

**For Discussion
on 26 June 2009**

**Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Safety of Taxi Drivers and Installation of Safety Devices in Taxis**

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the number of cases involving assault on and robbery of taxi drivers and the installation of safety devices in taxis.

Cases Involving Assault on and Robbery of Taxi Drivers

2. According to information provided by the Police, the numbers of cases involving assault on and robbery of taxi drivers in 2007, 2008 and 2009 (from January to May) are as follows:

	2007	2008	2009 (Jan to May)
Cases of assault on taxi drivers	18	23	7
Cases of robbery of taxi drivers	38	23	10
Total	56	46	17

3. The Crime Prevention Bureau of the Police has met with the taxi trade to present to them information about installation of safety devices in taxis and relevant legislation. The Police also provided information to the trade on robbery black spots to promote greater vigilance among taxi drivers for crime prevention.

Installation of Safety Devices in Taxis

Anti-robbery Transparent Plastic Partition

4. The Transport Department (TD) has no objection in principle to the installation of anti-robbery transparent plastic partition inside taxis. In

February 2009, an installation guideline was issued to the taxi trade. Details are as follows:

- (a) the plastic partition has to be securely mounted in the compartment to minimise any displacement or deformation under normal operating conditions of the taxi;
- (b) edges or flanges of the plastic partition have to be wrapped with soft materials, leaving no sharp edges or corners; and
- (c) the fee tray (if any) of the partition has to be wrapped properly with soft materials along the rim.

5. The taxi trade may decide on their own whether or not the plastic partition should be installed. Some taxis have already been fitted with such device. During the inspections of taxi vehicles, TD would examine the plastic partition to ensure compliance with specified standards.

Closed Circuit Television System

6. Some members of the trade proposed in public to install closed circuit television (CCTV) systems inside taxis for the purpose of crime prevention. Since the suggestion involves issues concerning passengers' privacy, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong (PCPD) expressed its views in public in February 2009 that it did not support the proposal of installing CCTV inside taxis. It considered that such act was very privacy intrusive. Even though the proposal was for the prevention of crime, PCPD was of the view that other less privacy intrusive alternatives should first be considered.

Radio System

7. Taxi drivers would usually keep in contact with radio call centers through radio systems inside taxis. We understand that some of the radio call centers would communicate with their members through established code signals, so that drivers could seek assistance from radio call centers via radio systems when needed.

8. Members are invited to note the above information.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
Transport Department
June 2009**