

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Traffic Conditions in Tseung Kwan O

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the traffic situation in Tseung Kwan O (TKO), with an update on the latest position of the various traffic management measures being planned or implemented by the Administration to relieve congestion at the morning peak.

BACKGROUND

2. At present, TKO has a population of about 250,000, which is expected to increase progressively to 390,000 by 2006. The increasing population intake of this New Town has placed pressure on its existing road network.

3. For the past twelve months, traffic congestion is observed at the roundabout junction of Wan Po Road/TKO Tunnel Road/Po Shun Road (the R1 roundabout as shown in **Figure 1**) on weekdays during the morning peak hours. Traffic queues are found building up on the TKO Tunnel Road and Po Shun Road respectively.

ASSESSMENT

Morning peak flow

4. We have examined the peak hour traffic flow of the TKO Tunnel. Between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., TKO Tunnel carries about 3,000 vehicles per hour in the Kowloon bound direction, slightly above its design capacity of 2,800 vehicles per hour leading to traffic queues on the tunnel approach roads.

5. Traffic queue along TKO Tunnel Road sometimes extends back to the upstream R1 roundabout junction affecting the smooth operation of the roundabout.

6. Po Shun Road is one of the main arterial roads connecting the new development areas in Hang Hau to the TKO Tunnel via the R1 roundabout. Traffic queue on the tunnel approach continues on Po Shun Road. A short traffic queue of less than 0.1km long is also sometimes observed on Wan Po

Road approach to the R1 roundabout.

7. Traffic queue on Po Shun Road is also attributable to the difficulty experienced by the motorists to enter the R1 roundabout. Motorists on Po Shun Road are frequently blocked by the relatively fast moving traffic circulating within the R1 roundabout. The majority of these circulating traffic comes from TKO Tunnel and are destined for the industrial areas or areas in the vicinity of Sheung Tak Estate.

Observation

8. At present, the TKO Tunnel has a daily throughput of about 70,000 vehicles, which is within its design capacity of 78,500 vehicles. The very peaky traffic demand for travelling to Kowloon through TKO Tunnel during the morning peak is the main cause of the traffic congestion in TKO. The resulting traffic queue has affected the operation of the R1 roundabout as well as the other adjoining roads. However, traffic queue often appears for a relatively limited period between 8.00am and 8.45am.

TRAFFIC MEASURES

9. To tackle the traffic situation in TKO, we have examined a number of measures for the immediate and medium term. Details of the proposed measures are set out below.

Short term measures

10. To ensure smooth operation of the R1 roundabout, the Police are currently deploying additional manpower to regulate traffic at the relevant busy junctions during the morning peak hour.

11. The Transport Department, the Police, the bus and tunnel operators have been maintaining close liaison to introduce contingency traffic arrangements should major traffic disruption occur at major junctions in TKO. To minimise the impact of traffic incident on TKO Tunnel Road and to ensure speedy incident recovery, the TKO tunnel operator has stationed one of their recovery vehicles at the tunnel portal on the TKO side during the morning peak hour. This would enable most of the traffic incidents on TKO side to be cleared as soon as possible. The Kowloon Motor Bus Company has also arranged for a service truck to be stationed in TKO to attend to bus breakdowns.

12. To improve the traffic situation on Po Shun Road, the Administration will widen the entry section of the Po Shun Road approach to the R1

roundabout to improve access for vehicles. Works will start in November 2000.

13. We have also examined the option of implementing tidal flow operation at TKO Tunnel during the morning peak hour to provide short term relief to the traffic congestion. The feasibility of tidal flow operation depends on the availability of a time “window” when the Kowloon bound traffic exceeds the capacity of two traffic lanes while the TKO bound traffic could be accommodated within the capacity of a single traffic lane. Upon detailed examination of the traffic flow at the TKO Tunnel, we are of the view that such a “window” is not available at the moment. Tidal flow will cause extensive traffic queue and congestion on the Kowloon side and is therefore not a viable option.

14. We have also considered the option of installing part-time traffic signals at all approaches to the R1 roundabout to improve traffic circulation at the R1 roundabout junction. However, as road construction works for a grade-separated interchange to enhance capacity of the R1 roundabout junction (see paragraph 15 below) is due to start in early 2001, we consider it more appropriate to review this option after commencement of road works.

Medium term measures

15. To improve the capacity at the R1 roundabout junction, a project to replace this junction with a grade-separated interchange will commence construction in early 2001. This project, on completion by 2003, would help alleviate the congestion on Po Shun Road.

16. The extension of the MTR line from Lam Tin to TKO is progressing on schedule and is expected to be in operation by 2002. The MTR will provide an alternative efficient transport mode for the TKO residents and significant relief to the tunnel traffic in the medium term.

FURTHER ACTION

17. The Administration will continue to closely monitor the traffic situation in TKO and will implement appropriate short and medium term traffic measures from now until the new MTR Line commences operation in 2002. The Administration will also endeavour to ensure timely completion of the new transport infrastructure to cope with the longer term traffic demand in TKO.

Transport Bureau
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