

立法會
Legislative Council

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by the Administration)

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Panel on Transport

Minutes of meeting held on
Thursday, 5 January 2012, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

- Members present** : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo (Chairman)
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
- Members absent** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

**Public Officers
attending**

: Agenda item III

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Miss Petty LAI Chun-yee
Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) 6
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr LEUNG Tak-fai
Assistant Commissioner/Technical Service
Transport Department

Mr LI Chi-chiu
Chief Engineer/Traffic Control
Transport Department

Mr Stephen Harvey VERRALLS
Chief Superintendent of Police (Traffic)
Hong Kong Police Force

Ms Angela NG Ho-chun
Senior Superintendent of Police
(Administration) (Traffic Branch Headquarters)
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr Ernest CHU Man-lung
Chief Inspector of Police (Law Revision &
Projects) (Traffic Branch Headquarters)
Hong Kong Police Force

Agenda item IV

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Edward TO W H
Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)5
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr TSANG King-man
Assistant Director/Development
Highways Department

Mr LUK Wing-cheong
Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West
Transport Department

Agenda item V

Mr Edward TO W H
Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)5
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr CHUI Wing-wah
Assistant Director/Technical
Highways Department

Mr Paul NG K W
Chief Land Surveyor
Highways Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Macy NG
Senior Council Secretary (1)2

Ms Emily LIU
Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

- I Information papers issued since last meeting**
- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| (LC Paper No. - | Submission from a member of the public on MTR's Student Travel Scheme |
| CB(1)515/11-12(01) | |
| LC Paper No. - | Administration's response to a further submission from a member of the public on tram waiting kiosk at Queensway |
| CB(1)705/11-12(01) | |

Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

II Items for discussion at the next meeting scheduled for 6 February 2012

(LC Paper No. - List of outstanding items for
CB(1)723/11-12(01) discussion
LC Paper No. - List of follow-up actions)
CB(1)723/11-12(02)

2. Members agreed to discuss the following issues proposed by the Administration at the next regular meeting on Monday, 6 February 2012 at 4:30 pm –

- (a) use of electric vehicles on expressways;
- (b) trade licence; and
- (c) improvement on emergency crossings on major roads.

III Expansion of the Red Light Camera System, Phase 4

(LC Paper No. - Administration's paper entitled
CB(1)723/11-12(03) "Expansion of the Red Light Camera
System, Phase 4")

3. The Under Secretary for Transport and Housing (USTH) briefed members on the Administration's paper proposing to create a new commitment of \$48.135 million to expand the existing red light camera system by installing 40 additional digital red light cameras at 40 new locations throughout the territory. The Administration planned to seek the Finance Committee (FC)'s funding approval in April 2012 to implement the proposal.

Discussion

Cost-effectiveness of the current proposal

4. Ms LI Fung-ying noted that since the introduction of an increase in the fixed penalty fine in 2006 for offences of failure to comply with traffic signals and the Phase 3 expansion of the red light camera system, there had been a reduction in the numbers of traffic accidents and prosecutions. She asked why the number of casualties had, on the contrary, increased by some 80 in 2010 when compared with 2009. Pointing out that the additional annual

recurrent expenditure for operating the new red light cameras would be about \$10.111 million, she asked whether the Administration had reviewed the cost-effectiveness of the measure and whether it would consider increasing the fixed penalty fine for offences of failure to comply with traffic signals. She also enquired about the drivers of which vehicles types were more often found to have jumped the red light.

5. USTH responded that the number of casualties had increased because there had been more traffic accidents involving vehicles with large passenger capacity. As regards the fixed penalty fine, USTH said that the Administration had no plan to increase the fine, and the Administration was confident that the red light camera system would be an effective tool to deter red light jumping. USTH advised that about 90% of red light jumping cases were detected by the red light camera system. He added that statistics showed that there were a number of red light jumping cases involving buses and public light buses last year. The Administration would strengthen public education and publicity with more emphasis on vehicles with large passenger capacity.

Locations proposed for installing the additional digital red light cameras

6. In response to Ms Miriam LAU's enquiry, USTH said that currently traffic lights were installed at about 1 800 road junctions. With the proposed addition of 40 digital red light cameras, it would add up to a total of 195 signalised junctions installed with such facilities. Ms Miriam LAU considered the number of red light cameras (195) inadequate, compared with a total of 1 800 road junctions with traffic lights. She suggested that all major road junctions should be installed with red light cameras to provide greater deterrent effect and to minimise disputes between drivers and the Police during the enforcement against offences of red light jumping.

7. Ms Miriam LAU further asked about the criteria for the selection of the 40 signalised road junctions for installation of the proposed additional red light cameras. USTH replied that the 40 signalised road junctions were drawn up having regard to the following factors –

- (a) accident records, with particular attention to accidents involving drivers disobeying traffic signals;
- (b) prevalence of red light jumping activities;
- (c) the need for an even distribution of red light camera locations to provide a territory-wide deterrent effect; and

- (d) preliminary assessment of the suitability of the location for installing red light camera.

8. USTH further said that the Administration would adopt a multi-pronged approach to combat red light jumping, which included strengthening public education and expanding the red light camera system. As to the suggestion of installing the cameras at all signalised junctions, USTH said that this would give rise to substantial cost implications and would have to be further studied.

9. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked whether the locations proposed for installing the additional red light cameras had covered all traffic accident blacksites. USTH explained that according to the criteria of the Transport Department (TD), any location with six or more pedestrian injury accidents in the past year; or with nine or more injury accidents in the past year; or with two or more fatal traffic accidents in the past five years would be classified as a traffic accident blacksite. USTH said that although there were some 1 800 signalised road junctions, not all of them were traffic accident blacksites. He said that as at September 2011, there were 78 traffic accident blacksites. Of the 40 locations proposed for installing the new red light cameras under the expansion project, 23 were road junctions which were either current or former traffic accident blacksites. He stressed that the number and locations of traffic accident blacksites actually changed from time to time. In addition, the occurrence of traffic accidents was attributed to many factors, and red light jumping was just one of them. As such, whether a road junction was a traffic accident blacksite was not solely determined by the number of accidents caused by red light jumping at the junction, but the number of all types of traffic accidents. In other words, road junctions with higher frequency of red light jumping were not necessarily traffic accident blacksites.

10. The Chairman agreed with Ms Miriam LAU that the number of red light cameras was far from adequate. He considered that owing to economy of scale, the capital cost involved might not be substantial if more of the signalised road junctions (say, 900) were installed with red light cameras. He also suggested that the Administration should consider installing vacant camera housings first to facilitate expeditious installation of red light cameras in future when the need arose. Noting that all the proposed 40 new red light cameras would only be commissioned by March 2015, the Chairman requested the Administration to expedite the installation process as far as possible. The Chairman also called for the Administration to consider installing vacant camera housings at the remaining traffic accident blacksites.

Feasibility of using portable red light cameras for enforcement

11. Mr Ronny TONG concurred with the Chairman that vacant camera housings should be installed. He also asked whether the Administration had explored the feasibility of using portable red light cameras for enforcement.

12. The Assistant Commissioner/Technical Service of TD (AC/TS) responded that unlike mobile speed enforcement devices (commonly known as "laser gun"), there were technical limitations in the use of portable or mobile red light camera systems. He further explained that most of the red light camera systems relied on induction loops embedded in the road surface as sensors to detect vehicles, and these loops had to be linked up with the traffic signal system to ascertain whether the vehicle had jumped a red light. There were technical issues such as how to set up and calibrate the sensors accurately within a short period of time. He further said that detailed adjustments and other complicated procedures were needed every time after setting up the camera to ensure that the camera could capture, for use as evidence, clear images of the red light jumping vehicle and the relevant traffic signals. As such, the use of mobile red light cameras was not considered practicable.

13. USTH and the Chief Superintendent of Police (Traffic) supplemented that the Administration would not solely rely on the red light cameras to detect red light jumping. When additional signalised road junctions were identified to be suitable for installing red light cameras but such facility was not immediately available, police officers could take the relevant prosecution actions manually.

Miscellaneous

14. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the colour of camera housings and whether amber light jumping was an offence. AC/TS said that all camera housings were coloured orange and were equipped with a camera. As regards amber light jumping, AC/TS said that under the Road Traffic (Traffic Control) Regulations (Cap. 374G), drivers had to stop their vehicles when amber light signal was on, except in the case where the vehicle was so close to the stop line or light signal that it could not safely be stopped before passing it.

15. Ms Miriam LAU asked why the Administration did not pursue installing vehicular countdown device (VCDD) before the signals turned amber. AC/TS said that review had been conducted by the Administration on adoption of VCDDs in Hong Kong. Overseas studies and trials revealed

that VCDDs might increase the risk of head-rear collision due to motorists' different responses to the information displayed. Furthermore, such devices were incompatible with the computerised traffic control systems with adaptive control function. He supplemented that some overseas countries and some cities in the Mainland had dismantled their VCDDs due to the aforementioned reasons.

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16. Summing up, the Chairman said that the Panel supported in principle the funding proposal and submission of it to FC for further discussion in April 2012. He also asked the Administration to provide supplementary information, if any, to address members' concern about the locations of the proposed cameras and on the feasibility of using portable red light cameras for enforcement.

(Post-meeting note: A supplementary information paper provided by the Administration was issued to Members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1426/11-12(01).)

IV Improvement to Pok Oi Interchange

(LC Paper No. - Administration's paper entitled CB(1)723/11-12(04) "798TH — Improvement to Pok Oi Interchange")

17. USTH briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper on the improvement to Pok Oi Interchange and the Administration's funding application to be made to the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) and Finance Committee to upgrade the project to Category A at an estimated cost of \$264.8 million in money-of-the-day prices. Details of the project scope were set out in paragraph 2(a) – (h) of the Administration's paper under discussion.

18. With the aid of power-point, the Assistant Director/Development (AD/D) of Highways Department (HyD) briefed members on the proposed works and the justifications. He pointed out that with the future development of Yuen Long Town, it was anticipated that the traffic congestion problem at Pok Oi Roundabout (the Roundabout) would be further aggravated. If the proposed improvement works could not be timely implemented, the congestion problem would become more serious. AD/D advised that upon completion of the proposed improvement works in 2015, traffic from Sheung Shui (via San Tin Highway) and Kowloon (via Tai Lam Tunnel) heading for Yuen Long South and traffic from Yuen Long South heading for Sheung Shui and Kowloon (via Tai Lam Tunnel) could bypass the

Roundabout using the new southbound and northbound slip roads respectively. With a reduction in the number of vehicles using the Roundabout, persistent traffic queues at both northern and southern approach roads of the Roundabout would no longer occur, thereby shortening the journey time for traffic to route through the Roundabout by as much as eight minutes. The proposed improvement works would also provide sufficient reserve capacity for the Roundabout to cope with the anticipated traffic growth in the area.

Discussion

19. While expressing support for the proposed works to improve the traffic at Pok Oi Interchange, Ms Miriam LAU was concerned about whether the construction works would further aggravate the congestion problem in the area. She asked about the measures to be taken to alleviate the traffic impact during implementation of the proposed improvement works.

20. AD/D advised that the number of traffic lanes at Yuen Long Highway and the Roundabout would not be reduced at peak hours during implementation of the improvement works. The temporary traffic arrangements would not induce additional traffic impact. Ms Miriam LAU suggested that consideration should be given to carrying out the improvement works at night in order to minimize the traffic impact. The Administration noted Ms LAU's suggestion.

21. Noting that the project scope included installation of noise barriers (along the southern approach road of the Roundabout) for the purpose of mitigating noise impact on two schools planned to be built in the vicinity, Ms Miriam LAU asked when the schools concerned would be built. AD/D responded that a site near the location of the proposed noise barriers had been reserved for building two schools. The construction date of the planned schools, however, had yet to be confirmed. In response to Ms LAU's further enquiry, AD/D said that the estimated cost of \$13.2 million for the item "noise barriers" comprised the costs of the foundation works and construction works for all the proposed noise barriers for the project. Nevertheless, for the proposed noise barriers near the planned schools, the Administration's present plan was to carry out the necessary foundation works only. The installation of noise barriers would not be carried out until the Education Bureau (EDB) had confirmed the construction plan for the schools concerned. USTH and AD/D assured members that the provisions for the installation works of the noise barriers would not be used if there was no concrete plan to provide the schools concerned. Ms Miriam LAU, however, considered that the Administration should seek funding approval for installation of the noise

barriers only after EDB had confirmed the construction of the schools. The Chairman also shared Ms LAU's view that it was inappropriate at the present stage to request LegCo to approve funding for the installation of the noise barriers which might not be needed if the school construction plan was scrapped eventually.

Admin

22. USTH explained that the Administration was obliged to implement the measures recommended in the approved Environmental Impact Assessment report for the project, including the provision of noise barriers for nearby planned schools. It was therefore necessary to secure funding for the installation of noise barriers as proposed in the paper. Noting the Administration's explanation, Ms Miriam LAU said that the foundation works for the noise barriers should be carried out first, to be followed by installation of noise barriers only when there was a concrete plan to build the schools. She requested the Administration to make it clear that such an approach would be adopted for provision of the noise barriers in the relevant paper to be submitted to PWSC.

Admin

23. The Chairman also requested the Administration to provide, in the paper to be submitted to PWSC, a breakdown of the estimate of \$13.2 million and to confirm that the funding applied for the installation of the noise barriers would not be used if the school construction plan remained uncertain. The Administration was also requested to ascertain when it would be known whether the funding for the installation of the noise barriers, if approved to be granted, would be used or not. USTH agreed to follow up.

24. Summing up, the Chairman said that the Panel supported in principle the funding proposal and submission of it to PWSC for further discussion in February 2012.

V Application of latest surveying technologies in major road works

(LC Paper No. - Administration's paper entitled
CB(1)723/11-12(05) "Applications of latest surveying
technologies in major road works"

LC Paper No. FS11/11-12 - Fact sheet entitled "Use of global
positioning system and
three-dimensional laser scanning in
road works" prepared by the
Legislative Council Secretariat)

25. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)⁵ briefed members on the Administration's paper on the applications of latest surveying technologies on

road construction and maintenance works in the HyD, including global positioning system (GPS), automatic monitoring survey system (AMSS) and three-dimensional laser scanning. With the aid of power-point, the Chief Land Surveyor of HyD briefed members on these latest surveying technologies used in major road works.

26. In response to the Chairman and Mr Jeffrey LAM, the Assistant Director/Technical of HyD (AD/T) said that the deployment of the aforementioned surveying technologies for road design, construction and maintenance had brought about obvious improvements to surveying accuracy, operation efficiency and personnel safety, which were difficult to achieve with conventional surveying techniques. He further said that Lands Department had also been playing a prominent role in applying the GPS technology for land surveying purpose in Hong Kong. As regards laser scanning, he understood that similar technology had been used for detecting structural problems, e.g. cracks, of buildings in other jurisdiction but such application was still in its early stage.

27. Ms Miriam LAU expressed support for the use of advanced technologies for surveying purpose. However, she queried the need to use GPS to collect asset information on street furniture such as lamp posts, street name plates and manhole covers, as the Administration should have the relevant records in hand.

28. AD/T said that although GPS was not the only way to collect asset information, in some circumstances such as when manhole covers being situated in the middle of a road, adoption of conventional surveying technologies might entail the need to temporarily closing a portion of the road for a longer time to facilitate collection of data by conventional surveying methods. With the adoption of GPS, time and manpower used for the surveying work would be largely reduced. He added that as there were a lot of road facilities and the locations of them might be changed over the years, the Administration would make use of GPS to crosscheck their records in hand with a view to ensuring the accuracy of the information.

29. Ms Miriam LAU further enquired about the actual use of laser scanning and AMSS. AD/T said that although laser scanning would be deployed to identify road surface defects such as road unevenness, it would not be used to detect minor variations on all the roads in Hong Kong. In respect of the application of AMSS, AD/T said that apart from monitoring retaining wall movements, AMSS was also used to facilitate monitoring of slopes and buildings, etc. He added that the advantages of AMSS were that it was highly accurate, and could automatically track many targets and take

angle and distance measurements in one go. In addition, since it was an automatic system, it would save much manpower to complete the survey within a comparable period of time when compared to using conventional methods.

30. In response to Ms Miriam LAU and the Chairman, AD/T said that the HyD had procured one set of AMSS and one set of laser scanner. The cost of each AMSS and laser scanner was about \$0.7 million and \$1.65 million respectively.

VI Any other business

31. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:10 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
25 May 2012