

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB (2)1919/13-14
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/SS/1/13

**Subcommittee on
Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2013**

**Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 29 October 2013, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 2A of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon YIU Si-wing
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Hon TANG Ka-piu
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

Members absent : Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

Public Officers attending : Item II
Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Andy CHAN
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) 2

Miss Carrie CHANG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport) 1

Mr Albert SU
Assistant Commissioner for Transport / Management and
Paratransit

Mr Dannis LEUNG
Chief Transport Officer / Planning / Taxi

Ms Mandy NG
Senior Government Counsel (Acting)

Clerk in attendance : Ms Maisie LAM
Chief Council Secretary (2) 5

Staff in attendance : Mr Stephen LAM
Assistant Legal Adviser 11

Ms Mina CHAN
Senior Council Secretary (2) 5

Ms Michelle LEE
Legislative Assistant (2) 5

Action

I. Election of Chairman (and Deputy Chairman)

Mr CHAN Kam-lam was elected Chairman of the Subcommittee on Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 ("the Subcommittee").

2. Members agreed that election of a Deputy Chairman of the Subcommittee was not required.

II. Meeting with the Administration

[L.N. 151 of 2013, File Ref: THB(T)L 3/3/5, LC Paper Nos. LS4/13-14 and CB(2)161/13-14(02)]

3. The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

Action

4. The Subcommittee had completed the scrutiny of the Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 ("the Amendment Regulation") and had no objection to the taxi fare adjustment proposals. Members agreed that the Subcommittee would give a verbal report on its deliberations to the House Committee on 1 November 2013. The Chairman reminded members that the deadline for giving notice of amendments, if any, to the Amendment Regulation was 6 November 2013.

III. Any other business

5. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:18 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
26 June 2014

**Proceedings of meeting of Subcommittee on
Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2013
held on Tuesday, 29 October 2013, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 2A of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker	Subject	Action Required
<i>Agenda item I: Election of Chairman (and Deputy Chairman)</i>			
000056 - 000224	Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Mr TANG Ka-piu Mr CHAN Kam-lam	Election of Chairman	
000225 - 000240	Chairman	Members' agreement that election of a Deputy Chairman was not required.	
<i>Agenda item II: Meeting with the Administration</i>			
000241 - 000516	Chairman Admin	Briefing by the Administration on the Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 ("the Amendment Regulation")	
000517 - 001053	Chairman Mr TANG Ka-piu Admin	<p>Mr TANG Ka-piu's enquiry about whether there were any cases where taxi owners had already increased taxi rental in anticipation of the proposed fare adjustments; and his concern about the impact of the proposed fare adjustment over the level of taxi licence premium.</p> <p>The Administration's response that -</p> <p>(a) about 65% of taxis were owned by individuals. Taxi rental was a commercial arrangement between drivers and owners and the level of the rental was determined by the market. Currently, the average taxi rental per shift for urban taxis ranged from \$350 to \$450. In June 2013, some major taxi owners openly indicated that they would not increase rental within three months after the fare adjustment took effect; and</p> <p>(b) the average taxi licence premium for urban taxis had dropped from about \$7.1 million in June 2013 to about \$6.8 million in September 2013.</p>	
001054 - 001606	Chairman Mr WONG Kwok-hing Admin	<p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing's enquiries about the details of taxi owners' indication of not increasing taxi rental within three month after the new fares took effect; and the progress of the Administration's study on taxi fuel surcharge.</p> <p>The Administration's response that -</p> <p>(a) a total of 13 taxi trade associations indicated on 19 June 2013 that they would not increase taxi rental within three months after the new fares took</p>	

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		<p>effect; and</p> <p>(b) the preference of the taxi trade was for the Government to first process the taxi fare increase applications according to the existing mechanism. The proposal of introducing a taxi fuel surcharge, which would have considerable policy and operational implications and was not supported by the current legislative framework, had to be considered carefully. The Administration would study overseas experience of implementing and not implementing a taxi fuel surcharge. The study was expected to take about 12 to 14 months to complete. The Administration would report to the Panel on Transport on the outcome of its study when ready.</p> <p>On Mr WONG Kwok-hing's suggestion of extending the scheme to relax the peak-hour and 7:00 am to 7:00 pm no-stopping restrictions ("NSR") on road with speed limits less than 70 kilometres per hour for taxis for another year and lifting the NSR period of 7:00 pm to 12:00 midnight, the Administration's response that the Transport Department ("TD") had all along maintained close communication with the taxi trade on various operational matters including NSR. TD would continue to liaise with the trade on any proposed relaxation arrangements, including those mentioned above.</p>	
001607 - 001914	Chairman Mr YIU Si-wing Admin	<p>Mr YIU Si-wing's enquiries as to whether consideration could be given to increasing the number of Lantau taxi licences to meet the service demand in relation to some major tourist facilities in North Lantau; and whether the Administration had discussed with the taxi trade measures to reduce the number of accidents involving taxis so as to lower insurance premium for taxis.</p> <p>The Administration's response that -</p> <p>(a) as observed by TD, the service demand of Lantau taxis could broadly be met during weekdays, whereas passenger waiting time might be longer during weekends and holidays. The Administration would continue to monitor the situation closely and was open to the issuance of new taxi licences as and when the need arose taking into account all relevant factors (including impacts on the trade, other transport modes and road network) in accordance with the established practice; and</p> <p>(b) the accident rates by distance travelled were not particularly high for taxis as compared to those of other vehicle types. TD would continue to</p>	

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		collaborate with the Police and taxi trade to promote road safety.	
001915 - 002208	Chairman Mr POON Siu-ping Admin	<p>In response to Mr POON Siu-ping's enquiry about how to determine a reasonable level of fare differential between taxis and other modes of public transport, the Administration's advice that the role of taxis was to provide a personalised point-to-point public transport service. Thus, it had all long been the Government's policy to encourage the use of mass public transport carriers and to maintain a reasonable fare differential between taxis and other modes of public transport in order to avoid excessive demand for taxi services and to ensure smooth traffic flow. In consultation with the Transport Advisory Committee, the Administration considered it appropriate to keep the fare differential between urban taxis and other public transport modes at a level of about five to seven times.</p> <p>Mr POON Siu-ping's concern about the ageing problem of taxi drivers, which was attributed to low income and absence of benefits; and the measures taken by the Administration to attract more young people to work as taxi drivers in order to sustain the development of the taxi trade.</p> <p>The Administration's advice that various industries were currently facing the problem of an ageing workforce. The Employees Retraining Board ("ERB") had organised courses to assist those who were interested in joining the taxi trade and provide subsidy for them to attend the Taxi Licence Test. The Administration would continue to collaborate with ERB to attract new blood to join the taxi trade.</p>	
002209 - 002436	Chairman Mr WU Chi-wai Admin	<p>Mr WU Chi-wai's enquiry as to whether consideration could be given to issuing time-limited taxi licences to cope with the surge in demand for taxi services in North Lantau during certain periods of time.</p> <p>The Administration's response that it would give due regard to the level of taxi service demand, operating environment of the taxi trade and the likely impact on other public transport modes and on the road network in considering whether any new taxi licences should be issued. The Administration had all along not ruled out the possibility of issuing new taxi licences as and when the need to do so arose. It would keep in view the views of various parties, including those of Legislative Council Members, on any related issues, including the number and terms of the licences. Mr WU Chi-wai's remark that the shortage of taxi services might be one of the reasons why the number of registered private cars had increase considerably over the past five to seven years.</p>	

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002437 - 002818	Chairman Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok Admin	<p>In response to Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok's enquiry about the reason of having a \$1 difference between the additional fares of the New Territories ("NT") taxis and those of urban and Lantau taxis for every article of baggage carried, every animal or bird carried and every hiring arranged through telephone booking, the Administration's advice that NT taxis had all along charged a lower level given their smaller operating area. In view of the increasing demand for taxi services by tourists, there were suggestions from the public and taxi trade of aligning the additional fares of the different types of taxis to avoid confusion.</p> <p>Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok's indication of no objection to the Amendment Regulation to maintain a reasonable fare differential between taxi and other public transport modes, as well as to align the levels of the additional fares of urban, NT and Lantau taxis.</p>	
002819 - 003207	Chairman Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan Admin	<p>Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan's enquiry as to whether consideration could be given to setting up more Liquefied Petroleum Gas ("LPG") filling stations in order to shorten the waiting time for filling.</p> <p>The Administration's response that there were currently a total of 62 LPG filling stations, including 12 dedicated ones and 50 non-dedicated ones. Due to the LPG price difference between dedicated and non-dedicated filling stations, taxi drivers preferred to refill at dedicated stations. The taxi trade had been encouraged to refill during non-peak hours to shorten the wait. In addition, the Administration would continue to try to identify suitable sites for LPG filling stations. Such attempts, however, would sometimes encounter local objections. It should be noted that the taxi trade was also trying out hybrid taxis and electric taxis. The Administration would continue to maintain communication with the trade regarding the introduction of taxis using different types of fuel to further enhance their operating environment.</p>	
003208 - 003816	Chairman Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Admin	<p>Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's view that any increase in income derived from the proposed fare adjustment would not entirely benefit the rentee-drivers if taxi rental was increased after its implementation.</p> <p>The Administration's reiteration that taxi rental was a commercial arrangement between drivers and owners and the level of the rental was determined by the market. The proposed fare adjustment had taken into account that the average monthly net income level earned by taxi drivers in real terms since the last fare increase in July 2011.</p> <p>Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's remark that the Administration</p>	

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		<p>should meet with the taxi trade three months after the implementation of fare adjustments to ascertain the impact so arising on the trade; and Mr TANG Ka-piu's view that the Administration should revert to the Panel on Transport on the operating conditions of the taxi trade after the implementation of fare adjustments as appropriate in due course.</p> <p>In response to Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's question as to whether consideration could be given to introducing a taxi fuel surcharge mechanism for taxis after the fare adjustments took effect, the Administration's response that it would study overseas experience of implementing and not implementing a taxi fuel surcharge after processing the taxi fare increase applications.</p>	
003817 - 004118	Chairman Mr TANG Ka-piu Admin	<p>In response to Mr TANG Ka-piu's enquiry about the Administration's efforts in identifying suitable sites for LPG filling stations and his view that more dedicated LPG filling stations should be provided on Lantau Island, the Administration's response that efforts had been and would continuously be made by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the Environmental Protection Department to expand the LPG filling network, particularly in the new development areas, as the circumstances might permit.</p> <p>Mr TANG Ka-piu's enquiry about the guidelines putting in place by TD and the Police for handling overcharging incidents where taxi drivers rounded up to the nearest dollar when giving change to passengers; and the Chairman's view that the problem could be tackled by installing Octopus fare collection systems on taxis.</p> <p>The Administration's response that passengers and taxi drivers had to pay and collect taxi fares according to meters respectively under the current legislation. Whether enforcement actions would be taken against overcharging depended on individual circumstances of each case.</p>	
004119 - 004414	Chairman Mr WONG Kwok-hing Admin	<p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing's appeal for the taxi owners to honour their pledge of not increasing taxi rental within three months after the implementation of new fares.</p> <p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing's reiteration of his call for extending the scheme for relaxation of the peak-hour and 7:00 am to 7:00 pm NSR on road with speed limits less than 70 kilometres per hour for taxis for another year as well as lifting the NSR period of 7:00 pm to 12:00 midnight. The Administration's undertaking to follow up on Mr WONG's suggestions through TD's regular communication with the taxi trade.</p>	

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004415 - 004510	Chairman Mr TANG Ka-piu	Mr TANG Ka piu's reiteration of his concern about the enforcement actions against overcharging by taxi drivers; and the Chairman's remark that passengers should report any suspicious cases to the Police.	
004511 - 004930	Chairman Admin	<u>Clause-by-clause examination of the Amendment Regulation</u> <i>Schedule 5 to the Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374 sub. leg. D)</i> Legislative timetable	
<i>Agenda item III: Any other business</i>			
004931 - 004935	Chairman	Closing remarks	

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
26 June 2014