

For information

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON TRANSPORT

**Strategy to Enhance Road Safety
and Combat Red Light Jumping
Progress Update**

PURPOSE

This paper updates Members on the progress of the implementation of our strategy to enhance road safety and combat red light jumping.

BACKGROUND

2. In December 2004, we reported to this Panel our grave concern about the increasing number of red light jumping offences on the road¹. We proposed a strategy to enhance road safety and combat red light jumping. The strategy includes a package of measures on the use of technology, publicity, education, legislation and enforcement. (Please refer to LC Paper No CB(1)298/04-05(06)). Most of the measures have been or are being implemented. The latest progress is set out in paragraphs 4 to 15 below.

3. Specifically on legislation, we consider it necessary to strengthen the deterrent effect by raising the penalties for red light jumping. In response to strong public demand, we originally proposed that the driving-offence points

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Year	No of accidents	No of casualties	No of prosecutions
2002	342	583	24 381
2003	362	598	22 590
2004	355	675	39 376

(DOPs) for this offence be raised from 3 to 8. Taking into account the views of the transport trade, we then revised the proposed DOPs for red light jumping from 8 to 5 in March 2005 (LC paper No CB(1)1096/04-05(05)). We believe this revised proposal has the support of the public. In fact, an opinion poll conducted by the University of Hong Kong in February 2005 found that 79% of the respondents considered that the DOPs for red light jumping should be increased, and the majority supported raising it from 3 to 5. In addition, 72% of the respondents supported increasing the fixed penalty to \$600. We have submitted the legislative proposals to raise the DOPs and fixed penalty to this Council.

PROGRESS

(a) Red Light Cameras: In Progress

4. We will install red light cameras at all red light jumping blackspots. We will procure 68 additional cameras and 20 additional housings, making a total of 96 cameras and 131 housings, which represents a threefold increase in the camera-to-housing ratio from 25% to 73%. Subject to funding approval later this year, works will start in early 2006 and will be completed by 2007. Currently, prosecutions using evidence from cameras cover about 80% of all red light jumping prosecutions. This will increase to over 97%. We will also explore if there are reliable mobile cameras to assist in the enforcement work.

(b) Overhead Traffic Lights: In Progress

5. We agree that overhead traffic signals can improve the visibility at wide junctions. We have begun to install such traffic lights at some 40 locations (at Tai Chung Kiu Road, King's Road, Java Road, Hennessy Road, Pokfulam Road, Waterloo Road etc), and we welcome further suggestions on suitable locations. Works would be completed in 2006.

(c) Speed Enforcement Cameras: In Progress

6. We are examining the new locations to install additional speed enforcement cameras, and will seek funding for the project in early 2006.

(d) Vehicular Countdown or Flashing Green: Being Examined

7. There are suggestions that we should install vehicular countdown or flashing green devices at traffic light to give advance warning to motorists. We consider it necessary to examine this in further detail. First, such devices are incompatible with our computerised traffic control systems. Secondly, researches and trials have yielded conflicting results. While some Mainland cities like Shenzhen might find them useful, other places like the USA, Israel, Austria, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom find that such devices would significantly increase the risk of head-rear collision because motorists react differently to the devices i.e. some would rush through the junction while others would stop when the flashing/countdown has begun. We would thus need to examine the technical, safety and legal implications.

(e) Publicity and education: On-going

8. Publicity and education is an integral part of our work in enhancing road safety. Red light jumping will be the focus in 2005-06 and resources have been set aside for this purpose. Details include :

- March 2005 – Launch of the Public Light Bus (PLB) Safety Charter
- April/May 2005 – Trade-oriented events and publicity (e.g. special newsletters for drivers of passenger vehicles)
- June 2005 – New radio APIs on red light jumping; distribution of road safety leaflets to the trades and members of the public
- July/August 2005 – Trade-oriented publicity, in-service training, refresher workshops, roadside publicity
- September/October 2005 – Publicity Banners at major roads and tunnels
- November to December 2005 – New TV APIs on red light jumping with increased airtime
- January/February 2006 – Publicity pamphlets and on-street educational activities at major traffic blackspots, public carparks and boundary control points.
- On-going – Road safety leaflets, in-service training, refresher workshops and seminars, roadside publicity, mobile publicity media, school publicity

(f) Strengthened Enforcement: On-going

9. Enhancing road safety has always been one of the operational targets of the Commissioner of Police, and combating red light jumping will be a key focus in 2005/06. Where necessary, district-based or territory wide blitz operations will also be carried out.

(g) Speed Display Devices on PLBs: Completed

10. We have made this a vehicle licence requirement. At present, about 23% of PLBs have installed the device. By April 2006, all 4,350 PLBs will have installed the device.

(h) Promulgation of PLB Safety Charter: Completed

11. Together with the trade, we have launched the Charter in March 2005. So far, 80 PLB drivers have signed the Charter. We will continue to encourage other PLB drivers to do the same.

(i) Display of Drivers' Name Plate: In Progress

12. We have consulted the trade and will make the necessary legislative amendments.

(j) Display of Complaints Hotline: In Progress

13. We intend to make this a requirement in the Passenger Service Licence and will shortly discuss with the trade the details.

(k) In-service Training and Refresher Workshops: In Progress

14. In-service training courses are already available and refresher workshops will be available shortly. We will continue to encourage PLB drivers to attend these courses and workshops.

(1) Pre-Service Training: Being Examined

15. Together with the trade, we will examine the effectiveness of this idea, taking into account the experience of the taxi trade.

WAY FORWARD

16. Members are invited to note the progress of various measures to enhance road safety and combat red light jumping.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
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