

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)706/11-12
(These minutes have been seen by
the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/TP/1

Panel on Transport

**Minutes of meeting held on
Tuesday, 18 October 2011, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo (Chairman)
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, SBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
- Members attending** : Hon LEE Wing-tat
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou
- Members absent** : Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon CHAN Hak-kan

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

**Public Officers
attending** : **Agenda item I**

Ms Eva CHENG, GBS, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Francis HO, JP
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)

Mr S M YAU, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Carolina YIP
Commissioner for Transport (Acting)

Mr Peter LAU, JP
Director of Highways

Ms Maisie CHENG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)¹

Ms Rebecca PUN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)²

Mr Patrick CHAN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)³

Clerk in attendance: Ms Joanne MAK
Chief Council Secretary (1)²

Staff in attendance : Ms Macy NG
Senior Council Secretary (1)²

Ms Emily LIU
Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

I Briefing by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the transport policy initiatives featuring in the 2011-2012 Policy Address

(LC Paper No. CB(1)54/11-12(01) - Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2011-2012 Policy Address and Policy Agenda

- Address by the Chief Executive at the Legislative Council meeting on 12 October 2011 - "From Strength to Strength"
- The 2011-2012 Policy Address - "Policy Agenda"

The Secretary for Transport and Housing (STH) briefed members on the new and on-going transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) featured in the 2011-2012 Policy Address.

Cross-boundary traffic and infrastructure projects

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) project

2. Noting that the estimated overall cost increase for the HZMB related local projects due to the judicial review (JR) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report of the HZMB local projects was about \$6.5 billion as set out in the Administration's paper, Mr WONG Kwok-hing asked about the cost breakdown, including the cost increase for the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link (TM-CLKL) project.

3. STH replied that the main reasons of the cost increase were the need to adjust the construction method to compress the works programme such that the Bridge could be commissioned as scheduled, as well as the increase in construction prices. She said that the estimated additional cost required for the advance works of TM-CLKL due to the JR case had already been included in the cost increase of \$6.5 billion. STH explained that the TM-CLKL southern landfall reclamation would be taken forward

as the same works together with the reclamation of the artificial island of Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities (HKBCF), because carrying out the reclamation works in the same contract to provide the land required for the two projects would reduce the total length of the seawalls to be constructed. STH further said that the Administration had originally planned to commission TM-CLKL together with HZMB in 2016, but the Administration at present would complete the project by phases. As the 3 km viaduct of southern connection connecting HKBCF with the North Lantau Highway had to be commissioned to dovetail with the commissioning of HZMB, the Administration would, through arrangement of works, complete the southern connection in 2016, while the sub-sea tunnel connecting HKBCF with Tuen Mun would be completed in 2017.

4. Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport)1 (DS(T)1) supplemented that one of the Administration's current proposals was to seek funding approval for the detailed design, site investigations and advance works of the TM-CLKL project. The Administration would seek funding for the construction of the TM-CLKL remaining works next year. By that time an accurate estimate would be available. For the Tuen Mun Western Bypass project, it was still in the preliminary design stage, and the Administration did not consider it an appropriate time to estimate the construction cost at the present moment.

5. As regards the breakdown of the \$6.5 billion, DS(T)1 said that for the HKBCF project, out of the estimated cost of \$30,433.9 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices, about \$6.3 billion in MOD prices arose from the additional cost due to the JR of the HZMB local related projects, which included the additional costs for: (i) adjustment of construction method to accelerate construction of the HKBCF infrastructures, facilities and buildings, etc, including adopting more sand fill and associated plant/equipment for the reclamation works, and the use of additional manpower, equipment and facilities (the associated cost increase was about \$4.05 billion) for accelerating the works progress; and (ii) increase in construction prices (the associated cost increase was about \$2.25 billion). The remaining \$0.2 billion of the \$6.5 billion cost increase was the additional cost for the advance works of TM-CLKL.

6. Mr LAU Kong-wah expressed concern about the impact on the works of the HZMB related local projects and the Bridge if an appeal was lodged against the judgment handed down by the Court of Appeal on 27 September 2011. He enquired about the cost implications should there be further delay. STH advised that \$6.5 billion was estimated based on the assumption that the works of HZMB related local projects could be

commenced before the end of 2011. If the project commencement was further delayed, the Administration anticipated that the cost would continue to rise significantly, with an estimate of \$31 million cost increase per day.

7. Noting that the work progress of about 70-odd projects had been affected by the JR of the EIA Report of HZMB, Mr WONG Kwok-hing asked how many major transport infrastructure projects were included within the 70-odd projects and their present position. STH advised that apart from the HZMB project, one of the major transport infrastructure projects affected by the JR was the Shatin to Central Link (SCL). The Administration would strive to compress the concerned procedures as far as possible, and to complete the statutory procedures and EIA processes for the SCL project before mid-2012. The Administration would strive to commence construction in 2012. In response to Mr WONG's request, STH agreed to provide information on the present position of the major transport infrastructure projects which had been affected by the JR case.

Admin

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)126/11-12 dated 20 October 2011.)

Ad hoc quota trial scheme for cross-boundary private cars

8. Noting that Guangdong and Hong Kong had decided to launch Phase I of the ad hoc quota trial scheme (the quota scheme) for cross-boundary private cars in March 2012, Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern about how enforcement actions could be taken against visiting Mainland private cars in the event of contravention of Hong Kong's traffic laws and regulations. Mr Jeffrey LAM echoed the concerns. Pointing out that there had been several fatal traffic accidents on the Mainland involving Hong Kong people who participated in self-drive tour, Mr LAM enquired about the measures to enhance the safety of Hong Kong drivers after implementation of the quota scheme.

9. STH responded that the quota scheme would start with the issue of one-off ad hoc quotas to Hong Kong private cars, to be followed by Guangdong private cars at a later stage after satisfactory implementation of the quota scheme for Hong Kong private cars and resolution of practical problems encountered. She said that drivers, irrespective of Mainland or Hong Kong drivers, would need to comply with local traffic regulations. To ensure road safety, publicity and educational efforts would be made to remind and educate cross-boundary private car drivers about the different traffic regulations in the Mainland and Hong Kong. THB would also

encourage organisations of the transport sector like the Hong Kong Automobile Association to provide training for applicants who would drive for the first time on the Mainland to familiarize themselves with the Mainland traffic regulations.

10. Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport)3 (DS(T)3) pointed out that the Administration was still working with Mainland authorities on implementation details and concrete arrangements. DS(T)3 explained that as visiting drivers would be required to provide necessary details to the relevant authorities when submitting an application for ad hoc quota, the relevant law enforcement authorities would be able to trace the drivers concerned in the event of contravention of traffic regulations. Mr LEE Wing-tat stressed to the Administration the need to attach great importance to ensuring road safety in the implementation of the ad hoc quota scheme.

11. Noting that in the Phase I of the trial scheme, only qualified owners of Hong Kong private cars with five seats or less could apply for ad hoc quotas under the quota scheme to drive their private cars into Guangdong Province, Mr KAM Nai-wai asked about the rationale of this requirement, as seven- or eight-seated private cars were more commonly used in Hong Kong. Sharing Mr KAM's views, Mr WONG Sing-chi considered it more cost-effective to also allow private cars with seven or eight seats to apply for the ad hoc quotas.

12. In reply, STH said that the requirement of only allowing private cars with "five seats or less" for application was set by the Mainland authorities, which intended to try out smaller cars first and introduce the quotas in a gradual and controlled manner, taking into account the handling capacity of cross boundary traffic. If the trial run of private cars with five seats or less was proven to be satisfactory, the quota scheme would be extended to other kinds of private cars.

13. In response to Ms Miriam LAU's enquiry on the Administration's measures to prevent illegal operation of light goods vehicles under the quota scheme and Mr Jeffrey LAM's question on the amount of fees for application of the ad hoc quota, STH advised that drivers might be disallowed from applying frequently for the ad hoc quotas at the initial stage. She added that a decision had yet to be made on the amount of application fees under the quota scheme.

Railway projects

West Island Line (WIL) and South Island Line (East)(SIL(E))

14. Pointing out that the implementation of the WIL and SIL(E) projects had commenced for some time and were progressing smoothly, Mr KAM Nai-wai enquired about the possibility of completing the two projects ahead of schedule, i.e. in 2014 and 2015 respectively.

15. STH responded that while the Administration would strive for the early commissioning of the two new railway lines, additional costs would be incurred if the relevant works programmes were compressed to advance the completion date of the two projects. In addition, the Administration had to cater to the need of allowing enough time for conducting testing and commissioning activities to ensure safety of the new rail lines. It was not expected that the commissioning of the WIL and the SIL(E) projects could be advanced.

16. Referring to the MTR Corporation Limited's (MTRCL's) recent procurement of Mainland-made trains which would be put into service shortly, Mr KAM Nai-wai asked if those trains would be used for WIL and SIL(E). Highlighting the public concern on the quality of the Mainland-made trains, Mr KAM enquired about the Administration's measures to ensure safety and address public concern in this regard.

17. STH and DS(T)1 responded that the MTRCL had adopted the international standard and adhered to established tendering procedures in train procurement, and had accepted the best offer which complied with all the requirements stipulated in the relevant tender documents. Emphasizing on the safety of rail services, the MTRCL had hired independent experts to take part in the tendering exercise, interior design and manufacturing of the trains. DS(T)1 added that the Corporation had also liaised closely with the train manufacturer to ensure that the specifications were met.

Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL)

18. In view of different timetables of commissioning of the Hong Kong section and the Shenzhen section of XRL, Ms Miriam LAU asked about the Administration's traffic arrangements that would be made to facilitate passengers from Hong Kong taking the Shenzhen section of XRL during the time gap. STH replied that the section from Guangzhou South to

Shenzhen North and the section from Shenzhen North to Futian were scheduled to open between 2010 and 2012. The Administration would, before completion of the Hong Kong section of XRL, closely monitor the demands for cross-boundary coach service and liaise with the coach operators concerned on the provision of such service to meet service demands.

Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Express Line (WEL)

19. Noting that one of the major functions of WEL was to enhance the cooperation between the two airports in Hong Kong and Shenzhen, Mr Albert CHAN asked whether the WEL project would be implemented in tandem with the HZMB project. In reply, STH said that the WEL project was covered in the study on the Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS 2U), which had commenced in March 2011. STH pointed out that one of the major functions of WEL was to promote the development of Qianhai and Northwest New Territories (NWNT). It was therefore necessary for the design of the WEL to take into consideration the planning of these two areas. With the development of Qianhai and NWNT being pushed ahead, more planning parameters for these areas would be available to enable conduct of in-depth studies on WEL. STH said that the WEL project was a separate project which would not be implemented together with the HZMB project.

Northern Link (NOL)

20. In response to Mr WONG Sing-chi's enquiry, STH advised that the planning of NOL was also covered in the study on RDS 2U.

Other transport-related initiatives

Environment-friendly buses and enhancing vehicle maintenance

21. Ms LI Fung-ying noted that the Chief Executive had proposed some transport-related environmental protection and conservation measures in his Policy Address, which included the proposal to earmark \$180 million for franchised bus companies to purchase 36 electric buses for trial runs on a number of routes to assess their performance in different conditions, and to set aside \$150 million to provide a one-off subsidy to owners of liquefied petroleum gas taxis and light buses for replacing catalytic converters in their vehicles. She enquired about the details of the proposals.

22. STH replied that while the implementation of the new measures was under the purview of the Environment Bureau, THB would assist by liaising with the transport operators. STH said that if the test results of the trial runs of zero-emission electric buses were satisfactory, the Administration would encourage franchised bus companies in a suitable way to use electric buses on a much larger scale and impose relevant requirements in the bus franchises as appropriate, taking into account the affordability of the bus companies and passengers. She further said that under the existing franchises, there was already a provision on the adoption of the latest commercially available and proven environment-friendly technologies for acquiring new buses.

Provision of fare concessions for the elderly and persons with disabilities

23. Referring to the Government's proposal to use public resources to facilitate the provision of fare concessions for eligible persons including the elderly and persons with disabilities to travel on the general Mass Transit Railway (MTR) lines, franchised buses and ferries anytime at a concessionary fare of \$2 per trip, Mr Albert CHAN and Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming asked respectively whether the outlying island ferries and public light buses (PLBs) would be covered in the concession scheme, and the timetable for implementation.

24. STH advised that the implementation of the concession scheme was under the purview of the Labour and Welfare Bureau. Notwithstanding, THB and the Transport Department (TD) would be involved in discussing with the public transport operators on the arrangements. STH said that according to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare (SLW), the target was to implement the concession scheme by summer of 2012 as time was required for public transport operators to modify the software and probably the hardware which might require replacement of octopus card readers. STH added that implementation of the concession scheme entailed the need to amend the Disability Discrimination Ordinance and to apply for funding from the Finance Committee, which would also take time to complete the necessary procedures.

25. STH confirmed that outlying island ferries would be covered in the concession scheme. The proposal of including PLBs in the concession scheme was, however, being considered by the SLW. STH explained that given that about 70% of Hong Kong passengers travelled by franchised buses, MTR or ferry, the Administration should take forward the original plan with a view to implementing the concession scheme as early as possible. She added that should the concession scheme be extended to

cover PLBs, more issues would have to be resolved as a large number of PLB operators and routes would be involved.

26. Mr WONG Sing-chi, however, remained unconvinced as to why the concession scheme could not be rolled out until next summer. In response, STH explained that much modification work would be required for a lot of the existing card readers, for example, those installed for the Light Rail and Feeder Buses of MTR, were currently not offering \$2 elderly fare concessions on Wednesdays, Saturdays and non-Sunday public holidays.

27. While welcoming the Administration's proposal to provide fare concessions for the elderly and persons with disabilities, Miss Tanya CHAN expressed concern that the concession scheme might increase the patronage of those unpopular bus routes, and adversely affect the progress in pursuing franchised bus service rationalization. STH responded that the Administration had the mechanism to monitor franchised bus services, including fares, patronage as well as the planning of bus routes. She added that rationalization of franchised bus services was an on-going exercise and the Administration would make sustained efforts in its bus rationalization efforts to this end.

Other views and concerns

Construction manpower for implementation of infrastructure projects

28. Noting that the Administration would implement a number of infrastructure projects concurrently in the next few years, Ms LI Fung-ying was concerned about the adequacy of supply of construction manpower for implementation of the projects.

29. STH and Director of Highways (DH_y) responded that the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the construction industry had studied the demand for and supply of construction manpower in the next few years. The construction industry did not raise concern on the adequacy of manpower for implementing the projects. DH_y further said that to cope with the growing demand of construction manpower, DEVB had collaborated with the construction industry to launch a "Build Up Publicity Campaign" to promote Training Programme to train up young people who would like to join the industry, and encouraged contractors to recruit and provide training to workers.

Traffic demand in Tseung Kwan O

30. Ms Miriam LAU expressed concern on the traffic problems in Tseung Kwan O. She considered that improvements were needed for the "3+1" service pattern of the Tseung Kwan O Extension (i.e., for trains from North Point during peak hours, the first three out of every four trains would terminate at Po Lam Station while the fourth train would terminate at LOHAS Park Station), which had been unable to meet service demands. She further pointed out that the traffic congestion in Tseung Kwan O, particularly during peak hours, was very serious. She enquired about the measures to be taken to improve the situation and whether shuttle bus services would be provided between LOHAS Park Station and other MTR stations, such as Hang Hau.

31. STH said that the THB would continue to liaise with the District Council concerned to address the traffic demand of Tseung Kwan O residents, including reviewing the frequency of railways and franchised bus services. She added that the TD would also consider Ms LAU's proposal of providing shuttle bus services between LOHAS Park Station and other MTR stations.

32. DS(T)1 supplemented that the Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel (TKO-LTT) would connect the proposed Trunk Road T2 in Kai Tak Development in the West, and then through the Central Kowloon Route (CKR) linking to West Kowloon, which formed Route 6 in the strategic road network. The planned Cross Bay Link connecting the TKO-LTT with the southeast area of Tseung Kwan O New Town would provide a bypass for vehicular traffic, and avoid traffic congestion at Tseung Kwan O town centre. She said that the works of these projects were at different stages. While the detailed design of CKR had already commenced, the preliminary site investigation and design works for the other projects were in progress. At the request of Ms Miriam LAU, STH agreed to provide supplementary information on the implementation progress of the above projects for members' reference.

Admin

II Any other business

33. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:35 pm.