

For information on
15 February 2018

Legislative Council Panel on Transport
The Bus Accident in Tai Po on 10 February 2018

Purpose

On 10 February 2018, a traffic accident involving a bus of Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (“KMB”) took place in Tai Po. Please refer to **Annex 1** for information about the accident. This paper briefs Members on:

- (a) the accident investigation and follow-up actions;
- (b) existing regulation and training of franchised bus captains; and
- (c) road safety measures at the subject road section.

Accident Investigation and Follow-up Actions

2. The Regional Crime Unit, New Territories North of the Police is now conducting an in-depth investigation into the accident. KMB has pledged to fully cooperate with the Police in the criminal investigation. It will also conduct an independent internal investigation into the accident and submit a report to the Transport Department (“TD”) in a month’s time. Upon receiving the accident report from KMB, the TD will carefully scrutinise its contents and take follow-up actions. Moreover, the TD will also review the road safety issues of the subject road section, including speed limit and traffic signs, etc., in a comprehensive manner.

3. The Chief Executive has announced that an independent committee chaired by a judge will be set up to comprehensively review the operation and monitoring of franchised buses so as to ensure that public bus services of Hong Kong are safe and reliable. The preparatory work for setting up the independent committee is being undertaken in full swing. Details of the committee such as the terms of reference and membership, etc. will be announced as soon as possible.

Existing Regulation and Training of Franchised Bus Captains

4. According to the Road Traffic (Driving Licences) Regulations (Cap. 374B), all franchised bus captains must pass the driving tests set by the TD and hold valid driving licences before they are allowed to drive franchised buses. In processing the applications for new bus captains (including both full-time and part-time bus captains), franchised bus companies will check the applicants' Certificate of "Previous Conviction Issued under Section 75(5) of Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374) of Laws of Hong Kong"¹. The bus companies will take into account records of the applicants therein as well as other factors in considering whether their applications should be accepted.

5. If the franchised bus companies accept the applications but the applicants do not possess valid franchised bus driving licences, the franchised bus companies will provide driving training and arrange driving tests to be set by the TD for them to obtain the valid driving licences. Franchised bus companies provide various types of training for newly-recruited bus captains, including driving skills, incident handling, customer service, and classroom and on-site training on different bus models and routes.

6. Franchised bus companies also provide serving bus captains with valid driving licences with regular driving enhancement trainings. These cover training on specified routes and bus models, customer service, refresher training on defensive driving techniques, etc. The aim is to enhance bus captains' road safety awareness, driving skills and attitudes, etc. Franchised bus companies will arrange relevant training for bus captains if they are assigned to serve a new route or drive a new bus model.

¹ The Certificate contains the following information –

- (a) Previous conviction record under Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap 374) in the past ten years.
- (b) Payment record under Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance (Cap 240) in the past five years.
- (c) Record of driving-offence points under Section 3(2) of Road Traffic (Driving-Offence Points) Ordinance (Cap 375) in the past five years.

7. Franchised bus companies also monitor the driving attitude and behaviour of bus captains on a regular basis. Electronic tachograph, commonly known as "black box", has been installed on the whole fleet to monitor the driving behaviour and habits of bus captains. Franchised bus companies conduct random checks on the operational data recorded in black boxes, deploy plain-clothed staff to conduct on-board monitoring on bus captains on-duty, and conduct breath alcohol tests before their driving duty. If it is found that the bus captains have the need for enhancement on driving attitude and behaviour, franchised bus companies will provide driving improvement course or supplementary driving training for the bus captains to reinforce their driving skills, enhance their safety awareness and foster good driving behaviour. If serving bus captains are involved in traffic accidents or violate traffic laws in driving duty, bus companies will take appropriate disciplinary actions against the bus captains or even dismiss them depending on the nature and severity of the incidents.

8. The TD requested all franchised bus companies to further strengthen their internal monitoring systems to monitor bus captains' safe driving and service performance in late 2017. Franchised bus companies were requested to organise and submit on a regular basis to the TD the results of random check on the operational data recorded in black boxes and the corresponding follow-up actions; records of on-board monitoring by plain-clothed staff and the corresponding follow-up actions; records of bus captains' traffic offences and the corresponding follow-up actions; as well as records of breath alcohol tests conducted on bus captains. Moreover, the TD will continue to collaborate with the Hong Kong Police Force ("HKPF") in holding "Road Safety Seminars" for franchised bus captains at which the HKPF is invited to give tips on safe driving, analyse major accident black spots in different districts and causes of bus accidents, in order to enhance the road safety awareness and promote good driving behaviour among bus captains.

Road safety measures at the subject road section

9. The accident happened on Tai Po Road (between Chek Nai Ping and Tai Po Mei Tsuen), and the subject road section is approximately 0.5 km long (the location of the subject road section is at Annex 2). This section of Tai Po Road currently has a speed limit of 70 km/hour. There are warning traffic signs including “Reduce Speed Now”, “Bend to Right Ahead” and “Sharp Deviation of Route”, etc. and road markings along the road to remind motorists to take heed of road conditions. “Slow” road markings are painted at suitable locations to warn motorists to reduce speed prior to entering the road section and thereafter keep operating at slow speed. Crash barriers are also installed at road bend to enhance road safety. According to the record of the TD and the HKPF, from 2013 to 2017, four traffic accidents occurred at the subject road section. Three were slight accidents, while one was a serious accident involving a motorcycle.

10. Some of the traffic signs and road facilities at the subject road section were damaged after the accident. The Highways Department has promptly taken follow-up actions to repair and reinstate the facilities. In the aftermath of this serious traffic accident, the TD will comprehensively review the road environment and relevant traffic management measures of the subject road section, including studying whether the speed limit should be changed, and whether the warning traffic signs and road markings should be enhanced to further promote road safety. At present, the HKPF have been taking enforcement actions on the subject road section from time to time with the use of mobile vehicle speed detection equipment. The TD and the HKPF will explore the feasibility of installing fixed speed enforcement cameras at the subject road section.

Advice sought

11. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Transport and Housing Bureau

Transport Department

February 2018

Information on the bus accident in Tai Po on 10 February 2018

(I) Information of the bus route

Bus company and route number	KMB route no. 872
Originating/terminating points	Sha Tin Racecourse / Tai Po Centre
Place of accident	Tai Po Road - Tai Po Kau towards Tai Po near Tai Po Mei
Accident time	About 6:15 p.m.

(II) Information of the bus captain

Employment mode	Part-time bus captain
Years of service with KMB	3 years and 11 months
Duty time elapsed at the time of accident	3 hours and 11 minutes
Training and experience in serving the subject route	Have received training and experience for serving the subject route

(III) Information of the vehicle

Age of the bus	12.8 years
Date of the last monthly vehicle examination	18 January 2018
Date of the last annual vehicle examination	21 to 28 March 2017



大埔尾村
Tai Po Mei Village

赤泥坪
Chek Nai Ping

發生致命交通意外地點
Location of fatal accident

REDUCE
SPEED NOW
開始減速

SLOW
慢駛

防撞欄
Crash Barrier



大埔公路 (赤泥坪至大埔尾村)
Tai Po Road 1: 1200 (A3)
(Chek Nai Ping to Tai Po Mei Village)

