

立法會 *Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(1)199/01-02

Ref : CB1/PL/TP

Background brief on the operation of boundary control points

Background

At the House Committee meeting on 2 November 2001, it was agreed that the Chief Secretary for Administration be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss the issue of 24-hour operation at boundary control points.

2. This paper gives some background information on the operation of boundary control points and a brief account of the discussions on measures to ease congestion at control points.

3. While the need for operating some of the boundary control points on a 24-hour basis has been raised during debates and question time at Council meetings, the economic and social impact of such a measure has not been discussed by Panels in depth. Previous deliberations on the issue have been focused on congestion that passengers crossing the border face before and after long holidays, measures to ease such congestion and to reduce passengers' waiting time at control points, and the need to establish more control points at the border to cope with increased traffic across the border.

Operation of boundary control points

4. Cross-boundary passenger and vehicular traffic has sustained significant growth in the past few years. Double-digit annual growth rate of passengers has been recorded since 1996. Passenger traffic has increased from 49.85 million passengers in 1995 to 101.71 million passengers in 2000, representing an increase of 104 %. The annual vehicular traffic has also increased by 32.6 % from 8.47 million vehicles to 11.23 million vehicles over the same period. Detailed statistics are at Annex.

Lo Wu

5 The Lo Wu Control Point operates daily from 0630 to 2330 hours. It is the busiest control point in Hong Kong accounting for approximately 85% of total cross-boundary passenger traffic. Double-digit annual growth rates have been registered in recent years, with passenger traffic springing from 43.3 million passengers (a daily average of 118,630 passengers) in 1995 to 86.5 million passengers (a daily average of 236,263 passengers) in 2000. Currently the daily average passenger figures stand at the level of 221,000 passengers for weekdays and 268,000 passengers for weekends, but goes up to 300,000 passengers on long holidays.

Lok Ma Chau

Passenger traffic

6. The operating hours of Lok Ma Chau Control Point for passenger traffic are from 0700 to 2200 hours. Passenger traffic has increased rapidly in recent years, especially after the introduction of shuttle bus service in March 1997. Passenger traffic increased from 2.51 million passengers (a daily average of 6,874 passengers) in 1995 to 5.04 million passengers (a daily average of 13,818 passengers) in 1997 and further up to 10.96 million passengers (a daily average of 29,938 passengers) in 2000, representing an increase of 337% over that of 1995.

Vehicular Traffic

7. Lok Ma Chau operates round the clock for goods vehicles and from 0700 hours to 2200 hours for private cars and coaches. Vehicular traffic grew from 4.5 million vehicles (a daily average of 12,323 vehicles) in 1995 to 7.6 million vehicles (a daily average of 20,810 vehicles) in 2000, with goods vehicles making up 80% of total vehicular movements. It is the busiest vehicular control point, accounting for 68% of cross-boundary vehicular traffic.

Hung Hom

8. Hung Hom, operating between 0730 and 2100 hours, deals with eight pairs of through trains running daily between Hong Kong and the Mainland with a full-loading capacity of 8,364 passengers. Service demand has been stable over the years. In 2000, the average daily passenger traffic was 5,517 passengers.

Man Kam To

9. Man Kam To operates from 0700 to 2200 hours for both passengers and vehicles. There has been no significant increase in passenger traffic over the

years. The average number of passengers per day is between 2,300 and 2,800 passengers. Vehicular traffic remains at a daily average of 6,900 to 8,400 vehicles.

Sha Tau Kok

10. Sha Tau Kok operates from 0700 and 2000 hours for both passengers and vehicles. Given its remote location, service demand from passengers and vehicles has been moderate. The average number of passengers per day is between 3,000 to 3,400 passengers while vehicular traffic remains at a daily average of 1,900 to 2,400 vehicles.

Cross boundary ferry service

11. Cross-boundary passenger ferry service is provided at the China Ferry Terminal in Tsimshatsui and the Hong Kong Macau Ferry Terminal in Central. The former operates between 0600 and 2200 hours and the latter operates 24 hours a day. At present, there are six operators providing 70 departures every day to various ports in the Guangdong Province. The average daily cross-boundary ferry passengers dropped slightly in 1999, but it seemed to have stabilized at around 17,000 passengers in 2000.

Round-the-clock operation of boundary crossings

12. The Administration has indicated that round-the-clock operation of boundary control points is the long-term objective of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Mainland authorities. In view of the increasing volume of passenger traffic on both sides of the boundary, the extension of the operating hours of boundary control points is only a natural development. The Administration will progressively extend operating hours in accordance with practical needs.

13. The Administration has also indicated that at this stage, the main concern of the two sides is how to boost the handling capability of the checkpoints during peak hours and holidays. The Chief Secretary for Administration pointed out to the media after meeting with Shenzhen Mayor Mr Yu Youjun in Guangzhou on 28 September 2001 that it was the hope of the two sides to extend the operating hours of the Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau control points for passenger clearance up to midnight on Saturdays and Sundays and even on normal days. This appears to be the mid-term objective of the two sides.

14. As a new extension measure, the operating hours of Lo Wu Control Point have already been extended for 30 minutes to 12 midnight on the day before and during the day of Hong Kong Public Holidays since 1 October

2001 to alleviate congestion at Lo Wu. For Chinese New Year, the extension will cover 10 days before and during the New Year period.

Measures to ease passenger congestion at boundary control points

15. On measures to ease passenger congestion at boundary control points, the Security Panel discussed the related issues at its meeting held on 1 March 2001. It has examined the feasibility of increasing the frequency of the Lok Ma Chau-Huanggang shuttle bus service and providing regular through train service between Hung Hom and Lo Wu. The Transport Panel also reviewed at its meeting on 27 April 2001 the current passenger and vehicular traffic conditions at Lok Ma Chau and the various measures being implemented or planned by the Administration to smoothen passenger and vehicular flows at the control point.

16. The Transport Panel has been briefed on the planning work for two new cross-boundary control points, viz the Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chur Spur Line and the Shenzhen Western Corridor and Deep Bay Link, and has urged the Administration to speed up the delivery of the projects.

17. The Legislative Council passed a motion on 27 June 2001 urging the Administration to consider advancing the completion date of the Northern Link, and exploring with the relevant Mainland authorities the feasibility of providing other additional cross-boundary passenger rail lines, including the feasibility of operating an express rail line between Sheung Shui or other districts and Shenzhen, and a Hung Hom-Shenzhen through train service.

Passengers Statistics at the Cross-boundary Control Points

	LO WU (LW)		HUNG HOM(HH)		LOK MA CHAU (LMC)		MAN KAM TO (MKT)		SHA TAU KOK (STK)		TOTAL	
YEAR	Passenger Traffic	% Increase	Passenger Traffic	% Increase	Passenger Traffic	% Increase	Passenger Traffic	% Increase	Passenger Traffic	% Increase	Passenger Traffic	% Increase
1995	43,299,785 (118,630)	N/A	2,119,905 (5,808)	N/A	2,509,140 (6,874)	N/A	1,004,528 (2,752)	N/A	919,479(2,519)	N/A	49,852,837 (136,583)	N/A
1996	47,976,070 (131,082)	10.8%	1,808,551 (4,941)	-14.7%	3,121,357 (8,528)	24.4%	967,087 (2,642)	-3.7%	1,024,428(2,799)	11.4%	54,897,493 (149,993)	10.1%
1997	56,296,232 (154,236)	17.3%	1,551,440 (4,251)	-14.2%	5,043,603 (13,818)	61.6%	928,970 (2,545)	-3.9%	1,097,129(3,006)	7.1%	64,917,374 (177,856)	18.3%
1998	66,105,559 (181,111)	17.4%	1,445,725 (3,961)	-6.8%	7,521,761 (20,608)	49.1%	834,724 (2,287)	-10.1%	1,119,591(3,067)	2.0%	77,027,360 (211,034)	18.7%
1999	77,193,998 (211,490)	16.8%	1,773,397 (4,859)	22.7%	9,181,205 (25,154)	22.1%	948,058 (2,597)	13.6%	1,175,787(3,221)	5.0%	90,272,445 (247,322)	17.2%
2000	86,472,363 (236,263)	12.0%	2,019,115 (5,517)	13.9%	10,957,405 (29,938)	19.3%	1,017,145 (2,779)	7.3%	1,243,368(3,397)	5.7%	101,709,396 (277,895)	12.7%
1995-2000 5 years growth		99.7%		-4.8%		336.7%		1.3%		35.2%		104.0%

Figures in brackets denote the daily average.

Vehicular Statistics at the Cross-boundary Control Points

	LOK MA CHAU (LMC)		MAN KAM TO (MKT)		SHA TAU KOK (STK)		TOTAL	
YEAR	Vehicular Traffic	% Increase	Vehicular Traffic	% Increase	Vehicular Traffic	% Increase	Vehicular Traffic	% Increase
1995	4,498,016 (12,323)	N/A	3,318,964 (9,093)	N/A	648,716 (1,777)	N/A	8,465,696 (23,194)	N/A
1996	4,987,471 (13,627)	10.9%	3,226,850 (8,817)	-2.8%	697,923 (1,907)	7.6%	8,912,244 (24,350)	5.3%
1997	5,729,895 (15,698)	14.9%	3,076,314 (8,428)	-4.7%	704,700 (1,931)	1.0%	9,510,909 (26,057)	6.7%
1998	6,506,951 (17,827)	13.6%	2,525,133 (6,918)	-17.9%	740,644 (2,209)	5.1%	9,772,728 (26,775)	2.8%
1999	6,622,164 (18,143)	1.8%	2,843,325 (7,790)	12.6%	862,317 (2,363)	16.4%	10,327,806 (28,295)	5.7%
2000	7,616,568 (20,810)	15.0%	2,726,169 (7,449)	-4.1%	883,463 (2,414)	2.5%	11,226,200 (30,673)	8.7%
1995-2000 5 years growth		69.3%		-17.9%		36.2%		32.6%

Figures in brackets denote the daily average.