

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)2414/06-07  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref: CB1/HS/1/05

**Subcommittee to Study the Transport Needs of and Provision of  
Concessionary Public Transport Fares for Persons with Disabilities**

**Minutes of twelfth meeting on  
Tuesday, 24 July 2007, at 10:00 am  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan (Chairman)  
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
- Members absent** : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Agenda items II and III  
  
Mrs Mary MA  
Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Labour and Welfare  
Bureau  
  
Mr Don HO  
Assistant Commissioner for Transport/  
Management and Paratransit  
  
Mr Kenneth MOK  
Chief Transport Officer/Planning/Disabled Transport &  
Project  
Transport Department

Agenda item III

Mrs Avia LAI  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and  
Housing

**Attendance by  
invitation** : Agenda items II and III

Equal Opportunities Commission

Dr Ferrick CHU Chung-man  
Head, Policy & Research

The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation

Ms Candice LAM  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Mr Rex LUK  
Director (Transport and Travel)

1st Step Association

Ms KWONG Suet-yi  
Organizer

Disabled and Carer Concern Group

Mr SIU Tung-choi  
Wheelchair Club Member

Direction Association for the Handicapped

Mr LEE Yuen-tai  
Chairman

Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong

Mr LEE Tsz-yu  
Member

The Parents' Association of Pre-school Handicapped Children

Ms CHEUNG Kwok-chun  
Representative

The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped

Ms CHENG Yee-man  
Chairman

Agenda item III

Individuals

Mr Wilson YU Wai-keung

Mr KWOK Tak-fai

Mr CHAN Wai-hung

The Fraternity Association of N.T. Taxi Merchants

Mr HO Che-kan  
Chairman

Sun Hing Taxi Radio Association

Mr CHAN Ming-sang  
Chairman

Tai Wo Motors Ltd.

Mr Aaron NG Hoi-shan  
Vice Chairman

Hong Kong Taxi Association

Mr LAI Hoi-ping  
Chairman

N.W. Area Taxi Drivers & Operators Association

Mr WONG Wing-chung  
Chairman

Chung Shing Taxi Limited

Mr CHENG Hak-wo  
Chairman

Taxi Dealers & Owners Association Limited

Mr NG Kwan-sing  
President

The Hong Kong Taxi & Public Light Bus Association  
Limited

Mr TONG Yeuk-fong  
Chairman

Pak Kai Taxi Owners Association Ltd.

Ms LAU Sin-kin  
Secretary

Sun Hing Taxi Radio Service General Association

Mr Ricky PANG  
Vice Chairman

United Friendship Taxi Owners & Drivers Association  
Ltd.

Mr WONG To  
President of Club  
Director Chairman

Association of N.T. Radio Taxicabs Ltd.

Mr Sunny CHAN Kai-san  
Vice Chairman

Taxi & PLB Concern Group

Mr LAI Ming-hung  
Chairman

New Territories Taxi Operations Union

Mr CHAN Shu-sang  
Chairman

The Kowloon Taxi Owners Association Ltd.

Mr YUM Tai-ping  
Chairman

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Connie SZETO  
Chief Council Secretary (1)6

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Sarah YUEN  
Senior Council Secretary (1)6

Ms Michelle NIEN  
Legislative Assistant (1)9

Agenda item III

Mr Watson CHAN  
Head, Research and Library Services

Mr Jackie WU  
Research Officer 1

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Action

- I Confirmation of minutes and matters arising**  
(LC Paper No. CB(1)2159/06-07 - Minutes of the meeting held on  
29 June 2007)

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2007 were confirmed.

Action

- II Rehabus service provided by the Government and voluntary agencies**  
(LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(01) - Submission from Direction Association for the Handicapped
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(02) - Submission from the Parents' Association of Pre-school Handicapped Children
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(03) - Submission from the Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(02) - List of follow-up actions prepared by the Secretariat (position as at 19 July 2007))

Meeting with persons with disabilities (PwD) groups

2. Members noted the submission of the Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities on this agenda item tabled at the meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: The above submission was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2193/06-07 (01) on 25 July 2007.)*

3. At the Chairman's invitation, the PwD groups took turns to express views on the Rehabus service. In gist, their views were as follows:

- (a) Shared Dial-a-Ride Service (DAR) should be encouraged and enhanced through optimizing vehicle allocation and trip scheduling as far as practicable with the aid of computer. Presently, due to the high charges and great difficulty in booking DAR during peak hours, handicapped school children had difficulty in taking part in more activities during the summer holiday;
- (b) The abolition of the existing four-hour minimum charge for DAR during Sundays and public holidays was welcomed. However, the present three-tier fare scale for DAR, though relaxed, was still unfair because basically vehicles of the same size were used for groups smaller than a certain size. It was therefore suggested that the same fare be charged regardless of the number of passengers unless a larger vehicle was deployed to provide the service. This would encourage shared DAR to optimize use of resources, and minimize separate booking for the purpose of avoiding paying a significantly higher

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hourly rate at the next tier;

- (c) Due to shortage in school bus service for special schools, some handicapped school children had to use the Scheduled Route Service (SRS). However, due to the insufficient number of Rehabuses and hence difficulty in securing SRS, parents of these children had to use DAR on a long-term basis and pay as much as \$800 to \$1,000 for the service every month. Moreover, since the service was booked through the school, when these children could not attend school due to various reasons, surcharge for subsequent changes or cancellation of booking at the level for an institution would be imposed. The situation was both undesirable and unreasonable. In some cases, the long-term booking for DAR had already exceeded seven years and the situation was found in a number of schools. There was an urgent need for the Administration to examine how such an apparent service gap could be filled;
- (d) Escort service was not provided on board Rehabuses. As handicapped school children did not have the ability to take care of themselves during emergency situations, consideration should be given to providing escort service on board SRS Rehabuses to ensure safety of these children and allow the driver to concentrate on road conditions. In fact, there had already been minor safety incidents involving handicapped school children during Rehabus trips. It was therefore necessary to resolve the matter early;
- (e) Unlike public transport services, Rehabus service would be immediately suspended upon hoisting of the black rainstorm warning or typhoon signal No. 8. It might be undesirable to retain handicapped school children attending boarding special schools in their schools over the weekend because of service suspension of Rehabus. As such, it was necessary to re-consider the arrangement of suspending Rehabus service during such period. In particular, service suspension of Rehabus during adverse weather conditions should be aligned with that of public transport services in consideration of the difficulty PwDs faced in finding alternative means of transport in inclement weather;
- (f) The existing fleet of Rehabuses could not meet the demand of the great number of PwDs. In particular, graduates of special schools also had difficulty in booking Rehabus service for travelling across districts to receive job training in adult day training centres. As such, more vehicles should be purchased to improve the service to facilitate PwDs' integration into the society. Moreover, old-model Rehabuses with narrow aisle in the cabin had caused much inconvenience to users. The vehicles were also unsafe because their

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tail lifts were not installed with railings, and the lifting capacity and maneuvering space were insufficient. Efforts should therefore be made to modify or replace aging vehicles to enhance their user-friendliness and safety; and

- (g) There were divergent views on imposing surcharge on cancellation of bookings of Rehabus Service. While some deputations found the surcharge necessary to deter abuse of the advance booking system and ensure optimal and fair use of Rehabus resources, there were also views that the surcharge should be waived for individual users in recognition of their need for social life and hence greater flexibility, and the fact that there were few cases of abuse by individual users. There were also views that the present arrangement of imposing surcharge on even minor changes in booking details was too stringent having regard that where activities organized by institutions were concerned, changes in attendance were inevitable.

**III Introduction of a new mode of accessible public transport service for persons with disabilities**

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(01) - Submission from Direction Association for the Handicapped
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(04) - Submission from the Parents' Association of Pre-school Handicapped Children
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(05) - Submission from the Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2166/06-07(01) - Submission from Mr Wilson YU Wai-keung
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(03) - Submission from Tai Wo Motors Ltd.
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(04) - Submission from the Hong Kong Taxi & Public Light Bus Association Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(05) - Submission from Sun Hing Taxi Radio Service General Association



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- LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(06) - Submission from Taxi & PLB Concern Group
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(06) - Information paper provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(07) - Information note on wheelchair-accessible taxi services prepared by Research & Library Services Division
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2013/06-07(01) - Second information paper provided by the Administration for the meeting on 29 June 2007)

4. Members noted the following submissions on this agenda item tabled at the meeting:

- (a) Submission from the Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities; and
- (b) Submission from Taxi & PLB Concern Group.

*(Post-meeting note: The above submissions were circulated to members vide LC Papers Nos. CB(1)2193 /06-07(02) and (03) on 25 July 2007.)*

Meeting with PwD groups

5. At the Chairman's invitation, the PwD groups took turns to express views on the new modes of accessible public transport services for PwDs. In gist, their views were as follows:

- (a) PwDs welcomed the initiative of the taxi trade to introduce wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong and the new accessible hire car service to be provided by Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation (HKSR) to facilitate PwDs' integration into the society. The two new modes of services would obviate PwDs' need to use the service provided by light goods vehicles, which operated illegally as taxis and were not properly equipped for providing service for PwDs, to address the safety concern of PwDs on board these vehicles. With a smaller passenger capacity, the two new modes of services could more flexibly meet the transport needs of light users, such as individual PwDs travelling to receive medical treatment. The new services might also be more personalized and user-friendly. It was hoped that the Administration could continue efforts in introducing more public

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transport alternatives for PwDs, and ensure priority be given to PwDs in using the two new modes of services, as well as ensure the fares charged would be reasonable and affordable to PwDs and no minimum charge would be imposed on users;

- (b) There were, however, views that the funding for the new accessible hire car service, which was similar to Rehabus service, should be used for procurement of more Rehabuses to help alleviate the huge demand for the service;
- (c) Concerns was raised about the long-term sustainability of the new accessible hire car service as the funding was only sufficient for providing the service for three years. Moreover, with only twenty vehicles deployed for the new service, the service might not be able to meet PwDs' transport needs. The provision of the new service might also give the Administration an excuse for procrastinating the provision of barrier-free transport for PwDs.
- (d) Given huge demand for Rehabus service, the Administration should consider increasing resources to improve the service notwithstanding the provision of the two new modes of services for PwDs;
- (e) The Administration should continue to liaise with public transport operators (PTOs) for improving public transport facilities for PwDs to provide a barrier-free transport environment meeting the needs of PwDs. In this connection, the Administration should formulate a concrete plan as soon as practicable for pursuing the objective, including the introduction of wheelchair-accessible taxis, creation of a barrier-free community, and enhancing public education to promote Hong Kong as a genuinely barrier-free city;
- (f) Drivers of wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong should be encouraged to receive training as the case in Sydney and London so that drivers could assist PwDs in using taxi service. The Administration should provide various incentives to assist the taxi trade in providing wheelchair-accessible taxi services, and encourage communication between the trade and PwDs; and
- (g) As regards facilities for assisting PwDs in using the new wheelchair-accessible taxis to be introduced by the taxi trade, in order to enhance passenger safety and facilitate passengers lighting and alighting the vehicle, it would be better if the steel fold-out ramp for wheelchair access could be replaced by a tail lift.

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Meeting with the taxi trade

6. At the Chairman's invitation, deputations from the taxi trade took turns to express views on the new modes of accessible public transport services. In gist, their views were as follows:

- (a) The taxi trade was pleased to note the great demand for wheelchair-accessible taxi service in Hong Kong, which could provide a new business opportunity for the trade to alleviate the decline in business resulting from economic downturn in the past years. The trade was very willing to provide PwDs with barrier-free transport service;
- (b) The taxi trade had been putting much effort in the past ten years in introducing wheelchair-accessible taxis to Hong Kong notwithstanding the uncooperative and discouraging attitude of the Government. The introduction of the new accessible hire car service, which to a certain extent was modeled on the new wheelchair-accessible taxis, would frustrate the taxi trade's initiative in this area. As a taxi manufacturer was already developing a new model of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)-driven wheelchair-accessible taxi and given the better experience of the taxi trade over HKSAR in providing transport services, if the taxi trade stopped making efforts in this regard, PwDs would suffer at the end. The new accessible hire car service would have a fleet of only twenty vehicles while wheelchair-accessible taxis, if successfully introduced, would be in a much larger number;
- (c) With the Government's uncooperative and discouraging attitude, the taxi trade had taken years to overcome the many hurdles in securing permission to introduce wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong. The trade had to bear the investment risk as petrol- or LPG-driven taxis would incur high costs. It was therefore unfair for the trade where it had only taken a short time for the Administration to approve the new accessible hire car service. As the service would be similar to taxi service, there was grave concern about competition with the taxi trade. Moreover, while the new accessible hire car service would be subsidized, taxi operators had to invest heavily in taxi licence;
- (d) As only twenty vehicles would be purchased to provide the new accessible hire car service for three years on a trial basis, there were concerns about the cost-effectiveness and adequacy of the new service in meeting PwDs' transport needs. Consideration should be given to using the funding for the new service to re-launch the Taxi Voucher Scheme which was shelved in 1998, to subsidize converting

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vehicles into wheelchair-accessible taxis, to procure more Rehabuses for improving Rehabus service, and to entrust the taxi trade to run the new service; and

- (e) The fares for wheelchair-accessible taxis would be reasonable and affordable to PwDs as fares would be charged according to the meter. Where advance booking was made, a minimum charge of \$200 would be imposed according to relevant requirements.

Motion

7. Members in general shared the views and concerns of the deputations, in particular those expressed by the taxi trade. To address such views and concerns, Dr Fernando CHENG moved the following motion:

"本委員會就引入為殘疾人士而設的全新無障礙公共交通服務，促使政府

- (一) 立即制訂具體計劃及時間表，並考慮提供鼓勵措施，盡快引入適合殘疾人士使用之的士；
- (二) 在發牌予「易達轎車」前，必須釐清此項服務之收費和其作為長遠運輸工具之定位，並確保此種轎車不會對其他公共交通工具造成不公平競爭及照顧低收入殘疾人士的需要；及
- (三) 立即與殘疾人士團體、運輸業界、社會服務團體，及復康諮詢委員會等商議，在半年內制訂為殘疾人士提供的交通服務政策及具體行動計劃，包括考慮引入的士代用券計劃。"

(Translation)

"That, in respect of the introduction of a new mode of accessible public transport service for persons with disabilities (PwDs), this Subcommittee urges the Government to:

- (a) immediately draw up specific plans and timetable as well as consider offering incentives for the speedy introduction of taxis which are suitable for PwDs;
- (b) ascertain the fees charged for the service of 'Accessible Hire Car' and its long-term position as a mode of transport service before issuing licences to this type of vehicles, and ensure that it will not compete unfairly with other public transport services while catering for the need of low-income PwDs; and
- (c) immediately consult PwD groups, the transport sector, social service

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agencies, the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, etc, with a view to formulating within six months a policy with specific action plans for the provision of transport service for PwDs, including considering the introduction of a Taxi Voucher Scheme."

8. The motion was seconded by Ms Miriam LAU. The Subcommittee agreed to proceed with the motion and put it to vote. Of the members present, three voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

*(Post-meeting note: The wording of the motion was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2194/06-07 on 25 July 2007.)*

Follow-up action

Admin

9. It was agreed that the Subcommittee would re-visit the subject on introduction of new modes of accessible public transport services for PwDs in six-month's time. The Administration was requested to follow up on the motion passed at the meeting and provide concrete response when the Subcommittee re-visit the subject, as well as to report progress of the introduction of the new accessible hire car service and wheelchair accessible taxis once there was new development.

**IV Any other business**

Meeting arrangements

Admin

10. Members agreed to schedule the next meeting for Monday, 8 October 2007, at 10:45 am to re-visit issues relating to the provision of concessionary public transport fares for PwDs, including PTOs' response to the motion passed at the meeting on 27 February 2007 and the Administration's follow-up actions on related issues discussed at the meetings on 27 February, 12 April and 29 June 2007. Members also agreed that PTOs and PwD groups should be invited to attend the meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, the meeting was subsequently rescheduled to Tuesday, 9 October 2007, at 4:30 pm.)*

11. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:00 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
2 October 2007

**Proceedings of the twelfth meeting of  
the Subcommittee to Study the Transport Needs of and Provision of  
Concessionary Public Transport Fares for Persons with Disabilities  
on Tuesday, 24 July 2007, at 10:00 am  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
<b>Agenda Item I – Confirmation of minutes and matters arising</b>			
000000 – 000153	Chairman	Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2007 (LC Paper No. CB(1)2159/06-07)	
<b>Agenda Item II – Rehabus service provided by the Government and voluntary agencies</b>			
<b>Meeting with persons with disabilities (PwD) groups</b>			
000154 – 000226	Chairman	Opening remarks by the Chairman	
000227 – 000448	Chairman Direction Association for the Handicapped	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(01))	
000449 – 000557	Chairman Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong	Presentation of views	
000558 – 001034	Chairman The Parents' Association of Pre-school Handicapped Children (PAPHC)	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(02))	
001035 – 001536	Chairman The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(03))	
001537 – 002004	Chairman 1st Step Association (1 <sup>st</sup> Step)	Presentation of views	
002005 – 002141	Chairman Disabled and Carer Concern Group (DCCG)	(a) Presentation of views  (b) Enquiry about the progress of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) in examining the feasibility of adding railings to the	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		tail-lifts of aging Rehabuses	
002142 – 002719	Chairman Administration	<p>The Administration's responses to PwD groups' views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Efforts had already been made to seek funds for purchasing more Rehabuses. As a result, six instead of the originally planned four additional Rehabuses would be put into service in 2007. In the 2007 Resource Allocation Exercise, the Administration would seek funds to (i) increase the bus fleet by eight new buses (six for Scheduled Route Service (SRS)) and (ii) replace 21 aging Rehabuses, including seven with single-arm tail-lift</li> <li>(b) With the Administration's support, the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation (HKSR) had applied for funding under the "SK YEE Fund for the Disabled 2006" to improve its computer facilities to enhance the efficiency of Rehabus allocation and trip planning for shared Dial-a-Ride Service (DAR)</li> <li>(c) EMSD had confirmed that it was not feasible to add railings to the tail-lifts of aging Rehabuses. It was therefore agreed that resources would be sought for expediting the replacement programme of aging Rehabuses instead</li> <li>(d) HKSR had already introduced improvements on the operation of Rehabus service including fare charges of DAR, and the service arrangements during hoisting of Black Rainstorm Warning or Typhoon Signal No. 8 and was reviewing surcharge for subsequent change/cancellation of service (Surcharge) where more time was required for further discussions with HKSR's User Liaison Group (ULG) on further improvement to the Surcharge</li> </ul>	
002720 – 003405	Chairman HKSR	<p>HKSR's responses to PwD groups' views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The tiered fare scale for DAR had been introduced with the purpose of minimizing individual passengers' fare share. In recognition of the changes in passenger combination, namely, that families comprising four members might be the more common users, and that most Rehabuses had four seats for wheelchair users, the fare scale for DAR for 1-3 passengers would be relaxed so that 1-4 passengers would be charged the same fare</li> </ul>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(b) Safety was the foremost consideration in deciding the service arrangements during Black Rainstorm Warning or Typhoon Signal No. 8. Service would however be resumed as soon as possible once signal was off. The needs of PwDs retained at either school or hospital during service suspension could be adequately taken care of by the institutions</p> <p>(c) The Surcharge was necessary to prevent abuse and waste of resources. Service cancellation rate before the imposition of the Surcharge was as high as over 40% but had dropped to some 20% thereafter. If sound reasons were given for cancellation of service with written proof, the Surcharge could be waived</p>	
<b>Discussion</b>			
003406 – 004403	Chairman Dr Fernando CHEUNG HKSR Administration	<p>(a) Dr Fernando CHEUNG enquired about the timetable for implementing computerization in Rehabus allocation and trip planning, and expressed concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) He welcomed the various improvements to Rehabus service reported in the Administration's paper</p> <p>(ii) It was not uncommon for PwDs to cancel plans of going out due to health reasons. There was therefore a need to examine the Surcharge with reference to the circumstances of individual case</p> <p>(iii) The booking of DAR on a long-term basis for up to seven years as highlighted by a PwD group was unacceptable. Such apparent service gap should be addressed</p> <p>(iv) SRS for handicapped school children should continue during the summer holiday to facilitate their participation in summer activities</p> <p>(b) HKSR's responses as follows:</p> <p>(i) The computer system for Rebus allocation and trip planning would be ready in late 2008 subject to approval of the funding and smooth implementation of the project. There would be a one-year trial for the new system. It was estimated that the new system could be</p>	



Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>formally commissioned in 2009</p> <p>(ii) The present 20% cancellation rate was already the net rate excluding cases for which justified reasons for cancellation of booking had been given and hence the Surcharge was waived</p> <p>(iii) The booking of DAR on a long-term basis was in fact a make-shift arrangement made flexibly to meet service gap for SRS. It was expected that with allocation of more resources to procure additional Rehabuses, SRS could be improved to meet the above service gap</p> <p>(iv) Where necessary and practicable, holiday SRS could be flexibly provided</p> <p>(c) The Administration's explanation that improvement to Rehabus service would hinge on the availability of resources for procuring additional vehicles. Priority would however be given to tackling the problem of booking DAR on a long-term basis through strengthening SRS</p>	
004404 – 005048	Chairman Mr WONG Kwok-hing Administration HKSR	<p>(a) The Administration's advice in response to Mr WONG Kwok-hing that the waiting list for SRS should have been removed in early 2009 with the above planned procurement of additional Rehabuses if demand remained at current level</p> <p>(b) Mr WONG 's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) The new Rehabuses procured should be broader and longer as the PwD groups suggested to suit wheelchair users' needs</p> <p>(ii) The requirement of written proof for waiver of the Surcharge should be relaxed on compassionate grounds</p> <p>(c) The Administration's response that Mr WONG's view in item (b)(i) would be taken into account where vehicle design permitted</p> <p>(d) HKSR's responses as follows:</p> <p>(i) Sourcing of suitable vehicle models for use as Rehabuses had been made in consultation with wheelchair users with regard to the technical constraints of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) light buses. A suitable model had</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>been identified recently</p> <p>(ii) Members' views on the Surcharge would be relayed to ULG for consideration and improvement would be introduced where appropriate</p>	
005049 – 010221	<p>Chairman Mr TAM Yiu-chung Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung Administration</p>	<p>(a) Mr TAM Yiu-chung's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) He was pleased to note that the Administration had adopted a more positive attitude in pursuing improvement to Rehabus service where resources permitted</p> <p>(ii) Efforts should also be made to ascertain PwDs' use of and access to public transport services through conducting a survey</p> <p>(b) Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) As a key player in the public transport market, Government had an important role in affecting the accessibility of public transport services for PwDs' use. It was disappointing that the Government had not adopted consistent policies in meeting the needs of PwDs. The relevant bureaux and departments should formulate a long-term comprehensive policy in the provision of transport services for PwDs</p> <p>(ii) The failure to secure concessionary public transport fares (CPTFs) for PwDs had indirectly increased PwDs' reliance on Rehabus service and hence the need for additional resources to support expansion of the service</p> <p>(c) The Administration's responses as follows:</p> <p>(i) Efforts had all along been made to provide barrier-free transport for PwDs to meet their transport needs. In fact, a number of improvements had already been made. For instance, all new rail stations had accessible facilities for PwDs, and new buses purchased should also be accessible</p> <p>(ii) TD also held regular meetings with PwD groups and public transport operators (PTOs) to discuss and identify areas of improvement to further enhance the accessibility of transport</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>services for use by PwDs. Continuous efforts would be made in conjunction with PTOs to ascertain PwDs' access to and use of public transport services</p>	
<p>010222 – 011027</p>	<p>Chairman PAPHC 1st Step DCCG HKSR Administration</p>	<p>(a) PAPHC's concerns and views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) It was undesirable that if individual PwDs booked more than one bus or their bookings involved more than one pick up/set down point or more than one passenger, they would be classified as institutions and be subject to a higher Surcharge. Moreover, the above arrangement might cause confusion in administering the service and was not conducive to optimal use of resources</li> <li>(ii) It was regrettable that due to the lack of resources to hire a driver, a new school bus donated by a private party for use by handicapped children had been left idle and certain handicapped children were not able to attend special school</li> </ul> <p>(b) 1st Step's views that organizations organizing activities for PwDs could not benefit from the relaxation of the fare scale for DAR for 1-3 passengers. A standard fare might better help reduce these organizations' operating cost</p> <p>(c) DCCG's elaboration of inadequate provision in and defective design of facilities, such as the lack of extended ramps, low-platform buses, and drop kerbs in bus pick up/drop-off points, to facilitate PwDs' accessibility to public transport services</p> <p>(d) HKSR's response that bookings for Rehabus service with more than one pick up/set down point or more than one passenger would involve more administrative work. Hence it was necessary to impose a higher Surcharge for cancellation of such bookings. To prevent abuse by organizations booking Rehabus service through individuals in order to circumvent the higher Surcharge, if individuals booked more than one bus or their booking involved more than one pick up/set down point or more than one passenger, they would be classified as "an institution". The waiver system could ensure exemption from the Surcharge for justifiable cases</p> <p>(e) The Administration's responses as follows:</p>	

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		<p>(i) According to the Education Bureau (EDB), eligible special schools which had secured registered school buses from private donation might apply for a special subsidy to meet the salary of drivers. The case highlighted by PAPHC above would be referred to EDB for follow-up</p> <p>(ii) TD would draw Highways Department (HyD)'s attention to the defects of highway facilities highlighted by DCCG above. Deputations could also point out problem spots to TD for referral to HyD.</p>	
<b>Agenda Item III – Introduction of a new mode of accessible public transport service (the new service) for persons with disabilities</b>			
<b>Meeting with PwD groups</b>			
011028 – 011650	Chairman 1st Step	Presentation of views	
011651 – 011821	Chairman DCCG	Presentation of views	
011822 – 011957	Chairman Direction Association for the Handicapped	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(01))	
011958 – 012139	Chairman Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong	Presentation of views	
012140 – 012333	Chairman PAPHC	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(04))	
012334 – 012439	Chairman The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2176/06-07(05))	
012440 – 012750	Chairman Mr Wilson YU Wai-keung	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2166/06-07(01))	
012751 – 012832	Chairman Mr KWOK Tak-fai	Presentation of views	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
012833 – 013039	Chairman Mr CHAN Wai-hung	Presentation of views	
<i>Meeting with the taxi trade</i>			
013040 – 013220	Chairman The Fraternity Association of N.T. Taxi Merchants	Presentation of views	
013221 – 013429	Chairman Sun Hing Taxi Radio Association Tai Wo Motors Ltd.	Presentation of views	
013430 – 013620	Chairman Hong Kong Taxi Association	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2150 /06-07(03))	
013621 – 013749	Chairman N.W. Area Taxi Drivers & Operators Association	Presentation of views	
013750 – 013947	Chairman Chung Shing Taxi Limited	Presentation of views	
013948 – 014134	Chairman Taxi Dealers & Owners Association Limited	Presentation of views	
014135 – 014151	Chairman The Hong Kong Taxi & Public Light Bus Association Limited	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(04))	
014152 – 014235	Chairman Pak Kai Taxi Owners Association Ltd.	Presentation of views	
014236 – 014359	Chairman Sun Hing Taxi Radio Service General Association	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(1)2150/06-07(05))	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
014400 – 014632	Chairman United Friendship Taxi Owners & Drivers Association Ltd. Association of N.T. Radio Taxicabs Ltd.	Presentation of views	
014633 – 014855	Chairman Taxi & PLB Concern Group	Presentation of views (LC Papers Nos. CB(1)2176/06-07(06) and CB(1)2193/06-07(03))	
014856 – 015113	Chairman The Kowloon Taxi Owners Association Ltd.	Presentation of views	
015114 – 015455	Chairman New Territories Taxi Operations Union	Presentation of views	
015456 – 020735	Chairman HKSR Administration Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)	<p>(a) HKSR's responses to deputations' views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The new hire car service (the new service) was a step forward in enhancing barrier-free transport for PwDs pending the introduction of wheelchair-accessible taxis on a full scale. The relevant pilot scheme would generate experience to benefit all parties interested in meeting PwDs' transport needs</li> <li>(ii) In setting the fares for the new service, reference would be made to the prevailing charging mode of hire car service. Zoning arrangement as well as distance travelled would be taken into account. However, fare details for the new service had yet to be finalized as it was necessary to strike a balance ensuring that the fares would neither be so low as to compete with taxi service nor so high that PwDs could not afford</li> </ul> <p>(b) The Administration's responses to deputations' views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The Administration's policy on transport services for PwDs had always been to develop an accessible transport system</li> <li>(ii) The Administration had been exploring in association with the taxi trade, vehicle</li> </ul>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>manufacturers and agents on ways to facilitate the introduction of taxis to accommodate wheelchair passengers. However, as the current legislation required new taxis to use LPG or petrol, there was difficulty in identifying suitable vehicle models meeting the legislative requirements and catering for the special needs of PwDs despite the Administration's effort in conducting global searching and active liaison with taxi manufacturers in exploring the feasibility of converting vehicles to meet the transport needs of PwDs. Nevertheless, some vehicle manufacturers and agents had recently indicated interest to explore the feasibility to provide LPG converted taxis which fulfilled legislative requirements. TD would continue to work proactively with relevant parties in this direction</p> <p>(c) EOC's responses to deputations' views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) EOC was keen to ensure PwDs could use public transport services. Despite the taxi trade's great efforts in the past years, introduction of wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong had yet to materialize</li> <li>(ii) EOC was pleased to note the taxi trade's positive attitude in meeting PwDs' transport needs and would assist the trade in this regard to impress upon other PTOs that PwDs could in fact be a source of revenue for them</li> <li>(iii) If the fares of the new service were too high, it would be unaffordable to PwDs. If the fares were too low, there might be unhealthy competition between the new service and taxi service. It was necessary to address the dilemma</li> <li>(iv) The Administration should work out an action plan to meet the objective of providing barrier-free transport for PwDs. There was also a need to provide guidelines to ensure barrier-free means of transport and road design</li> </ul>	

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<i>Discussion</i>			
020736 – 021340	Chairman Mr WONG Kwok-hing Administration	<p>(a) Mr WONG Kwok-hing's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) The Administration should follow the example of the Australian Government to offer taxi operators with incentives in providing wheelchair-accessible taxi service to PwDs</p> <p>(ii) The Administration should reconsider the introduction of the Taxi Voucher Scheme launched twenty years before. While the Scheme was then unsuccessful, the Administration should re-examine it now as times had changed</p> <p>(b) The Administration's explanation that it did re-examine the Scheme two years before. As the Scheme was not well-received by PwDs and the taxi trade when last implemented, and the relevant circumstances had not changed much since then, the Administration would not reconsider the Scheme for the time being. Moreover, other measures were already in place or being examined to meet the transport needs of PwDs. For example, Rehabus service, which could best cater to PwDs' transport needs, had been greatly improved</p>	
021341 – 022242	Chairman Dr Fernando CHEUNG Administration	<p>(a) Dr Fernando CHEUNG's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) There was no consultation on the new service and little progress in the introduction of wheelchair-accessible taxis to Hong Kong</p> <p>(ii) It was unfair that while the taxi trade had taken years to overcome the many hurdles in securing permission to introduce wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong, the Administration had suddenly approved the new service which might lead to unhealthy competition with the new wheelchair-accessible taxis. The Administration should provide incentives to assist taxi operators in providing wheelchair-accessible taxi services instead</p> <p>(iii) Use of the new service should be strictly restricted to PwDs to obviate unhealthy competition with taxi. The fares should also be comparable to those for Rehabus to ensure affordability by PwDs</p>	



Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(iv) The Administration should formulate a comprehensive policy on transport services for PwDs with an action plan for its implementation</p> <p>(b) The Administration's responses as follows:</p> <p>(i) Existing hire car permits were issued as appropriate in response to applications that could meet the relevant stringent requirements. Permit application for the new service would be processed similarly in a stringent manner</p> <p>(ii) The permit for the new service would be granted on condition that the service would be available to wheelchair users only with advance booking, and that the fee charges would be set with reference to the prevailing charging mode of hire car services, which took into account the zoning arrangement as well as distance travelled, and was generally higher than that for taxis</p>	
022243 – 022909	Chairman Ms Miriam LAU Administration	<p>(a) Ms Miriam LAU's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(i) With so many uncertainties surrounding the new service, in particular the availability of continued funding and difficulties in determining the fare level, the sustainability of the new service was questionable. With a fleet of only twenty vehicles, the new service could hardly meet PwDs' transport needs. The Administration should help the taxi trade in introducing wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong, and provide taxi transport subsidy to PwDs</p> <p>(ii) The Administration should map out a comprehensive long-term policy in respect of transport services for PwDs making reference to the experience of the Australian Government, which had provided various incentives to assist taxi operators in providing wheelchair-accessible taxi services including a taxi voucher scheme</p> <p>(iii) It was unfair that the taxi trade, which had been making efforts for many years to introduce wheelchair-accessible taxis to Hong Kong, should have to overcome many hurdles because of the uncooperative and discouraging attitude of the Government</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(b) The Administration's explanation that the Government remained committed to taking care of the basic transport needs of PwDs. Currently, financial assistance was provided under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) and Disability Allowance (DA) payments. It would continue to take appropriate measures to cater for the basic transport needs of PwDs, including enhancing the Rehabus service, improving public transport facilities for PwDs, and considering the provision of CPTFs under the welfare programme. In view of the above measures already in place, the Administration would not, for the time being, re-consider the introduction of the Taxi Voucher Scheme</p> <p>(c) Ms LAU's view that Rehabus service could not adequately meet PwDs' transport needs</p>	
022910 – 023440	Chairman Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	<p>Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(a) The arbitrary and non-transparent manner in which the Administration introduced the new service was regrettable</p> <p>(b) Apart from ensuring adequate Rehabus service and barrier-free public transport service, transport subsidies should also be provided for PwDs. PwDs could choose the mode of public transport to be used and PTOs could compete for PwD customers so that market forces would be given full play</p> <p>(c) The new service could create unfair competition to wheelchair accessible taxi service to be introduced by the taxi trade</p> <p>(d) There would be great difficulty in setting the fares for the new service to prevent competition with wheelchair accessible taxi service, and to ensure affordability to PwDs. There was concern that fares might go up after the three-year trial period</p>	
023441 – 023854	Chairman Taxi & PLB Concern Group	<p>Taxi &amp; PLB Concern Group's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(a) TD had never provided assistance to the taxi trade in introducing wheelchair-accessible taxis to Hong Kong. Rather, it had created many hurdles for the trade. The taxi trade might be discouraged from introducing wheelchair-accessible taxis to Hong Kong to serve PwDs</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(b) The Administration needed to secure resources for continued operation of the new service after the three-year trial period. Such expenses could have been saved if the taxi trade could introduce wheelchair-accessible taxi service</p>	
023855 – 024139	Chairman Mr Wilson YU Wai-keung	<p>Mr Wilson YU Wai-keung's concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(a) Consideration should be given to implementing the new service on a trial basis. The Taxi Voucher Scheme should be re-introduced and the Octopus Card should be used to resolve problems associated with encashing the vouchers</p> <p>(b) Rehabus service and non-means-tested DA and CSSA could not adequately take care of the basic transport needs of PwDs</p>	
024140 – 024440	Chairman United Friendship Taxi Owners & Drivers Association Ltd.	<p>United Friendship Taxi Owners &amp; Drivers Association Ltd.'s concerns and views as follows:</p> <p>(a) The times were different and taxi drivers were at present willing to serve PwDs. As such, there was no need to introduce the new service. Moreover, many implementation problems needed to be resolved before the new service could be launched</p> <p>(b) The Administration had created obstacles rather than provided assistance to the taxi trade in introducing wheelchair-accessible taxis in Hong Kong</p>	
024441 – 024609	Chairman Chung Shing Taxi Limited	<p>Chung Shing Taxi Limited's view that in recognition of the taxi trade's social corporate responsibility, the trade was willing to serve PwDs without any subsidy and could increase the number of wheelchair-accessible taxis as necessary to meet PwDs' needs. As such, introduction of the new service would be a waste of public resources. The relevant donation should better be used to provide transport subsidies to PwDs</p>	
024610 – 025011	Chairman Administration	<p>The Administration's responses to the above views of deputations as follows:</p> <p>(a) The Administration would consider the way forward for the new service in the light of implementation of the service during the three-year trial period</p> <p>(b) The progress to introduce LPG multi-purpose taxis to Hong Kong was subject to the technical and commercial considerations of vehicle manufacturers</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>in converting and producing this type of taxi. Besides, the hurdles observed by the taxi trade were in fact necessary procedures to inspect converted taxis to ensure safety of the vehicles before providing the service. Notwithstanding, progress had already been made in this regard recently</p>	
025012 – 025812	<p>Chairman Dr Fernando CHEUNG Ms Miriam LAU Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung</p>	<p>(a) Ms Miriam LAU's views as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The Administration's response above had demonstrated that there was no comprehensive policy in the provision of transport service for PwDs. The Administration should formulate a comprehensive policy with reference to experience of London and Sydney in developing wheelchair-accessible taxis as revealed in the information note prepared the LegCo Secretariat</li> <li>(ii) The relevant bureaux and departments should speed up efforts to expedite the introduction of wheelchair-accessible taxis to Hong Kong</li> <li>(iii) The Taxi Voucher Scheme was unsuccessful mainly because of administrative problems and not because the idea was ill-received. With the latest technological development, consideration should be given to re-introduce the Scheme</li> <li>(iv) Before issuing licences to the new service, the fares and its long-term position as a mode of transport service should be ascertained</li> </ul> <p>(b) Dr Fernando CHEUNG's view that wheelchair-accessible taxis should be introduced as soon as practicable to meet PwDs' aspiration, and there were overseas experience for easy reference</p> <p>(c) Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's view that wheelchair-accessible taxis should be introduced in parallel with the new service to create healthy competition</p>	
025813 – 025855	Chairman	Voting on the motion moved by Dr Fernando CHEUNG	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
<b>Agenda Item IV – Any other business</b>			
025856 – 030053	Chairman Ms Miriam LAU Dr Fernando CHEUNG	Date of next meeting and relevant arrangements	

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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