

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Passenger and Vehicular Traffic Conditions at Lok Ma Chau, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok

PURPOSE

This paper briefs members on the current passenger and vehicular traffic conditions at Lok Ma Chau, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok and measures being implemented or planned by the Administration to smoothen passenger and vehicular flows at the control points.

BACKGROUND

Current Conditions at Road Crossings

2. Lok Ma Chau (LMC) Control Point is currently the largest and most popular vehicular crossing, handling about 68% of all cross-boundary traffic or around 23,250 vehicle trips a day. The volume of cross-boundary traffic at LMC increased by 60% in the past five years from 4.99 million vehicular trips in 1996 to 7.96 million in 2001. At present, about 80% of the 23,250 daily average vehicular trips are made by goods and container vehicles, with the remainder by coaches, shuttle buses, private cars and hire cars. Traffic at LMC is usually most heavy on Fridays. Passenger traffic at LMC increased from 3.12 million in 1996 to 12.56 million in 2001, representing an increase of 302% over that of 1996. Currently, the average number of passengers is 44,120 per day.

3. Man Kam To (MKT) Control Point handles about 7,500 vehicles a day, constituting 22% of all cross-boundary traffic. In the period of 1996 to 2001, cross-boundary traffic decreased by 22% from 3.2 million vehicular trips to 2.5 million. Majority of the vehicles are goods and container vehicles (89%), with the others being coaches and private cars. Passenger throughput increased by 10% from 0.97 million in 1996 to 1.07 million in 2001. At present, an average of 2,930 passengers cross the boundary at MKT every day.

4. Sha Tau Kok (STK) Control Point, being situated at the eastern periphery of the HKSAR/Shenzhen boundary, is lightly used by 10% of all cross-boundary traffic. The daily flow of 2,350 vehicles is made up of goods and container vehicles (67%), private cars (27%) and

coaches (6%). There has been a steady traffic growth of 14% from 0.7 million in 1996 to 0.8 million in 2001. Passenger traffic increased from 1.02 million in 1996 to 1.32 million in 2001, representing an increase of 29% over that of 1996. The present average daily passenger throughput is 3,600.

IMPROVEMENT MEASURES IMPLEMENTED/PLANNED

5. To cope with the continual growth of cross-boundary vehicular and passenger traffic, a number of improvement measures have been or will be implemented at the three road boundary crossings and their approach roads. These include :-

(I) Passenger Traffic

6. **“Co-location” of immigration and customs facilities on the Shenzhen side** – We have reached agreement with the Mainland side to pursue the concept of co-location of facilities for handling passenger traffic at the Huanggang Control Point. Under this arrangement, the majority of the passenger traffic will be diverted to the Huanggang Control Point to undergo clearance procedures required by both sides. This will leave all vehicular kiosks at LMC Control Point free for the clearance of goods vehicles. Such an arrangement will also be adopted for the Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC) when it opens.

7. **Enhancement of manpower resources** – In 2002/03, the Immigration Department (ImmD) was allocated additional resources to create 76 posts at the Lo Wu Control Point. These posts are being filled in batches. In addition, starting from mid-July, the Civil Aid Service has taken up crowd control responsibilities at the Lo Wu Control Point. As a result, the ImmD is able to redeploy resources to create 21 additional counter officer posts at the Lo Wu and LMC Control Points. The ImmD has also engaged a private security company to assist in crowd control work at four boundary control points since early October this year. The contract-out arrangement is made on a trial basis for 3 months. If implemented on a long-term basis, we estimated that savings could be achieved for creation of more counter staff posts.

8. **Issue of machine-readable travel documents** – The ImmD introduced new machine-readable Re-entry Permits in December 2001. The ImmD will also enhance existing non machine-readable Re-entry Permits (totaling around 400,000) by attaching machine-readable labels on them free of charge. This would shorten clearance time at control points by doing away with the need to manually input the personal data of holders, and would help speed up the passenger flow. For similar reasons, the ImmD also intends to issue machine-readable Document of Identity by 2003.

9. **Improvement Works at LMC Control Point** - A number of works items under the LMC Improvement Project (Remaining Works) have been completed, including the southbound and northbound vehicle holding areas. With the completion of the expansion works at the arrival hall in June 2002, the number of immigration counters has increased from 26 to 33. The number will further increase to 50 when the conversion works at the terminal building are completed in September 2003. We have also installed air-conditioning systems along the two temporary walkways to the passenger hall and provided temporary cover in the open queuing area since July this year. Another improvement being pursued is the installation of “Coach Information System” by displaying on LED boards the parking location of coaches. With the aid of this system, passengers will easily locate the coaches for boarding. Such a system will help the Police manage the traffic and reduce congestion at the control point. Under the Improvement Project, the number of coach alighting/boarding/waiting spaces will also be increased from 120 to 175 in 2003. A northbound flyover will be provided in 2003 to segregate passenger vehicles from goods vehicles at the approach to the LMC Boundary Bridge.

10. **Extension of operating hours** – With effect from 1 December 2001, the opening hours for passenger clearance were extended from 7:00 am – 10:00 pm to 6:30 am – 12 midnight to facilitate passenger movements across the boundary.

11. **Trial scheme to clear private car passengers in the Passenger Hall at the LMC Control Point** – A trial scheme has been launched since mid September 2002 to clear all private car passengers in

the clearance Hall at dedicated immigration counters. The purpose of the arrangement is to speed up the flow of private car traffic at the kiosk lanes. At present, there are two designated lanes for clearance of private cars: one for private cars with driver only or with HK resident passengers on board (the I/C lane) and the other for private cars with non-HK residents passengers (the non I/C lane). The average throughput for the I/C lane is 72 vehicles per hour and the non I/C lane is 45 per hour. By directing the passengers to go through immigration clearance at the dedicated counters in the Passenger Hall, the throughput rate may be improved to 122 vehicles per hour at both lanes. Immigration staff will ensure needy passengers such as the elderly or infirm will still go through immigration clearance at the kiosks. A review will be conducted shortly.

(II) Goods Vehicle Traffic

(a) All road crossings

12. **Installation of CCTVs on approach roads to boundary crossings** – Thirteen CCTVs have been installed in 2002 on San Tin Highway, Fanling Highway, Jockey Club Road, Po Shek Wu Road, Man Kam To Road and Sha Tau Kok Road. The cameras are linked to the Transport Department's Headquarters and the Police Regional Command and Control Centre to facilitate round-the-clock monitoring of cross-boundary traffic on the approach roads to the three control points. This also enhances our ability to respond to transport incidents and emergencies at these locations.

(b) Lok Ma Chau Control Point

13. **Land cargo advance clearance system** – C&ED has been operating a trial scheme of Land Cargo Advance Clearance System at LMC Control Point since March 2000. Under the scheme, vehicular clearance time will be shortened by advance submission and processing of cargo manifest. This scheme may bridge over to the future Road Manifest Electronic Data Interface.

14. **Super Link China Direct** – C&ED introduced the Super Link China Direct scheme in August 2000. Transshipment air cargo headed for the Mainland via LMC Control Point will be checked at the

airport by C&ED and then sealed. The sealed cargo will usually not be checked again, and the corresponding clearance time at land boundary crossings can thus be shortened.

15. **Widening of the northbound slip road to San Tin Interchange** - To ease access of cross-boundary private cars to San Tin Interchange, which leads to LMC Crossing, the associated slip road from northbound San Tin Highway to the Interchange was widened in mid-2001 to two lanes. (Item (a) at Annex refers)

16. **Widening of the westbound slip road to San Tin Interchange** - The slip road from westbound Fanling Highway to San Tin Interchange is planned to be widened to two lanes to facilitate access of cross-boundary private cars to the Interchange. Works are scheduled to start in early 2004 for completion in early 2005. (Item (b) at Annex refers)

17. **Widening of the southbound entry to San Tin Interchange** - The southbound carriageway of San Sham Road at its approach to the elevated roundabout of San Tin Interchange is planned to be widened from two to three lanes to improve the junction capacity. Works are scheduled to start in early 2004 for completion in early 2005. (Item (c) at Annex refers)

18. **Widening of the San Tin section of Castle Peak Road** – The San Tin section of Castle Peak Road between LMC Public Transport Interchange and the slip road of San Tin Interchange will be widened from two to three lanes to improve the access of vehicles including shuttle buses from Castle Peak Road to San Tin Interchange. Works have commenced in mid October 2002 for completion in December 2003. (Item (d) at Annex refers)

19. **Expansion of inspection lanes** – With effect from 1 October 2002, the number of inspection lanes at the Huanggang Control Point has been increased from the existing three (one northbound and two southbound) to five (one northbound and four southbound) between midnight and 7:00am. Corresponding adjustments have been made at the LMC Control Point.

20. **Trial scheme of "One-Stop Clearance" by Immigration and Customs** – With the aid of the Automatic Vehicle Recognition

System (Paragraph 23 below), C&ED has launched a trial scheme in mid October 2002 for streamlining customs clearance procedures for goods vehicles at the LMC Control Point. Under this arrangement, customs clearance will be conducted simultaneously with immigration clearance in a "one-stop-shop" environment so that the goods vehicles will only stop once for both immigration and customs clearance. The target is to reduce the clearance time for laden goods vehicles from the present 33 seconds to 15 seconds. A review will be conducted in about three months' time.

(c) Man Kam To Control Point

21. **Provision of additional coach laybys** - The coach alighting/boarding spaces at MKT Control Point are planned to be increased from 8 to 14. Works are planned to be completed in early 2003.

(d) Sha Tau Kok Control Point

22. **Provision of additional coach laybys** - The coach alighting/boarding spaces at STK Control Point are planned to be increased from 8 to 11. Works are planned to be completed in early 2003.

(III) Introduction of New Technology

23. **Automatic vehicle recognition system** – Through installing an automated computer system to recognise vehicle registration numbers by the use of digital cameras and infrared equipment, C&ED can speed up the processing time for each vehicle by two to three seconds on average. Installation work has commenced in June this year in customs kiosks at LMC, MKT and STK Control Points respectively by phases.

24. **Automated passenger clearance** – The ImmD aims to introduce smart identity cards in mid 2003 and to replace the existing identity cards by phases within a four-year period. The new identity cards provide a platform for using biometric recognition technology, and would facilitate the launching of a self-service immigration clearance system in future. The feasibility study on automated passenger clearance has been completed. It is planned that the self-service

clearance system would be implemented in 2004/05.

25. **Automated vehicle clearance** – Operating on a similar basis as the Automated Passenger Clearance system, self-service vehicular clearance kiosks would be set up by using vehicle and biometric identification technology. The feasibility study on automated vehicle clearance has also been completed. The ImmD plans to implement the Automated Vehicle Clearance System in 2004/05 to tie in with launching of the Automated Passenger Clearance System.

(IV) New Boundary Crossings

26. We will build new boundary crossings to alleviate congestion at existing control points and to meet the growing demand. The Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC) and the Sheung Shui to LMC Spur Line are targetted for completion in end 2005 and mid 2007 respectively. The SWC has a capacity of 44,000 vehicles a day and is expected to attract a throughput of 28,400 vehicles on its opening. The LMC Spur Line terminal will be able to handle 150,000 passengers a day and can be further expanded to handle a maximum of 300,000 passengers daily.

LOK MA CHAU - HUANGGANG SHUTTLE BUS

27. The LMC–Huanggang shuttle bus service operates from 6:30 a.m. to 12 midnight on a daily basis. In March 2002, the shuttle bus operator has replaced its fleet of 10 vehicles by new and larger vehicles, increasing the carrying capacity of each vehicle from 54 passengers to 70 passengers. The new vehicles are equipped with two doors to facilitate passenger flow during boarding and alighting. The shuttle bus operator has retained most of the 54-seat vehicles as operational reserve. As agreed between the Hong Kong and the Shenzhen authorities, the operator could deploy two spare 54-seat vehicles to meet additional demand when necessary. With these improvement measures, the maximum one-way carrying capacity of the shuttle bus service has increased by about 50% to some 1,600 passengers per hour when compared to the situation before the improvements.

28. We have reached further agreement with the Shenzhen authorities to allow the shuttle bus operator to use more 54-seat vehicles

in case of very high passenger demand during peak periods and festive holidays, subject to the actual conditions at the LMC Control Point and approval from the control point authorities of the two sides.

29. To improve the passenger waiting environment, provision of additional shelters and lighting facilities over the passenger holding area at the San Tin shuttle bus terminus was completed in April 2002. The shuttle bus operator has also put up additional railings and seats, and installed an announcement system to facilitate dissemination of information to queuing passengers. We will further examine the feasibility of enhancing the terminus by providing an air-conditioned passenger waiting area.

CROSS BOUNDARY COACH SERVICES

30. At present, there are about 680 cross boundary coaches operating some 150 routes between different parts of Hong Kong and destinations in the Mainland, mostly in the main cities in Pearl River Delta Region. In the past two years, some operators have pooled together their quotas to provide cross boundary coach services on a fixed-schedule basis to meet specific passenger demand. One example is the service from Fanling to Shatoujiao (Shenzhen) via the STK Control Point. Like all other existing cross boundary coach services, the service frequency of these fixed-schedule services, their routing, fare level as well as choices of destinations outside Hong Kong are the commercial decisions of the operators concerned, and the choice of destinations in the Mainland are subject to the approval of the relevant Mainland authorities.

CONCLUSION

31. Members are invited to note the various improvement measures being undertaken or to be implemented to smoothen vehicular and passenger flow at road boundary crossings.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
November 2002



深圳
SHENZHEN

深圳河
SHAM CHUN RIVER

SAN SHAM ROAD

南行車輛停候處
SOUTHBOUND
VHA

新田路

落馬洲跨界通道
LOK MA CHAU
BOUNDARY
CROSSING

北行車輛停候處
NORTHBOND
VHA

附加的北行
車輛停候處
ADDITIONAL
NORTHBOND
VHA

丁項:
青山公路(新田段)的擴闊工程
ITEM (d):
WIDENING OF SAN TIN SECTION
OF CASTLE PEAK ROAD

新田
SAN TIN

甲項:
新田交匯處北行支路擴闊工程(已完成)
ITEM (a):
WIDENING OF NORTHBOUND SLIP ROAD
TO SAN TIN INTERCHANGE (COMPLETED)

丙項:
新田交匯處南行進路擴闊工程
ITEM (c):
WIDENING OF SOUTHBOUND ENTRY TO
SAN TIN INTERCHANGE

乙項:
新田交匯處西行支路擴闊工程
ITEM (b):
WIDENING OF WESTBOUND SLIP ROAD TO
SAN TIN INTERCHANGE

白石凹
PAK SHEK AU

粉嶺公路
FANLING HIGHWAY

新田交匯處
SAN TIN
INTERCHANGE

青山公路
CASTLE PEAK ROAD

新田公路

SAN TIN HIGHWAY

落馬洲的道路改善工程項目
ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AT LOK MA CHAU