

CB(1)935/06-07(01)

**Follow-up to the Legislative Council
Panel on Transport Meeting on 23 June 2006**

**Progress Report on the Improvement in the Accessibility to
Public Transport Facilities for People with Disabilities**

PURPOSE

This paper reports the progress in improving the accessibility to public transport facilities for people with disabilities ("PWDs") in response to Members' request at the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Transport ("the Panel") on 23 June 2006.

BACKGROUND

2. At the Panel meeting held on 23 June 2006, Members conveyed their concerns to the Administration that there was room for improvement in the current design and provision of the facilities for the convenience of PWDs when boarding and alighting from public transport, such as extended ramps of low-floor buses, dropped kerbs at public transport interchanges ("PTIs"), and pick-up/drop-off points for bus, taxi and public light bus ("PLB"). The Administration was requested to:

- (a) conduct an overall review of all major PTIs in Hong Kong to ascertain if they are all properly equipped with the above facilities;
- (b) work out guidelines in this regard for new PTIs and bus, taxi and PLB pick up/drop-off points; and
- (c) rectify the shortcomings identified in individual cases which have been referred to the Administration for action.

The Panel requested the Administration to submit a progress report on the above issues in six months.

OVERALL REVIEW OF MAJOR PTIs

3. To enhance the accessibility of PTIs for PWDs, the Transport Department ("TD") revised the Transport Planning and Design Manual ("the Manual") in 2001 and updated the design standards for PTIs. New PTIs since then have been constructed in accordance with the new design standards in which PWD accessible facilities, such as dropped kerbs and reserved waiting area for PWDs, are provided.

4. In response to the Panel's suggestion, TD reviewed 110 major PTIs across the territory between July and December 2006. The findings reveal that appropriate facilities have been provided in 46 PTIs. TD also plans to implement improvement works for 53 PTIs, in which improvement works for 30 of them are expected to be conducted in 2007. Improvement works for the remaining 11 PTIs cannot be carried out yet due to technical problems or redevelopment plans. The feasibility of including additional facilities in these PTIs will be further studied.

GUIDELINES FOR NEW PTIs AND BUS, TAXI AND PLB PICK-UP / DROP-OFF POINTS

5. As mentioned above, all PTIs designed and constructed after the revision of the Manual in 2001 are provided with boarding and alighting facilities for the convenience of PWDs. According to the guidelines in the Manual, the standard kerb height of the bus and PLB pick-up / drop-off points is 125 mm. All wheelchair-accessible buses provide kneelers and other wheelchair-accessible features such as ramps and super low floors to cater for the needs of wheelchair passengers when boarding and alighting. As for taxis, passengers with restricted mobility can board and alight from taxis in restricted zones (except for expressways and 24-hour restricted zones) with the "Certificate for Picking Up or Setting Down of Passengers with Disabilities in Restricted Zones". They can choose appropriate boarding and alighting locations based on their needs.

6. The above arrangements and facilities address the existing needs of PWDs. However, the Administration learned from PWD organizations that public works carried out at a pick-up / drop-off point had changed the kerb

height and obstructed the boarding and alighting activities of wheelchair passengers. Highways Department ("HyD") carried out resurfacing works at the concerned location in late July 2006 and the kerb at the bus stop was then reverted to the standard height. TD and HyD will keep in view the conditions of pick-up / drop-off points for public transport and PTIs during their routine inspections on at-grade facilities and improve damaged or substandard facilities as soon as practicable. Separately, TD will also actively follow up and examine the design of PTIs completed before 2001 so as to expedite provision of accessible transport facilities for PWDs.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TAKEN IN INDIVIDUAL CASES

7. A member reflected to TD after the Panel meeting that there was room for improvement in the public transport facilities at the following locations:

- (a) Bus stop at the entrance of St. Joseph Primary School on Kwun Tong Road;
- (b) Bus terminus outside KCR Hung Hom Station;
- (c) Bus terminus on Yuet Wah Street, Kwun Tong;
- (d) Bus terminus at Exchange Square, Central; and
- (e) Public Light Bus terminus at Langham Place, Mongkok.

Based on the information provided by the member, TD has examined in detail the shortcomings in the provision of accessible transport facilities for PWDs at the above spots and has taken appropriate follow-up actions. Progress of the latest improvement in individual cases is set out at Annex.

8. TD will continue to follow up with the progress of the planned PTI improvement works and review the Manual periodically to tie in with the development of public transport design and meet the latest needs of PWDs in order to further enhance the standard of barrier-free facilities for the convenience of PWDs.

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Annex

Location	Problem and Follow-up Action
<p>Bus stop at the entrance of St. Joseph's Primary School, Kwun Tong Road</p>	<p>Problem: Due to the insufficient kerb height at the bus stop, when a low-floor bus lowers its ramp picking up or setting down wheelchair passengers, the inclination of the ramp would be at a larger angle. This might create inconvenience or even danger to wheelchair passengers.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: Resurfacing works on that road section were arranged as soon as the case was made known to Transport Department ("TD"). Remedial works were completed at the end of July 2006. The kerb of the bus stop is now reverted to the standard level.</p>
<p>Bus terminus outside KCR Hung Hom station</p>	<p>Problem: Dropped kerbs were not provided at the bus terminus outside KCR Hung Hom station.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: The bus terminus concerned is located above the concrete shelter of KCR Hung Hom station with platforms and rails underneath. If facilities such as dropped kerbs and tactile warning tiles were to be installed at the waiting areas and pavements at the bus terminus, the road surface of the railway shelter would have to be opened up for construction works. This may damage the waterproof material of the concrete shelter and cause leakage, thereby affecting passengers waiting at the railway platform as well as the normal operation of the railway. Hence, provision of additional facilities at the bus terminus should be carefully considered and examined.</p> <p>To achieve the objective of "Transport for All", TD actively discussed with Highways Department ("HyD") on related improvement works, aiming at providing the additional facilities to facilitate PWDs in using transport services without affecting the daily operation of the railway. TD already arrived at a feasible improvement</p>

	<p>plan with HyD in August 2006. The plan was agreed by various parties concerned subsequently in September of the same year and improvement works are expected to complete within 2007.</p>
<p>Bus terminus on Yuet Wah Street, Kwun Tong</p>	<p>Problem: Dropped kerbs and tactile warning tiles were not provided at the pedestrian crossing of the bus terminus on Yuet Wah Street.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: Design proposal for dropped kerbs and tactile warning tiles at the above location was finalised in August 2006 and is now under consultation. If no objection is received, the works would be carried out by the works department as soon as possible. Improvement works are expected to complete within 2007.</p>
<p>Bus Terminus at Exchange Square, Central</p>	<p>Problem: Dropped kerbs were not provided at the bus stop at the Exchange Square Bus Terminus in Central.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: TD plans to finalise the design of the improvement works at Exchange Square Bus Terminus in Central in 2007. Works will include the provision of additional transport facilities for PWDs. TD aims at commencing the improvement works in early 2008.</p>

Public Light Bus ("PLB") terminus at Langham Place, Mongkok	<p>Problem: Passageway at the waiting platform of the PLB stand was too narrow, creating inconvenience to wheelchair users.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: The PLB terminus at Langham Place in Mongkok was constructed in accordance with the standard design laid down in the "Transport Planning and Design Manual". According to the design of the PLB terminus, wheelchair users can go straight to the reserved waiting area for PWDs without passing through the passageway with railings at the waiting platform. Both the area and the width of the reserved waiting area for PWDs are in compliance with the existing requirements of the transport planning and design standard. The waiting area is also sufficient for an ordinary electric wheelchair for adults to pass through.</p>
	<p>Problem: The tactile guide path was suspected to mislead its users to the wall.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: TD had looked into the case and found that the tactile guide path referred to by the Member was in fact tactile warning tiles commonly installed at pedestrian crossings for alerting the visually impaired of obstacles ahead. Also, the location of the tactile warning tiles in question is of a considerable distance from the wall.</p>
	<p>Problem: PLBs waiting at the crossing might affect PWDs crossing the waiting platforms.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: As soon as the case was made known, TD informed PLB associations concerned of the possible problem and urged them to remind their members that vehicles in waiting should not obstruct crossing of PWDs.</p>

	<p>Problem: Steps at the waiting platform at the PLB stand caused inconvenience to wheelchair passengers.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: TD had looked into the case and found that the steps at the PLB stand referred to by the Member were at the rear end of the waiting platform. For public transport interchanges, crossing is normally provided at the front end of the waiting platform where access ramp and tactile warning tiles are provided to facilitate wheelchair users' access to the waiting platform via the ramp.</p>
	<p>Problem: Tactile guide path at the entrance of the PLB terminus was too short, failing to lead the visually impaired to the PLB terminus.</p> <p>Follow-up Action: TD had looked into the case and found that the tactile guide path referred to by the Member was in fact connecting Mongkok MTR Station and Mongkok Community Hall. The path was under construction at the material time. Related construction works commenced in early September 2006 and were completed in mid-November of the same year.</p>