

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON TRANSPORT

Western Harbour Crossing Tolls

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the new statutory toll levels of Western Harbour Crossing (WHC) with effect from 31 July 2002. Concessionary tolls will be offered for all categories of vehicles so that current tolls remained unchanged.

Background

2. The Western Harbour Crossing Ordinance (Cap. 436) provides for a specified toll adjustment mechanism in respect of the WHC. Under the Ordinance, the franchisee may effect toll increases on certain specified dates spread over the 30-year franchise period. If the actual net revenue in respect of any year that is not a year ending immediately before the specified dates is less than the minimum estimated net revenue for that particular year as specified in Schedule 5 to the Ordinance, the franchisee may advance the toll increase. The maximum levels of increase in respect of different categories of vehicles are specified in Schedule 2 to the Ordinance.

3. In August 2000, the franchisee of WHC indicated its intention to increase tolls. As required under the specified toll adjustment mechanism, we carefully examined the 1999/00 Net Revenue Statement (NRS) of WHC and noted that the franchisee suffered a net loss of \$58.8 million in 1999/00 as against the minimum estimated net revenue of \$253 million specified in Schedule 5 of the Ordinance for that year. While the franchisee may effect a toll increase under the law, we brought to the franchisee's attention our concern for such an increase during the extant economic climate, stressing that the franchisee should strike a balance between commercial considerations and the interest of the public at large. The franchisee subsequently decided not to effect a toll increase in 2001 but to keep the matter under review.

Lastest Position

4. The franchisee notified the Administration in June 2002 that financial considerations demanded its effecting a toll increase from 31 July 2002. In response to our repeated urging and having regard to the prevailing economic conditions, the franchisee decided to offer concessionary tolls for all vehicles from the same date so that the current tolls will be maintained. A table showing the

existing tolls and the new statutory tolls with effect from 31 July 2002 is at Annex. Details of the concessionary tolls provided by the franchisee have also been incorporated.

5. The franchisee has complied with the requirements under the Ordinance to effect a toll increase on the basis of the 1999/00 NRS and the Administration is required under the law to publish the new statutory tolls in the gazette accordingly. Concessionary tolls for all categories of vehicles will be offered, however, so that the current toll levels are maintained. We will continue to urge the franchisee to have regard to the wider interest of the general public in devising its tolling strategy.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau

July 2002

(ETWB(T)CR 1/4651/99)

Annex

Existing Tolls and New Tolls of Western Harbour Crossing

Statutory Tolls

	Gazetted Tolls	Increase Allowed Under the WHC Ordinance	Gazetted New Tolls with effect from 31 July 2002
Motorcycle *	\$20	\$5	\$25
Private Car, Taxi *	\$40	\$10	\$50
Light Bus *	\$50	\$10	\$60
Light Goods Vehicle *	\$60	\$15	\$75
Medium Goods Vehicle *	\$85	\$20	\$105
Heavy Goods Vehicle *	\$125	\$30	\$155
Single-Deck Bus *	\$50	\$10	\$60
Double-Deck Bus *	\$70	\$15	\$85
Additional Axle *	\$40	\$10	\$50

* Concessionary Tolls

	Current Tolls	New Tolls with effect from 31 July 2002
Motorcycle	\$20	\$20
Private Car, Taxi	\$35	\$35
Light Bus	\$45	\$45
Light Goods Vehicle	\$50	\$50
Medium Goods Vehicle	\$70	\$70
Heavy Goods Vehicle	\$100	\$100
Single-decked Bus	\$50	\$50
Double-decked Bus	\$70	\$70
Additional Axle	\$30	\$30