

**[Translation]**

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Secretary General  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
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(Attn: Mr Lemuel WOO)

[Fax no.: 2840 0269]

16 March 2018

Dear Mr WOO,

**Panel on Transport**  
**New Franchise for The “Star” Ferry Company, Limited**

Regarding the follow-up items raised at the meeting on 19 January 2018, we hereby provide a consolidated reply from this Bureau and the Transport Department (TD).

**(a) Carriage of bicycles on the “Central – Tsim Sha Tsui” route**

The Government encourages public transport service operators to facilitate cyclists as far as practicable in using their services on the premise that the safety of passengers and efficiency of service will not be comprised. Having said that, given the relatively large size of bicycles, public transport service operators must give due consideration to the safety of other passengers and avoid causing inconvenience to passengers when facilitating cyclists.

As advised by The “Star” Ferry Company, Limited (SF), the patronage of the “Central – Tsim Sha Tsui” route is rather high and upper/lower deck has to be used for the carriage of passengers. If the lower deck is open to

both passengers and bicycles, the access on board will be obstructed. At present, the patronage of the “Wan Chai – Tsim Sha Tsui” route is relatively low. Subject to the actual circumstances, passengers may carry bicycles on the lower deck of ferries on this route.

The TD will continue to maintain close liaison with operators including the SF and review the bicycle carriage arrangement on ferries from time to time.

**(b) Provision of additional in-harbour ferry routes (e.g. “Hung Hom – Wan Chai” route and ferry routes linking up such new development areas as the West Kowloon Cultural District and the Kai Tak Development Area)**

Ferries provide essential links to the outlying islands. The in-harbour ferry services perform a supplementary role as an alternative public transport service to rail and road-based harbour-crossing services. Services are adjusted in accordance with supply and demand in the market.

As regards whether there is a need to provide additional ferry routes, the TD will consider various factors, including whether there are any alternative transport services, the passenger demand and the financial and operational viability of the ferry services. Those who are interested in operating new ferry routes may submit applications to the TD. The TD and other relevant departments will consider the proposals based on the aforesaid factors and handle the applications in accordance with the established mechanism.

Yours sincerely,

(Vivian HO)  
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c.:  
Commissioner for Transport

(Attn: Ms Anna YEUNG)