

**Information Paper for
Legislative Council Panel on Transport and
Legislative Council Panel on Security**

**Continuation of Trial Schemes for Taxi and Green Minibus Operation
at Lok Ma Chau Control Point during the Extended Period**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the result of the Administration's review of the trial schemes for operation of taxis and green minibuses ("GMBs") in Lok Ma Chau Control Point ("LMCCP") during the extended period (i.e. from midnight to 6.30 am).

BACKGROUND

2. We informed Members in March 2003 vide information paper LC Paper No. CB(1)1127/02-03(01) the Administration's decision to implement the trial schemes for allowing urban and New Territories ("NT") taxis and GMBs to operate to the LMCCP from 0000 hours on 20 March 2003. We undertook to review the trial schemes three months after their commencement to consider whether and how they should continue.

THE REVIEW

3. We have reviewed the trial schemes from the following aspects -
- (a) impact on the operations of and demand for public transport services; and
 - (b) implications on traffic flow.

Surveys and site observations were conducted by Transport Department ("TD") at different times during the trial period.

Taxi Operations

4. It was observed that -
- (a) the average daily passenger carrying taxi trips observed at LMCCP during the extended period was about 280;
 - (b) over 70% of all such taxi trips were by NT taxis;
 - (c) over 60% of the taxi trips were northbound drop-off trips;
 - (d) the number of taxi trips at San Tin Public Transport Interchange (“PTI”) during the extended period reduced by over 60% due to diversion of taxi trips to LMCCP;
 - (e) taxi drop-off activities at LMCCP were conducted smoothly;
 - (f) the taxi ticketing system operated smoothly; the daily average number of tickets issued to waiting taxis was about 130, some 90% of which were for NT taxis; and
 - (g) the number of taxis calling at the San Tin PTI taxi holding area for the taxi ticket was not high and reduced drastically after 12.30 am. At most of the time, the number of taxis waiting at the taxi holding area at San Tin PTI was considerably less than the maximum number of 22 taxis which could be accommodated at the holding area.

GMB Operations

5. The survey findings of the three GMB routes (Tuen Mun, Tin Shui Wai/Yuen Long and Mong Kok) indicated that -
- (a) the GMB operation at LMCCP was smooth. The daily average number of GMB passengers picked up and dropped off at the LMCCP was about 800; and

- (b) the proportion of southbound GMB passengers who boarded GMBs at LMCCP (as a percentage of the total number of southbound GMB passengers boarding at LMCCP and San Tin PTI) increased gradually since the commencement of the trial schemes to 70% recently. The proportion of northbound GMB passengers alighting at LMCCP is about 90%.

LMC-Huanggang Shuttle Bus Operations

6. During the extended period, about 30% of the shuttle bus passengers boarded the shuttle bus at LMCCP. These are passengers travelled to LMCCP by taxis or GMBs. The connecting shuttle bus services between LMCCP and Huanggang were sufficient to meet demand. The passenger waiting queues at the shuttle bus pick-up point at LMCCP seldom exceeded a bus-load of passengers. The shuttle bus fare collection arrangements during the transition period at around midnight and 6.30 am each day also operated smoothly.

Implications on Traffic Flow

7. Since taxi and GMB operation to LMCCP was confined to the extended period only when the volume of goods vehicle traffic is relatively low, the trial schemes did not cause any serious impact on the traffic flow at the strategic roads connecting with LMCCP viz. San Tin Interchange and San Sam Road.

Other Observations

8. It should be noted that there was a significant drop of cross-boundary patronage at LMCCP by 20-40% during the three-month trials primarily due to the impact of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. Because of the much lower patronage level, the operational mode and arrangements of the trial schemes have not been fully tested. On the other hand, the improvement projects at LMCCP are still on-going and some of the areas in LMCCP have to remain cordoned off as works sites for a few more months before the projects are fully completed. Access to the taxi and GMB stands at

LMCCP will be further improved after the completion of the project.

WAY FORWARD

9. On the basis of the above considerations, we will continue the trial schemes and review them in eight months i.e. at the end of February 2004. This period will cover the coming major holidays such as the National Day and Christmas holidays in 2003 and the Chinese New Year in January 2004.

10. In parallel, we will monitor the operation of the trial schemes closely. In the light of the review findings in para. 4(g) above, we will monitor the cost effectiveness of the existing ticketing system and, where appropriate, may consider modifying the ticketing system. The taxi trade will be consulted before any such change is implemented.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
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