

香港特別行政區政府

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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Secretary General
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Ms Sophie LAU)

Dear Ms LAU,

Panel on Transport
Hon TANG Ka-piu's Request For
Discussion About Road Closures And Traffic Arrangements
For Major Events

Thank you for your letter of 22 January 2016 to the Transport and Housing Bureau relaying the views of Hon TANG Ka-piu about road closures and traffic arrangements for major events. Our reply can be found below.

As an international city, Hong Kong hosts many major events and sports competitions every year that attract the participation of locals and people from around the world. In organising such events, the Government needs to make temporary traffic arrangements, including temporary closure of some carriageways and diversion of traffic, to facilitate the running of these events. The Government will also assist in terms of planning, coordination, dissemination of information and incident management so as to minimize the impact of these events on the public. Moreover, upon completion of the events, organisers and relevant government departments will conduct reviews and learn

from experience, with a view to making better arrangements for similar functions in future.

Preparatory Work before Major Events

For holding major events in Hong Kong like the Hong Kong Marathon and Cyclothon, extensive road closures and traffic diversions are required for temporarily designation of trunk roads as racetracks. Before finalising the appropriate race routes, the necessary road closure and traffic and public transport (“PT”) diversion arrangements, organisers and relevant government departments will give consideration to event type, number of participants and impact on the public, etc. The government departments concerned, relevant District Councils and various parties will also be consulted.

As the temporary traffic arrangements implemented during the event may cause inconvenience to the public and some shop tenants, the organiser and Transport Department (“TD”) will publicise in advance the road closure, traffic diversion and PT arrangements to be implemented on the event day through various media and electronic channels, so as to allow the public to have sufficient time for planning their journeys on that day and avoid delay. Such information will also be disseminated through the public address (“PA”) systems of the road tunnels concerned and information display boards on trunk roads about one to two weeks in advance. Furthermore, the organiser will distribute leaflets to affected residents and shop tenants to give them early notice of the temporary traffic and PT arrangements on the event day. As many PT services, such as franchised buses and minibuses, may be affected, PT operators will display the relevant information at termini and intermediate stops of the affected routes. The franchised bus companies will also post notices on their webpages in advance to inform passengers of their franchised bus route diversion arrangements.

Arrangements on the Event Day

On the day of the event, TD’s Emergency Transport Coordination Centre (“ETCC”), together with the organiser, relevant government departments and PT operators, will closely monitor the traffic conditions and operation of PT services. The ETCC will also disseminate the latest traffic and PT information

to the public through the media (radio/television), webpages and mobile applications, etc. Such information will continue to be disseminated through the PA systems of the road tunnels concerned and information display boards on trunk roads.

The ETCC will maintain close liaison with and provide the latest traffic and PT information to the Hong Kong Airport Authority for making announcements to passengers. The franchised bus companies will deploy additional outdoor staff to affected major bus stops to make immediate bus deployment and frequency adjustment having regard to the latest traffic conditions to reduce the impact on passengers. The management company of the Tsing Ma Bridge will also arrange adequate staff to regulate traffic and handle unexpected incidents (such as removing breakdown vehicles as soon as possible).

In the meantime, the Police will deploy adequate manpower to regulate the traffic and guide the motorists on site. Past experience shows that organisers would arrange staff and voluntary workers to assist contestants and perform real-time monitoring role along the race routes to ensure the smooth implementation of the events and avoid delays in road reopening due to incidents.

Review after Event

The relevant government departments (such as the Home Affairs Bureau, Home Affairs Department, TD, Hong Kong Police Force, Fire Services Department, Highways Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department) will meet with the organiser after the event for a comprehensive review of the arrangements and details, including the flow and time of the event, road closure and traffic diversion measures, dissemination of information and publicity work, etc.

Regarding the first Hong Kong Cyclothon in 2015, the progress was affected due to several reasons, including delays in clearing cyclists lagging behind and removing temporary traffic signs and dividers. The reopening of the upper deck of the Lantau Link was thus delayed from the original schedule of 9.00 a.m. to 9.47 a.m. As for the Hong Kong Marathon 2016, the special

road closure and traffic diversion arrangements in the New Territories were similar to those adopted in the past few years. The inclement weather, heavy rain and several traffic accidents happened at the Lantau Link during the event, however, resulted in traffic congestions and delay in the reopening of the upper deck of the Lantau Link from 10.15 a.m. as originally estimated to 10.38 a.m. Subsequent to the review, the relevant government departments consider that for similar events in future, close liaison can be maintained with the organisers to enhance information dissemination, and upon completion of the events, further improve site clearance arrangements, reopen closed roads as soon as possible and restore normal traffic and PT services.

The Government is aware of the views and concerns of the public and motorists over road closure and traffic diversion arrangements for major events. Relevant government departments and organisers will learn from experience and make reference to the reviews, with a view to having better arrangements for future events and minimising the impact on traffic, PT services and members of the public.

I would like to thank Hon TANG Ka-piu for his concern over the traffic arrangements for major events in Hong Kong.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Amy TSE)
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c. Commissioner for Transport
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