

**Subcommittee on the Six Orders Made under Section 5(1) of the
Public Bus Services Ordinances and Gazetted on 20 January 2012**

Written Submission to Subcommittee Meeting on 23 February 2012

by

**The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (“KMB”) /
Long Win Bus Company Limited (“LWB”)**

Background Information

To meet changing passenger demand patterns arising out of demographic changes and economic developments, and to improve the efficiency of the bus network, KMB and LWB implemented 58 and 1 changes to the services in the period between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011 respectively. Nevertheless, there are factors that affect daily bus operations and KMB / LWB have to make apt adjustments to the trip schedules to maintain the service stability.

There are numerous factors affecting daily bus operations. These include sudden bus mechanical failure, traffic accidents, congestion, manpower shortage and road closures. While some of the factors are beyond our control, we have used the utmost endeavours in the following areas:

- (i) To cope with sudden bus mechanical failure, not only have KMB / LWB established a comprehensive fleet maintenance system, but have also continually reviewed the system and strengthened the preventive maintenance programmes. Despite having been performing relatively well in this regard, KMB / LWB will continue to take measures to rigorously ensure the roadworthiness of the bus fleet and to provide a reliable service to the public.
- (ii) KMB / LWB have taken proactive measures to minimize the impacts of accidents on our service. Safety is accorded the highest priority in the operation of KMB / LWB. The Safety and Service Quality Department was established last year to administer safety measures and promotion within the companies and to the public. KMB / LWB have spared no efforts in strengthening the safety awareness of bus captains and the general public through staff training and civil education campaigns, and have actively participated in road safety promotion programmes in the community.

(iii) We notice that traffic conditions have deteriorated recently, mainly as a result of the booming economy and road works. Traffic congestion occurs not only in the central business areas such as Central and Tsim Sha Tsui but also in newly developed and redeveloping areas like eastern Kowloon, and especially during peak hours. Bus service stability has been adversely affected as traffic congestion always results in prolonged bus journey times. Bus operations are also affected by road closures which are common in various districts. KMB / LWB are proactively working in cooperation with Transport Department on traffic improvement proposals as well as rationalization of journey times to more realistically meet the traffic conditions.

(iv) Recruitment of professional drivers has become a great challenge. This applies not only to the bus service sector but is a common problem in the other transport-related industries. KMB / LWB have been facing a challenging environment in the recruitment and retention of bus captains in a tight labour market. Given the stringent requirements for our bus operations, it is not easy for us to recruit drivers. KMB / LWB have enhanced bus captain hiring and training capability through utilizing various new recruitment channels; strengthened the training capacity of our Bus Captain Training School with additional resources (including driving instructors and training buses); as well as enhanced the post-employment orientation and caring programmes for new bus captains to help assimilate them to the new working environment more readily.

As KMB has been serving Hong Kong for nearly 80 years and LWB 15, we will endeavour to take effective measures to further improve and strengthen the level of services provided to the public.