

**For information on**  
**4 January 2011**

**Legislative Council Panel on Security**

**Measures to Facilitate Immigration Clearance  
of Passengers and Vehicles at Boundary Control Points**

**Introduction**

This paper aims to brief Members on the immigration clearance situation of passengers and vehicles at boundary control points, and the related facilitation and mitigating measures taken by the Immigration Department (ImmD) and other Government departments.

**Increase of Mainland Visitors**

2. As the economic and social ties between Hong Kong and the Mainland continues to strengthen and the coverage of visitors facilitation schemes such as the “Individual Visit Scheme” (IVS) continues to expand, the number of trips recorded at various control points, in particular that of Mainland visitors, has kept on growing. In the first eleven months of this year, there are on average 328 000 passengers (including Hong Kong residents and visitors) arriving Hong Kong per day, up 8.3% as compared with 303 000 passengers during the same period last year. Among them, the number of trips made by Mainland visitors is 60 500, up 27.4% as compared with 47 500 trips during the same period last year. Taking the control points at Shenzhen Bay and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line as example, the number of trips made by arriving Mainland visitors per day has increased by more than 50% as compared with the same period last year. Over the same period, there has also been an increase by 20% to 40% in the number trips made by arriving Mainland visitors using the control

points at Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, the Airport Terminal and the ferry terminals (see Annex A).

3. Since its implementation from July 2003, the IVS has continued to extend and now covers 49 cities. Since April 2009, the Mainland authorities allow eligible Shenzhen residents with household registration to apply for one-year multiple individual visit endorsement (“multiple entry” endorsement). Thereafter, the number trips made by visitors entering Hong Kong with such endorsement has increased substantially: the daily average number of trips was 5 400 from April to December last year, whereas the daily average number of trips during the first eleven months this year has reached 11 000, more than doubling the previous figure.

4. Besides, it is worth noting that there is a relatively high portion of Mainland visitors making day trips to the HKSAR (i.e. arriving in the morning and departing on the same day). For instance, during the festive periods of the Labour Day and the National Day this year, the number of trips by Mainland visitors making day trips accounted for nearly half of the total, i.e. 47.0% and 44.7% respectively.

5. Notwithstanding the increase in the number trips made by Mainland visitors arriving Hong Kong, ImmD endeavours to provide efficient immigration clearance service to visitors while maintaining effective immigration control. The Department pledges that 95% of the visitors using land and sea boundary control points can have their clearance completed within 30 minutes, and that 95% of the visitors at the airport can have their clearance completed within 15 minutes. During the three major Mainland holiday periods this year, all nine control points were able to meet the Department’s performance pledge, with the exception of the Lo Wu Control Point during the National Day festive period this year (see Annex B).

6. As for vehicular flow, in the first eleven months of 2010, there is on average 21 000 vehicles arriving each day. Among them, private vehicles comprise around 40% and their growth rate is higher than the other vehicles. Relevant figures can be seen at Annex C.

### **Mitigating Measures relating to Immigration Clearance**

7. To cope with the surge in passenger traffic, the ImmD has all along adopted a number of mitigating measures to meet the demand. During the festive periods with higher cross-boundary passenger flows (for instance, Christmas and the New Year, Chinese New Year, Labour Day and the Golden Week of National Day), the ImmD and other relevant Government departments (including the Police, the Transport Department and the Customs & Excise Department (C&ED)) and the Mass Transit Railway Corporation would form a joint command centre and set it in operation to closely monitor passenger traffic and adopt mitigating measures to handle passenger flow as appropriate. Besides, during long holidays, ImmD will maintain close liaison with the tourism industry to assess the passenger traffic and deploy manpower accordingly. In accordance with passenger flow, ImmD would deploy more frontline staff and arrange staff to work overtime to enhance service on a need basis.

8. ImmD would step up publicity before festive periods and encourage passengers to avoid using cross-boundary service during the peak hours. During the festive periods, the Department would upload onto its website the number of arriving and departing passengers at various control points. There is also a cyber link at the website of the Hong Kong Tourism Board to provide such information for passengers' reference.

### **Medium to Long-term Measures**

9. ImmD will enhance its automatic clearance system and strengthen the handling capacity of its control points to tie in with the

plan of the Mainland authorities to issue electronic “Exit-Entry Permits for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao” (e-EEP) to Mainland residents. ImmD has secured funding approval from the Finance Committee this July for upgrading its computer system and installing facilities for enabling Mainland visitors using e-EEP to visit Hong Kong. Meanwhile, ImmD is considering allowing eligible frequent visitors from the Mainland to use the e-Channel service in a trial run so as to provide more efficient clearance.

10. Moreover, we also plan to enhance the clearance facilities at existing cross-boundary control points. At present, the Lok Ma Chau Control Point is the busiest land boundary control point providing both passenger and vehicular clearance between Hong Kong and the Mainland. We will carry out improvement works at Lok Ma Chau Control Point. We plan to more than double the number of e-Channels therein from the current 20 to around 46. We also plan to suitably improve the facilities of the ImmD, C&ED and Department of Health at the Passenger Terminal Building, and consider increasing the number of private car kiosks.

11. The first phase of this project (south bound) will commence in the first half year of 2011 and is expected to be completed by 2012. The second phase (north bound) will follow thereafter. We also plan to conduct similar works at the Man Kam To Control Point and increase the number of e-Channels by 9 (from currently 9 to 18). The works will commence in the first quarter of 2011 and is expected to be completed in 2012. Cross-boundary kiosks and counters will remain open during the construction period. We will also keep in close contact with stakeholders and the Mainland authorities and will adopt mitigating measures during the construction period with a view to minimizing inconvenience caused to cross-boundary passengers.

12. In the coming years, both the HKSARG and relevant Mainland authorities will plan for new boundary-crossing facilities,

including the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge to be completed in 2016 and the Liantang-Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point in 2018. These new control points will facilitate cross-boundary passenger and vehicular flow and provide more options for passengers between Hong Kong and the Mainland. We will work closely with other bureaux to follow up the project works.

13. The ImmD will suitably deploy its resources and review its manpower and resource requirement in accordance with the trend in cross-boundary passenger flow and the implementation of the mitigating measures.

14. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Security Bureau  
December 2010

**Annex A**

**Number of Arriving Passengers in Recent Years**  
**(Daily Average and Increase)**

|   | <b>2007</b> | <b>2008</b><br>(increase in<br>comparison with the<br>previous year) | <b>2009</b><br>(increase in<br>comparison with the<br>previous year) | <b>January to<br/>November 2010</b><br>(increase in<br>comparison with the<br>same period in the<br>previous year) |
|---|-------------|--|--|--|
| <b>All passengers</b>                   | 298 500     | 304 500<br>(2.0%)  | 305 500<br>(0.3%)  | 328 400<br>(8.3%)  |
| <b>Hong Kong<br/>residents</b>          | 221 200     | 223 800<br>(1.1%)  | 224 400<br>(0.3%)  | 231 100<br>(3.2%)  |
| <b>Visitors</b>                         | 77 300      | 80 700<br>(4.4%)   | 81 100<br>(0.5%)   | 97 300<br>(22.4%)  |
| <b>(of which<br/>Mainland Visitors)</b> | 41 800      | 45 400<br>(8.6%)   | 48 500<br>(6.8%)   | 60 500<br>(27.4%)  |

**Annex A (Continued)**

**Daily Average Number of Arrival Trips**  
**made by Mainland Visitors at various Control Points**  
**from January to November 2010**

|                      |                       | <b>Number of Arrivals</b><br>(increase in comparison<br>with the same period in the previous year) |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Rail –               | Lo Wu                 | 20 200<br>(21.7%)  |
|                      | Lok Ma Chau Spur Line | 7 300<br>(52.1%)   |
|                      | Hung Hom              | 1 600<br>(23.1%)   |
| Lok Ma Chau          |                       | 10 500<br>(19.3%)  |
| Shenzhen Bay         |                       | 8 800<br>(49.2%)   |
| Sha Tau Kok          |                       | 790<br>(71.7%)   |
| Airport              |                       | 7 300<br>(28.1%)   |
| China Ferry Terminal |                       | 2 100<br>(16.7%)   |
| Macau Ferry Terminal |                       | 1 300<br>(39.8%)   |

**Percentage of Passengers with their Clearance Completed within the  
Time Limits of the Performance Pledge at various Control Points  
during the three long holidays in the Mainland in 2010**

**Land and Sea Control Points: Clearing 95% of visitors within 30 minutes  
Airport: Clearing 95% of visitors within 15 minutes**

|                                    |                          | <b>Lunar New Year<br/>Holidays</b><br>(11-22 February) | <b>Labour Day<br/>Holidays</b><br>(30 April to 3 May) | <b>National Day<br/>Holidays</b><br>(1-8 October) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| Rail –                             | Lo Wu                    | 99.2   | 100.0   | 85.2 <sup>1</sup>                                 |
|                                    | Lok Ma Chau<br>Spur Line | 100.0  | 98.3  | 96.5  |
|                                    | Hung Hom                 | 100.0  | 99.9  | 99.6  |
| Lok Ma Chau                        |                          | 97.6   | 97.1  | 98.2  |
| Shenzhen Bay                       |                          | 98.6   | 97.7  | 96.7  |
| Sha Tau Kok                        |                          | 100.0  | 100.0   | 100.0   |
| Man Kam To                         |                          | 100.0  | 100.0   | 100.0   |
| China Ferry Terminal               |                          | 100.0  | 100.0   | 100.0   |
| Macau Ferry Terminal               |                          | 98.8   | 100.0   | 99.9  |
| Hong Kong International<br>Airport |                          | 99.7   | 98.9  | 99.3  |

<sup>1</sup> During the National Day festive period this year, the number of Mainland visitors increased by about 20% as compared with the National Day festive period last year, and as much as 40% to 50% of the Mainland visitors entered Hong Kong between 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon, rendering the immigration clearance service not meeting the performance pledge during the peak periods of passenger traffic.



## Annex C

### Number of Arriving Vehicles in Recent Years (Daily Average and Increase)

|                          | <b>2007</b> | <b>2008</b><br>(increase in<br>comparison with the<br>previous year) | <b>2009</b><br>(increase in<br>comparison with the<br>previous year) | <b>January to<br/>November 2010</b><br>(increase in comparison<br>with the same period in<br>the previous year) |
|--------------------------|-------------|--|--|---|
| <b>All Vehicles</b>      | 20 300      | 20 500<br>(1.0%)   | 19 700<br>(-0.4%)  | 21 000<br>(7.1%)  |
| <b>Private Vehicles</b>  | 6 200       | 7 500<br>(21.0%)   | 7 900<br>(5.3%)  | 8 400<br>(6.3%)   |
| <b>Coach<sup>2</sup></b> | 1 200       | 1 200<br>(0%)  | 1 400<br>(16.7%)   | 1 300<br>(-7.1%)  |
| <b>Goods Vehicles</b>    | 12 900      | 11 800<br>(-8.5%)  | 10 400<br>(-11.9%)   | 11 300<br>(9.7%)  |

<sup>2</sup> Excluding the shuttle bus service for Huanggang / Lok Ma Chau.