

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)386/13-14
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by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/TP/1

Panel on Transport

**Minutes of special meeting held on
Monday, 22 April 2013, at 8:30 am
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon CHAN Han-pan
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Hon TANG Ka-piu
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members attending : Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP

Members absent : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

Public Officers attending : **Agenda item I**

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

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

Mr Anthony LOO, JP
Assistant Commissioner/Planning
Transport Department

Mr TANG Wai-leung
Chief Engineer/Transport Planning
Transport Department

Attendance by invitation : **Agenda item I**

Mr Michael C CLARK
Principal Consultant
Wilbur Smith Associates Limited

Mr Billy WONG
Associate
Wilbur Smith Associates Limited

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and
Progress of Hong Kong

Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing
Deputy Spokesperson of Transport Services

"DIVING" (Cross Harbour) Concerning Group

Mr Jacky LIM

New People's Party

Mr Hubert HO

New People's Party Youth Committee Member

Lok Ma Chau China-Hong Kong Freight Association

Mr Stanley CHAING

Chairman

Hong Kong Taxi Owners' Association Limited

Mr WONG Po-keung

Chairman

Tai Wo Motors Limited

Mr Aaron NG Hoi-shan

Vice Chairman

The Kowloon Taxi Owners Association Limited

Mr WAN Cheuk-ming

Chairman

China Hong Kong and Macau Boundary Crossing Bus Association

Mr Alan CHAN

Secretary General

Green Sense

Mr Roy TAM

Chief Executive Officer

Individual

Mr Francis CHAN

Taxi Driver Operators Association

Mr NG Yip-pui
General Secretary

United Friendship Taxi Owners & Drivers
Association Limited

Mr AU YEUNG Kan
Vice Chairman

Individual

Miss YU Hin-pik

Youth Committee of the Liberal Party

Mr Dominic LEE
Chairman

Civic Party

Mr Joshua LI
Kowloon West District Developer

Labour Party

Mr KWOK Wing-kin
Vice General Secretary

Democratic Party

Mr CHAI Man-hon
Convenor, Transport Policy Group

The Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport in
HK

Mr LEUNG Kong-yui
Council Member

Public Transport Think Tank of Hong Kong

Mr CHAN Tik-yiu
Officer

Public Transport Research Team

Mr LEUNG Yik-hang
Secretary

Public Omnibus Operators Association

Mr Louis KUNG
Secretary General

Hong Kong District Tourists and Passengers
Omnibus Operators Association

Mr David CHAN
Chairman

Tuen Mun District Tourists and Passengers
Omnibus Operators Association

Mr Dick YIP
Chairman

Yuen Long District Tourists and Passengers
Omnibus Operators Association

Mr Leo YIP
Member

Kowloon District Tourists and Passengers
Omnibus Operators Association

黎正邦先生
Committee Member

Business and Professionals Federation of Hong
Kong

Ms Susan CHAN
Senior Manager

Hong Kong Automobile Association

Mr YUNG Chi-keung
Hon Treasurer

Clerk in attendance: Ms Sophie LAU
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

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

Ms Emily LIU
Legislative Assistant (1)2

Miss Ariel SHUM
Clerical Assistant (1)2

Action

- I Proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings**
(LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(03) - Administration's paper on proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings
LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(04) - Paper on measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings prepared

- by the Legislative Council Secretariat (background brief)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)861/12-13(01) - Submission from FGG
- LC Paper No. CB(1)861/12-13(02) - Submission from a member of the public
- LC Paper No. CB(1)861/12-13(03) - Submission from Designing Hong Kong Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(1)861/12-13(04) - Submission from Mr David LAI, Wan Chai District Councillor
- LC Paper No. CB(1)861/12-13(05) - Submission from The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
- LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(01) - Submission from Mr YEUNG Wai-sing, Eastern District Councillor
- LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(03) - Submission from Federation of Hong Kong Transport Worker Organizations
- LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(04) - Submission from Taxi & P.L.B Concern Group
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1014/12-13(01) - Submission from Chit Fai Motors Co. Ltd)

Meeting with deputations and the Administration

The Chairman invited deputations to express their views on the three toll adjustment options proposed by the Administration as measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings ("RHCs"). All the three options involved different degrees of downward toll adjustments at the Eastern Harbour Crossing ("EHC") and upward toll adjustments at the Cross Harbour Tunnel ("CHT"). The summary of deputations' views is in the **Appendix**.

The Administration's initial response to the concerns of deputations

2. At the Chairman's invitation, Under Secretary for Transport and Housing ("USTH") explained the following points in response to the views of deputations –

- (a) The three toll adjustment options on which current consultation exercise conducted was an extension of the findings and

recommendations of the consultancy study on rationalising the utilisation of Road Harbour Crossings commissioned in 2008. Option C was a new option devised in the light of the feedback received during the last round of public consultation in 2010/2011 and had addressed the concerns of the public and the transport trade.

- (b) According to past experience, toll adjustment was one of the effective means to achieve better traffic distribution among the three RHCs. It was the Administration's target that the cross-harbour traffic queue near both ends of CHT would not adversely affect non-cross-harbour traffic.
- (c) The Administration was against the proposal to reduce tolls at Western Harbour Crossing ("WHC") to divert traffic from CHT. It was because though WHC itself had spare capacity, its connecting roads, in particular those in Central, were already congested. These roads would not be able to cope with additional traffic during the morning and evening rush hours when relief at CHT was most needed. This constraint might only be overcome when the Central-Wanchai Bypass ("CWB") came into operation by the end of 2017.
- (d) The Administration proposed to implement the proposed toll adjustments on a 12-month trial basis tentatively in the second half of 2014 to test the effectiveness of the proposed toll adjustments. The public's acceptability of subsidising tunnel users through public funds would be assessed too. The outcome of the trial would provide good reference for the Administration in coordinating traffic arrangements for the three RHCs when the ownership of EHC was returned to the Government in 2016 and CWB was completed in 2017.
- (e) To help relieve the road traffic congestion on the Hong Kong Island, the Administration had taken the initiatives to develop an alternative central business district in Kowloon East to support the economic development of Hong Kong. It had also planned to construct a new route connecting the exit of WHC with East Kowloon to help divert road traffic from east to west and vice versa.

- (f) Unifying the toll levels of RHCs at a lower level or significantly reducing the toll levels of RHCs were not feasible as they would induce additional vehicular and cross-harbour traffic.

Discussion

3. Mr TANG Ka-piu noted that to benefit from the reduced tolls at EHC, drivers would need to travel a longer distance and a higher fuel cost would be incurred. As such, he was concerned whether the proposed measures would be able to effectively divert the traffic from CHT to EHC. He further said that even if they were able to do so, there were still concerns that the less congested CHT might attract additional traffic from WHC as the toll of CHT, after upward adjustment, would still be lower than that of WHC. In his view, the Administration should not leave out WHC when proposing measures to rationalise the distribution of RHCs.

4. USTH advised that according to the computation of the consultants, all the three possible options could reduce the traffic queue at CHT by 30% to 40%. However, its effectiveness in diverting traffic from CHT could be studied after the trial. He added that the outcome of the trial would be a basis for the Administration to work out further arrangements upon the expiry of EHC's franchise in 2016.

5. The Deputy Chairman pointed out that the public was dissatisfied with the Administration for having taken an unreasonably long period of time to carry out the consultancy study. He noted that among the deputations who had attended the meeting, about five to six of them had opted for Option C (i.e. Status Quo for Public Transport Option) because of no other choices. Some deputations considered that the proposed measures could only temporarily solve the problem. Some had expressed strong views that the Administration should buy back WHC, construct a fourth RHC, and put all RHCs under the management of the Administration. In his opinion, it would be too late for the Administration to consider buying back WHC after the commissioning of CWB in 2017.

6. USTH noted the views of the Deputy Chairman. He explained that there was a need to conduct the trial first so that the outcome of which could provide reference for the Administration in formulating long term measures.

7. Mr NG Leung-sing considered that to solve the traffic congestion problems of CHT and in the Central district, the Administration should study the feasibility of providing interchange facilities near both ends of CHT and

the Hong Kong side of WHC so as to divert traffic to different destinations by public light buses and so forth.

8. USTH responded that while the Administration would consider Mr NG's suggestion as a long-term measure to solve the traffic congestion problem, it should be noted that it was not an easy task to secure land for provision of large-scale interchange facilities, or entrance/exit of a new harbour crossing as suggested by some members and deputations. In addition, reclamation so involved would be subject to very stringent restrictions under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (Cap. 531). As implementation of the above-mentioned suggestions required a long lead time, it would not provide a timely solution to address the long-standing congestion problem at CHT. The Administration believed that the proposed toll adjustment options would be a more effective and timely solution to address the congestion problem at CHT and achieve the objective of rationalising the traffic distribution among RHCs.

9. Mr Frankie YICK opined that the trial of the rationalising measures could be conducted after 2017 upon the commissioning of CWB to test the effectiveness of diverting traffic from CHT to WHC. At the moment, the Administration could start liaising with WHC to explore possible areas of cooperation. He considered that providing Government subsidy to tunnel operators should not be seen as a kind of collusion between business and the Government because the matter had to be considered from a macro perspective, taking into account factors like social cost, productivity, environmental and public health issues. Mr YICK noted that the logistics industry was strongly opposed to the Administration's proposed measures as the benefit gained by the trade from the reduced EHC toll would be offset by the increased fuel cost and time arising from the need to travel a longer distance. Or, if the transport vehicles used the CHT, they would have to pay the higher tolls, resulting in increased cost.

10. USTH replied that according to the consultancy study, goods vehicles would enjoy different degrees of economic benefits under the three proposed options. Under Option C, the annual savings in costs of goods vehicles would be about \$140 million. The Administration thus considered it worthwhile to conduct the trial.

11. Dr KWOK Ka-ki considered that the Kowloon bound traffic of WHC was not so congested and urged the Administration to study the feasibility of diverting some of the Kowloon bound traffic of CHT to WHC. He considered the proposed measures to reduce the tolls at EHC and increase the tolls at CHT was not practicable as the traffic throughput of EHC had nearly

reached its maximum capacity. The proposed measures would only shift the traffic congestion problem from CHT to EHC.

12. USTH replied that the implementation of the proposed measures would increase the daily traffic throughput of EHC by about 5 000 vehicles, and bring the total daily traffic throughput of EHC to about 75 000 which would still be within its capacity of 78 000. He added that CWB had been designed to be the main connecting road of WHC when WHC was constructed. However, the completion of CWB had been delayed from 2010 to 2017 due to a judicial review case on reclamation. As a result, the traffic congestion problem in Central had yet to be solved.

13. Principal Consultant of Wilbur Smith Associates Limited supplemented that currently there was indeed traffic congestion problem at the connecting roads of the Kowloon bound of WHC on Hong Kong Island, particularly in areas near Pedder Street and Connaught Road. Since these areas were quite far from the entrance of WHC, the public might not be aware that the traffic congestion problem was already there.

14. Mr CHAN Han-pan considered that the Administration's proposed measures could not solve the congestion problem of CHT at root as the less congested CHT might attract additional traffic from WHC. In addition, it was questionable whether a toll reduction of \$5 at EHC would provide enough incentives for drivers to switch to use EHC, given the longer travel distance. In his view, the most effective measures would be to buy back WHC and reduce the toll differences among RHCs. In addition, the tolls of CHT should be frozen while the tolls of EHC be reduced.

15. Assistant Commissioner/Planning of Transport Department ("AC/P") responded that the target of the Administration was to divert marginal users of CHT switch to use EHC. He explained that marginal users were those who travelled similar distance to their destinations by either using EHC or CHT. These people currently choose CHT in view of the existing lower toll levels. He said that with the implementation of the proposed toll adjustments (i.e. with EHC tolls reduced and CHT tolls increased), it was anticipated that a proportion of those marginal users, such as those travelling from Kowloon Bay to Wan Chai, would opt for EHC owing to the savings in time, fuel cost and toll fees. AC/P further said that the suggestion of reducing the EHC tolls only while maintaining status quo for CHT tolls was not feasible in traffic management terms. He explained that according to the analysis of the consultants, this option would generate additional cross-harbour traffic. Traffic at EHC would become heavier due to the traffic diverted from CHT as well as some additional cross-harbour traffic.

It was estimated that the EHC traffic queue on the Kowloon side would extend beyond the Tseung Kwan O Road/Lei Yue Mun Road junction, thus affecting non-cross harbour traffic. On the other hand, CHT would remain congested because the brought by traffic diverted to EHC effect would be much offset by the newly generated cross-harbour traffic and traffic diverted from WHC.

16. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan indicated the views of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions that toll adjustment measures should also be implemented at WHC and toll concession should be offered to commercial vehicles only. He further suggested that to better connect the road network between the New Territories and the Hong Kong Island, different toll concession packages should be offered to tunnel users, say combined use of Tai Lam Tunnel with WHC, Lion Rock Tunnel with CHT, and Tate's Cairn Tunnel with EHC. In addition, the tolls of the three combined routes should be set at a similar level. The Administration should also discourage the use of private cars, introduce park-and-ride scheme to reduce cross-harbour traffic and study the feasibility of introducing the Electronic Road Pricing Scheme.

17. USTH responded that with the commissioning of the transport infrastructures including CWB and Central Kowloon Route, Mr LEE's suggestion could be further explored.

18. The Chairman thanked deputations/individuals who had attended the meeting to express their valuable comments.

II Any other business

19. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:32 am.

Panel on Transport

Special meeting on Monday, 22 April 2013, at 8:30 am

Proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings

Summary of views and concerns expressed by deputations/individuals

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
1.	Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there was not a public consensus on the Administration's proposal to reduce the tolls at the Eastern Harbour Crossing ("EHC") and increase the tolls at the Cross Harbour Tunnel ("CHT"). Comprehensive consultation of the transport trade should be carried out by the Administration before adoption of any option the Administration should actively consider freezing the tolls at CHT and reducing the tolls at EHC in the long run, the Administration should actively study other options, such as the feasibility of buying back the Western Harbour Crossing ("WHC") or extending its operating right, and constructing the fourth road harbour crossing ("RHC")
2.	New People's Party [LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(06)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> should improve Option C (i.e. Status Quo for Public Transport Option) by increasing the existing tolls for taxi by \$3-\$13 at CHT and decreasing that by \$10 at EHC in the long term, the Administration should consider constructing the fourth RHC

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
3.	Lok Ma Chau China-Hong Kong Freight Association [LC Paper No. CB(1)1065/12-13(01)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> opposed to the three proposed measures which would increase the tolls for goods vehicles at CHT goods vehicles might not switch to use EHC as the longer travelling distance would incur higher fuel cost the tolls of all the three RHCs should be standardised
4.	Hong Kong Taxi Owners' Association Limited [LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(05)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the tolls for taxi of all the three RHCs should be standardised as \$20 per trip in support of Option C if there were no other choices
5.	Tai Wo Motors Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option C was the most feasible option at present in the long run, the tolls of all the three RHCs should be standardised
6.	The Kowloon Taxi Owners Association Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in support of Option C hoped that the Administration would buy back WHC
7.	China Hong Kong and Macau Boundary Crossing Bus Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently Hong Kong Island offered the most job opportunities. The Government should try to decentralise the jobs from Hong Kong Island to Kowloon or the New Territories to reduce the number of employees having to cross the harbour for work

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the tolls for commercial vehicles should not be adjusted as the choice of which RHC to use was subject to the instruction and needs of clients
8.	Green Sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> measures should be adopted to encourage more drivers to use WHC if the Administration could successfully rationalise the traffic distribution among the three RHCs, the construction of Central Kowloon Route would no longer be required
9.	Taxi Driver Operators Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the tolls for taxi of all the three RHCs should be standardised to \$20 per trip
10.	United Friendship Taxi Owners & Drivers Association Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in support of Option C the Administration should study the feasibility of constructing the fourth RHC in the long run
11.	Miss YU Hin-pik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Administration could make reference to overseas practice of determining the level of tolls of private cars according to the number of passengers carried in a vehicle (i.e. the tolls would be higher with fewer passengers)
12.	Youth Committee of the Liberal Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the proposed measures would not be effective to divert the traffic from CHT to EHC upon the expiry of EHC's franchise in 2016 and with the completion of Central-Wanchai Bypass in 2017, the Administration should

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
		liaise with WHC on the buy back option or toll reduction
13.	Civic Party [LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(07)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all the three proposed options would not be able to relieve the traffic congestion of CHT. The Administration should study effective measures again the toll increase at CHT would increase the burden of the public on transport expenses the consultancy report had not taken into account the increase in traffic flow with the development of Kowloon East
14.	Labour Party [LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(08)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Administration should adjust the toll structure of CHT and EHC to rationalise the utilisation of RHCs different toll concession packages should be offered for different combination of tunnels toll adjustments should be applied mainly to private cars the Administration should buy back WHC and study the adoption of Electronic Road Pricing Scheme
15.	Democratic Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Administration should provide information on its plan for the management of EHC after the expiry of its franchise in 2016 to facilitate the consideration of the proposed measures

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Option C would subsidise public transport operators but could not guarantee that the operators would refrain from increasing the fares ● the Administration should consider constructing the fourth RHC in the proximity of CHT
16.	The Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport in HK [LC Paper No. CB(1)852/12-13(01)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● in support of Option A (i.e. Resource Management Option) ● suggested to charge franchised buses a nominal fee only at all tolled tunnels and roads. The savings arising from the reduced tolls should be passed to passengers through fares reduction ● the Government should carry out a comprehensive review of the tunnel toll policy
17.	Public Transport Think Tank of Hong Kong [LC Paper No. CB(1)852/12-13(02)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the tolls of all the three RHCs should be standardised ● the toll increase should be applied to private cars only
18.	Public Transport Research Team [LC Paper No. CB(1)852/12-13(04)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● in support of Option C which had minimal impact on public transport and was the most effective ● to solve the problem of RHCs at root, the Government should relax the restrictions on the number of franchised buses so as to strengthen the public transport services
19.	Public Omnibus Operators Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● objected to Options A and B as they would significantly increase the operating cost of public omnibus operators

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> although there was not a financial impact on public omnibus operators under Option C, the traffic congestion at CHT would still exist as a less congested CHT would attract additional traffic from WHC
20.	Hong Kong District Tourists and Passengers Omnibus Operators Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in support of Option C surcharge should be imposed on vehicles using CHT during peak hours
21.	Tuen Mun District Tourists and Passengers Omnibus Operators Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in support of Option C measures, such as toll promotions, should be introduced to encourage more drivers to use WHC
22.	Yuen Long District Tourists and Passengers Omnibus Operators Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> on top of Option C, the tolls of WHC should be reduced at the same time. In addition, there should be a substantial toll decrease at EHC a designated lane at RHCs should be set up for franchised buses, non-franchised buses and other kinds of public transport to encourage more people to use public transport
23.	Kowloon District Tourists and Passengers Omnibus Operators Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing the tolls at EHC and increasing the tolls at CHT would cause traffic congestion at EHC the three options could not reduce the operating cost of transport operators as the lengthened road distance would entail higher fuel

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
		<p>cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option C was more preferable among the three options
24.	Business and Professionals Federation of Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in support of the Administration's measures to improve the traffic distribution among the three RHCs by adjusting the toll structure, including increasing the tolls at CHT the Administration should implement the Electronic Road Pricing Scheme with a view to developing the intelligent transport systems in the long run there should be a significant difference in the adjustment of toll between public transport vehicles and private cars
25.	Hong Kong Automobile Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in support of Option A the Administration should construct an additional RHC/bridge within ten years
26.	Mr Francis CHAN [LC Paper No. CB(1)940/12-13(02)]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option A was preferable to the others as the adoption of resource management principle was relatively fair the Administration should actively study the proposals of expanding CHT or constructing the fourth RHC the Administration should buy back EHC and liaise with the operator of WHC on toll reduction

No.	Name of deputations/individuals	Major views and concerns
27.	"DIVING" (Cross Harbour) Concerning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● the proposed measures could be put on trial for one week at the cost of the Government to test their effectiveness● alternatively, the Administration should consider collecting views on the proposed measures from users of CHT by voting

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
3 December 2013