

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(4)922/14-15(05)

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**Panel on Transport**  
**Meeting on 12 May 2015**

**Background brief on road traffic congestion in Hong Kong**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on road traffic congestion in Hong Kong. It also summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by the Legislative Council Members during previous discussions on the subject.

**Background**

2. According to the Administration<sup>1</sup>, traffic congestion has increasingly become a cause for concern in the community and it affects all road users. The Administration is determined to tackle the problem and the Secretary for Transport and Housing therefore invited the Transport Advisory Committee ("TAC") in March 2014 to conduct a study of road traffic congestion in Hong Kong. The study is mainly to identify various factors contributing to overall road traffic congestion in Hong Kong; suggest short and medium-term measures at territorial level to contain road traffic congestion which are practicable and can be implemented within a reasonable period of time; and flag up long-term measures at territorial level for further study by the Administration.

3. In December 2014, TAC submitted the "Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong"<sup>2</sup> to the Administration for consideration. The Report analyzed various factors contributing to overall road traffic congestion in Hong Kong and suggested 12 short-, medium- and long-term additional measures for study by the Administration. The measures are summarized as follows –

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<sup>1</sup> Source: The Administration's press release on "THB receives TAC road traffic congestion study report" issued in December 2014

<sup>2</sup> Available at [http://www.thb.gov.hk/eng/boards/transport/land/Full\\_Eng\\_C\\_cover.pdf](http://www.thb.gov.hk/eng/boards/transport/land/Full_Eng_C_cover.pdf)

### Short and medium-term measures

- (a) Raise private car's First Registration Tax and Annual Licence Fee;
- (b) Tighten up standards for Environment-friendly Petrol Private Cars;
- (c) Raise "fuel levy" for diesel private cars;
- (d) Start planning for a congestion charging pilot scheme;
- (e) Increase meter parking charges;
- (f) Enhance publicity and education efforts to promote compliance with traffic rules and regulations;
- (g) Raise the fixed penalty charges for congestion-related offences to restore the deterrent effect;
- (h) Adopt a stricter approach and deploy more resources to enforce congestion-related offences by the Police;
- (i) Make further use of information technology in enforcement;

### Long-term measures

- (j) Review parking policy and disseminate real-time information on parking vacancies;
- (k) Encourage on-street loading and unloading outside peak hours; and
- (l) Provide more park-and-ride facilities.

### **Major concerns raised by the Legislative Council Members**

4. Members have raised concerns about road traffic congestion in Hong Kong at the Panel on Transport ("the Panel") meetings as well as the Council meetings. Their major views and concerns are summarized in the following paragraphs.

#### Growth in the number of private cars

5. At a number of Panel meetings, some members considered that, in urban areas in Hong Kong, the vehicular speed had dropped from 25.6

miles per hour ("mph") in 2003 to 22.7 mph in 2013. They expressed concern about the adverse effect of road traffic congestion on the operation efficiency of road-based public transport services. They also suggested that the Administration should formulate policies on containing the rapid growth in the number of private cars in order to mitigate road traffic congestion.

6. According to the "Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong" by TAC, the total number of licensed vehicles grew by about 30% from about 524 000 in 2003 to about 681 000 in 2013, with an annual growth rate of 3.4% in recent years. The larger the vehicle fleet size, the slower the car journey speed in the urban areas.

#### Problem of lost bus trips

7. The Panel members noted that the busy road traffic condition in Hong Kong was one of the major causes of lost bus trips. Some members therefore considered that the Administration should strengthen the law enforcement against illegal parking near bus stops. They also requested the Administration to enhance the accessibility of franchised buses at bus stops, such as by assigning double yellow line road marking within the area of bus stops, and establishing a bus bay such that motorists were mandated to give way to buses exiting the bus bay. Besides, some members suggested that the Administration could make reference to overseas countries which designated some carriageways only for buses and private cars with three to five passengers during peak hours.

#### Inadequacy of parking spaces

8. Several members at the Panel meetings raised concern that there was a shortage of parking spaces for different kinds of vehicles and urged the Administration to address the problem. They pointed out that parking spaces for coaches were insufficient particularly at tourism spots. Also, there was a shortage of parking space and safe pick-up/drop-off areas for Rehabuses and school buses/nanny vans. They expressed worry that under-provision of parking spaces might aggravate illegal parking.

9. At the Council meeting of 11 February 2015, a Member expressed concern about the supply of parking spaces. He enquired whether the Administration had increased the number of parking spaces in public car parks in the past decade in response to the continuous increase in the number of private cars.

### Electronic road pricing ("ERP")

10. The Panel members noted that the Administration planned to study the implementation of ERP in the Central District. Some members expressed support to the proposal. Nevertheless, some members opined that ERP might not be necessary as the commissioning of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass in 2017 might have already relieved the traffic congestion in Central. Besides, they also cited Singapore as an example to illustrate that the implementation of ERP might deprive the public of the right to drive and grievance amongst the citizens might be resulted.

### Traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings ("RHCs")

11. Members at the Panel meetings continuously urged the Administration to introduce long-term strategies to address the traffic congestion problem at RHCs. Some members therefore suggested increasing the number of Autotoll lanes and accepting Octopus payment for tolls at RHCs to facilitate traffic flow. In addition, they asked the Administration to seriously consider the option of buying back the Western Harbour Crossing as this would provide great flexibility for the Administration to implement traffic management measures. They also called on the Administration to study the feasibility of constructing the fourth RHC to meet the increasing traffic demand due to new developments and growing number of residents and tourists.

### Transport studies and overseas experience

12. The Panel generally supported the Administration's conduct of different transport studies, including the Public Transport Strategy Study and the Traffic Congestion Study. However, some members noted that the scopes of those studies were rather limited as they did not address issues like the cross-boundary transportation needs and provision of car parking spaces, etc. As such, they urged the Administration to expeditiously launch the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study to comprehensively review the transport policies in Hong Kong. In addition, a motion on "Expediently launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study" was passed at the Council meeting of 7 January 2015. The wording of the motion is in **Appendix I**.

13. The Panel paid a duty visit to Singapore in September 2014 to study the experience of the Singapore government in provision of public transport facilities and traffic control measures. After the visit, delegation members found that some of the measures, like the application of information technology to provide real-time traffic information to drivers and commutes; building of better integrated transport hub, were valuable

and useful reference for Hong Kong.

### **Latest developments**

14. The Administration plans to brief members on the Government's response to the "Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong" submitted by TAC at the Panel meeting to be held on 12 May 2015.

### **Relevant papers**

15. A list of relevant papers is in **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 4  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
6 May 2015

(Translation)

**Motion on  
“Expeditiously launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study”  
moved by Hon Frankie YICK  
at the Council meeting of 7 January 2015**

**Motion as amended by Hon TANG Ka-piu and Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok**

That, since the Government conducted the Third Comprehensive Transport Study, the rapid socio-economic development, the continuous growth in Hong Kong's population and inbound visitors, the development and expansion of new towns, and the increasingly frequent cross-boundary activities, etc. have all led to changes in and continuous increase in the public demand for transport services, but on the premise of using railways as the backbone of the passenger transport system, other public transport services are considered to have retrogressed and are marginalized, resulting not only in an imbalance between the supply of and demand for such services but also the pressure to increase fares, and hence causing continuous increase in the transport expenses of the public; at the same time, with the Government encouraging the public to fully utilize railway services, the income of employees engaging in other public transport services is seriously affected; the Government used Hong Kong as the only base for the past three comprehensive transport studies, with no consideration given to the cross-boundary transportation needs in terms of passenger flow or vehicular flow brought about by the further integration between Hong Kong and China, and the development of transport infrastructure facilities (such as parking facilities) is also unable to resolve the problem of large growth in vehicle numbers; as for the promotion of the environmentally-friendly transport policy (including the pedestrian linkage systems and the policy on the use of bicycles, etc.) and the Intelligent Transport Systems, progress has been slow; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to expeditiously launch the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study to comprehensively review the overall transport policy and the situation at present, and apart from formulating measures to enable various modes of public transport to develop in a sustainable and healthy manner in tandem with the continuous expansion of railways, to also formulate a forward-looking and long-term transport development blueprint, which includes conducting a review of the tolls of all tunnels and bridges, having regard to future town planning, development of industries and land use, etc., with a view to continuously perfecting the transport system as a whole, promoting Hong Kong's economic development, ensuring a more stable income for employees engaging in other public transport services and providing the public with better and more efficient transport services; this Council also urges the Government to formulate

measures to perfect the mass transit network, and conduct a review of the distribution of and arrangement for road usage, with a view to ensuring proper and orderly implementation of the related transport infrastructure planning and projects according to their priorities.

## Panel on Transport

## List of relevant papers on road traffic congestion in Hong Kong

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
18.1.2013	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2013 Policy Address	CB(1)409/12-13(03) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0118cb1-409-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0118cb1-409-3-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes	CB(1)839/12-13 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130118.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130118.pdf</a>
22.2.2013	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings	CB(1)544/12-13(03) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0222cb1-544-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0222cb1-544-3-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes	CB(1)1307/12-13 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130222.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130222.pdf</a>
22.4.2013	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings	CB(1)544/12-13(03) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0222cb1-544-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0222cb1-544-3-e.pdf</a>



Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes	CB(1)386/13-14  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130422.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130422.pdf</a>
21.6.2013	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on taxi fare increase applications	CB(1)1298/12-13(03)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0621cb1-1298-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0621cb1-1298-3-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes	CB(1)466/13-14  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130621.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20130621.pdf</a>
17.1.2014	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2014 Policy Address	CB(1)702/13-14(05)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0117cb1-702-5-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0117cb1-702-5-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes	CB(1)1105/13-14  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20140117.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20140117.pdf</a>

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
28.2.2014	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on traffic distribution among road harbour crossings	CB(1)912/13-14(05) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0228cb1-912-5-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0228cb1-912-5-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes	CB(1)1574/13-14 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20140228.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20140228.pdf</a>
25.11.2014 9.2.2015	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on Public Transport Strategy Study – Work Plan	CB(1)238/14-15(06) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/papers/tp20141125cb1-238-6-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/papers/tp20141125cb1-238-6-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes	CB(4)437/14-15 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20141125.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20141125.pdf</a>
16.1.2015	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on transport-related policy initiatives of the Transport and Housing Bureau under the 2015 Policy Agenda	CB(4)349/14-15(04) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/papers/tp20150116cb4-349-4-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/papers/tp20150116cb4-349-4-e.pdf</a>
11.2.2015	Council meeting	Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen raised a question on supply of parking spaces	<a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201502/11/P201502110407.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201502/11/P201502110407.htm</a>

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Minutes/Paper</b>	<b>LC Paper No.</b>
20.3.2015	Panel on Transport	Administration's paper on Public Transport Strategy Study – Franchised bus service	CB(4)655/14-15(04) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/papers/tp20150320cb4-655-4-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr14-15/english/panels/tp/papers/tp20150320cb4-655-4-e.pdf</a>

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