

## **Legislative Council Panel on Transport**

### **Information Note on Deduction of Bus-bus Interchange Fares**

#### **Purpose**

At the meeting of the LegCo Panel on Transport on 21 March 2003, members asked for supplementary information on the question of deduction of incorrect bus-bus interchange (“BBI”) fares. This note sets out the measures taken by the franchised bus operators to address the matter.

#### **Octopus system for BBI schemes**

2. Each time when a passenger presents an Octopus card for fare payment when travelling on a bus, the route number and direction of travel will be encoded onto the card. Bus drivers are required according to operating guidelines issued by the bus operators to manually set the route number and the direction of travel to ensure that the correct fares are charged. For BBI schemes, the Octopus device on bus will read the data of the last trip to confirm the route and direction combinations to enable the passengers to enjoy the relevant fare discount.

3. In 2002, the franchised bus companies handled a total of about 1,160 million Octopus transactions. On average, about 1.2 complaints per million transactions were received in connection with incorrect deduction of BBI fares. According to the bus operators, the main cause of the incorrect deduction is that bus drivers inadvertently input wrong information when setting the Octopus system before commencement of bus service.

#### **Measures implemented by the bus operators**

4. The bus operators have implemented the following measures to prevent occurrence of the problem:

- (a) issue notices to bus drivers to remind them to press the start and end trip buttons on every trip, and to ensure that the correct fare level is set;
- (b) stick labels in driver cabins as reminders to bus drivers;
- (c) carry out spot checks on board of buses by bus operators' own inspectors and follow up with the bus drivers as necessary;
- (d) conduct on-board checking by driving instructors while giving training to new drivers; and
- (e) carry out disciplinary actions for bus drivers who have proven to have repeatedly omitted to set the correct fare levels.

### **Checking of Octopus fares by passengers**

5. The Octopus display on board of buses shows the exact amount of fare deducted and the remaining value of the Octopus card to a passenger when an Octopus card is presented for fare payment. Passengers can identify any incorrect deduction of Octopus BBI fare immediately.

6. In addition, passenger can check the past Octopus transactions on the machines located at Mass Transit Railway stations, Kowloon-Canton Railway stations and Customer Service Centres of The Kowloon Motor Bus Co. (1933) Limited, Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited.

7. Upon receipt of complaints by passengers and verification of incorrect deductions, the bus companies would refund the overcharged amount to the passengers concerned.