

Islands District Council
Paper IDC 52/2019

Transport Department
Traffic and Transport Working Plan 2019-2020

Purpose

This Paper presents the Traffic and Transport Working Plan of the Transport Department for Islands District in 2019-2020.

Work Objectives

2. We hope that the work programmes planned for implementation in 2019-2020 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 2019-2020:

(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 relevant projects for improving the road network and traffic facilities to enhance the road safety.

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 Mun Tung Estate, the commissioning of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, and to meet the passenger demands, the bus companies have implemented a number of bus service improvement measures in 2018-2019, of which 55 items involve increase in bus departures, frequency adjustment or deployment of additional buses while 50 items involve expansion of service coverage, introduction of special bus services and route rationalisation.

10. At the meeting on 18 March 2019, the Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) under the Islands District Council (“IDC”) was briefed on the Bus Route Planning Programme for Islands District in 2019-2020. There are 2 items of new routes and 13 items of service improvement/rationalisation in the Programme.

(b) Ferry Services

11. The licences of six major outlying island ferry routes (namely, “Central – Mui Wo”, “Central – Cheung Chau”, “Inter-islands”, “Central – Peng Chau”, “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan”) have been extended with effect from April 2017 and July 2017 respectively for a period of three years. The Finance Committee (“FC”) of the LegCo has also approved a commitment of about \$410 million to facilitate the Government to continue providing the six ferry routes with Special Helping Measures (“SHM”) in the current licence period (2017-2020).

12. The Government is examining in the mid-term review for current licence period of the six major outlying ferry routes whether the SHM would be the most desirable long-term operation model for maintaining the financial viability of ferry

services. The objectives are to improve service quality, ensure long-term financial sustainability of ferry operation, and a fair level of fares. Apart from the SHM, the review will cover, inter alia, a detailed study on the feasibility of providing full subsidy to ferry operators for replacement of vessels, and the Government will also examine whether the SHM or other arrangement would be applicable to the eight other outlying island ferry routes¹.

13. To enhance the “Central – Cheung Chau” and “Central – Mui Wo” ferry services, New World First Ferry Services Limited (“NWFF”) is replacing the air-conditioning systems, refurbishing the passenger cabins and washrooms, as well as renewing the passenger seats / replacing the seat coverings of its ferry fleet.

14. To better cater for the needs of the passengers, we will continue to conduct regular surveys on the ferry services to monitor the service levels, the performance of ferry operators, passenger demand and to facilitate the review on the ferry services. Besides, NWFF and HKK have committed to establish passenger liaison groups (“PLG”) for the ferry services operated by them so as to collect opinions from the passengers of the ferry services annually. The second PLG Meeting for the “Central – Mui Wo” ferry service was held by NWFF in May 2019, and the second PLG Meetings for “Central – Cheung Chau” and “Inter-Islands” ferry services would be held by NWFF in due course. In addition, the second PLG Meetings for “Central – Peng Chau”, “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan” ferry services were held by HKK in April 2019. Ferry operators will continue to collect passengers’ opinions with a view to providing quality services to the passengers.

15. With a view to providing passengers with a better waiting environment, the Transport Department has identified Yung Shue Wan Ferry Pier as the pilot scheme for upgrading of ferry piers. The scopes of improvement works include new facilities (e.g. toilet facilities, a baby-care room with lactation facilities and seats), as well as other internal renovation works and provision of better lighting and ventilation systems.

¹ *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”.

C. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge

16. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB), commissioned on 24 October 2018, is a mega transport infrastructure jointly built by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. It not only provides a new land-based boundary crossing between Hong Kong and Guangdong, but is also the first land-based transport link between Hong Kong and Macao. By substantially reducing the travelling time between Hong Kong and the Western Pearl River Delta Region, the HZMB serves to facilitate the movement of people in the region, and carries strategic significance for the overall development of both Hong Kong and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

17. Since the commissioning of the HZMB up to 30 April 2019, there has been an average of about 67 000 passenger trips crossing the boundary via the HZMB every day. The passenger flow reached a peak during the Lunar New Year, with about 160 000 inbound/ outbound passenger trips recorded on 7 February 2019, the third day of Lunar New Year. With the concerted efforts of the bureaux/departments concerned as well as the coordinated services provided by various transport services operators, the cross-boundary and local public transport services and the ancillary transport facilities at the Hong Kong Port (HKP) have generally been operating smoothly, and the situation of travellers using and queuing for various public transport services has been satisfactory.

18. On cross-boundary transport, in order to cope with the peak-hour cross-boundary passenger flow, in particular during weekends and festive holidays, the TD and the shuttle bus operator have put in place a number of service improvement arrangements since early November 2018, including enlarging the bus fleet and improving the queuing measures, etc. In parallel, the TD and the cross-boundary transport operators and tourism trades have closely monitored the operation of the HKP and the cross-boundary services, and taken action to cater for passenger demand where necessary.

19. On local public transport services, when planning ancillary public transport services for the HKP, the TD has, having regard to passenger demands, transport infrastructural network, overall ancillary public transport, bus networks and their operating arrangements, sought to optimize existing road facilities and public transport networks and resources, so as to enable the public to travel between the HKP

and other parts of Hong Kong conveniently and quickly. In line with this principle, the TD has arranged various public transport services to cater for passengers traveling to and from the HKP. These include extending the routing of 9 airport buses (“A” routes) to the HKP; introducing 3 feeder franchised bus routes (i.e. “B” routes) plying to and from the Airport, MTR Sunny Bay Station and Tung Chung Station respectively; introducing a green minibus route plying to and from Tung Chung North; and arranging for taxis and non-franchised buses to carry passengers to and from the HKP.

20. Generally speaking, major franchised bus routes serving the HKP with high passenger demand will operate additional departures during peak periods, and spare buses will be deployed to provide special departures to divert passenger flow. Bus companies will also deploy additional staff at the HKP, Tung Chung and Sunny Bay to keep the queuing and boarding of passengers in order.

21. The TD will continue to maintain close liaison and communication with members of the District Council, listen to the views of the public, and actively study the traffic and public transport matters in the district.

Transport Department
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