

**For discussion on
2 March 2007**

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

**Traffic and Transport Arrangements for the Commissioning of
Hong Kong – Shenzhen Western Corridor**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the public transport services at the new boundary crossing of Hong Kong – Shenzhen Western Corridor (HK-SWC), the quota arrangements for cross-boundary vehicles using HK-SWC, and the traffic impact on Northwest New Territories (NT) brought about by the commissioning of HK-SWC.

BACKGROUND

2. To cater for the increasing cross-boundary traffic demand, two new boundary crossings, i.e. the Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line (Spur Line) and HK-SWC will be commissioned in 2007. We informed Members on 26 January 2007 of the transport arrangements for Spur Line. As regards HK-SWC, construction works for the Hong Kong section were completed in end 2005. We will continue to work closely with the Shenzhen Government for timely completion of the remaining works and prepare for the commissioning of the new crossing with a view to opening it around mid-2007.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES AT THE HK-SWC

3. Cross-boundary passengers can cross the boundary through HK-SWC by taking cross-boundary coaches and public transport services. A public transport interchange (PTI) of about 8 000 square metres will be provided at the Hong Kong side of the control point. Its layout is at the **Annex**.

4. We have agreed with the Mainland authorities to provide complementary public transport services at each side of the control point. We have planned one franchised bus route to/from Yuen Long East, one franchised bus route to/from Tuen Mun, one green minibus route to/from Tin Shui Wai and the provision of urban and NT taxi services in the PTI. As the PTI is located within the Hong Kong Port Area (HKPA) at the Shenzhen Bay Port, we will amend Schedule 7 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374E) to designate roads within the HKPA as permitted operating areas for NT taxis. This amendment will come into effect on the commissioning date of the HKPA. As regards urban taxis, they will be able to operate at the PTI when the HKPA comes into being, as laws of Hong Kong (including those providing legislative backing for urban taxis to provide service throughout the territory of Hong Kong) will then be applied in the HKPA.

5. In addition, similar to other strategic roads in Hong Kong, we will install the traffic control and surveillance system (TCSS) on HK-SWC to enable better traffic management. The TCSS will include, among other things, the variable speed limit sign. To enable the application of this sign in HK-SWC as well as on other roads, we will amend the Road Traffic (Traffic Control) Regulations to include it as a prescribed sign¹.

QUOTA ARRANGEMENTS FOR HK-SWC

6. To ensure smooth cross-boundary traffic, all cross-boundary vehicles other than goods vehicles and the LMC – Huanggang Shuttle Buses are subject to quota restriction. The quota system is jointly administered by the Hong Kong and Guangdong authorities, with the number of quotas set at a level commensurate with the processing capacities of the control points.

7. The commissioning of HK-SWC provides room for the relaxation of the existing quota arrangements. We have reached agreement with the relevant Guangdong authorities on the number of quotas to be issued for cross-boundary private cars and coaches. For

¹ Taking this opportunity, we will also include lane signal in the Road Traffic (Traffic Control) Regulations as a prescribed sign to enable its application on all roads in Hong Kong.

private cars, we would initially issue 1 500 new HK-SWC quotas. In addition, to ease congestion at the existing control points, we would encourage existing holders of quotas at other crossings to switch to HK-SWC. In this regard, we would allow a 3-month trial period upon the commissioning of HK-SWC, during which existing quota-holders can try to use HK-SWC. They may then apply for a HK-SWC quota by surrendering their quota for other existing crossing.

8. As regards cross-boundary coaches, we plan to issue 300 quotas before the commissioning of HK-SWC. We will closely monitor the traffic situation and operation of the new control point, and review the need to issue further quotas six months after the commissioning of HK-SWC.

TRAFFIC IMPACT ON NORTHWEST NT UPON THE COMMISSIONING OF HK-SWC

9. As reported to Members on 22 April 2005, the Northwest NT Traffic and Infrastructure Review concluded that with the existing and committed road networks, together with necessary improvement measures, such as the widening of Castle Peak Road and Yuen Long Highway, we would be able to cope with the traffic (including those to be generated from HK-SWC and the Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macao Bridge) up to at least 2016. The road network would operate within manageable levels such that no new major highway infrastructure projects will be required. To ensure that the new transport infrastructure beyond 2016 will be provided in a timely manner, we have been conducting further investigation and engineering feasibility studies on the proposed road projects, including the Tuen Mun Eastern Bypass, the Tuen Mun Western Bypass and Tuen Mun – Chek Lap Kok Link, the Link Options between Tuen Mun and Lantau, and the Tsing Yi- Lantau Link. The objective is to get the necessary advance work done as much as possible at the present stage so that when the implementation programme for the various planned developments in the region becomes clearer, construction can start in a timely manner.

10. On 24 November 2006, we consulted Members on three proposed projects to improve the overall operation of Tuen Mun Road. The three proposed projects include –

- (a) widening of the section at Tsing Tin Interchange from a dual 2-lane to dual 3-lane carriageway;
- (b) widening of the Town Centre Section from Yan Oi Town Square to Wong Chu Road from a dual 2-lane to dual 3-lane carriageway; and
- (c) reconstructing and improving of the expressway section to meet the prevailing expressway standard, including the provision of full-width hard shoulder, as far as practicable.

11. Members supported the implementation of the proposed projects. Subject to the satisfactory passage of the necessary statutory procedures, we plan to commence the widening works at Tsing Tin Interchange in 2007 for completion by 2009, commence the widening works at the Town Centre Section in 2008 for completion by 2010, and commence the improvement works at the expressway section in 2008 for staged completion by 2012.

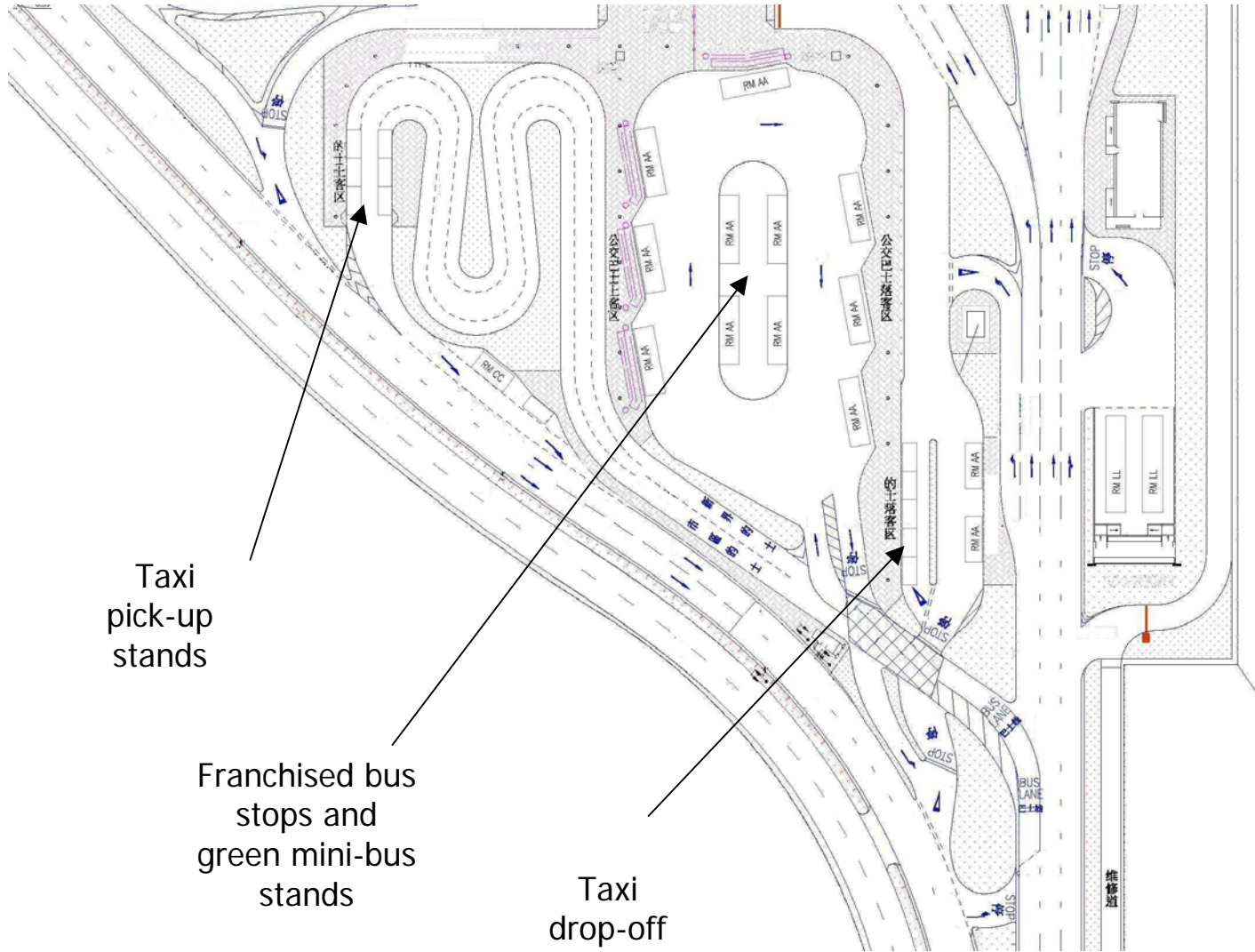
12. Separately, we have been discussing with the franchisee of Route 3 the feasibility of rationalising the utilisation of Route 3 and the non-tolled Tuen Mun Road, including franchise extension in exchange for toll reduction. We have also been encouraging the franchisee to offer more concessions to more vehicle types. We keep an open mind on all possible options and will continue our discussion with the franchisee in this regard.

ADVICE SOUGHT

13. Members are invited to note the traffic and transport arrangements for the HK-SWC.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
February 2007

Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor Public Transport Interchange



Taxi pick-up stands

Franchised bus stops and green mini-bus stands

Taxi drop-off point

To Shekou