

**Islands District Council**

**Paper IDC 57/2018**

**Transport Department**

**Traffic and Transport Working Plan 2018-19**

**Purpose**

This Paper presents the Traffic and Transport Working Plan of the Transport Department for Islands District in 2018-19.

**Work Objectives**

2. We hope that the work programmes planned for implementation in 2018-19 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 2018-19:

**(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 North Lantau Highway, 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) Construction of bus-laybys at South Lantau Road near Shui Hau; and
- (ii) Provision of additional cycle parking spaces near Cheung Chau Municipal Services Building.

**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. In view of the population intake in Tung Chung North and to meet the passenger demands, the bus companies have implemented a number of bus service improvement measures in 2017-18, of which 39 items involve increase in bus departures, frequency adjustment or deployment of additional buses while 45 items involve expansion of service coverage, introduction of special bus services and route rationalisation.

10. At the meeting on 22 January 2018, the Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) under the Islands District Council (“IDC”) was briefed on the Bus Route Planning Programme for Islands District in 2018-19. There are 2 items of new routes and 14 items of service improvement/rationalisation in the Programme.

## **(b) Ferry Services**

11. The new 3-year licences (2017-20) of the six major outlying island ferry routes (namely, “Central – Cheung Chau”, “Inter-islands”, “Central – Mui Wo”, “Central – Peng Chau”, “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan”) have taken effect in mid-2017<sup>1</sup>. The Finance Committee (“FC”) of the LegCo has also approved a commitment of about \$410 million to facilitate the Government to continue to provide the six ferry routes with Special Helping Measures (“SHM”) in

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<sup>1</sup> The “Central-Mui Wo” ferry route licence which expired on 31 March 2017 has been extended for 3 years to 31 March 2020. The rest of 5 ferry route licences which expired on 30 June 2017 have been extended for 3 years to 30 June 2020.

the current licence period. The current licence period is the first time where the Government subsidises operators' depreciation expense to encourage the operators to introduce new vessels and upgrade facilities or equipment, and the Government also formally incorporated the profit-sharing mechanism into the terms of licence extension of the ferry services. It will take time to observe what the actual effectiveness of the above new arrangements will be in enhancing ferry services and maintaining the long-term financial viability of ferry services.

12. The Government will, in the first half of 2019, examine in the mid-term review of the current three-year licence period (2017-20) whether the SHM would be the most desirable long-term operation model for maintaining the financial viability of ferry services. This review will cover, inter alia, a detailed study on extending the licence duration and the feasibility of providing full subsidy to ferry operators for replacement of vessels. The objective is to ensure service quality, long-term financial sustainability of ferry operation, and a fair adjustment of fares. Moreover, the Government will examine whether SHM or other arrangement should also be apply to the eight remaining outlying island ferry routes<sup>2</sup>. Specifically, the Government will study in depth in different topics. Regarding the proposal to relax the cap on licence period newly granted or extended on each occasion from not exceeding three years to not exceeding five years, with the aggregate licence period remains to be capped at 10 years, the Government consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Transport (the Panel) on 16 March 2018 and the proposal was supported by the Panel. The Government plans to table an amendment bill in the Legislative Council within the 2017-18 legislative year.

13. To enhance the "Central – Cheung Chau" ferry route service, New World First Ferry Services Limited ("NWFF") has committed to increase the carrying capacity of its fleet by utilising the existing spaces to install 20 additional seats in five 400-seat fast ferry vessels as well as 7 additional seats and 1 additional space for disabled passenger in "New Ferry II" which has 430 seats. Fast vessels with additional seats are currently in-service and all fast ferry vessels with additional seats are expected to be in-service by late 2018. To enhance the cabin environment of the fleet, NWFF is

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<sup>2</sup> The eight other outlying island ferry routes include:

- (1) "Aberdeen – Cheung Chau";
- (2) "Aberdeen – Yung Shue Wan via Pak Kok Tsuen";
- (3) "Aberdeen – Sok Kwu Wan via Mo Tat";
- (4) "Tuen Mun – Tung Chung – Sha Lo Wan – Tai O";
- (5) "Discovery Bay – Central"
- (6) "Discovery Bay – Mui Wo";
- (7) "Ma Wan - Central"; and
- (8) "Ma Wan – Tsuen Wan".

replacing the air-conditioning systems of 17 ferry vessels (including 9 fast ferry vessels and 8 ordinary ferry vessels) with new air-conditioning systems using environmentally-friendly refrigerants, refurbishing the passenger cabins and washrooms of 17 ferry vessels, renewing the passenger seats of 8 ordinary ferry vessels and 1 fast ferry vessel, and replacing the seat coverings of 8 fast ferry vessels. On the other hand, Hong Kong & Kowloon (Holding) Ferry Limited (“HKK”) has completed the replacement of seat coverings of its 6 fast ferry vessels, and committed to purchase 2 new fast ferry vessels for enhancement in service quality.

14. To better cater for the needs of the passengers, we will continue to conduct regular surveys on ferry services to monitor the service levels, the performance of ferry operators, passenger demand and for reference in reviewing the ferry services. Apart from conducting regular surveys, NWFF and HKK have committed to establish passenger liaison groups (“PLG”) for the ferry services and to conduct a meeting of the PLG for each of the ferry services every year during the current licence period (2017-20). Meetings of the PLG for the “Central – Mui Wo” and “Central – Cheung Chau” ferry routes were held by NWFF in November 2017 and March 2018 respectively, and meeting of the PLG for the “Inter-Islands” ferry service will be held in June 2018. HKK has also held the meetings of the PLG for the “Central – Peng Chau” ferry route in February 2018, as well as “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan” in April 2018. Ferry operators will continue to collect passengers’ opinions with a view to providing quality services to the passengers.

15. 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.

### **C. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge**

16. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (“HZMB”) is the first cross-boundary land link connecting Hong Kong, Zhuhai and Macao. In preparation for the commissioning of the HZMB, we, having consulted the stakeholders<sup>3</sup>, formulated the local public transport arrangements for the Hong Kong Port (Hong Kong Port) and announced their details in May 2017. It is expected that upon the commissioning of the HZMB, commuters can make use of the following local public transport services to travel to and from the public transport interchange at Hong Kong

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<sup>3</sup> Including the Islands District Council, as well as the franchised bus, public light bus, taxi, goods vehicle and non-franchised bus trades.

Port:

- (i) nine existing airport “A” routes (mainly existing “A” routes with higher patronage and frequency) that will be extended to the Hong Kong Port<sup>4</sup>;
- (ii) three new feeder franchised bus routes<sup>5</sup>;
- (iii) one new Green Minibus (GMB) route 901 (Hong Kong Port – Tung Chung North (circular route) (via the Catering Services Area and AsiaWorld-Expo));
- (iv) all types of taxis (i.e. Urban taxis, New Territories taxis and Lantau taxis); and
- (v) non-franchised buses (tour, hotel and contract hire services)<sup>6</sup>.

17. Whilst planning the transport facilities of the Hong Kong Port, the Government anticipated that most of the travellers of the HZMB would use public transport to travel to the Hong Kong Port. The Government would also promote and encourage visitors to use public transport for reaching the Hong Kong Port. Upon their arrival at the Hong Kong Port by public transport or private cars, visitors can take cross-boundary shuttle bus to reach the Zhuhai and Macao Ports. The Hong Kong Port will also provide around 650 parking spaces for local non-cross-boundary private cars<sup>7</sup>. To offer greater convenience for motorists, we will introduce a reservation system for the car park and set aside half of the parking spaces for reservation to be made 24 hours to within 7 days before actual use. We will disseminate real-time information on parking vacancies for local vehicles at Hong Kong Port through the Hong Kong eRouting website and mobile application. Visitors will be able to check if there is any parking space available before they set off the journey. In case the car park is about to be full, motorists should use public transport to travel to the Hong

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<sup>4</sup> Nine “A” routes include A11 (plying to/from North Point), A21 (plying to/from Hung Hom), A22 (plying to/from Lam Tin), A29 (plying to/from Tseung Kwan O), A31 (plying to/from Tsuen Wan), A33X (plying to/from Tuen Mun), A35 (plying to/from Mui Wo), A36 (plying to/from Yuen Long) and A41 (plying to/from Sha Tin).

<sup>5</sup> Three new feeder franchised bus routes include: Route B4(Hong Kong Port – Airport (circular route) (via AsiaWorld-Expo)), Route B5(Hong Kong Port – Sunny Bay (via Hong Kong Disneyland during specified hours)) and Route B6 (Hong Kong Port – Mun Tung Estate, Tung Chung (via Yat Tung Estate and MTR Tung Chung Station))

<sup>6</sup> Non-franchised buses which provide pick-up service at the Hong Kong Port public transport interchange are required to submit application online to the TD beforehand. No prior application is required for drop-off service.

<sup>7</sup> In addition to private car parking spaces, the car park will also provide 12 parking spaces for the disabled, 25 for motorcycles, 14 for light goods vehicles and 21 for out-of-service taxis.

Kong Port.

18. 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

June 2018