

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON TRANSPORT

Improvement of Directional Signing

Purpose

This paper sets out a series of proposals to improve the directional signing in Hong Kong.

Background

2. The review of the standards for traffic signs and road markings, including directional signing, is an on-going process. In August 2001, Transport Department commissioned a consultant to undertake the “Comprehensive Review of Directional Signing in Hong Kong” (the Study). The objectives of the Study were to identify deficiencies and problems relating to the present directional signing and to formulate recommendations for necessary improvement. The Study was completed in end 2002.

3. The Study reveals that the current design standards and provision of directional signs in Hong Kong are generally in line with major overseas countries. However, the lack of space, heavy traffic movements and expansion of the road network in recent years have given rise to a number of problems, including inadequate directional guidance to access the strategic road network (SRN), inconsistent destination names and inadequate advance signing.

4. In order to deal with the problems identified, one of the major recommendations proposed by the Study is to promote drivers’ knowledge of the SRN route numbers so that these numbers can be used on signs to guide motorists to use the strategic roads for long distance inter-regional trips. It proposes that advance directional signs have to be provided for better guidance and destinations of local, district or regional levels should be separated and displayed on different panels. It also recommends the introduction of an exit numbering system on the SRN and the use of distance indicators to inform motorists on strategic roads how far they are from their destinations, exits or junctions.

Follow Up Actions to Improve Directional Signing

5. Based on the findings and recommendations of the Study, the Administration plans to implement the recommended measures to improve the directional signing in the territory in the coming years. Details of the planned improvement measures are summarised in paragraphs 6 to 13 below.

Promotion of Route and Exit Numbering Systems

6. The current route numbering system has been in force since 1974. So far, nine route numbers have been designated for strategic roads (**Annex A**). As the numbers were not assigned to the routes in a logical manner, the public may find it difficult to remember the routes and their numbers. There is scope to rationalise the existing route numbering system, making it easier for motorists to use and remember. The Administration proposes to rationalise the SRN route numbering system and introduce a logical exit numbering system on the SRNs so that motorists can plan their trips and use the strategic roads more easily.

7. Transport Department has consulted the Transport Advisory Committee, academics, professional institutions, interest groups and the trades in March/April 2003 on the proposed rationalisation of SRN route numbering system and the new exit numbering system. The preferred options of these two systems are shown in **Annex B** and **Annex C** respectively.

8. The preferred option of route numbering system is a completely new system intended to provide a more logical numbering basis that can be remembered more easily by motorists. It is developed on three north-south routes which include the cross harbour tunnels starting on Hong Kong Island and proceeding north, four east-west routes and one loop road around the New Territories.

9. Under the preferred option of the exit numbering system, the exit number begins with 1 at the first exit from the starting point of a SRN and increases by 1 at each subsequent exit. The same exit numbers will be used for exits in both directions at symmetric interchanges. For non-symmetric

interchanges providing an exit in one direction only, the exit will be numbered with an alphabetical suffix. This system is now on trial along Route 3.

10. To further assist motorists to remember the SRN routes, we will promote the concept using a schematic SRN diagram, analogous to the MTR route map (**Annex D**), and develop SRN line diagrams for each route (**Annex E**). In addition, driving maps showing each SRN route and their exit numbers would be produced to assist motorists. All exit information indicated on the driving maps would be consistent with that contained on the actual directional signs on the road itself. We would liaise with map publishers and other relevant organisations to incorporate the SRN route and exit information into driving maps and guidebooks available in Hong Kong.

11. More than 1,400 signs will have to be modified by patching the route numbers and exit numbers on these signs. It is estimated that the sign modification will be completed by early 2004. A publicity programme will be launched to promote the SRN routes and their exit numbers. By late 2004, motorists should become more familiar with the new SRN and exit numbering systems and will be able to use them for the planning of inter-regional trips and for route guidance.

Trial and Implementation of other Improvements of Directional Signing

12. For conveyance of clearer and more precise messages to motorists, advance directional signs will be provided (**Annex F**) and destinations of local, district and regional levels will be separated into different panels (**Annex G**). Directional signs using the revised design standards will be put on trial in Shatin District and a section of Tolo Highway from Shatin to Tai Po. Preparation for the trial will commence in mid 2003 and sign modification works will be completed by early 2004. The new design will be refined subject to public response. The guidelines on directional signing will then be revised and incorporated into the Transport Planning and Design Manual to serve as a basis for the design of directional signs for the whole territory.

13. The sign improvement programme will be effected in packages of projects. Essential improvements such as the enhancement of clarity will be implemented first. Other improvements will be effected in regular sign replacement programmes.

Other On-going Improvement Measures

14. In addition to the improvement measures outlined above, the Administration will also implement necessary improvement measures to address specific local concerns. In response to concerns over the need to improve the illumination of directional signs, Highways Department has conducted a research and identified 580 signs, including 440 roadside signs and 140 gantry signs, in the territory that are not provided with sufficient illumination. Improvement works are now in progress and will be completed by end 2004. We have also received suggestions to provide additional directional signs in new development areas such as Tin Shui Wai. Transport Department has conducted a review of the directional signs in Tin Shui Wai and will implement a series of improvement measures starting with the existing gantry directional signs at Hung Tin Road and Long Tin Road. The works will be completed in mid 2004. In addition, existing roadside directional signs will be modified and additional ones erected under the road projects in Tin Shui Wai North.

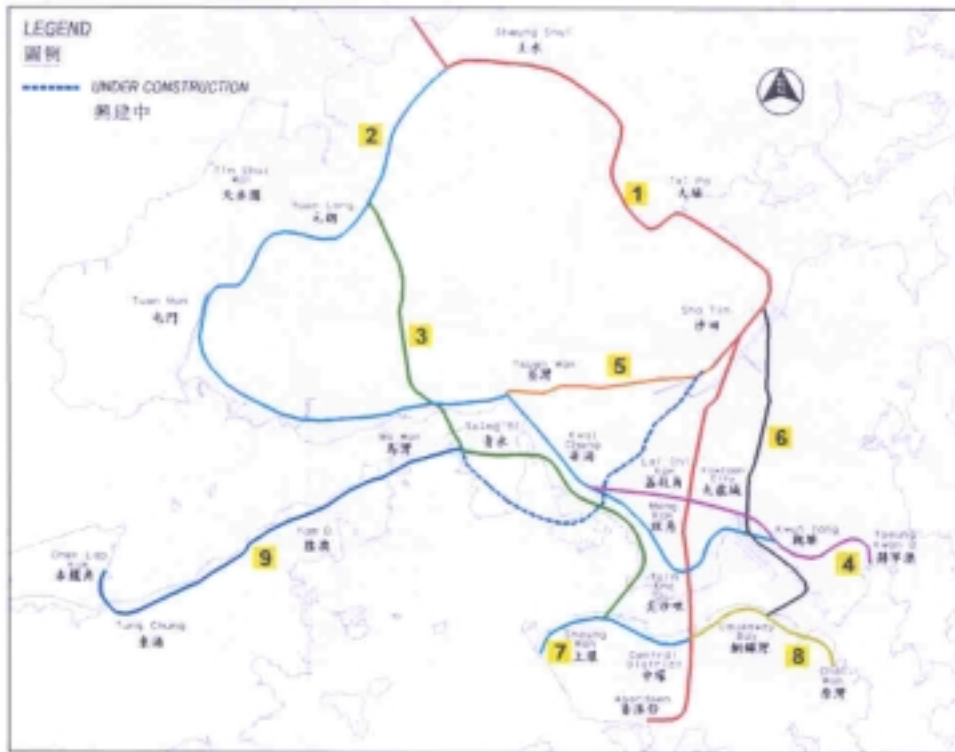
Advice sought

15. Members are requested to note the above measures for improving the directional signing in Hong Kong and offer their comments.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
23 June 2003

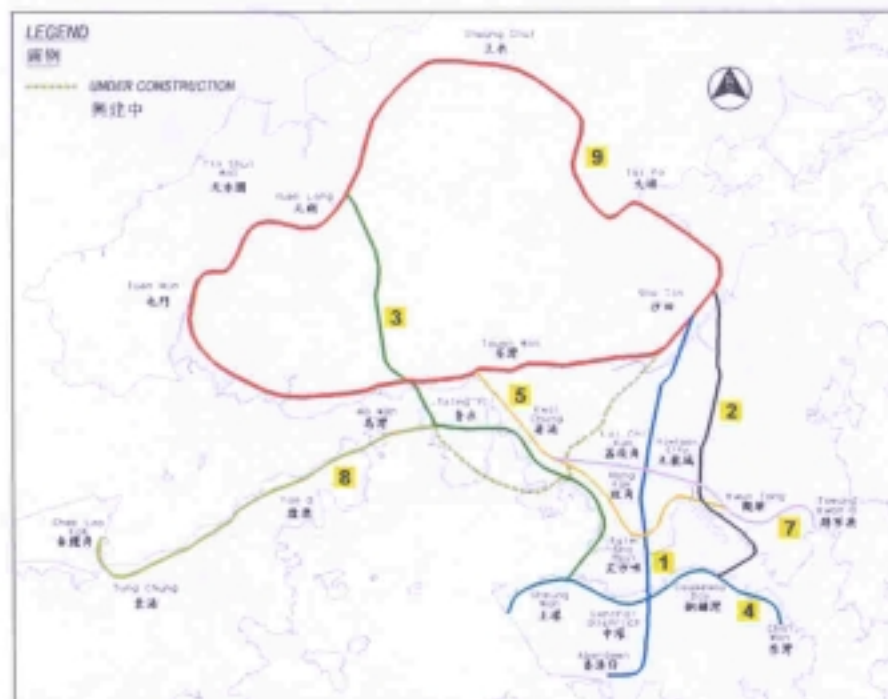
Existing Route Numbering System

現有的幹線編號系統



Rationalized Route Numbering System

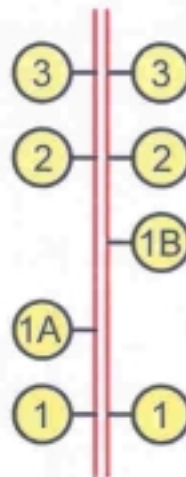
重整後的幹線編號系統



Notes 附註：

- Route 1 includes the Cross Harbour Tunnel, and Routes 2 and 3 the Eastern Harbour Crossing and Western Harbour Crossing respectively. This sequence follows the opening of the three cross harbour tunnels
一號幹線包括海底隧道，二號幹線及三號幹線則分別包括東區海底隧道及西區海底隧道。這個編序是按照三條隧道通車的先後而定的。
- The east-west Routes 4, 5, 7 & 8 will have sequences starting from south to north. Along the northern coast of Hong Kong Island, the existing Routes 7 and 8 will be combined and numbered as Route 4. The section of existing Route 2 from Kowloon Bay to Tsuen Wan will become Route 5. The existing Route 4 will be renamed as Route 7, and the section of existing Route 9 at Lantau will be renamed as Route 8.
東西行的四號、五號、七號及八號幹線由南至北編序。香港島北面沿岸的七號及八號幹線會合而為一，編為四號幹線。現時由九龍灣至荃灣的二號幹線則改為五號幹線。現有的四號幹線改稱七號幹線，現時大嶼山段的九號幹線則改稱八號幹線。
- Route 6 will be unallocated at this time and be available for a future SRN route, possibly the Central Kowloon Route, which lies in between the revised Route 5 and 7.
目前未有幹線編為六號幹線，日後建成另一幹線網絡時可使用這個編號。這個新建的網絡很有可能是重整後的五號與七號幹線之間的中九龍幹線。
- The single New Territories loop is named as Route 9.
唯一位於新界的圓線編為九號幹線。

Proposed Exit Numbering System
建議的出口編號系統



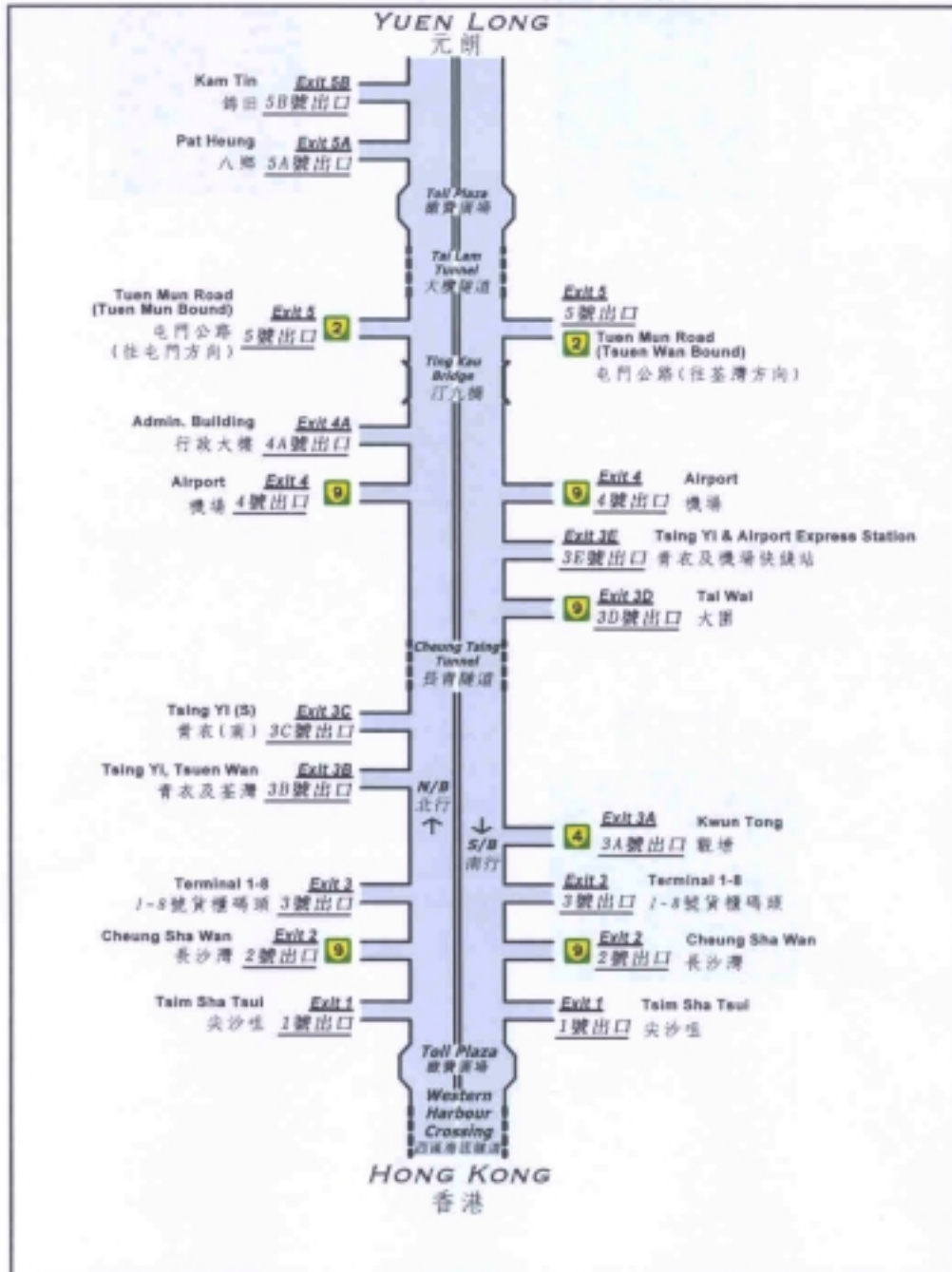
Notes 附註：

- Exit numbers will begin with 1 at the first exit from starting point of a SRN and increase by 1 at the next exit.
出口編號會由幹線網絡第一個出口編起，以 1 號起首，下一個出口即加 1。
- For non-symmetric exits, i.e. exits on one bound only, they will be numbered with alphabet suffix as the preceding exit, such as 1A, 1B, 1C etc. if the preceding symmetric exit number is 1.
不對稱出口(即只在單方向闢設的出口)的編號，則按上一個出口編號後面加上英文字母的方法編定。舉例說，假如前面的對稱出口編號是 1，則編為 1A、1B、1C，如此類推。
- All symmetric exits will have identical exit number and exits in each bound will be numbered in a consecutive order.
所有對稱出口的出口編號便會完全相同，而每個來回方向的各個出口，便會編成順序。

Schematic Diagram for SRN Routes
幹線網絡簡圖



Example of SRN Line Diagram (Route 3)
 幹線網絡線狀圖範例(三號幹線)





Advanced Informatory Sign
(at 1 to 1.5km before junction)
預告方向指示標誌
(在幹線出口前 1 至 1.5 公里)



Map Type Directional Sign
圖形指示標誌



Sign confirming that driver is on Route 1, and he is at 6 km, 19 km and 24 km from Tai Po, Sheung Shui and Lok Ma Chau respectively

此標誌讓駕駛者清楚知道現正在 1 號幹線行駛及距離大埔 6 公里、上水 19 公里和落馬洲 24 公里

Route Confirmatory Sign
路線確定標誌



Existing Sign Format

現有指示標誌格式



Proposed Sign Format

建議指示標誌格式

(Separate panels for destinations of different types, with white colour for local destination)

(將不同地點類別的指示標誌分開，以白色標誌指示區內地點)