

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

Public Bus Services Ordinance
(Chapter 230)

PUBLIC BUS FRANCHISEES' SCHEDULE OF ROUTES ORDERS

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the Executive Council on 19 February 2008, the Council **ADVISED** and the Chief Executive **ORDERED** that the Schedule of Routes Orders* (“the Orders”) should be made under section 5(1) of the Public Bus Services Ordinance for Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited, Citybus Limited, New World First Bus Services Limited, New Lantao Bus Company (1973) Limited and Long Win Bus Company Limited, to formalise their service changes introduced during the period between 4 May 2006 and 2 December 2007.

JUSTIFICATIONS

2. The service changes have been made to better serve the travelling public and to improve the efficiency of bus operation. They should be formalised to ensure the continued provision of these services.

THE ORDERS

3. The following changes to the services of the five franchised bus companies were introduced under section 15(1) of the Ordinance between 4 May 2006 and 2 December 2007, with the agreement of the franchised bus companies concerned -

* Note : The Schedule of Routes Orders are available for Members’ inspection at the Legislative Council Secretariat.

- (a) Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited introduced two new routes, cancelled six routes and made alterations to 196 routes;
- (b) Citybus Limited operates two bus franchises. The company introduced two new routes, cancelled three routes and made alterations to 30 routes in respect of its franchise for Hong Kong Island and cross-harbour bus services. The company also made alterations to 12 routes in respect of its franchise for North Lantau and Chek Lap Kok Airport bus services;
- (c) New World First Bus Services Limited introduced four new routes and made alterations to 31 routes;
- (d) New Lantao Bus Company (1973) Limited introduced two new routes, cancelled one route and made alterations to six routes; and
- (e) Long Win Bus Company Limited made alterations to 11 routes.

In making these changes, we had regard to our policy objective to rationalise bus services on busy corridors to help relieve traffic congestion and improve air quality, whilst ensuring that demand for bus services would be appropriately met. These changes are now proposed to be specified in the Orders.

LEGISLATIVE TIMETABLE

4. The legislative timetable is as follows –

Publication in the Gazette	29 February 2008
Tabling at the Legislative Council	5 March 2008
Commencement	1 May 2008

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

5. The proposal is in conformity with the Basic Law, including the provisions concerning human rights, and does not affect the current binding effect of the Ordinance. The economic implication of the proposal as advised by Government Economist is set out in the **Annex**. The proposal has no productivity, financial or civil service implications. It does not have any major environmental or sustainability implications.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

6. The District Councils concerned were consulted on the major service changes before the changes were introduced under section 15(1) of the Ordinance. They generally supported the changes which have been implemented.

PUBLICITY

7. The brief is issued for Legislative Council Members' reference.

BACKGROUND

8. Under section 5(1) of the Ordinance, the Chief Executive in Council may grant any registered company the right to operate a public bus service on such routes as he specifies by order. The routes so specified form the franchised bus networks of the relevant bus franchises.

9. The franchised bus network needs to be adjusted from time to time to meet the changing transport needs of the community. Section 15(1) of the Ordinance provides that the Commissioner for Transport may, after consultation with the bus companies, require them to introduce new routes and make alterations to specified routes on a temporary basis where appropriate. Such changes may take effect for a period up to 24 months (the relevant period) only unless they are specified in the Orders made by the Chief Executive in Council under section 5(1) of the Ordinance before expiry of the relevant period.

10. The existing Orders were approved by the Chief Executive in Council in June 2006 formalising changes to bus routes up to end April 2006. It is now necessary to make new Orders to enable the service changes

introduced between 4 May 2006 and 2 December 2007 to continue to take effect.

ENQUIRIES

11. Any enquiries concerning this brief can be directed to the following officer -

Mr Anthony Loo
Assistant Commissioner for Transport
Tel No.: 2829 5212

Transport and Housing Bureau
February 2008

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

New Schedule of Routes Orders would be made to formalise the bus service changes introduced during the period between 4 May 2006 and 2 December 2007. Such changes were made to better serve the travelling public and to improve the efficiency of bus operation and some of the changes have helped relieve traffic congestion. Formalising these changes would give positive economic benefits to the public and the bus companies.

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