

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Panel on Transport**  
**Meeting on 19 July 2013**

**Background brief on private driving instructors' licences**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the existing mechanism for issuing private driving instructors' ("PDIs") licences. It also summarizes the major concerns expressed by the Panel on Transport ("the Panel") on the subject.

**Background**

2. The Government has been adopting a "two-pronged approach" in respect of driver training. On the one hand, it promotes off-street driver training through the establishment of driving schools. On the other hand, it maintains a sufficient supply of PDIs for on-street driver training.

3. A review was conducted in 1999 to ensure that the "two-pronged approach" driver training policy could be sustained through objective means to stabilize the supply of PDIs. Following the review, PDI licences were regrouped from seven types into three groups-

Group 1: Private Cars and Light Goods Vehicles

Group 2: Light Buses and Buses

Group 3: Medium Goods Vehicles, Heavy Goods Vehicles and  
Articulated Vehicles

According to the Administration, the above grouping was drawn up after careful consideration of the driver training skills for each group of vehicles taking into

account comments from the trade. There are common features for vehicles within each group - Group 1 vehicles are small vehicles; Group 2 vehicles are vehicles for the carriage of a substantial number of passengers; and Group 3 vehicles are vehicles for the carriage of goods.

4. The Administration agreed with the trade in 1999 that the number of valid PDI licences prevailing at the time for the three groups of PDIs (i.e. 1 050 for Group 1, 130 for Group 2 and 230 for Group 3) would be used as benchmarks. The trigger point for the Commissioner for Transport ("C for T") to consider issuing new PDI licences for a particular group is when the number of valid licences falls below the benchmark by 10%.

5. C for T reviews biennially the need to issue new PDI licences. In so doing, the following factors as set out in the Road Traffic (Driving Licences) Regulations (Cap.374B) should be taken into account:

- (a) prevailing traffic conditions;
- (b) policy adopted for driver training; and
- (c) demand of learner drivers to receive driving instructions from PDIs in respect of that group of motor vehicles.

6. Since 1999, reviews have been conducted in 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2012. A total of 173 new Group 1 PDI licences were issued in 2002 while no new PDI licence was considered necessary following the reviews in 2004 and 2006. In the 2008 review, C for T decided to issue a total of 460 new PDI licences. As of mid-March 2010, the issuance of the new PDI licences subsequent to the 2008 review was still in progress.

### **Grouping of PDIs**

7. Some members of the PDI trade have suggested that, with their rich experience in providing driving instructions, PDIs in Groups 2 and 3 should be given priority in applying for the new Group 1 PDI licences. They suggested that all PDIs should possess the driving licences of all classes so that each PDI would (subject to their passing the relevant PDI tests) be qualified for providing driver training for all the three groups, thereby enhancing the overall quality of private driver training. Some PDIs suggested merging the three existing PDI groups into one (hereafter the "3 in 1 proposal"). In the light of these comments, the Administration has studied the practices in some jurisdictions on the regulation of private driver training and conducted a review of the grouping

of PDIs.

8. At the Panel meeting on 30 March 2010, the Administration briefed members of the review findings on the grouping of PDIs, and the three preliminary options, as follow, for further consultation with the trade –

Option A: to maintain the status quo;

Option B: to lift the benchmark (as mentioned in paragraph 4) for individual groups but maintain a benchmark for overall number of PDI licences; and

Option C: to lift the benchmark for all PDI groups.

9. The Panel noted that amongst the three options (A, B, and C) presented, Option B was similar to the "3 in 1" proposal. While some Panel members expressed support for this option which they considered would enhance flexibility of the PDI trade in tackling problems such as the decreasing demand for driving instructions, some members reminded the Administration that adoption of the "3 in 1" proposal might entail a higher threshold for entry into the PDI market because new entrants of the PDI trade would then be required to possess driving licences of all vehicle classes under the existing three PDI groups. The Panel urged the Administration to have due regard to the impact of each of the options on the structure of the trade and on the livelihood of PDIs and examine the options in close consultation with the trade.

### **Driving schools**

10. At the Panel meeting on 30 March 2010, some members expressed concern over the complaints that the Government was prejudicing against PDIs in favour of the HK School of Motoring, and urged the Administration to explore how to prevent monopoly by the latter. They urged the Administration to review not only the issue of PDI licences but also the overall driver training policy.

11. The Administration advised that that there was no monopoly by driving schools as there were already four driving schools in Hong Kong, and that more could be opened if there were interested parties. In fact, there were over 1 000 PDIs in Hong Kong, with only about 340 restricted driving instructors working in driving schools.

## **Issue of PDI licences**

12. At the same Panel meeting, some members questioned the need to impose restrictions on the number of entrants to the PDI market, which would only keep fees high to the detriment of learner drivers. Some members, however, agreed that care should be exercised in determining whether to issue new PDI licences, pointing out that the problem with the driver training market was that supply was greater than demand, in particular where Group 2 and Group 3 vehicles were concerned because employment opportunities and incomes of the professional drivers concerned were on the decrease.

13. The Administration advised that there was a need to open up the market in a progressive manner with care, in recognition that the supply of PDIs already exceeded demand of learner drivers to receive driving instructions from PDIs.

## **Relevant question raised at Council meeting and other relevant papers**

14. During the Fourth Legislative Council, a question relating to the policy for driver training was raised at the Council meeting of 22 June 2011. The hyperlinks to the question and the Administration's response, together with other relevant papers, are in the **Appendix**.

## **Latest developments**

15. The Administration plans to inform the Panel of the outcome of the review conducted by Transport Department ("TD") on the need to issue new PDI licences and to consult the Panel on the outcome of TD's review on the issuing mechanism of PDI licences at the Panel meeting to be held on 19 July 2013. Deputations from the PDI trade will be invited to give views at the meeting.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
12 July 2013

## Appendix

### Private driving instructors' licences

#### List of relevant papers

Date of meeting of Panel on Transport	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
28.5.1999	Administration's paper on private driving instructor licence	CB(1)1370/98-99(08) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr98-99/english/panels/tp/papers/tp28054j.htm">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr98-99/english/panels/tp/papers/tp28054j.htm</a>
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1823/98-99 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr98-99/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp280599.htm">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr98-99/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp280599.htm</a>
26.11.1999	Administration's paper on driving training	CB(1)419/99-00(04) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/papers/a419e04.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/papers/a419e04.pdf</a>
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)869/99-00 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp261199.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp261199.pdf</a>
28.4.2000	Administration's paper on driver improvement scheme	CB(1)1435/99-00(04) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/papers/a1234e05.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/papers/a1234e05.pdf</a>
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1663/99-00 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp280400.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp280400.pdf</a>

Date of meeting of Panel on Transport	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
4.11.2005	Administration's paper on private driving instructor's licences  Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1829/04-05(01) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0624cb1-1829-1e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0624cb1-1829-1e.pdf</a>  CB(1)452/05-06  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp051104.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp051104.pdf</a>
24.2.2006	Administration's paper on private driving instructor's licences  Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1829/04-05(01) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0624cb1-1829-1e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0624cb1-1829-1e.pdf</a>  CB(1)1234/05-06  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp060224.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp060224.pdf</a>
22.5.2009	Administration's paper on private driving instructor's licences  Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1333/08-09(01) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0424cb1-1333-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0424cb1-1333-1-e.pdf</a>  CB(1)2756/08-09  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20090522.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20090522.pdf</a>
30.3.2010	Administration's paper on private driving instructors' licences	CB(1)1451/09-10(03) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0330cb1-1451-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0330cb1-1451-3-e.pdf</a>

<b>Date of meeting of Panel on Transport</b>	<b>Minutes/Paper</b>	<b>LC Paper No.</b>
	Background brief on private driving instructors' licences prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1452/09-10 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0330cb1-1452-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0330cb1-1452-e.pdf</a>  CB(1)1996/09-10 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20100330.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20100330.pdf</a>
22.6.2011	Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah raised a question on policy for driver training and Hong Kong School of Motoring	<a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201106/22/P201106220157.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201106/22/P201106220157.htm</a>

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