

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Information Note on Various Issues Raised by Members

INTRODUCTION

In response to Members' request, this paper sets out the relevant information and, where applicable, the Administration's assessment and response in respect of the following items :

- (a) measures to enhance pedestrian safety, in particular preventing traffic accidents arising from pedestrians listening to MP3 while crossing the road;
- (b) use of two-wheeled motorised human transporter in Hong Kong; and
- (c) legislative amendments relating to lighting, reflectors and markings of vehicles.

**MEASURES TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY
(paragraph 1(a) above)**

Issue

2. A Member suggested that the Administration should look into traffic accidents involving pedestrians using portable audio electronic devices while crossing the road and take measures to prevent such accidents.

Background

3. In the five years between 2003 to 2007, the annual average number of pedestrian casualties while crossing the road was 1,375. There were 1,018 pedestrian casualties while crossing the road in 2007, representing a decrease of 24% when compared with 1,704 in 2003¹. Among these pedestrian casualties,

¹ Number of pedestrians casualties while crossing the road

2003	1,704
2004	1,482
2005	1,444
2006	1,227
2007	1,018

most crossed the road heedless of traffic or inattentively². In the five-year period, there was one pedestrian casualty directly attributable to the use of portable audio electronic device while crossing the road.

Considerations and Way Forward

4. The most effective approach to address the concern of pedestrians using portable devices while crossing the road is to step up publicity and education. A specific publicity campaign has commenced since May this year. Newly-produced posters together with television and radio Announcement of Public Interests (APIs) have just been launched to remind pedestrians to attend to traffic conditions and refrain from using electronic devices when crossing the road.

5. Apart from the above, publicity efforts including posters and APIs will also be put in place to remind pedestrians of the proper behaviour during different phases of signals at light signal crossings.

6. We are also mindful of the importance to instil a sense of proper pedestrian behaviour in younger members of the community. With the aid of the Road Safety Towns, students have been educated to use the road safely. The Police will continue to visit schools and arrange seminars for the Road Safety Patrols to educate them about the proper pedestrian behaviour. As regards the ageing population, in addition to the arrangement of pedestrian safety seminars for the elderly, the Police will also identify suitable Road Safety Ambassadors to publicise proper pedestrian behaviour targeting the elderly and will design souvenirs with reflective coating for the elderly to carry, so that they can be more conspicuous on roads.

² Contributory factors to the pedestrian casualties from 2003 to 2007 –

Factors related to pedestrian behaviour	[Total : 69%]
• Crossing road heedless of traffic	56.1%
• Inattentive	4.6%
• Jay walking	0.8%
• Others	7.5%
Factors <u>not</u> related to pedestrian behaviour	31%

7. The Police have been taking enforcement actions against pedestrians' improper road crossing behaviour³. The Police will continue to conduct on-street publicity campaigns from time to time to raise the pedestrians' awareness on road safety and take enforcement actions to deter jay-walking and improper use of road crossing facilities by pedestrians through verbal warnings and summons actions.

8. We have all along been providing/improving various types of road crossing facilities, including footbridges, subways and at-grade pedestrian crossings, over the territory. The implementation of pedestrianisation schemes such as part-time pedestrian zones, and traffic calming measures in areas with heavy pedestrian flows, also help enhance pedestrian safety. These efforts have resulted in continued reduction in the number of pedestrian casualties over the years. We will continue to improve and provide new pedestrian facilities to enhance pedestrian safety.

USE OF TWO-WHEELED MOTORISED HUMAN TRANSPORTER IN HONG KONG (paragraph 1(b) above)

Issue

9. A manufacturer has developed a two-wheeled motorised human transporter (the transporter) for recreational and short distance personal transportation purposes and a Member suggested that the Administration should review the control of the use of the transporter in Hong Kong.

Background

10. The transporter is a motor vehicle under the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374). For it to be used on roads⁴ or private roads it must satisfy the provisions of the Ordinance. A vehicle examination according to the constructional requirement of a motor cycle as stipulated in Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374A) was conducted on a transporter. Some non-compliances were found and it cannot be registered or licensed for use on roads or private roads. A person who use the transporter on roads or private roads would commit an offence.

³ In 2007, over 19,800 pedestrians were prosecuted for pedestrian offences.

⁴ "Road" under the Road Traffic Ordinance includes highway, thoroughfare, street, lane, alley, court, square, car park, passage, path, way and place to which the public has access.

11. Most countries we studied do not allow the use of the transporter on carriageways. In the United States where its use is more popular, its use is restricted to sidewalks, bike paths, pathways and trails etc in some states. In some states the transporter is allowed to be used on streets and roads subject to a speed limit, and local agencies may limit or prohibit the time, place, and manner of use on state properties within their boundaries. In some crowded places like New York City, the use of transporter on carriageways is prohibited.

Considerations and Way Forward

12. Hong Kong is a densely populated city with very limited road space. Most of the roads are congested and have heavy traffic flow whereas most of the footways in Hong Kong are crowded and/or narrow with a great number of street furniture as well as other activities. Having regard to the situation in Hong Kong, we have grave concern on the use of the transporter on roads when it is mixed with other vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Mixing the transporter with other vehicular traffic and pedestrians will easily lead to accidents and may cause severe injury.

13. In view of above, we will not allow the use of the transporter on roads and private roads, including carriageways, car parks, footways and cycleways. Limited use under a permit granted by Transport Department with conditions on private premises where there is no other vehicular traffic and the pedestrian density is low may be considered and the applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The permit shall only be granted if it is clear that road safety would not be adversely affected.

LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS RELATING TO LIGHTING, REFLECTORS AND MARKINGS OF VEHICLES (paragraph 1(c) above)

14. The change in technology has widened the gap between the provisions in Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374A) (the Regulations) and the latest international standards in automotive lighting design. Drafting of the legislative amendments to update the provisions of the Regulations is underway. We will consult the Panel before the legislation is tabled at LegCo for negative vetting.

ADVICE SOUGHT

15. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
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