

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Exit Numbers on Expressways

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on a proposal to assign exit numbers on expressways.

BACKGROUND

2. Many overseas countries adopt exit numbering on expressway. A brief summary of the practices of these countries is at **Annex A**. In brief, Singapore, Japan, UK and some of the states in USA adopt exit numbering on expressways whilst Australia does not. For those states in USA that do not use exit numbers, the argument is that each exit should have been assigned the name of the connecting cross-streets. For those states that number exits, the rationale is that the names of the connecting cross-streets may not be useful to travellers.

3. In Hong Kong, exit numbers are not provided. Instead, destination names and route numbers are shown on expressway to help drivers identify their way. From time to time, the feasibility of assigning numbers to exits along expressways to assist motorist in locating their positions and in choosing correct routes to destinations has been raised for discussion. Such system is also said to be useful when reporting breakdowns or accidents.

PROPOSAL

4. We agree that the proposal to assign exit numbers on major expressways (as shown at **Annex B**) is worth exploring. Exit numbers, if provided, can be shown on gantry direction signs and be attached to count down markers leading to exit lanes. To facilitate motorists to

recognise the direction that they are heading, the direction of travel could be shown at the top right hand corner of the gantry signs by using suitable abbreviation, i.e. E for East and N for North etc. and the appropriate Chinese gothic character, as shown at **Annex C**.

5. There are four options we could consider for the numbering system of the exits.

Option 1

6. Exit numbers will begin with 1 at the first exit from the start point of an expressway in each bound and is increased by 1 at the next exit. Exit numbers in the opposite bound will begin from the start point at the other end. An exit number will not be assigned to an exit which is leading to another major route having a route number. In this way, the use of route number could also be promoted with exit numbers at the same time.

7. However, some motorists may think that the exit leading to another major route is similar to other exits. The absence of an exit number at such location may cause some confusion to them. Moreover, exits with different numbers in the opposite bound at the same interchange may not be readily recognised by motorists.

Option 2

8. This option is similar to option 1 but an exit connecting to a major route having a route number is also numbered. However, exits in the opposite bound at the same interchange will still have different numbers.

Option 3

9. This option will assign an identical number to exits in both bounds at the same interchange. Exits in the opposite bound at the same interchange will have the same exit number. If there is no exit in the

opposite bound at the interchange, the same exit number in the opposite bound will be skipped.

10. Motorists may find this numbering system difficult to follow if there are single exits at interchanges along the expressway and thus the exit numbers are not in a consecutive order. Also, there may be arguments on which end of an expressway should exit numbers start.

Option 4

11. This option is similar to option 3 but any exit which exists only in one bound of the expressway (single exit) will be numbered with alphabet suffix as the preceding exit, say 1A if the preceding exit number is 1. In case the first exit is a single exit, it will be numbered as 1A and the next exit will be 1. In this way, all exits at the same interchange will have identical exit number. Also, exit numbers in each bound will be in a consecutive order.

12. Similar to option 3, there may still be arguments on which end of an expressway should exit numbers start. However, this option is considered the best among the four options.

13. The numbering systems of the above four options are illustrated at **Annex D**.

14. For future additions of exits to an existing expressway but no exit numbers have been reserved for them, suffixes will then be used. In other words, if a new exit is added between two existing exits with numbers say 7 and 8, the new exit will be assigned with an exit number of 7A.

CONSULTATION

15. We are arranging consultation with the concerned parties including Hong Kong Automobile Association, Institute of Advanced Motorists Hong Kong, Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, Hong Kong

Institution of Highways and Transportation and Institution of Civil Engineers (Hong Kong Branch). We expect that the consultation would be completed in the first quarter of 2000.

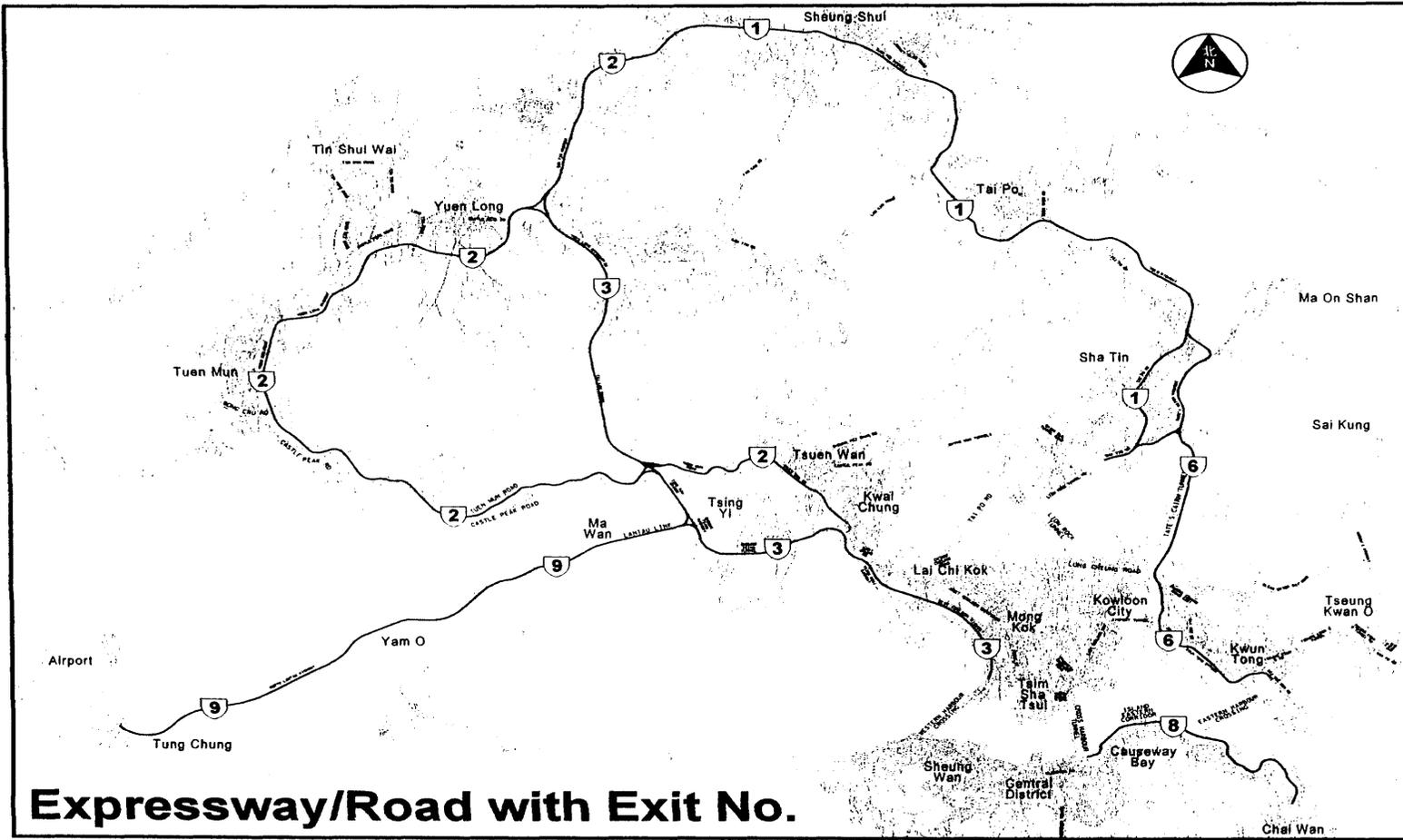
ADVICE SOUGHT

16. Members are invited to note the content of this paper and to express views on the proposal to assign exit numbers on expressways.

Transport Bureau
December 1999

**A Brief Summary of Overseas Practices on Exit Number
and the arrangement in Hong Kong**

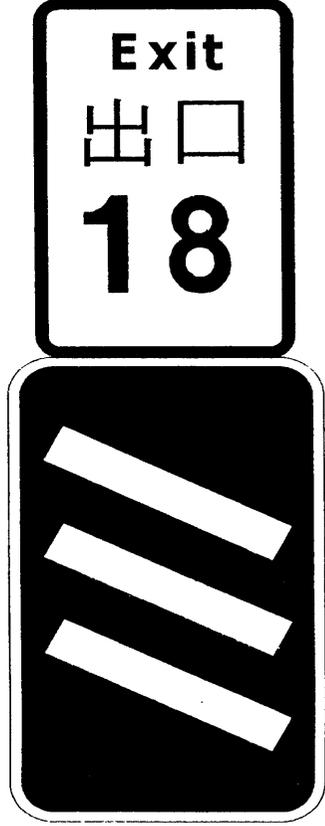
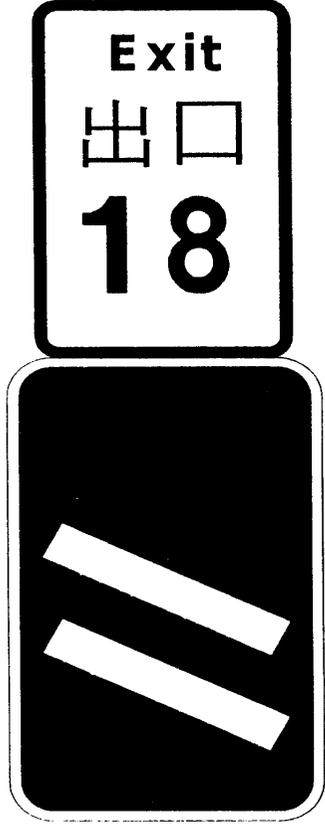
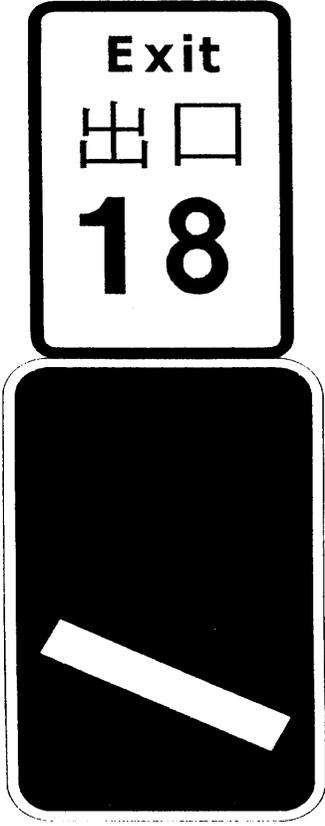
Country	Arrangement	Remarks
U.S.A.	<p>The States typically use one of two methods of numbering the Interstate interchange exits.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consecutive numbering system - Starting at the most westerly or southerly point on each Interstate route, interchanges are numbered consecutively. Thus the first interchange becomes Interchange #1. Each succeeding interchange is numbered consecutively as #2, 3, 4, etc 2. The milestone numbering system - All Interstate routes are mile-posted beginning at the most westerly or southerly point. The beginning point is milepost '0'. If the first interchange on the route is located between milepost 4.0 and 5.0, it is numbered as interchange #4. The next interchange, if located at milepost 8.7, would be numbered as Interchange #8, etc. With this system the motorist can easily determine the location and distance to a desired interchange. 	Some states number the freeway entrances/exits (e.g. Connecticut, New York Florida, etc.) whilst some do not (e.g. California, Nevada, Oregon, etc.). For those that number the freeway entrances/exits, some use a sequential numbering system for each freeway. Other states number their exit/entrances according to milestones rounded to the nearest integer.
Singapore	Mileage is used for the expressway exit number system which follows the practice in U.S.A. Alphabets are added for exits between whole mileage.	
Japan	The entrances/exits are numbered and named. The number starts from originating entrance/exit and is incremental by one. In case new entrance/exit is constructed in between, it is numbered like 2-1 using dash sign.	Details on the rules or regulations of the numbering and naming are not available.
United Kingdom	The entrances/exits are numbered and named. An identical number is assigned to exits in both bounds at the interchange.	
Australia	No exit numbering.	Use destination name and route number instead.
Hong Kong	No exit numbering.	Use destination name and route number instead.



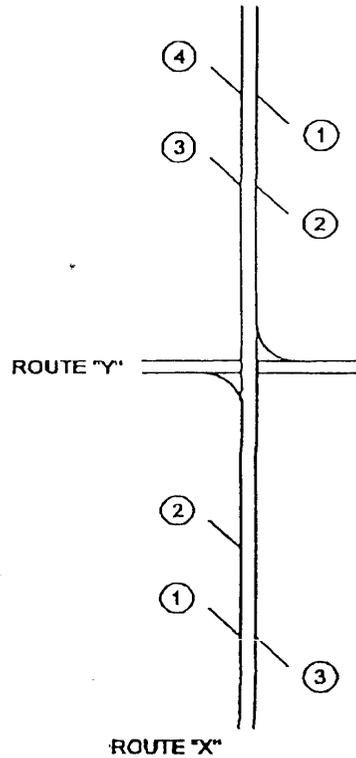
Expressway/Road with Exit No.



PROPOSED EXIT NUMBER AND ROUTE DIRECTION ARRANGEMENT

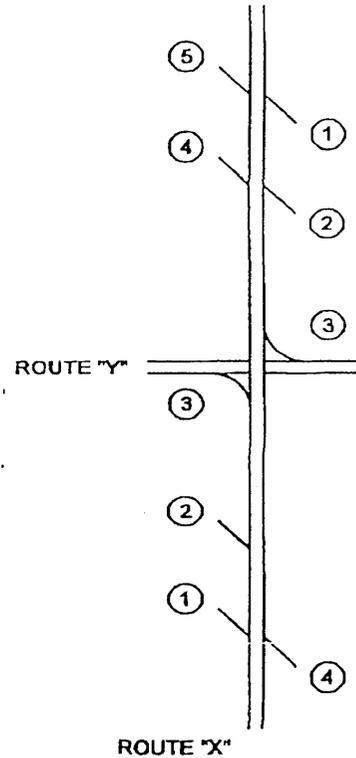


OPTIONS FOR EXIT NUMBERING ON EXPRESSWAYS



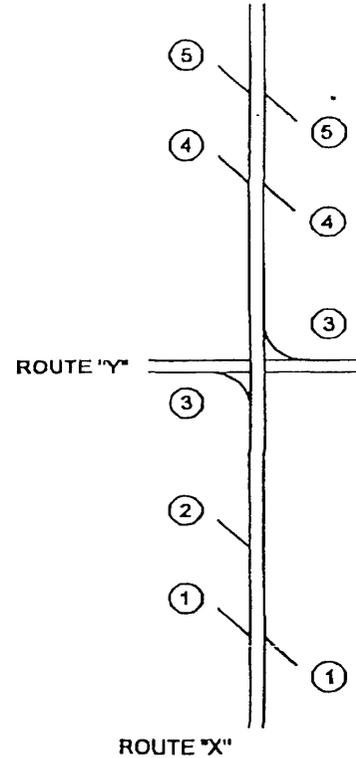
OPTION 1

(Exits numbered from start point in each bound and connections with trunk road not numbered)



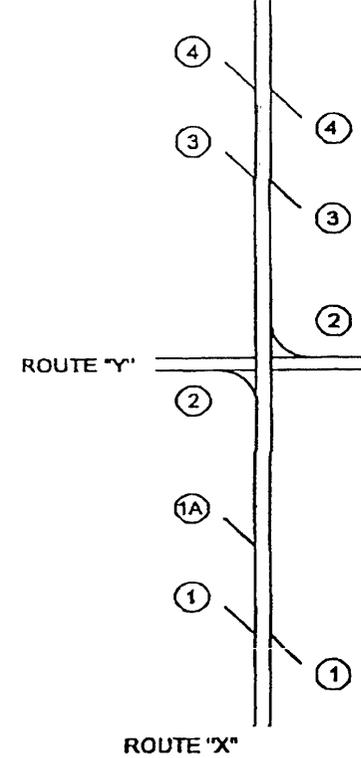
OPTION 2

(Similar to option 1 but with exit number for connection with trunk road)



OPTION 3

(Same exit number at each interchange)



OPTION 4

(Similar to option 3 but single exit numbered with alphabet suffix)