



February 23, 2005

To: Member of the LegCo Transport Panel

Dear Members:

Today you are being asked to solve or ignore the traffic problems in Southern and Western districts. How bad is traffic? How many people are affected by the traffic? How much of their lives are stolen because they are stuck in traffic? These questions have not been answered by Government.

Today you will be presented with three options:

1. The half a million people who live or work in Western and Southern Districts are not important and their transit problems should be ignored. People in new developments are more important.
2. Build Route 4, a road that will increase pollution, create more traffic in the Central-Causeway Bay corridor, cost the people billions and not improve transit time.
3. Build an MTR which will guarantee travel time from Aberdeen to Admiralty in 7 min, and less than 15 minutes to Tsim Sha Tsui and take 40% of all the polluting buses off the road
4. There is another option to consider.

Electronic Road Pricing (ERP)

- The 2001 ERP Executive Summary said that ERP will be needed in 2006 – it is.
- ERP in the Central - Causeway Bay Corridor will reduce traffic congestion by 30% directly improving traffic all over Hong Kong Island.
- Business vehicles will NOT be stuck in traffic anymore on Hong Kong Island and can make more deliveries with fewer vehicles – making more money.
- ERP will earn \$1 billion for the Government every year (roads – including the Central-Wanchoi Bypass and Route 4 – cost billions)
- Vehicle first registration tax can be reduced significantly or eliminated.

Professional drivers:

After building the MTR all current bus drivers can find jobs in feeder services.

Drivers want jobs where they will have cleaner air to breathe in feeder services

...rather than forced to continue to injure their health by driving into the polluted Causeway Bay to Central corridor



During today's meeting Clear the Air hopes members will ask the following questions.

1. Roads increase traffic. The MTR will take 40% of the polluting buses off the road. The MTR will guarantee travel time between Aberdeen and Admiralty to be 7 minutes – any time of day. Why, then, is the Government proposing to increase traffic, keep pollution high and keep travel time long by building Route 4.
2. Government's stated policy is rail over road. Why is rail then attacked rather than compared side-by-side with a road? Why is the term "huge investments" not applied to Route 4 as well as the MTR?
3. 40% of the people prefer to take the MTR rather than the bus. It is Government policy to provide choice. Why does this paper not recommend giving people a choice?
4. It is Government policy NOT to subsidise privately owned transport businesses or individual vehicle owners. So why is Route 4 not presented as a toll road – similar to the self supporting MTR – in a side-by-side comparison?
5. The proposed Route 4 will cost more than the MTR. Why consider an option that will cost more, serve fewer people, increase pollution and not improve travel time?
6. The MTR loop will integrate fully into both the KCRC and MTR lines so that travel times throughout the SAR can be minimized. Why is the Government favoring bus over rail and depriving the people of choice?
7. After building the MTR all current bus drivers can find jobs in feeder services. Drivers want jobs where they will have cleaner air to breathe rather than be forced to continue to injure their health by driving into the polluted Causeway Bay to Central corridor. Do drivers want to have a job where they have clean air?

Summary

Clear the Air supports both the MTR loop and ERP that must be implemented by the end of 2006 to reduce traffic all over Hong Kong Island as per the Government ERP report of 2001.

Thank you.

Regards,

Annelise Connell
Vice Chairman
Clear the Air

www.cleartheair.org.hk

*With **Electronic Road Pricing** in the Central to Causeway Bay corridor:*

***Business vehicles** will NOT be stuck in traffic anywhere on Hong Kong Island and ...*

can make more deliveries with fewer vehicles...

making more money.