

Panel on Transport

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 24 November 2008)

Proposed timing for discussion

1. Hong Kong – Zhuhai - Macao Bridge

Proposed by the Administration. The Administration plans to seek funding support for launching the preliminary design for the Main Bridge of the Hong Kong – Zhuhai Macao Bridge (HZMB).

December 2008

As proposed by Ir Dr Raymond HO at the meeting on 14 October 2008, members may wish to request the Administration to include in the paper on the above financial proposal details on the latest development in the planning and implementation of HZMB, in particular its Hong Kong landing point and connecting roads.

2. Proposed creation of two Chief Engineer posts in the Highways Department

Proposed by the Administration. The proposal is to create one Chief Engineer (D1) post in the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Project Management Office; and one Chief Engineer (D1) post in the Railway Development Office to work on the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou- Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Shatin to Central Link.

December 2008

3. Proposed creation of one permanent Principal Transport Officer post in the Management and Paratransit Branch of Transport Department

Proposed by the Administration. The proposal is to create one permanent Principal Transport Officer post in the Management and Paratransit Branch (MPB) of the Transport Department to deal with increasingly complex issues relating to taxi services, ferry services, and transport services for people with disabilities with a view to ensuring proper and efficient operation of the paratransit services so as to better meet the public demand.

December 2008

Proposed timing for discussion

4. PWP Item 6720TH – Widening of Tolo Highway/Fanling Highway between Island House Interchange and Fanling – Stage 1

Proposed by the Administration. The Administration plans to submit funding application for upgrading part of the project for construction (>\$500 million) to the Public Works Subcommittee in December 2008.

December 2008

5. PWP Item 6746TH - Reconstruction and improvement of Tuen Mun Road

Proposed by the Administration. The Administration plans to submit funding application to the Public Works Subcommittee in April 2009 for increasing the approved project estimate to cater for the higher-than-expected tender price due to the recent significant drastic increase in the price of major construction materials.

1st Quarter 2009

6. PWP Item 6819TH - Traffic improvements to Tuen Mun Road Town Centre section

Proposed by the Administration. The Administration plans to submit funding application for upgrading the project to Category A for construction (>\$500 million) to the Public Works Subcommittee in April 2009. Timing of discussion is subject to the objection handling progress of the gazetted road scheme.

1st Quarter 2009

7. Regulation of charging taxi fares according to meters

When the Subcommittee on Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2008 scrutinized the Amendment Regulation, members expressed concern that the existing legislation and enforcement could not provide sufficient deterrence against fare bargaining, and urged the Administration to put in place legislative provisions to ensure payment of metered fares.

By May 2009

At the Subcommittee's request, the Administration undertook to study overseas experience regarding the regulation of charging taxi fares according to meters, engage the taxi trade through the Transport Department's taxi conferences to understand more their views and concerns, and report the outcomes of the above

Proposed timing for discussion

to the Panel in six months' time.

8. Proposed creation of one permanent Principal Transport Officer post in the Bus and Rail Branch of Transport Department

Proposed by the Administration. The proposal is to create one permanent Principal Transport Officer post in the Railway Division of the Bus and Railway Branch of the Transport Department to enhance both its planning function in connection with new railways and its monitoring of railway operations.

2nd Quarter 2009

9. MTR Corporation Limited's commitment not to increase fares

Proposed by the Chairman. Noting that the effective period of MTRCL's commitment not to increase fares would expire in June 2009 and the current economic downturn, the Chairman would like to discuss with MTRCL concerns in this regard.

Before June 2009

10. PWP Item 6579TH - Central – Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link

Proposed by the Administration. Timing of discussion is subject to the objection handling progress of the gazetted road scheme and the progress of the relevant judicial review.

To be confirmed

11. Sha Tin New Town, stage 2 - Trunk Road T4

Proposed by the Administration. The Traffic and Transport Committee of Sha Tin District Council passed a motion requesting Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) to put on hold the project until after the commissioning of Trunk Road T3 and Route 8. Trunk Road T3 and Route 8 (Cheung Sha Wan to Sha Tin) were opened in March 2008. CEDD and the concerned department will examine the actual traffic flow and review the need for the project. Funding application would not be submitted in the 2008-2009 session.

To be confirmed

Proposed timing for discussion

12. Vehicle maintenance requirements on non-franchised bus operators

Proposed by Mr LAU Kwong-wah. When the Panel discussed "Enhancement of the safety of long downhill roads" at the meeting on 30 June 2008, Mr LAU stressed the need to ensure the vehicle examination frequency of non-franchised bus operators was comparable to that of franchised buses. He requested the Administration to follow up the vehicle maintenance requirements on non-franchised bus operators, and report back on the developments in the 2008-2009 legislative session.

To be confirmed

13. Policy on the provision of escalators by the Government in public areas

Proposed by Mr KAM Nai-wai at the meeting on 14 October 2008. Highlighting the hilly terrain of many districts in Hong Kong, he would like to be briefed on the policy on the provision of escalator link/elevator system for an uphill area to facilitate accessibility and provide convenience to pedestrians.

To be confirmed

14. Operation of outlying island ferry services

Proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing and Mr IP Wai-ming at the meeting on 14 October 2008. In consideration of the great difficulty in operating outlying island ferry services due to high fuel cost and shrinking island populations, the members saw a need to follow up measures to tackle the difficulties, so as to enhance the financial viability of the services while keeping fare and service levels reasonable.

To be confirmed

15. Safety of reversing goods vehicle

Proposed by Mr Andrew CHENG. Last discussed at the meetings on 24 October 2006 and 25 May 2007. Mr CHENG would like to follow up progress in this regard after the two meetings.

The Administration will provide an information paper to brief members on the related matters

Proposed timing for discussion

16. Regulation of cargo compartments casually placed at roadsides

Proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing. He was concerned about the safety risks caused by cargo compartments for storing construction wastes casually placed at roadsides. He took the view that proper enforcement actions and legislative measures should be put in place to ensure that the contractors concerned would install flashlights, lighting systems or other appropriate devices, so that at night or under poor lighting conditions, motorists could be made aware of such compartments being placed at roadsides in order to ensure road safety.

The Administration will provide an information paper to brief members on the related matters

17. Exemption from regulation 53(2) of the Road Traffic (Traffic Control) Regulations (Cap. 374 sub. leg. G) for vehicles used for canvassing activities

At the Subcommittee to Study Four Items of Subsidiary Legislation under the Road Traffic Ordinance, some members of the Subcommittee considered that the Administration should take a broader view and the proposed Amendment Regulations should aim at facilitating not only the float parades to be held at the Hong Kong Disneyland but also canvassing activities during elections. The Administration was of the view that the safety requirements for standing passengers on such vehicles went beyond the ambit of the then legislative amendments, but the Administration undertook to separately examine this proposal in detail.

The Administration will provide an information paper to brief members on the related matters

18. Review of public light bus operations

Proposed by Mr Albert CHAN. In consideration of the recent media reports on triad infiltration in public light bus operations, Mr CHAN would like to review with the Administration measures to tackle the problem and other monitoring issues relating to red minibus (RMB) operations, as well as the progress of work in respect of the conversion of RMB to green minibus operations. When this item is discussed, members may wish to refer to the report of the study entitled "Strategic Review of Public Light Buses in Hong Kong" circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1983/06-07 on 25 June 2007.

An information paper was provided to the Panel on 27 June 2008 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2062/07-08(01).

Proposed timing for discussion

19. Design of control boxes attached to traffic light poles at pedestrian crossings

Proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing. He would like the Administration to conduct an overall review of the design of control boxes attached to traffic light poles and electronic audible traffic signal installations at pedestrian crossings. He also calls on the Administration to adopt a standardized design of such facilities to facilitate use by persons with disabilities.

An information paper was provided to the Panel on 17 June 2008 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1936/07-08(01).

At the meeting on 30 October 2007, members agreed that in the paper to be prepared for this item, the Administration should also address public concerns about the Transport Department's plan to demolish the countdown devices presently installed at pedestrian crossings of 15 locations.

20. Legislative amendments relating to lighting, reflectors and markings of vehicles

Drafting of the legislative amendments is underway. The Administration will consult the Panel before the legislation is tabled at LegCo for negative vetting.

An information paper was provided to the Panel on 17 June 2008 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1936/07-08(01).

21. Measures to enhance the safety awareness of pedestrians

Proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing to highlight the importance of preventing traffic accidents arising from pedestrians listening to MP3 while crossing the road. In this regard, Mr WONG would like to know whether the Transport Department has collected any statistics on such traffic accidents.

An information paper was provided to the Panel on 17 June 2008 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1936/07-08(02).

Proposed timing for discussion

22. Staff-related matters arising from the merger exercise

Proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing. The Panel would like to follow up in the 2008-2009 legislative session the submission on staff-related matters arising from the merger exercise from Hong Kong Railway Workers General Union and Hong Kong Railway Employees Union issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2049/07-08(01) on 26 June 2008.

The Administration's reply to the unions has been circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2308/07-08 on 23 September 2008.

23. Review of recent bus fire incidents

Proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing. In the wake of the fire that broke out at a Kowloon Motor Bus depot in Tin Shui Wai on 31 March 2008 and earlier incidents of fire breaking out on buses running on the roads, Mr WONG and the Chairman are keen to ensure proper bus maintenance to prevent such incidents, and the availability of sound measures to facilitate safe evacuation of passengers from a bus on fire.

An information paper was provided to the Panel on 20 June 2008 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1986/07-08.