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Panel on Transport

**Background brief on
cross boundary transport services**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the public transport services, facilities and arrangements at boundary control points and summarizes the views expressed by members of the Transport Panel (the Panel) in the past.

Land crossings

2. There are currently four land crossings, namely, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau (LMC), Man Kam To (MKT) and Sha Tau Kok (STK). The LMC, MKT and STK were originally designed mainly for freight traffic, while Lo Wu has been a passenger-only crossing right from the beginning. With the continuous increase in cross-boundary travel, there has been a substantial and continued increase in the volume of passenger traffic at LMC, MKT and STK, with LMC taking up the largest share of the increase. Since mid 90's, there have been calls for enhancement of the transport arrangements and infrastructure, in particular at Lo Wu and LMC Control Points, in view of the continuous increase in passenger and vehicular traffic. Between 1994 and 2004, the number of cross-boundary passengers has increased by 162%, from 56 million to 147 million a year.

3. In 2004, Lo Wu accounted for over 68% of the cross-boundary land-based passenger traffic, whereas the other three land crossings at LMC, MKT and STK accounted for 26%, 2% and 1% respectively. The remaining 2% of passengers took the Kowloon-Canton Railway inter-city through train and crossed the boundary at the Hung Hom Control Point.

Feasibility of access by other public transport vehicles at Lo Wu

4. In reviewing the transport arrangements at Lo Wu Control Point at the Panel meeting on 23 May 2003, members expressed the views that as a matter of policy, different public transport modes should be allowed to operate at all boundary control points to ensure commuters' choice and maintain competition in the market.

Members urged the Administration to consider allowing other public transport vehicles to access the Lo Wu Control Point. Consideration should also be given to providing a proper public transport interchange at Lo Wu. In view of the disproportionately high rail fare¹ charged by the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation for East Rail service between Sheung Shui and Lo Wu Stations, there was also the suggestion that a new green minibus route should be introduced to ply between Sheung Shui and Lo Wu.

5. In considering the suggestion to allow public transport modes to have access to control points, the Administration has pointed out that their key considerations are:

- (a) priority should be given to mass carriers and transport modes which have large carrying capacity to ensure efficient use of the limited road space and facilities of the control points;
- (b) smooth operation of existing transport services through the limited access facilities must be maintained;
- (c) law and order inside the control points should not be compromised. As a responsible Government, it must devise pragmatic and comprehensive traffic control schemes for both vehicles and passengers;
- (d) passenger safety should not be compromised under any circumstances. The Administration must ensure adequate and safe pedestrian access for passengers;
- (e) smooth traffic flow inside the control points must be ensured to maintain proper operation of the control points;
- (f) there should not be any disruption to the operation or programme of any ongoing construction works taking place inside the control points. The provision of additional public transport services should not be at the expense of other improvement works at hand or planned projects; and
- (g) there is a need to ensure that freight traffic should not be affected, as smooth cargo flow is of vital importance to the economic development and well-being of Hong Kong.

6. Having regard to the physical constraints in the vicinity of Lo Wu Control Point, the Administration has advised that Lo Wu Control Point should remain to be served by East Rail which has had ample capacity to meet the traffic demand and has continuously improved its services and facilities. In parallel, the Administration will continue to develop other control points for the operation of other public transport services.

¹ The single journey fare from East Tsim Sha Tsui Station to Sheung Shui station is \$12.5 whereas the single fare from Sheung Shui Station to Lo Wu Station is \$20.

Passenger crossing at LMC Control Point

7. LMC is the most important crossing for cross-boundary freight traffic and is increasingly popular with cross-boundary passengers.

LMC-Huanggang Cross-Boundary Shuttle Bus (Shuttle Bus)

8. Passengers who make their way to San Tin Public Transport Interchange (PTI) may make use of the 24-hour short shuttle service run by the Shuttle Bus between the San Tin PTI and the Huanggang Control Point via the LMC Control Point. The fare is \$ 7 per passenger.

Short-haul cross-boundary coach services via LMC and Huanggang Control Point

9. Cross-boundary coach services are operated under a quota system jointly administered by the Hong Kong and the Mainland authorities. Each quota allows a coach to cross the boundary via a designated control point within a specified time. In order to address the problems of cross-boundary coach operators overrunning their quotas and operating short-haul services terminating at the Huanggang Control Point without authorization, the Administration informed the Panel on 25 June 2004 that it had decided with the Mainland authorities to allocate some new quotas and invite applications from the existing cross-boundary coach operators to operate six cross-boundary routes running between various districts in Hong Kong and the Huanggang Control Point. At the same time, enhanced enforcement actions would be taken against any unauthorized services.

10. From 12:00 noon on 16 August 2004, six new short-haul routes (Mongkok, Yau Tsim, Kwun Tong, Wan Chai, Tsuen Wan and Kam Tin) have started operation, with fixed stopping points, routing and service schedules. Coaches running on these routes have specific markings and clear destination signs for easy identification. With the exception of the Kam Tin route the operating hours of which would tie in with those of the West Rail, the new short-haul routes operated 24 hours daily. The fares range from \$20 to \$50. Specific pick-up/drop-off bays are provided for these six routes at the Lok Ma Chau and Huanggang Control Points. Passengers are required to purchase tickets at designated ticket-selling points before boarding and no cash or Octopus payment is allowed on board the coaches.

11. The Panel has expressed concern that the introduction of short-haul routes between Hong Kong and Huanggang may represent a policy change as cross-boundary coach services would take on a new role of providing shuttle services to LMC/Huanggang. This would directly impact on the businesses of those existing public transport operators including taxis, public light buses and LMC-Huanggang Cross-boundary Shuttle Bus which have been providing services to the control point. The Panel urges the Administration to ensure a balance between providing a reasonable choice for commuters and minimizing impact on other existing public transport operators. The Administration should also consult the existing public

transport operators as well as the Panel before introducing any new services.

Trial scheme for taxi and green minibus operation at Lok Ma Chau Control Point

12. All along, taxis and green-minibus were required to drop/pick up passengers at San Tin PTI. Passengers would then take the Shuttle Bus to LMC Control Point. In March 2003, the Administration introduced a trial scheme to allow urban and New Territories taxis and three green minibus routes to access the LMC Control Point between 12 midnight and 6:30 am, when cross-boundary traffic was relatively lighter. According to the Administration, such an arrangement has proven to be useful as it brings about more convenience and options for cross-boundary travellers. Since 26 January 2005, the hours for taxis and green minibuses to access the LMC Control Point have been relaxed to 11 pm – 6:30 am.

New boundary control points

13. To cater for the anticipated demand, construction works for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor, which will connect Shekou with Northwest New Territories, has commenced since August 2003. The Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, a second rail boundary crossing at Huanggang/LMC is being constructed and is expected to be completed in 2007. The Administration is conducting joint studies with Mainland authorities on the feasibility of an express rail link connecting Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou. To take forward the advance planning for the Hong Kong – Zhuhai – Macao Bridge, the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have set up an advance work co-ordination group and commissioned a feasibility study for the project.

Cross-boundary ferry services

14. On cross-boundary ferry services, there are two existing cross boundary terminals for operation of passenger ferry services to Macao and the Mainland. They are the Hong Kong-Macao Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan and the China Ferry Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui.

15. A third cross-boundary passenger ferry terminal is being built in Tuen Mun. In December 2003, the Government signed a tenancy agreement with the successful bidder for the occupation, modification and use of part of the Tuen Mun Ferry Pier for operating cross-boundary ferry services. The modification works are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2006.

16. A list of the relevant papers is in **Appendix**.

Cross boundary transport services

List of relevant papers

Panel/Committee	Date	Paper
Transport Panel	23 November 2001	<p>Administration's paper on the operation of cross-boundary passenger ferry services at Tuen Mun Pier (LC Paper No. CB(1)356/01-02(04))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1123cb1-356-4e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)733/01-02)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp011123.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	May 2002	<p>Administration's information paper on the proposal to convert Tuen Mun Pier to a cross-boundary ferry terminal (LC Paper No. CB(1)1779/01-02(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0524cb1-1779-1e.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	20 December 2002	<p>Administration's information paper on the proposal to occupy and use the Tuen Mun Pier for the operation of cross-boundary passenger ferry services (LC Paper No. CB(1)372/02-03(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1220cb1-372-1e.pdf</p>

Panel/Committee	Date	Paper
Transport Panel and Security Panel	6 January 2003	<p>Administration's paper on transport arrangements associated with the introduction of 24-hour passenger crossing at Lok Ma Chau Control Point (LC Paper No. CB(1)602/02-03(08))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/papers/tpse0106cb1-602-8e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)965/02-03)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/minutes/setp0106.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	23 May 2003	<p>Administration's paper on transport arrangements at Lo Wu Control Point (LC Paper No. CB(1)1678/02-03(08))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0523cb1-1678-8e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2040/02-03)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp030523.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	27 June 2003	<p>Administration's information paper on tenancy in respect of the occupation, modification and use of part of the Tuen Mun Ferry Pier for the operation of cross-boundary passenger ferry services (LC Paper No. CB(1)1868/02-03(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0627cb1-1868-1e.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	30 January 2004	<p>Administration's information paper on tenancy in respect of the occupation, modification and use of part of the Tuen Mun Ferry Pier for the operation of cross-boundary passenger ferry services (LC Paper No. CB(1)669/03-04(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/papers/tpcb1-669-1e.pdf</p>

Panel/Committee	Date	Paper
		<p>Administration's paper on the latest development of the Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (LC Paper No. CB(1)848/03-04(06))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0130cb1-848-6e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1146/03-04)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp040130.pdf</p> <p>Administration's letter dated 28 February 2004 providing information on the rights and obligations of the tenant in subletting the allocated berthing slots at the Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (LC Paper No. CB(1)1177/03-04(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0130cb1-1177-1e.pdf</p>
Council	28 April 2004	<p>Question raised by Hon LAU Kong-wah on cross-boundary coach services</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0428ti-translate-e.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	25 June 2004	<p>Administration's paper on public transport facilities and arrangements at boundary control points (LC Paper No. CB(1)2180/03-04(03))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0625cb1-2180-3e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2501/03-04)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp040625.pdf</p> <p>Administration's information paper on new short-haul cross-boundary coach services</p>

Panel/Committee	Date	Paper
		<p>operating via Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang (LC Paper No. CB(1)2479/03-04(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0625cb1-2479-1e.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	29 October 2004	<p>Administration's paper on the latest progress of Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (LC Paper No. CB(1)111/04-05(06))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1029cb1-111-6e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (LC Paper No. CB(1)113/04-05)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1029cb1-113-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)286/04-05)</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp041029.pdf</p>
Transport Panel	2 February 2005	<p>Administration's paper on extending the hours for the trial scheme for taxi and green minibus operation at Lok Ma Chau Control Point (LC Paper No. CB(1)766/04-05(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tpcb1-766-1e.pdf</p>
Council	27 April 2005	<p>Question raised by Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming on the tender exercise for the Tuen Mun cross-boundary ferry terminal</p> <p>http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200504/27/04270152.htm</p>

Council	1 June 2005	Question raised by Hon Albert HO on the latest progress of the Tuen Mun cross-boundary ferry terminal http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200506/01/06010117.htm
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