

For Discussion

On 6 January 2003

LegCo Panel on Transport and Panel on Security

Security-related Arrangements for 24-hour Passenger Clearance at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point

Introduction

We have reached common understanding with the relevant Mainland authorities to implement 24-hour passenger clearance at the Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang Control Point (i.e. to extend the present service by 6.5 hours from 0000 hrs - 0630 hours) before the Chinese New Year.

2. This paper sets out security-related arrangements for implementing 24-hour passenger clearance at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point.

Passenger Traffic / Staff Deployment

3. We estimate that the average traffic flow during the overnight period is about 1 000 passenger per hour. The traffic volume is expected to be smaller in the period between 0200 hrs to 0500 hrs. The average waiting time for different types of passengers will be about 5 to 15 minutes.

4. The three frontline departments (i.e. Police, Immigration Department and Customs and Excise Department) will redeploy sufficient staff for providing 24-hour passenger clearance at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point. An initial estimate is that a total of 53 additional staff will be required.

5. During the overnight period from 0000 hrs to 0630 hrs, Immigration Department will open 10 counters (5 arrival and 5 departure counters). Depending on passenger volume, contra-flow arrangement will be operated under which arrival counters will be deployed for departure clearance or vice versa to ease congestion. In addition, 2 inspection lanes (one for each direction) will be open for clearance of private cars.

6. Correspondingly, Customs and Excise Department will deploy sufficient staff to provide normal customs clearance service for both the passengers and private cars.

Law and Order

7. We expect that 24-hour passenger traffic will not have any major adverse impact on the overall law and order situation at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point where 24-hour policing is already in place. In view of the extended passenger service, police will revise their deployment plan to strengthen action to combat illegal immigration activities through the Control Point. Patrol by uniformed and plainclothes officers will likewise be re-arranged and suitably enhanced to cover the precinct of the Control Point including the Public Transport Interchange at San Tin to ensure effective and efficient prevention and detection of crimes and response to calls for police services at all times.

Liaison with the Mainland

8. Relevant Mainland authorities have assured us that corresponding arrangements would be in place on the Huanggang side to provide overnight service to the traveling public. Border Liaison officers of the three frontline departments will work closely among themselves and maintain close liaison with their Mainland counterparts to ensure safe and smooth movement in both vehicular and passenger traffic across the boundary. Officers on the ground will maintain close contact with their counterparts on the Shenzhen side through the Hotline as and when necessary.

Publicity

9. Upon receipt of approval from the Central People's Government, we will issue a press release to announce the effective implementation date and related implementation details.

Security Bureau
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