#### **Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09**

#### Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing Session No. : 14

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<u>S-THB(T)02</u>	S073	WONG Kwok-hing	186	Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers
<u>S-THB(T)03</u>	S074	WONG Kwok-hing	186	Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers
<u>S-THB(T)04</u>	S075	WONG Kwok-hing	186	District Traffic and Transport Services
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<u>S-THB(T)06</u>	S079	WONG Kwok-hing	186	District Traffic and Transport Services

## CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Head: 60 - Highways Department Subhead 000 Operational (No. & title): Expenses

Programme:

<u>Controlling Officer</u>: Director of Highways

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In 2008-09, the Highways Department plans to create 15 posts for the maintenance and administration of new roads taken over by the Department in the New Territories. Will the Administration advise this Committee of the number of new roads concerned and their names?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The 15 posts to be created will be responsible for the maintenance and administration of the following new roads:

- (i) Grade Separated Interchange T1/P1/P2, Tseung Kwan O;
- (ii) Remaining Engineering Infrastructure Works for Pak Shek Kok Development, Stage 1;
- (iii) Castle Peak Road Improvement between Sham Tseung and Ka Loon Tsuen;
- (iv) Essential Public Infrastructure Works for Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line and Public Transport Interchange at Lok Ma Chau Terminus;
- (v) Penny's Bay roads in association with the Disneyland Theme Park; and
- (vi) Road T7 in Shatin.

 Signature

 Name in block letters
 WAI CHI SING

 Post Title
 Director of Highways

\_\_\_\_\_

Date 10 April 2008

Reply Serial No.

S-THB(T)01

Question Serial No. S072

# CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No. S-THB(T)02

Question Serial No. S073

<u>Head</u>: 186 – Transport Department <u>Subhead</u> (No. & title) :

<u>Programme</u>: (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing

- <u>Question</u> : In 2007-08, the four licensing offices of the Transport Department processed about 200 000 ten-year driving licence renewal applications submitted over the counters. Will the Administration inform this Committee
  - (a) the locations of the four licensing offices;
  - (b) the number of driving licence renewal applications processed by each of the four licensing offices; and
  - (c) the maximum capacity of each of the four licensing offices in handling driving licence renewal applications?
- Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

#### Reply :

- (a) The four licensing offices of the Transport Department are located at Admiralty, Sham Shui Po, Kwun Tong and Shatin respectively.
- (b) The number of applications for renewal of full driving licences processed by the licensing offices in 2007-08 is as follows –

Licensing Office	Number of applications processed
Hong Kong Licensing Office (Admiralty)	71 100
Kowloon Licensing Office (Sham Shui Po)	100 300
Kwun Tong Licensing Office	126 100
Shatin Licensing Office	58 400

Question Serial No. S073

(c) While the four licensing offices all handle full driving licence renewal applications, they are also responsible for delivering other types of services, which may vary from one office to another. For example, first registration of vehicles and direct issue of full driving licences involve extensive documentation and require detailed vetting procedures, and are available only at the Hong Kong Licensing Office. The Kwun Tong and Shatin Licensing Offices handle more non-counter applications.

The Transport Department flexibly deploys staff amongst the four licensing offices to handle the applications submitted over the counters or by post/drop-box/electronic means. No "maximum capacity" is set for each licensing office in handling driving licence renewal applications.

The Transport Department will continue to monitor the performance of the licensing services and take appropriate measures to cope with any upsurge in demand.

Signature	
Name in block letters	ALAN WONG
Post Title	Commissioner for Transport
Date	10 April 2008

# CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No. S-THB(T)03

Question Serial No. S074

<u>Head</u>: 186 – Transport Department <u>Subhead</u> (No. & title) :

<u>Programme</u>: (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing

- <u>Question</u>: To cope with the upsurge in the renewal applications of ten-year driving licences, the Administration has secured additional provision in 2007-08 for the creation of 14 time-limited posts. How many renewal applications does the Administration anticipate that the additional staff can process annually? The number of renewal applications of driving licences has surged from 15 000 to 340 000. Did the Administration foresee the upsurge in renewal applications before 2007-08? If yes, why hasn't the Administration considered applying for more provision for the creation of more time-limited posts to handle the renewal applications?
- Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

#### Reply :

According to the Transport Department's records, about 1 400 000 ten-year driving licences will expire from 2007-08 to 2009-10 (ten-year driving licences were first issued in mid-1997). To cope with this anticipated upsurge in renewal applications of ten-year driving licences, the Transport Department has secured funding totalling \$39 million for the period from 2006-07 to 2009-10, including the provision of 14 time-limited posts (i.e. two Senior Clerical Officers, six Assistant Clerical Officers and six temporary staff).

In addition to the additional staffing support, other measures have also been adopted to streamline the renewal process. The Transport Department has recently simplified the renewal arrangement for full driving licences by replacing the existing requirement of producing a copy of identity document or using an e-certificate for authentication of identity with a personal identification number (renewal password) issued by the Transport Department. This will facilitate postal and electronic applications, thereby reducing the demand for counter licensing services. This will in turn shorten the waiting time at the licensing offices for applications through service counters.

The Transport Department will continue to monitor the performance of the licensing services and take appropriate measures to cope with any upsurge in demand.

Question Serial No. S074

# CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No. S-THB(T)04

Question Serial No. S075

<u>Head</u>: 186 – Transport Department <u>Subhead</u> (No. & title) :

<u>Programme</u>: (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing

- <u>Question</u>: In 2007-08, the Transport Department arranged three new bus and five new green minibus (GMB) routes. In this regard, will the Government advise this Committee
  - 1. details of the areas served by the three new bus routes;
  - 2. details of the areas served by the five new GMB routes; and
  - 3. whether all these new routes will overlap with existing routes and lead to wasteful competition?

<u>Asked by</u>: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

#### Reply :

- 1. The three new bus routes are -
  - (a) Yuen Long Station to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line;
  - (b) Yuen Long Station to Shenzhen Bay Port; and
  - (c) Tuen Mun Pierhead to Shenzhen Bay Port.
- 2. The five new green minibus (GMB) routes are -
  - (a) Tin Shui Wai (Tin Yan Estate) to Shenzhen Bay Port;
  - (b) Kwai Chung Estate to North-East Kwai Chung (Circular);
  - (c) Kwai Chung (Lai Kong Street) to Sham Shui Po (Po On Road) (Circular);
  - (d) Kowloon City (Kowloon City Road) to Kowloon Hospital (Circular); and
  - (e) Kowloon City (Wyler Garden) to Lok Fu Station.
- 3. The three new bus routes serve passengers commuting between Yuen Long/Tuen Mun and the new Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point and the Shenzhen Bay Port and do not overlap with the existing routes. As for the new GMB routes, one of them serves a new catchment area, i.e. the Shenzhen Bay Port, and the other four which serve existing and new demands do not directly overlap with existing routes either.

Question Serial No. S075

Signature	
Name in block letters	ALAN WONG
Post Title	Commissioner for Transport
Date	10 April 2008

#### CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No. S-THB(T)05

Question Serial No. S078

<u>Head</u>: 186 – Transport Department <u>Subhead</u> (No. & title) :

<u>Programme</u>: (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing

- <u>Question</u>: As regards the effect of skips on road safety, will the Government advise this Committee -
  - (a) whether the current management guidelines are workable in the absence of legal backing;
  - (b) whether the Administration will consider amending the legislation in order to address the difficulties and loopholes in enforcement; and
  - (c) the number of skips in the territory and organisations involved, whether there is a system for registration of skips and, if not, whether a registration and application system would be considered?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

(a) and (b): The Transport Department published in January this year the "Guidelines for Mounting and Placing of Skips" which have been distributed to the trade and the public. The purpose of the guidelines is to remind skip users of the importance of road safety and to prescribe a set of safety standards regarding the mounting and placing of skips. For those skips posing serious obstruction or immediate safety threat to the public or vehicles, they are subject to enforcement action carried out by the Police under the common law or the Summary Offences Ordinance, which may involve the immediate removal of the skips concerned. The Lands Department may also, under the Lands (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance, post notices and allow one day for the owners to remove the skips. In the event that the concerned skips are not removed within the prescribed time, the Lands Department will arrange for their removal.

The trade is encouraged to comply with the standards set out in the guidelines, while cases of obstruction or safety threat may be dealt with under current legislation. At present, the Government does not have any plan to amend the relevant legislation.

Question Serial No. S078

(c) We do not have any detailed statistics on skips. Unlike vehicles, individual skips do not require prior registration with government departments. Any party wishing to temporarily place a skip on a public road is advised to follow the "Guidelines for Mounting and Placing of Skips". As regards the temporary placement of skips on government land other than public roads, applications can be submitted to the Lands Department for consideration.

Signature	
Name in block letters	ALAN WONG
Post Title	Commissioner for Transport
Date	10 April 2008

# CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No. S-THB(T)06

Question Serial No. S079

<u>Head</u>: 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

<u>Programme</u>: (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

<u>Director of Bureau</u> : Secretary for Transport and Housing

- <u>Question</u>: There is no cross-boundary coach service operating in Kwai Tsing District and Tung Chung new town. It causes great inconvenience to residents as they have to interchange a number of public transport services to travel to the Mainland. The Secretary for Transport and Housing has undertaken to provide solutions in an oral reply at a regular meeting of the Legislative Council. Would the Administration advise this Committee on –
  - 1. when cross-boundary coach services will be introduced for the above-mentioned districts; and
  - 2. the routings and stops for these services?

<u>Asked by</u> : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

#### Reply:

The routes of the cross-boundary coach service (CBCS) in Hong Kong are basically determined by the operators themselves based on passenger demand and other commercial considerations. However, the Transport Department would consider and approve the proposed stops of such routes having regard to factors such as convenience to passengers, road safety and the local traffic situation, etc.

We have liaised with the cross-boundary coach operators who are interested in providing CBCS in Kwai Tsing District and Tung Chung new town respectively. According to our understanding, they plan to introduce the services via the Shenzhen Bay Port in the coming months. The detailed routings are being worked out by the operators and have yet to be firmed up.

We will keep in view the applications from these operators, which will be processed once received.

Question Serial No. S079