

## **LegCo Panel on Transport**

### **Measures to tackle speeding by public light buses**

#### **Introduction**

This paper presents the measures adopted and proposals made by the Administration in tackling speeding activities by public light buses (PLB).

#### **Background**

2. A number of fatal accidents involving PLBs occurred in recent months giving rise to public concerns over the speeding activities and the driving behaviour of PLB drivers, especially those on routes operating overnight services between the urban areas and new towns.

3. The number of traffic accidents involving PLBs and the number of accidents involving PLBs per million veh-km also remains relatively stable in the past ten years. Details are set out in **Annex A**. The number of prosecution cases against PLB driver speeding in the past three years similarly remained rather stable. Details are set out in **Annex B**.

#### **Action against Speeding Activities of PLB**

4. The Administration closely monitors the service standards of PLBs, including the safety and driving standards of drivers. Every accident is investigated by the Police, and appropriate remedial/improvement measures will be implemented by the Transport Department and the Police. In the past three years, the Transport Department adopted a series of measures to combat speeding activities of PLB -

- (a) at the quarterly trade conferences, operators of both green and red minibuses were regularly reminded of the importance of safe driving. In October 1999, letters were issued to all operators of overnight green minibus (GMB) services, requiring them to instruct drivers to strictly observe the speed limits. Similarly, red minibus (RMB) associations were asked to remind their members to observe all the traffic rules and regulations; and

- (b) a new licensing condition has been imposed on new GMB routes since 1997 requiring drivers of GMBs to be employed by licence holders (in lieu of hiring GMBs to drivers on per diem rates). This is to ensure that GMB operators would have the capability to manage and control their drivers.

5. In addition, the Administration has proposed to revise the penalties for speeding in excess of speed limits by 30 km/hr and over to increase the deterrent effect.

6. Transport Department has held extensive consultation with the trade on further improvements since early 1999. Following the recent incidents involving PLBs, a special Task Force comprising representatives from the Transport Department and the Police has been set up to tackle the speeding problem of PLBs. Having consulted the trade, it was agreed that the following measures would be introduced -

- (a) to display, before the end of this year, a driver identity card and complaint hotlines on all GMBs operating overnight routes. Some GMB routes have already adopted these new measures; and
- (b) three workshops on safe driving for GMB operators had been conducted and more than 100 operators had attended the workshops. Two to three more workshops would be conducted within 2000, and drivers of overnight services would be given priority to attend these workshops.

7. The operators of 10 GMB routes, including three overnight routes, have also voluntarily installed speed warning devices in 103 GMBs, and the number is expected to increase. The Transport Department will continue to encourage operators to install such devices and priority should be accorded to overnight services.

8. The Police has targeted at overnight routes and stepped up enforcement action against irresponsible drivers. In addition, educational materials and road safety advice will be handed out jointly by the Police and the Transport Department to passengers and PLB drivers at major PLB/GMB stands.

9. Other measures being examined by the Transport Department include -

- The passenger service licences issued to overnight GMB routes before 1997 will be revised, upon renewal, to require operators to formally employ drivers (in lieu of renting the vehicles) so that licence holders can exercise control and manage their drivers effectively;
- To install more red light cameras at selected junctions in the Territory by phases;
- To examine the need for compulsory installation of speed warning and other devices to assist the operators and passengers to better monitor the behaviour of the drivers;
- To examine the feasibility of imposing a maximum speed limit on light buses; and
- To examine the feasibility of enhancing passenger protection measures in all public light buses, such as interior impact protection, energy-absorbing seatbacks, head restraints and seatbelts.

### **Advice Sought**

10. Members are invited to comment on the proposed measures to tackle speeding activities of PLBs.

Government Secretariat  
Transport Bureau  
TRAN 3/9/21  
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**Annex A**

**Accident Rates of Public Light Buses  
1990 - 1999**

<b>Year</b>	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>Total number of accidents involving all classes of vehicles</b>	15255	15327	15322	15469	15440	14812	14397	14776	14014	14714
<b>Number of accidents involving PLB</b>	985	931	951	886	892	787	977	950	891	995
<b>% involving PLB</b>	6.5	6.1	6.2	5.7	5.8	5.3	6.8	6.4	6.4	6.8
<b>Number of PLB involved accidents per million vehicle-km</b>	2.93	2.87	3.05	2.80	2.80	2.30	2.88	2.58	2.52	2.91*

(Source: Road Safety and Standards Division, Transport Department)

\* provisional

**Annex B**

**Statistics of Police Prosecutions against PLB Speeding  
(1997 - 1999)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>
In excess of speed limit by 15 km/hr. or less	364	280	481
In excess of speed limit : 15 km/hr. - 30 km/hr.	875	999	646
In excess of speed limit : 30 km/hr. - 45 km/hr.	68	42	23
In excess of speed limit : more than 45 km/hr.	2	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>1,151</b>

(Source: Hong Kong Police Force )