the opinions of the members of the public and actively consider the traffic and transport issues in the district.

Transport Department
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