

**Subcommittee to Study the Transport Needs of and Provision of
Concessionary Public Transport Fares for Persons with Disabilities**

List of follow-up actions
(position as at 23 April 2008)

Date of meeting	Follow-up actions required	Administration's response
9.1.2006	The Administration was requested to take the following actions – (a) to provide a list of the work done by the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau (ETWB) and the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) with timing of relevant events on the provision of concessionary public transport fares for persons with disabilities (PwDs) over the past four years or so. The information should include details of the relevant instructions given by the Bureau Secretaries and the forums or occasions at which the Administration discussed the subject with public transport operators; (b) to seek legal advice on whether the non-provision of concessionary public transport fares for those PwDs who need to be accompanied by a carer to use public transport services and/or those PwDs' carers would constitute a contravention of the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 487) (DDO); and (c) to work out possible schemes for provision of concessionary public transport fares for PwDs having regard to the principles of equality as implemented by the DDO, to assess the number of PwDs who will benefit under each of the possible schemes, and to discuss with public transport operators the financial implications of those schemes. The advice of the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Department of Justice should be sought in respect of the legal issues that may arise from the schemes.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)869 /05-06(01) on 10 February 2006.

Date of meeting	Follow-up actions required	Administration's response
12.5.2006	The Administration was requested to take the following actions – (a) to convey to the Board of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) for consideration a member's view that from a welfare perspective, the policy intent of providing concessionary fares (CF) to PwDs was no different from that of providing CF to the elderly. Given that MTRCL had invested substantial funds in improving transport facilities for PwDs, provision of CF to PwDs would encourage them to travel more, making MTRCL's investment in improvements to transport facilities for PwDs more cost-effective. The Administration should report back on the outcome of the Board of MTRCL's consideration in this regard in due course; (b) to brief members on the way forward for amending DDO to put it beyond doubt that selective provision of CF to PwDs would not constitute a contravention of DDO; and (c) to continue to liaise with public transport (PT) operators on the funding arrangements for the provision of CF to PwDs. If PT operators were unwilling to provide CF on their own, to work out various options for financing the provision of CF to PwDs from a welfare or transport perspective for members' consideration instead.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)967/06-07(01) on 15 February 2007. Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1919/05-06(01) on 4 July 2006. Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1919/05-06(01) on 4 July 2006.
10.7.2006	The Administration was requested to take the following actions – (a) to convey to the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works for further consideration members' view that the Administration should exercise its influence in the management boards of the two railway corporations with a view to introducing the proposed concessionary fare schemes for selected groups of PwDs at its earliest opportunity;	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)967/06-07(01) on 15 February 2007.

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	(b) to make every effort to speed up the work related to the survey for assessing the travelling characteristics of the selected groups of PwDs (the Survey), and to follow up with the independent research agency on the design of the questionnaire with regard to members' call to ensure that the findings of the survey should include the necessary quantitative information to enable the Government/PT operators to assess the financial implications of offering fare concessions to selected groups of PwDs, and estimate the additional trips that would be taken by PwDs and the revenue so generated with the introduction of the proposed concessionary fare schemes for PwDs; and (c) to brief members on the preliminary findings of the survey at the next meeting.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)675 /06-07(01) on 10 January 2007. Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)675 /06-07(01) on 10 January 2007.
15.1.2007	The Administration was requested to take the following actions – (a) to provide for the next meeting a concrete legislative timetable and progress report of the introduction of legislative amendments to DDO to put it beyond doubt that selective provision of CF to PwDs would not constitute a contravention of DDO; and (b) to report its discussion with PT operators in following up the Survey at the next meeting.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)967 /06-07(01) on 15 February 2007.

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27.2.2007	At the meeting, the Subcommittee passed the following two motions – "This Subcommittee urges the Equal Opportunities Commission to follow up and study the failure on the part of the relevant government departments and various public transport operators to implement the policies, measures and means regarding the provision of CF for persons with disabilities, and to consider conducting investigations in this respect and to submit a follow-up report to this Subcommittee." "This Subcommittee expresses extreme regret at the Government's persistent failure to come up with a transport policy to facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities into the community, and urges the Government to expeditiously implement a policy to provide half fare concession for persons with disabilities under the principle of shared responsibility between the Government and various public transport operators." (a) The Administration was requested to seriously consider the views and suggestion raised by members, and the two motions passed at the meeting. It was also requested to follow up the matters and give concrete responses at the next meeting; and (b) The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was invited to take follow-up action for the first motion and provide a response at the next meeting.	Relevant information provided by the Administration and EOC issued vide LC Papers Nos. CB(1)1292/06-07(01) and (02) on 3 April 2007.

Date of meeting	Follow-up actions required	Administration's response
12.4.2007	The Administration was requested to take the following actions – (a) to provide information on the relevant policy and measures taken in introducing wheelchair accessible taxis to Hong Kong, the work progress and difficulties encountered including the Administration's efforts and liaison with the automobile trade and taxi trade in taking forward the matter; (b) to consider Ms Miriam LAU's proposal of expediting the progress by allowing diesel wheelchair accessible taxis with Euro IV models (which were environment friendly) or other fuel-driven taxi models, to operate in Hong Kong; (c) to report on the Administration's final decision on the provision of CF for PwDs, including the decision and concrete plan for taking forward the matter under the principle of shared responsibility between the Government and public transport operators, and options on financing and operational arrangements; and (d) to provide a paper explaining the bases for working out the respective monthly payments of the Normal and Higher Disability Allowance, covering a breakdown of the estimated expenses for various expenditure items incurred by PwDs, particularly in respect of PwDs' travelling expenses.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper Nos. CB(1)2013/06-07(01) and CB(1)2150/06-07(06) on 28 June and 19 July 2007 respectively. Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper Nos. CB(1)2013/06-07(01) and CB(1)2150/06-07(06) on 28 June and 19 July 2007 respectively. Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1943/06-07(01) and CB(1)1969/06-07(01) on 22 June and 25 June 2007 respectively. Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1463/06-07(01) on 26 April 2007.

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22.5.2007	The Administration was requested to take the following actions and report the outcomes and/or progress to the Subcommittee in July 2007: (a) To work out the targets with concrete timetables, as well as provide estimates on the financial resources (including the number of additional vehicles required) to effectively improve the Rehabus service, in respect of the following areas – (i) to meet the needs of 39 applicants waiting for Scheduled Route Service (SRS) as at end March 2007; (ii) to reduce the number of rejected Dial-a-Ride Service (DAR) orders; (iii) to strengthen SRS and DAR, and increase Feeder Service (FD) routes to meet anticipated rising demand for the services in the next few years; and (iv) to examine the needs of persons with disability (PwDs) living in remote areas, such as Tung Chung, Tseung Kwan O and Tin Shui Wai, for both SRS and FD, and explore measures to meet such needs. In this regard, consideration should be given to gearing up the publicity for new FD routes to boost patronage and hence enhance their financial viability. (b) To explore the feasibility of enhancing Rehabus service by deploying more Government resources, and seeking private donations to subsidize the purchase and operation of additional Rehabuses; (c) To examine with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department the feasibility of modifying aging Rehabuses to add railing to and increase the wheelchair lifting capacity of their tail-lifts; (d) To undertake a comprehensive review with the Hong Kong Society for	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2150 /06-07(01) on 18 July 2007.

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	Rehabilitation on the operation of Rehabus service in respect of the following areas with a view to identifying improvements to address the various concerns highlighted by members and deputations at the meeting – (i) the inadequacy of SRS; (ii) the long lead time required for booking DAR and complicated booking procedures involved; (iii) the immediate suspension of SRS service upon hoisting of the black rainstorm warning or typhoon signal No. 8; (iv) the present fare structure of DAR during holidays, in particular concerns about the minimum four-hour charge, and the strict requirement for PwDs to pay group fare instead of individual fare should there be more than one passenger; and (v) to maximize shared DAR through optimizing vehicle allocation and trip scheduling with the aid of computer. (e) To liaise with the Education and Manpower Bureau on measures to meet parents' request for provision of escorts on Rehabuses which provide SRS service for handicapped school children; (f) To consider relaxing the restrictions on taxis to allow the introduction of wheelchair accessible taxis, and to consider re-introducing the taxi voucher scheme for PwDs implemented some years before with improvements to the relevant reimbursement arrangements; and (g) To provide a consolidated response to the following motion passed at the meeting –	

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	"That this Subcommittee urges the Government to immediately formulate plans and timetables to meet the demand from persons with disabilities (PwDs), especially those living in remote new towns, for Rehabus service, which should include the introduction of large-size multi-purpose wheelchair accessible taxis to facilitate the integration of PwDs into the community; review of the provision of escort service for disabled school children so that they will be taken good care of on their way to and from school; and handling of Rehabus service fares on public holidays in a flexible way and considering the offer of a subsidy scheme to PwDs for taking taxis, so as to encourage them to participate in normal social functions."	
29.6.2007	(a) EOC agreed to provide the Subcommittee a copy of the reply from the Chief Executive to its letter regarding the provision of concessionary public transport fares (CPTF) for PwDs when it was available; and (b) The future Labour and Welfare Bureau was urged to devise measures for implementing CPTF for PwDs and proceed with bidding the necessary resources in the 2008-09 Resource Allocation Exercise. The Administration was also requested to liaise with public transport operators (PTOs) and explore the following options in implementing a CPTF trial scheme for PwDs in the light of the findings of the survey conducted by the Social Sciences Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong on the travelling characteristics of PwDs: (i) The option as proposed by MTRCL in its letter to the Administration dated 14 March 2007, under which discounted fares for an identifiable group of PwDs would be introduced on the basis that the Government would fund any deficits, and any surplus generated from the scheme would be paid to the Government; and (ii) The option as proposed by Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr LAU Kong-wah,	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2417 /06-07(01) on 8 October 2007.

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	under which CPTF would be provided for PwDs under the principle of shared responsibility between the Government and various PTOs. The Administration was requested to report to the Subcommittee in early October 2007 the outcome of the above efforts.	
24.7.2007	The Subcommittee passed the following motion at the meeting: "That, in respect of the introduction of a new mode of accessible public transport service for persons with disabilities (PwDs), this Subcommittee urges the Government to: (a) immediately draw up specific plans and timetable as well as consider offering incentives for the speedy introduction of taxis which are suitable for PwDs; (b) ascertain the fees charged for the service of 'Accessible Hire Car' and its long-term position as a mode of transport service before issuing licences to this type of vehicles, and ensure that it will not compete unfairly with other public transport services while catering for the need of low-income PwDs; and (c) immediately consult PwD groups, the transport sector, social service agencies, the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, etc, with a view to formulating within six months a policy with specific action plans for the provision of transport service for PwDs, including considering the introduction of a Taxi Voucher Scheme." The Administration was requested to follow up on the above motion and provide concrete response when the Subcommittee re-visited the subject on "Introduction of a new mode of accessible public transport service for persons with disabilities", as well as	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1327 /07-08(01) on 23 April 2008.

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	to report progress of the introduction of the new accessible hire car service and wheelchair accessible taxis once there was new development.	
9.10.2007	The Administration was requested to take the following actions and report back on the progress in December 2007: (a) To actively pursue with PTOs the relevant plan for implementing a CPTF scheme for PwDs by 1 April 2008 the latest, with reference to proposals including Kowloon Motor Bus (1933) Limited's suggestion to consider the option of reimbursing revenue foregone to PTOs; (b) In working out the CPTF scheme, the Administration was urged to give regard to the complexity of the proposals, their capital and administrative costs as well as lead time for implementation; (c) In taking forward the above tasks, the Administration was requested to note Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung's suggestions as follows – (i) To commission an independent agency or set up a working group to study the technical and financial viability of the proposals of providing CPTF to PwDs, so as to ascertain all relevant details to facilitate selection of the preferred proposal and its implementation including the timetable; and (ii) To provide the financial details which the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau had been studying when examining various options of providing CPTF to PwDs.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)541 /07-08(01) on 10 January 2008.

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15.1.2008	The Administration was requested to take the following actions: (a) To take into account the views of PwDs and members in working out the CPTF scheme, and report back at the meeting on 11 March 2008; and (b) To provide a paper for the meeting on 11 March 2008, setting out the following – (i) Advice from the Department of Justice (DoJ) in respect of possible legal issues that might arise from implementing a CPTF scheme for PwDs with public funds, including whether implementation of the scheme might contravene provisions of DDO, and whether there would be litigation risks on the part of the Administration or PTOs as the latter would be involved in the implementation of the scheme. In considering the matter, it should be noted that there were current examples where public and private bodies, such as the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Ocean Park, and the ferry operators, were offering various concessions to PwDs; (ii) Having regard to (i) above, DoJ's advice on the need to introduce legislative amendments to DDO to remove possible litigation risks that implementation of the CPTF scheme would constitute a contravention of the Ordinance; and (iii) In connection with (ii) above, if the need to amend DDO was established, the Administration's plan and the legislative timetable in this regard.	Relevant information provided by the Administration issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)977 /07-08(01) on 5 March 2008. Response from the Administration is awaited.

Date of meeting	Follow-up actions required	Administration's response
11.3.2008	At the meeting, the Subcommittee passed the following motion – "That since the Government's proposal to provide an extra monthly \$200 disability allowance to persons with disabilities (PwDs) as transport supplement still leaves room for improvement, this Subcommittee considers that the Government has the responsibility to continue discussion with public transport operators on the provision of half fare concession for PwDs in the spirit of corporate social responsibility; this Subcommittee urges the Government to immediately start discussion with MTR Corporation Limited on the relevant arrangements and report the progress to this Subcommittee in two months." The Administration was requested to follow up on the above passed motion and provide concrete response when the Subcommittee re-visited the subject on "The provision of concessionary public transport fares for persons with disabilities."	Response from the Administration is awaited.