

Islands District Council
Traffic and Transport Committee
Document No. T&TC 50/2021

Regulation of Village Vehicles on Cheung Chau,
Lamma Island and Peng Chau

PURPOSE

This paper aims to inform members the arrangement for regulation of village vehicles in Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau.

BACKGROUND

2. Currently, village vehicles¹ operating on roads in Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau are mainly used for carriage of goods or construction materials. Some of them are also used to carry mobility impaired persons of the elderly homes. The Transport Department (TD) has been regulating the examination, installation as well as the use of village vehicles in accordance with the Road Traffic (Village Vehicles) Regulations (Cap 374N). Any person who drives or uses a village vehicle on a road must hold a valid village vehicle permit. Based on the road environment of individual areas, the TD regulates the use of village vehicles through the imposition of permit conditions, which cover the days, time, roads and areas that the vehicle can operate; the size, weight and shape of loads that it can carry; as well as the safety measures to be taken. Moreover, the main provisions in the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap 374) that govern driving attitude and behavior, including those on careless driving, dangerous driving or drink driving, are also applicable to village vehicle drivers.

3. In addition, the TD places great emphasis on the safety awareness of village vehicle drivers. The TD will provide the permit holder a copy of the "Code of Practice for Using Village Vehicles" (see **Annex 1**) when it issues village vehicle permits, so as to remind drivers on the points to note when using their village vehicles.

¹ According to the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap 374), village vehicle means — (a) a driver operated village vehicle; (b) a pedestrian controlled village vehicle; or (c) a golf cart.

4. The speed of petrol/diesel village vehicles on Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau is restrained by certain restrictions, including their engine size² and also their forward or backward gear shift function³. Besides, the TD has stipulated in the permit conditions that the speed of most electric village vehicles in the above-mentioned areas cannot exceed 15 or 18 km/h. Given that the road conditions and topographic environment of Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau are different from the other areas which some of the road sections are relatively narrow, steep and curved, there are suggestions that the TD should fully regulate the speed of village vehicles so that drivers can better control the village vehicles and avoid conflicts or collisions with other road users. The TD should also review the limitation of gear shift function on petrol/diesel village vehicles to meet their actual operational needs.

SUGGESTION

5. Since 2018, the TD has met with relevant rural committee members and village vehicle drivers in Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau and collected opinions on the speed and gear shift limitation of village vehicles. The TD also presented the preliminary proposals for regulation of village vehicles at the 5th Working Group Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of the Islands District Council held on 31 October 2018, but stakeholders have reservations on some of the proposals. In order to follow up on the comments received at the meeting, the TD conducted field tests of village vehicles on Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau in 2019, and further sought relevant stakeholders' views in parallel. The TD subsequently consulted relevant stakeholders again on the improved proposals in February 2020, and sought views from the members at the 1st Working Group Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of the Islands District Council held on 9 June 2020.

6. After considering and balancing the opinions of all parties, the TD proposes the latest arrangement for all "driver operated village vehicles" and "golf carts" running on the roads of Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau as shown in **Annex 2**.

² The village vehicle permit has stipulated that "The engine cylinder capacity of a village vehicle shall not exceed 300 cc."

³ The village vehicle permit has stipulated that "Unless written approval from the Commissioner for Transport is obtained, a village vehicle shall only be fitted with one forward and one backward gear and must not have any system varying the transmission ratio to provide higher speed capacity."

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

7. To enable the owners and drivers of "driver operated village vehicles" and "golf carts" on Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau to have sufficient time to adapt to the proposal and make the relevant arrangements, the TD plans to impose the following restrictions when issuing the relevant permits (including renewals and temporary permits) with effect from 1 April 2022⁴:

- (a) The maximum speed of this village vehicle must not exceed 15 km/h or 20 km/h (only applicable to the specified road sections on Lamma Island (North)); and
- (b) Unless written approval from the Commissioner for Transport is obtained, a village shall only be fitted with gears with restraint on travelling speed to not more than 20 km/h (applicable to Cheung Chau, Lamma Island (South) and Peng Chau) or 25 km/h (applicable to the village vehicles at Lamma Island (North)).

8. Since the validity period of the village vehicle permit is one year, existing village vehicle permit holders must be renewed with a valid permit on or before 31 March 2023 and subject to the above conditions before they can continue to drive or use village vehicles on the roads of Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau. The TD will also issue an updated "Code of Practice for Using of Village Vehicles" to all village vehicle permit holders at the same time when the relevant permits are issued.

9. Members are invited to note the information in this paper.

Transport Department

December 2021

⁴ The existing permit conditions for the highest operation speed and limitation on gear function imposing on individual village vehicles will be amended or deleted appropriately.

Annex 1: "Code of Practice for Using Village Vehicles"

Annex 2: Proposed Arrangements for Regulation of Village Vehicles on Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau

Code of Practice for Using Village Vehicles

1. Operating hour: Comply with the designated operating hour at all times while driving.
2. Operating route: Comply with the designated operating route at all times while driving.
3. Mind the driving speed: Apply the appropriate speed while driving for the sake of safety.
4. Mind the road surface: Pay due attention to the road surface and observe if there is accumulation of sands and rocks on road etc while driving.
5. Mind the bends: Drive slowly when approaching road junction as there might be pedestrian, bicycle or other motor vehicle coming out.
6. Mind the vehicle loading: Never carry overloaded goods for every loading since it would cause danger. When carrying sands, rocks, refuse, etc, they should be properly covered or be securely fastened to avoid polluting and endangering the environment.
7. Be polite and give way: Keep patient, be polite and give way in case you meet a crowd of pedestrian or a special incident occurs while driving.
8. Mind the vehicle maintenance: Test all parts of a vehicle and ensure they operate properly and safely before driving. Conduct vehicle check and maintenance regularly and carefully to ensure the stability of a vehicle's performance.
9. Mind the weather: On rainy and windy days, avoid unnecessary operation of village vehicle. If it is unavoidable, pay due attention to the vehicle speed, road surface and nearby environmental condition etc to avoid any accidents.

To keep your living or working place nice and clean, you have the responsibility to remove and clean up any pollutant left as a result of goods delivery by your village vehicle.

**Proposed Arrangements for Regulation of Village Vehicles on Cheung Chau,
Lamma Island (South) and Peng Chau**

1. To impose a maximum speed limit of 15 km/h on village vehicles for enhancing the road safety and reducing the chance of traffic accident;
2. To restraint the gears of petrol/diesel village vehicles with travelling speed of not more than 20 km/h but allow the village vehicles to run 15 km/h or below without using the maximum engine speed for better service life of the engine and minimize the noise nuisance;
3. To allow the petrol/diesel village vehicles to flexibly operate with multi forward or backward gear shift function to meet their actual operational needs; and
4. To update the “Code of Practice for Using Village Vehicles” by adding the point to note of “Driving Safety: Do not use hand-held mobile phones or telecommunications equipment while driving.” to enhance the safety awareness of village vehicle drivers.

**Proposed Arrangements for Regulation of Village Vehicles on
Lamma Island (North)**

1. To impose the following maximum speed limits on village vehicles for enhancing the road safety and reducing the chance of traffic accident:

<u>Maximum Speed Limits</u>	<u>Application Road Sections</u>
20 km/h ⁵	(a) The section of Cable Route between Pak Kok Tusi and Long Tsai Tsuen; and (b) The section of Reservoir Road between Wang Long and Lamma Wind Power Station
15 km/h	The remaining road sections on Lamma Island (North)

2. To restraint the gears of petrol/diesel village vehicles with travelling speed of not more than 25 km/h but allow the village vehicles to run 20 km/h or below without using the maximum engine speed for better service life of the engine and minimize the noise nuisance;
3. To allow the petrol/diesel village vehicles to flexibly operate with multi forward/backward gear shift function to meet their actual operational needs; and
4. To update the “Code of Practice for Using Village Vehicles” by adding the point to note of “Driving Safety: Do not use hand-held mobile phones or telecommunications equipment while driving.” to enhance the safety awareness of village vehicle drivers.

⁵ At present, the Cable Route between Pak Kok Tusi and Long Tsai Tsuen as well as the Reservoir Road between Wang Long and Lamma Wind Power Station are the maintenance accesses. The average width of most road sections is about 4 to 5 m, with relatively clear vision and located away from the residential areas. The concerned road sections are considered suitable to allow village vehicles to operate at a speed not exceeding 20 km/h, and the drivers could make appropriate adjustments to suit the road conditions. Therefore, the TD recommends the maximum speed of 20 km/h for the concerned road sections.