

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Traffic Proposals for Discovery Bay

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the proposed designation of roads in Discovery Bay as restricted roads to enhance road safety.

BACKGROUND

2. The use of golf carts as a transport mode is a unique feature of Discovery Bay. At present, about 500 golf carts and some 60 other vehicles (buses, light buses, hire cars and goods vehicles) operate on the private roads in Discovery Bay. With the opening of the Discovery Bay Tunnel Link in May 2000, the golf carts are expected to have more interface with vehicles from outside Discovery Bay which are unfamiliar with the driving environment of the area.

3. To enhance safety of all road users in Discovery Bay, we need to ensure that all golf cart drivers should have an acceptable level of driving skills and awareness of road conditions. Under the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374), the Secretary for Transport may make regulations specifying that only holders of specified driving licences will be allowed to drive and use golf carts on roads specified as "restricted roads". Under the existing law, any person who wishes to drive a golf cart on such roads is required to hold a valid driving licence. Any person who contravenes this law is liable to a fine of \$2,000 and to imprisonment for 3 months.

PROPOSED MEASURES TO ENHANCE ROAD SAFETY

4. To enhance road safety, we propose to specify all roads in Discovery Bay, except those in the golf course area, as “restricted roads”. We propose further to make it a mandatory requirement for persons who drive a golf cart on a “restricted road” in Discovery Bay to be holders of a valid driving licence except a learner’s driving licence. For the avoidance of doubt, we will make it clear that the requirement to hold a valid driving licence only applies to drivers rather than owner-users of golf carts who are passengers on board. A new Schedule listing the “restricted roads” will be created under the Road Traffic (Village Vehicles) Regulations. The Schedule will cover all existing roads in Discovery Bay (except the one inside the golf course). New roads in Discovery Bay outside the golf course will also be similarly specified in future.

5. The proposal has the unanimous support of the Island District Council’s Traffic and Transport Committee, Area Committee of Peng Chau and Discovery Bay, the Owners Committees as well as the Management Company of Discovery Bay.

6. The Police will be responsible for enforcing this new requirement.

ADVICE SOUGHT

7. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.