

NOTE FOR PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

Supplementary information on 91ET – Education resource centre-cum-public transport interchange at Kowloon Tong – stage 2

INTRODUCTION

In considering the paper referenced PWSC(2002-03)63 on the above project on 13 November 2002, the Public Works Subcommittee requested the Administration to provide additional information on –

- (a) the projected traffic demand of cross-boundary coaches;
- (b) the planned ancillary facilities to meet the demand; and
- (c) the policy on the monitoring of cross-boundary coaches.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Projected traffic demand

2. Cross-boundary coach services are operated under a quota system jointly administered by the Hong Kong and Mainland authorities. The purpose of the quota system is to prevent overloading the boundary clearance facilities which have a limited capacity. The quotas for cross-boundary coach services are regularly reviewed by the Hong Kong and Mainland authorities, having regard to factors including passenger demand for coach services and capacity constraints at the boundary crossing points.

3. Daily cross-boundary coach traffic flow has increased from about 550 vehicles in 1997 to about 1 000 in 2002, representing an average annual increase of about 13%. The number of cross-boundary passengers using coach services per day has increased from 13 000 to 23 600 for the same period,

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representing an average annual increase of about 13%. According to the latest projection based on the Review on Cross-boundary Travel Projections prepared by the Planning Department, the average annual growth rate of both cross-boundary coach vehicular traffic and passenger traffic will be about 5% for 2003 to 2006.

Planned ancillary facilities

4. It is the Administration's policy objective to provide off-street loading/unloading facilities for cross-boundary coaches, preferably as part of public transport interchanges near the rail stations, to facilitate inter-modal transfer and minimise circulation of these coaches in the congested urban areas. At present, off-street cross-boundary coach terminating facilities are provided at Austin Road in Tsim Sha Tsui, Fanling (Luen Wo Hui) bus terminus and Sheung Shui (Landmark North) bus terminus. We have plans to provide additional cross-boundary coach terminating facilities in six different areas, namely, Kowloon Tong, Yau Tong, Kowloon Airport Express Line (AEL) Station, Sai Wan Ho, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai. These facilities are expected to be completed before 2005 and will provide some 40 loading/unloading bays for cross-boundary coaches. We would also consider allocating spare space at existing public transport interchanges with lower utilisation rates for the use of cross-boundary coaches.

5. As regards the provision of passenger waiting room and ticketing office for cross-boundary coaches, we would consider on a case-by-case basis, depending on the scale of the terminating facilities and the availability of space thereat. We have plans to provide passenger waiting rooms at three planned cross-boundary coach termini at Kowloon Tong, Kowloon AEL Station and Sai Wan Ho.

Monitoring of cross-boundary coaches

6. Cross-boundary coach service is a type of non-franchised public bus service authorised under the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374). It is a scheduled service with specified boundary crossings and crossing time, routing as well as terminating and stopping points within Hong Kong. The terminating and stopping points in Hong Kong are chosen by the operators based on their own commercial considerations, and are subject to the approval of the Transport Department, which will take into account factors such as passenger convenience, road safety and traffic situation in considering the operators' applications.