

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Enhancement of Professional Drivers' Safety and Health Awareness

Purpose

This paper briefs Members of a campaign which the Administration will be launching to enhance the safety and health awareness of professional drivers¹.

Background

2. Over the years, the Administration has been putting in much effort in enhancing and promoting road safety. To this end, the Administration has improved road infrastructure and facilities, introduced legislative means, stepped up law enforcement, and organised publicity and education programmes. Through the joint efforts of the Administration and various sectors of the community, the total number of traffic accidents has reduced by 3% from about 15 020 cases in 2004 to about 14 580 cases in 2008. The number of fatal and serious accidents have also shown a reduction of 16% from about 2 680 cases in 2004 to about 2 240 cases in 2008.

3. Notwithstanding the above, there has been public concern about the occurrence of serious incidents from time to time involving professional drivers. In addition, there are also concerns about the health condition of professional drivers. According to the records of the Transport Department ("TD"), driver contributory factors account for more than 50% of the total number of involvements in traffic accidents. These contributory factors include driving too close to vehicle in front, careless lane changing, turning right/left negligently, starting a vehicle negligently, swerving/stopping suddenly to avoid collision, etc. Further, although relatively small in number, on average 9 accidents per year (ranging from 3 to 13 accidents a year) in the past five years were caused by the sudden illness of drivers.

¹ Professional drivers refer to drivers by profession, including those driving franchised buses, public light buses, taxis, non-franchised buses, school private light buses (i.e. nanny vans) and goods vehicles.

4. In the light of the above, TD plans to launch a new round of education and publicity programme to raise the safety and health awareness of professional drivers with a view to enhancing road safety for the benefits of the general travelling public as well as the drivers themselves.

Current Efforts of the Transport Department in Enhancing the Safety and Health Awareness of Professional Drivers

5. TD places great emphasis on the training and education of professional drivers to enhance their safety and health awareness and instill in them proper driving behaviour. Measures currently in place to achieve this include the following:

- (a) providing assistance and expert advice for developing training courses under the Skill Upgrading Scheme for professional drivers. Safe driving behaviour, proper driving attitudes and occupational health tips are included as key components of these courses. The Administration subsidises 70% of the course fee. Since 2004, about 2 100 professional drivers have attended these courses;
- (b) organising safety seminars, talks, workshops and exhibitions for professional drivers to update them on the latest road safety requirements, new legislation relating to traffic offences and road safety, and occupational health information. Since 2005, about 6 200 professional drivers have attended these activities; and
- (c) introducing driver improvement courses to instill a stronger sense of road safety and a better understanding of good driving behaviour. We also introduced legislative amendments to the Road Traffic Ordinance and the Road Traffic (Driving Offence-Points) (“DOP”) Ordinance to require traffic offenders who have accumulated 10 or more Driving Offence Points under the DOP Ordinance within a period of two years, or persons convicted of serious traffic offences such as dangerous driving, drink driving, driving in excess of speed limit by more than 45 km per hour,

etc., to attend driving improvement course on mandatory basis.

6. The Administration also disseminates road safety messages through road safety bulletins, newsletters for different transport trades, radio / TV APIs, and other publicity materials. Health messages are included in some of these publicity materials. In addition, TD organised free health check for taxi drivers in 2007, with about 400 taxi drivers joining the health check.

“Safe Driving and Health Campaign for Professional Drivers”

7. To further focus the attention of professional drivers on the importance of safe driving attitude and good health condition, TD plans to launch a “Safe Driving and Health Campaign for Professional Drivers” from December 2009 to April 2010 (“the Campaign”).

8. The Campaign will be composed of three major elements, namely publicity, health check and safety seminars. TD has appointed through normal tendering procedures, a radio station to assist in organising the Campaign. The Campaign will start with a launching ceremony to be held on 29 December 2009. A series of publicity activities including radio APIs on road safety, interviews with professional drivers to disseminate messages and share knowledge on safe driving and health tips, and commendation of good drivers, etc. will be arranged in the following four months.

9. Further, we have engaged non-governmental organisations (“NGO”) to help organise “Health Check Days” in January 2010 for professional drivers. The “Health Check Days” will provide health check on, for example Body Mass Index, body fat percentage, blood pressure, total Cholesterol and Plasma Glucose measurements, etc. There will also be exhibition of health messages at the venues. This event will be held at five different locations to facilitate more drivers to participate conveniently.

10. TD will also organise 11 safety seminars for professional drivers. These seminars will be designed to suit the need of frontline drivers from

different transport trades with reference to the different operating characteristics of the transport trades. The aim of the seminars is to refresh and strengthen their awareness of good driving manner and habits.

11. Planned activities of the Campaign are at the **Annex**.

Liaison with the Transport Trades

12. TD will liaise closely with the relevant transport trade associations during various stages of the Campaign to encourage more frontline professional drivers to participate in the Campaign.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to note the content of this Paper.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
December 2009**

Safe Driving and Health Campaign for Professional Drivers

Date	Activities
15 December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion at Transport Panel on the Safe Driving and Health Campaign for Professional Drivers
Pre-29 December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liaison with transport trades and other relevant parties ● Publicity on the Campaign and the Launching Ceremony
29 December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launching Ceremony of the Safe Driving and Health Campaign for Professional Drivers
January 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health Check Days ● Distribution of booklets about safe driving and health tips
January – February 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadcasting of education messages on safe driving ● Phone-in games on safe driving ● Radio commendation of safe and healthy drivers ● Safety driving tips ● Transport Safety Days
January – April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Road safety seminars