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### Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2018-19

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing**

**Session No. : 9**

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****S-THB(T)01****(Question Serial No. S0060)**Head: (60) Highways DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Capital ProjectsControlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and HousingQuestion:

- (1) The projects under the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme have in general been delayed for long periods and not yet completed. Regarding the construction time and completion date of the projects, has the Government laid down any indicators and timetables? If so, please provide a detailed list of the indicators and timetables. If not, please explain the reasons in detail.
- (2) Subsequent to Reply Serial No. THB(T)069, will the Transport and Housing Bureau set out the reasons for the projects still to be completed under the Original Programme and the anticipated time of completion by using the table form below.

Highways Department (HyD) project number	Location	Current status	Reason for construction/design still to be completed	Anticipated date of completion

- (3) What is the specific staffing establishment for the UA Programme within the Government? In view of the fact that the construction periods for most of the projects are too long, will the Government consider engaging more manpower in this regard, or further handling the situation by means of outsourcing so as to expedite the construction progress of the projects concerned?
- (4) At present, even if some of the items under the UA Programme have been completed, the usage of the facilities is on the low side due to the lack of direct link to nearby commercial centres/housing estates. Will the Government carry out a study on enhancing connection between these items and nearby public facilities/housing estates/commercial centres so as to raise the usage of the facilities, thus improving the cost effectiveness of the UA Programme?

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

(1) & (2)

Same as other capital works projects, individual lift retrofitting items under the UA Programme have to go through feasibility study, investigation, detailed design, tender and construction stage as per the established Public Works Programme (PWP) procedures. The programme of each item is subject to site constraints, interfaces with other projects, public consultation, statutory procedures and funding approval. To take forward and complete the items as soon as practicable, we implement and let out contracts progressively when a batch of items have gone through all necessary preparation as well as the PWP procedures and are ready to start construction. In general, items included in earlier contracts are completed earlier than those included in later contracts.

Currently, we are pressing ahead with the implementation of a total of 145 items under the “Original Programme” of the UA Programme. As at end March 2018, 71 items have been completed and 64 items have proceeded to construction under various construction contracts awarded to contractors selected in accordance with established tendering procedures.

In accordance with the terms of these contracts, the contractors are required to complete the works of items within the respective periods for completion stipulated in the contracts. However, the completion may be deferred with extension of time (EoT) for completion which has to be awarded in accordance with the provisions of the contracts for delays resulting from circumstances which are outside the control of the contractors. As the retrofitting works are weather-sensitive and may require diversion of underground utilities, especially in built-up areas, to make way for the works, delays due to inclement weather and diversion of utilities are the common reasons for awarding EoT.

As of now, we anticipate that the majority of the items still under construction will be completed progressively by around end 2019 in accordance with the provisions of the construction contracts with the EoT taken into account.

For the remaining ten items in the “Original Programme”, due to various factors such as a longer time required for handling different public opinions, the need to co-ordinate with other works or development projects, and other design and construction problems, their design schemes and implementation programmes are still being formulated. The HyD will commence the retrofitting works for these items as soon as possible upon resolving the concerned matters properly.

(3)

The design and supervision of the works under the UA Programme are carried out by consultants engaged by the HyD while the HyD deploys existing staff resources to manage and oversee the implementation of the projects. As the delays to the construction works are mainly due to inclement weather and diversion of utilities, increasing the staff resources will not help prevent such delays. We will continue to strive to overcome the difficulties and challenges encountered in delivering the retrofitting works in order to implement the UA Programme expeditiously.

(4)

Under the UA Programme, the Government retrofits barrier-free access facilities to existing walkways (i.e. footbridges, elevated walkways and subways) which are either maintained by the HyD or not maintained by the HyD but meeting certain criteria. As regards the connectivity of the concerned walkway to the estate / shopping centre, this is beyond the scope of the UA Programme, and will be separately reviewed by the Government on a case-by-case basis.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-THB(T)02**

**(Question Serial No. S0063)**

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

According to Reply Serial No. THB(T)025 and the reply given by the Director of Highways (DH<sub>y</sub>) at the Special Finance Committee Meeting held on 18 April 2018, the \$269.6 million expenditure for the maintenance of the Hong Kong section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) in 2018-19 is actually the expenditure for the operation and maintenance of the HZMB Hong Kong Link Road (HKLR) and Hong Kong Port (HKP) in 2018-19. In this connection, will the Government advise me on the following:

- (1) Have the HZMB HKLR and HKP projects been completed? If so, please provide the dates of completion. If not, what will be the anticipated dates of completion for these two projects?
- (2) At the meeting, the DH<sub>y</sub> stated that the maintenance expenditure concerned is the maintenance expenditure for the entire 2018-19, which covers, inter alia, payment to the contractor before the commissioning. Please advise how much of the \$269.6 million is set aside for the maintenance expenditure after the commissioning (i.e. when the HZMB Hong Kong section is in full operation) and how much is for the payment to the contractor before the commissioning?
- (3) What are the respective expenditures for the maintenance of the HZMB HKLR and HKP when the HZMB Hong Kong section is in full operation without cessation throughout a financial year?
- (4) At the meeting, the DH<sub>y</sub> claimed that the maintenance expenditure included the cost for electricity and lighting. But according to the Estimates under Head 60, highways maintenance is subsumed under Subhead 000 of Head 60 whereas electricity for public lighting is under Subhead 272. What are the reasons for the electricity bills of the HKP and HKLR to be booked under maintenance expenditure?
- (5) At the meeting, the DH<sub>y</sub> replied that the maintenance expenditure is mainly related to the operation of the HKP. But according to the reply of the Government, the maintenance expenditure for the HKLR in 2018-19 amounts to \$143.9 million. Out of the \$143.9 million, how much is for the maintenance expenditure before the commissioning and how much is for such expenditure after the commissioning?

- (6) Whether the repair cost for wear and tear is included in the maintenance expenditure for the HZMB Hong Kong section in 2018-19? If so, what is the amount for the year?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chi-chuen

Reply:

The Highways Department (HyD) is responsible for maintenance of public roads. The HyD engages contractors to undertake routine inspections and, where necessary, arrange appropriate maintenance works to public roads, so as to keep them in safe and serviceable conditions for road users. The same applies to the road systems on the HZMB HKLR and the HKP.

HKLR is a 12km-long strategic link with expressway standard connecting the HKP with the HZMB Main Bridge at the boundary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Maintenance of HKLR cannot be directly compared with other ordinary roads in Hong Kong as some marine viaducts of the HKLR have unprecedentedly long span structures (up to 180m span). Also, there are over 150 viaduct piers (with some of them situated at nearly 50m above sea water level). The maintenance cost of the HKLR covers daily inspection and cleansing of road carriageways, routine maintenance of the marine and land viaducts, regular monitoring of the structural health of the viaducts, electricity cost for highways depots for the HKLR, etc.

As for the HKP, its maintenance cost covers the management, operation and maintenance of most of the common facilities on the 130 ha-HKP, including the Passenger Clearance Building with an area of over 90 000 m<sup>2</sup>. The cost also includes general traffic and crowd control on the HKP, cleansing, maintenance of the landscape area, electricity cost for several ancillary buildings of the HyD, etc.

The maintenance cost covers that for normal wear-and-tear maintenance. There is no breakdown on this.

“Subhead 272 Electricity for public lighting” is for paying electricity bills for all highways facilities including public lighting, traffic signals, lifts and escalators for footbridges and subways, and ventilation systems for public transport interchanges, etc. The cost for electricity for road lighting at the HZMB HKLR and HKP is charged under Subhead 272. Electricity cost charged under “Subhead 000 Operational Expenses” is for paying electricity bills for several buildings in the HKP, for which the HyD has taken up the maintenance responsibility. An example is the Passenger Clearance Building.

The commissioning date of the HZMB will be announced once confirmed. As the commissioning date is not yet determined when preparing the estimates for the financial year 2018-19, a twelve-month operation of HZMB HKLR and HKP has been assumed for budgetary purpose. Against this background, the maintenance cost for the HZMB HKLR and the HKP in 2018-19 is \$143.9 million and \$125.7 million respectively.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-THB(T)03**

**(Question Serial No. S0061)**

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Ms Mable CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

According to the figures provided by the Government in Reply Serial No. THB(T)136, the numbers of bicycle parking spaces available in the Central and Western, Wan Chai, Eastern and Southern Districts of Hong Kong Island are 40, 8, 44 and 13 respectively, whereas according to Reply Serial No. THB(T)141, the cycle tracks on Hong Kong Island are only located in the Southern District with a length of 0.3 km, and, in the vicinity of Residence Bel-air and Cyberport where there are not many users. The figures show that the Government lacks comprehensive planning for cycling on Hong Kong Island. Scattered and extremely short cycle tracks without ancillary facilities in effect exist in name only. With the promotion of the concept of green commuting and the emergence of bicycle-sharing services, there will certainly be more Hong Kong Island residents using bicycles for commuting.

Please advise:

- (1) For Hong Kong Island, does the Government have any plan to promote the use of bicycles as a transport mode by the residents? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
- (2) Does the Government have any plan to provide additional bicycle parking spaces as well as cycle tracks on Hong Kong Island? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
- (3) In the future transport planning for Hong Kong Island, will the Government include bicycles as one of the transport modes, and carry out relevant infrastructure planning, in order to encourage the residents to use bicycles for commuting and thereby reduce the burden on the public transport system?

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

- (1) Like other urban areas in Hong Kong, on Hong Kong Island, the traffic is generally very heavy, with narrow and crowded roads, frequent on-street loading and unloading activities and many vehicles passing by and needing to stop temporarily. Given the relatively limited road space, it is not practicable to designate dedicated cycle lanes or build cycle track network on Hong Kong Island without narrowing the existing walkways or carriageways, which will inevitably bring inconvenience to other road users and aggravate road traffic congestions. Allowing a large number of bicycles to share the busy roads on Hong Kong Island with other vehicles without dedicated cycle lanes or cycle tracks will increase the risks of accidents. Owing to road safety considerations, the Government currently does not have any plan to promulgate the use of bicycles as a mode of transport on Hong Kong Island as well as in other parts of the urban areas.
- (2) The Government is considering the provision of cycle tracks and ancillary facilities for recreational purpose at the waterfront promenade along the new Central harbourfront and on the proposed boardwalk underneath the Island Eastern Corridor from North Point to Quarry Bay.
- (3) The Government is committed to creating a “bicycle-friendly” environment in new towns and new development areas to foster a green community, by continuing to improve existing cycle tracks and bicycle parking facilities, as well as enhancing education and publicity on cycling safety, so as to facilitate the public to ride bicycles for short-distance commuting or leisure purposes. However, owing to the reasons stated in (1) above, the Government does not encourage the public to use bicycles for commuting in urban areas.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-THB(T)04**

**(Question Serial No. S0062)**

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Ms Mable CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Upon the commissioning of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB), the quota for Hong Kong cross-boundary private car using HZMB to the Guangdong has been increased to 10 000. Among these quotas, would there be any for the Hong Kong local private cars (without dual-plate) to enter Guangdong for a single trip?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden

Reply:

The governments of Guangdong Province, Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions will allow qualified cross-boundary private cars to travel between Guangdong/Hong Kong and Hong Kong/Macao via the HZMB with reference to the existing quota system for Guangdong/Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars. The Guangdong and Hong Kong Governments have agreed that 10 000 quotas will be provided for the Hong Kong dual-plate cross-boundary private cars to use the HZMB for multiple entries to Guangdong during the quota validity period. According to the established practice, these private cars would need to complete all the required formalities in both Hong Kong and the Mainland, including obtaining Mainland vehicle licences, before driving across the boundary via the HZMB. The arrangement does not allow Hong Kong local private cars (without Mainland vehicle licences) to enter Guangdong for a single trip.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-THB(T)05**

**(Question Serial No. S0051)**

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Ms Mable CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding Question Serial No. 0503 and Reply Serial No. THB(T)239, the Government indicated in its reply that it has started implementing a number of new measures to increase the supply of parking spaces since 2017. Will the Government specifically state how many parking spaces mentioned in the table of the reply were provided as a result of the new measures, and what are the details of the relevant new measures for providing parking spaces?

Asked by: Hon POON Siu-ping

Reply:

In 2017-18, a total of about 300 additional public parking spaces were provided in various districts. Of these, 67 are provided under measures introduced since 2017, comprising 49 overnight parking spaces for commercial vehicles and 18 parking and pick-up/set-down spaces for coaches. As the new measures also include medium to long-term ones, the Transport Department will continue to monitor their overall effectiveness in the provision of parking spaces for various types of vehicles in the territory.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-THB(T)06**

**(Question Serial No. S0065)**

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Ms Mable CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Relating to the reply with reference THB(T)213, it is mentioned in the last paragraph that “Franchised bus companies are required to provide their services with buses under the age of 18. Newly purchased buses are also required to comply with the prevailing statutory emission standards. As such, we expect that all in-service buses of Euro II, Euro III and Euro IV emission standards will be retired by end 2019, 2026 and 2029 respectively”. For the “emission standards” mentioned in the reply, please clarify whether it refers to the emission standards at the time the buses were first registered, or it refers to the emission standards at the time the buses were retrofitted with the catalytic reduction devices.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy

Reply:

The “emission standards” mentioned in the reply with reference THB(T)213 refer to the emission standards of the franchised buses when they were first registered.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SV-THB(T)01**

**(Question Serial No. SV015)**

Head: (28) Civil Aviation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Flight Standards

Controlling Officer: Director-General of Civil Aviation (Simon LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Follow-up question to Reply Serial No. THB(T)002:

What is the percentage of the five posts to be created in the Flight Standards and Airworthiness Division of the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) in 2018-19 in the relevant establishment?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying

Reply:

The CAD will create five new posts in the Operations Officer grade (i.e. two Senior Operations Officers, two Operations Officers and one Assistant Operations Officer) under the Flight Standards and Airworthiness Division in 2018-19. Based on the establishment as at 31 March 2018, these five new posts account for 11% of the establishment of the ranks concerned in the Division.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SV-THB(T)02**

**(Question Serial No. SV016)**

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Below is a follow-up question on Reply Serial No. THB(T)025:

For part (2) of the question, the annual expenditure on highways maintenance for the Hong Kong section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) in 2018-19 amounts to \$269.6 million even when it has not yet commissioned. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chi-chuen

Reply:

The Highways Department (HyD) is responsible for maintenance of public roads. The HyD engages contractors to undertake routine inspections and, where necessary, arrange appropriate maintenance works to public roads, so as to keep them in safe and serviceable conditions for road users. The same applies to the road systems on the HZMB Hong Kong Link Road (HKLR) and the Hong Kong Port (HKP).

HKLR is a 12km-long strategic link with expressway standard connecting the HKP with the HZMB Main Bridge at the boundary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Maintenance of HKLR cannot be directly compared with other ordinary roads in Hong Kong as some marine viaducts of the HKLR have unprecedentedly long span structures (up to 180m span). Also, there are over 150 viaduct piers (with some of them situated at nearly 50m above sea water level). The maintenance cost of the HKLR covers daily inspection and cleansing of road carriageways, routine maintenance of the marine and land viaducts, regular monitoring of the structural health of the viaducts, electricity cost for highways depots for the HKLR, etc.

As for the HKP, its maintenance cost covers the management, operation and maintenance of most of the common facilities on the 130 ha-HKP, including the Passenger Clearance Building with an area of over 90 000 m<sup>2</sup>. The cost also includes general traffic and crowd control on the HKP, cleansing, maintenance of the landscape area, electricity cost for several ancillary buildings of the HyD, etc.

The maintenance cost covers that for normal wear-and-tear maintenance. There is no breakdown on this.

The commissioning date of the HZMB will be announced once confirmed. As the commissioning date is not yet determined when preparing the estimates for the financial year 2018-19, a twelve-month operation of HZMB HKLR and HKP has been assumed for budgetary purpose. Against this background, the maintenance cost for the HZMB HKLR and the HKP in 2018-19 is \$143.9 million and \$125.7 million respectively.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SV-THB(T)03**

**(Question Serial No. SV018)**

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Below is a follow-up question on Reply Serial No. THB(T)025:

For part (4) of the question, please provide information on the maintenance expenditure for the Main Bridge of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB).

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Reply:

The entire HZMB project consists of two parts: (i) the HZMB Main Bridge (i.e. a 22.9 kilometre (km)-long bridge and a 6.7 km-long subsea tunnel) situated in Mainland waters which is being taken forward by the HZMB Authority; and (ii) the link roads and boundary crossing facilities under the respective responsibility of the three governments.

Since the HZMB Main Bridge is situated in Mainland waters, its construction works and daily management will be implemented in accordance with the Mainland laws and regulations. According to the agreement of the three governments, the HZMB Authority, as a non-profit-making public institution legal person, is responsible for the construction, operation, management and maintenance of the Main Bridge. Therefore, the maintenance cost of the HZMB Main Bridge will be borne by the HZMB Authority. According to the HZMB Authority, the estimated annual maintenance cost is about RMB0.21 billion.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SV-THB(T)04**

**(Question Serial No. SV017)**

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Ms Mable CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Follow-up question to Reply Serial No. THB(T)205:

What was the number of applications proposed by non-franchised bus (NFB) operators concerning route modification of residents' services (RS)? How many of these applications were not accepted? What were the reasons for not accepting the applications?

Asked by: Hon POON Siu-ping

Reply:

The Transport Department received 26 applications from NFB operators concerning route modification of RS in 2017. Among the applications, two were not approved because the proposed changes would have adverse impact on existing franchised bus services.

- End -