

Legislative Council
Panel on Transport and Panel on Welfare Services

Concessionary Public Transport Fares for Persons with Disabilities

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the current provision of concessionary fares for the persons with disabilities (PwDs) by public transport (PT) operators and the latest development of this subject.

Public Transport Policy

2. The Administration's PT policy is to ensure that PT operators maintain proper and efficient PT services for the community and at the same time regulate fares of major PT services under well-established mechanisms to ensure that fare levels are reasonable.

Current Provision of Fare Concessions by Public Transport Operators

3. In addition to regulating basic fares, the Administration has been encouraging PT operators to introduce fare concessions as far as possible to help reduce travelling expenses of all passengers (including PwDs), taking into account various factors including the overall economic environment of the society, market conditions, operating conditions of the PT operators and the needs of passengers. At present, major PT operators are providing passengers with various fare concessions, including fare concessions for children/elderly/student/PwDs. For details of the fare concession schemes, please refer to [Annex 1](#).

4. Specific to PwDs, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has started offering fare concessions to PwDs who are recipients of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme aged between 12 and 64 with 100% disability and recipients of Disability Allowance in the same age group since 22 December 2009. These PwDs holding Personalised Octopus cards with "Persons with Disabilities Status" can enjoy fare discount of about 50% on all MTR commuter lines (except the Airport Express), Light Rail routes and MTR Bus services.

5. PwDs can also enjoy fare concessions in some ferry routes and green minibus routes – 18 ferry routes are offering 10% to 50% fare discount and two green minibus routes are offering about 15% fare concessions respectively to PwDs.

6. Moreover, all major PT operators, including MTRCL, franchised bus operators, major ferry service operators, tram, peak trams and some public light bus operators support the organisation of the “International Day of Disabled Persons” held annually, and offer free rides to PwDs on those days.

Latest Development – Requests for the extension of fare concessions for PwDs from railway service to other modes of transport

7. In line with the spirit of free enterprise, the provision of fare concessions is a commercial decision of individual PT operators. We are mindful of the need for the operators to keep their fares at reasonable levels while maintaining their operational and financial capabilities to provide proper and efficient PT services. If the Administration mandates the PT operators to provide specific types of fare concession for specific groups of passengers, the financial impact on the operators will eventually be reflected in the basic fares.

8. The issue of introducing fare concessions to PwDs has been discussed in the December 2009 and April 2010 meetings of the “Working Group on Access to Public Transport by People with Disabilities” (WG), which is a platform for groups of PwDs, PT operators, and relevant government bureaux and departments to work together for improving the PT services for PwDs. The terms of reference and the membership of the WG are at Annex 2. The relevant PT operators stated in the WG meetings and their written replies that they would not provide fare concessions tailor-made for PwDs on top of existing concessions which are open to all passengers because of the significant financial implications. They would only consider offering fare concessions to PwDs provided that the Administration would reimburse to them the discrepancy in revenue between normal fare and concessionary fare charged to PwDs.

9. We take note of the views of all concerned parties and will continue to encourage the PT operators to provide fare concessions to passengers as far as practicable. As regards the proposal for government subsidy to support fare concessions to PwDs, this is related to assistance and specific measures provided to persons with special needs, and hence is a broader issue for consideration.

Advice Sought

10. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Fare Concession Schemes offered by Public Transport Operators

Public Transport	Major Fare Concession Schemes
All MTR commuter lines, Light Rail routes and MTR Bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 50% fare discount for recipients of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme aged between 12 to 64 with 100% disability and recipients of Disability Allowance in the same age group (except the Airport Express) • About 50% fare discount for the elderly (except the Airport Express) • About 50% fare discount for children • About 50% fare discount for students (except the Airport Express, East Rail Line 1st class premium and Lo Wu / Lok Ma Chau journeys) • \$2 flat fare for the elderly on Wednesdays and public holidays (except Sundays) (except the Airport Express, East Rail Line 1st class premium , Lo Wu / Lok Ma Chau journeys, Light Rail routes and MTR Bus services). Starting from 1 September 2010, the scheme* will be extended to Saturdays as well • Sheung Shui – East Tsim Sha Tsui Monthly Pass, Tuen Mun – Nam Cheong Monthly Pass and Tuen Mun – Hung Hom Monthly Pass** <p>* The promotion will expire on 31 August 2011. ** The promotions will expire on 30 June 2011.</p>
Franchised bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% fare discount for the elderly • 50% fare discount for children (except NWFB¹ racecourse routes) • \$2 flat fare for the elderly on Sundays and public holidays (except racecourse routes, airport ‘A’ routes and special routes; and all NLB¹ routes other than

¹ NWFB=The New World First Bus Services Ltd., NLB=The New Lantao Bus Co. (1973) Ltd.

Public Transport	Major Fare Concession Schemes
	<p>route B2/B2P). The current scheme will last up to 31 January 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As at end May 2010, there were 238 Bus-Bus Interchange fare discount schemes involving about 400 bus routes • 50% to 60% fare discount on 8 NLB¹ routes for the elderly on Mondays to Saturdays except public holidays
Tram service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% fare discount for the elderly • 50% fare discount for children
Green minibus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 15% fare discount on 2 routes for passengers with disabilities • About 5% to 60% fare discount on 74 routes (including 4 routes with concession on Sundays and public holidays; and 2 routes with concession on Sundays) for the elderly • About 40% to 50% fare discount on 3 routes for children • About 15% to 40% fare discount on 7 routes for students • GMB-GMB Interchange fare discount scheme involving 44 routes • Rail-GMB Interchange fare discount scheme involving 54 routes
Ferry Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% to 50% fare discount on 18 routes for persons with disabilities • 10% to 50% fare discount on 17 routes and free ride on 4 routes for the elderly • 10% to 50% fare discount on 21 routes for children • Monthly tickets on 13 routes, multi-trip ticket on 1 route and special resident fares on 2 routes

Working Group on Access to Public Transport by People with Disabilities

Terms of Reference

1. To review existing and planned public transport facilities to assist disabled persons in making fuller use of public transport.
2. In consultation with disabled groups to look into the feasibility of, and to make recommendations on, further improvement of access to public transport by the disabled.
3. To monitor the implementation of those recommendations accepted.

Membership

Government Bureaux and Departments

1. Transport Department (Chair and Secretariat)
2. Representative from Transport and Housing Bureau
3. Representative from Labour and Welfare Bureau
4. Representative from relevant departments on a need basis

Public Transport Operators

1. Mass Transit Railway Corporation Ltd.
2. The Kowloon Motor Bus Co. (1933) Ltd.
3. Long Win Bus Co. Ltd.
4. Citybus Ltd.
5. The New World First Bus Services Ltd.
6. The New Lantao Bus Co. (1973) Ltd.
7. The Hongkong Tramways Ltd.
8. The "STAR" Ferry Company, Ltd.
9. Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Ltd.
10. New World First Ferry Services Ltd.

Groups of People with Disabilities

1. Rehabilitation Advisory Committee Subcommittee on Access
2. The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
3. Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth
4. Hong Kong Rehabilitation Power
5. The Hong Kong Society for the Blind
6. New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
7. The Hong Kong Society for the Deaf
8. Alliance for Patients' Mutual Help Organizations
9. Retina Hong Kong
10. Direction Association for the Handicapped
11. Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service
12. Environmental Advisory Service of the Rehabaid Society
13. The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation
14. Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong
15. Hong Kong Federation of the Blind
16. Hong Kong Blind Union
17. Hong Kong Association of the Deaf
18. Fu Hong Society