

**Opening Remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Housing
at the LegCo Special Finance Committee Meeting (Transport)
on 7 April 2016**

Honourable Chairperson,

Today, I would like to brief Members on our work on land, marine and air transport in the new financial year.

2. In respect of land transport, we will continue to adopt a public transport-oriented strategy with railway as the backbone. With the commissioning of the Kwun Tong Line Extension and the South Island Line (East) this year, the capacity and convenience of the railway service will be further enhanced. In light of the public concern on the Fare Adjustment Mechanism of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the Government has already asked MTRCL to conduct a joint review one year in advance of 2018 as originally scheduled.

3. Apart from the on-going large-scale road projects, including the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link and the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island East Corridor Link, etc., we are also seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council (LegCo) for the construction of the Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel, as well as actively planning the implementation of the Central Kowloon Route project.

4. The Government is determined to enhance public transport service to reduce citizens' dependence on private cars. The Public Transport Strategy Study is underway. Six topical studies have been completed. The relevant reports have already been discussed by the Panel on Transport (Panel). Meanwhile, the two remaining topical studies have recently been completed. The reports will be discussed at the meeting of the Panel next week. Our target is to create a well-connected, elderly-friendly city with transport for all.

5. For the convenience of the public (especially the elderly) in travelling to and from uphill areas and enhance their accessibility to other areas, we will seek funding in the 2016-17 financial year for the construction of three hillside escalator links and two footbridge projects, continue to implement and enhance the Universal Accessibility Programme, and provide subsidy to franchised bus companies for expediting the installation of seats and display panels for real-time arrival information at existing covered bus stops. Subsidy for the installation of display panels will be provided on a matching basis.

6. To provide the public with more real-time traffic information, as well as enhance transport efficiency and the capacity of the Transport Department in traffic and incident management, we plan to install in phases about 400 sets of real-time traffic detectors along major routes that are currently without them.

7. In respect of marine transport, the Marine Department (MD) will continue to implement various medium- and long-term measures to enhance marine safety, improve its business processes and operational procedures and enhance training.

8. The Government supports the development of the logistics industry and the port, and will dispose for sale a site in Tuen Mun for modern logistics development as soon as practicable. At the same time, we will rationalise the use and management of the port back-up land in the vicinity of the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals in order to enhance the operational efficiency of the port. The dredging works to deepen the Kwai Tsing Container Basin and its approach will be substantially completed in April 2016 as scheduled. Ultra-large containerships will be able to access the Kwai Tsing container port at all tides.

9. The Government has established the new Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board this month to work closely with the industry in fostering the long-term development of high value-added maritime and port services. Additional resources have been provided for the work of the Board.

10. As for air transport, the Hong Kong International Airport is the world's busiest airport by cargo traffic and the third busiest by passenger traffic. In order to cope with future demand for air transport, the new air traffic control system will be launched in phases from June 2016 to significantly enhance the capability of air traffic management of the Civil Aviation Department.

11. The Airport Authority is actively taking forward the implementation of the Three-Runway System (3RS) and is proceeding with the relevant statutory procedures. The Central People's Government supports the 3RS project and the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is stepping up its discussion with the Civil Aviation Administration of China to take forward issues relating to the optimisation and co-operation on the use of the Pearl River Delta airspace.

12. Honourable Chairperson, I will be happy to answer policy-related questions from Members. Controlling officers and other colleagues will answer questions pertaining to operation and the use of financial resources.

Transport and Housing Bureau
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