

立法會

Legislative Council

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Bills Committee on Road Traffic Legislation (Parking Spaces)(Amendment)Bill 2019

Background brief

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Administration's legislative proposal to install and operate a new generation of parking meters with additional features in Hong Kong. It also summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by Legislative Council ("LegCo") Members on the subject.

The Bill

2. The Road Traffic Legislation (Parking Spaces)(Amendment) Bill 2019 ("the Amendment Bill") was published in the Gazette on 15 November 2019 and introduced into LegCo on 27 November 2019. The Amendment Bill seeks to amend the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374) and other specified traffic legislation to provide for the use of electronic means to pay for using parking spaces, the installation of sensors to detect the occupancy of parking spaces and other related matters.

Background

3. On-street parking is provided to cater for motorists' short-term parking needs. Under section 8 of the Road Traffic (Parking) Regulations (Cap. 374C) ("the Regulations"), a motorist could park a vehicle in a parking place designated by the Commissioner for Transport ("C for T") for a continuous period of not more than 24 hours.¹ As at end August 2019, there were some

¹ To discourage prolonged parking at on-street metered parking spaces, the longest parking time allowed for each transaction at parking meters is fixed at 30 minutes, 1 hour or 2 hours. Parking time can be purchased by motorists in units of 15 minutes or 30 minutes. Notwithstanding the duration of the longest parking time, a motorist could lawfully park the same vehicle at the same

9 700 parking meters² covering about 18 000 on-street parking spaces (with one parking meter usually covering two parking spaces) in the territory, representing about 74% of the total on-street parking spaces (excluding motorcycle parking spaces).³ The existing meters, which only accept payment of parking fees by Octopus card, have been in use since 2003-2004 and are approaching the end of their serviceable life.

New generation of parking meters

4. In the 2017 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that, as one of the "Smart Mobility" initiatives, the Administration would install a new generation of on-street parking meters from 2019-2020 onwards. Having regard to the findings and feedback of the on-site and backend trials conducted by the Transport Department ("TD"), as well as the outcome of the latest market research, the Administration plans to incorporate the following new features to the on-street metered parking spaces for enhancing operational efficiency and bringing convenience to motorists –

- (a) accepting multiple electronic payment means;
- (b) accepting remote payment for parking time units through a mobile application; and
- (c) providing real-time occupancy information through the installation of vehicle sensors to detect the occupancy status of metered parking spaces so as to assist motorists in finding vacant on-street parking spaces.

Details about the three features are given in paragraphs 9 to 16 of the LegCo Brief issued by the Transport and Housing Bureau on 13 November 2019 (File Ref.: THB(T)CR 30/5591/75). The design of the new parking meters is shown in **Appendix I**.

metered parking space continuously for up to 24 hours so long as he/she continues to purchase additional parking time.

² While there were a total of 10 250 parking meters, normally, only about 95% of them (i.e. approximately 9 700) could be put in daily operation due to the need for maintenance and for conducting various kind of regular tests to ensure their normal operation.

³ On-street parking spaces are provided where they do not obstruct traffic. The majority of on-street parking spaces, mainly in urban areas and new towns, are metered (except those for motorcycles). Some of the on-street parking spaces are not metered at the moment for various reasons, such as to facilitate motorists' engagement in long-hour outdoor activities like hiking.

Maximum Fee

5. The current maximum fee for use of metered parking spaces at \$2 per 15 minutes as stipulated in Schedule 2 to the Regulations has not been revised since 1994. The Administration originally intended to increase the maximum fee from \$2 to \$4 per 15 minutes, having regard to the fee levels of public car parks⁴ and other factors, and with a view to increasing the turnover rate of on-street metered parking spaces. After consulting the Panel on Transport ("the Panel") in 2018 and in the light of the recent economic and social conditions in Hong Kong, the Administration has decided to withhold the proposed increase in order to avoid increasing the financial burden of motorists and the transport trades.

Transitional Arrangement

6. According to the Administration, the new generation of parking meters is scheduled for installation by phases over a span of around two years starting from the first half of 2020. The existing and new parking meters will be in operation concurrently for about two years to cater for the phased installation.

Major views and concerns of LegCo Members

The longest parking period and exploitation of on-street parking space for commercial use

7. When the Administration briefed the Panel regarding the implementation of a new generation of on-street parking meters at the meeting on 19 January 2018, members expressed support to the proposal. Discussions were held on the optimal level of longest parking period allowed for each transaction to prevent prolonged parking. Some members opined that the crux of the issue lied with the current legislation, which allowed a motorist to park a vehicle in a parking space continuously for 24 hours. In addition, it was observed that on-street parking spaces were often abused for commercial uses. These members opined that the Administration should review the legislation in this regard.

4 Based on a parking fee level survey conducted by TD in early 2018, the parking fee level for private cars of about 75% of public car parks operated by the private sector was set at a level higher than \$16 per hour (i.e. the Administration's original proposed maximum fee). Effective from 1 January 2019, the parking fee level for private cars at car parks operated by the Hong Kong Housing Authority ranges from \$13 to \$34 per hour depending on the location. As regards car parks under TD's management, with effect from 1 June 2019, the hourly parking fee for private cars ranges from \$11 to \$23 depending on the location and time of parking (i.e. day time or night time).

8. At the LegCo meeting held on 28 February 2018, a Member raised an oral question regarding unlawful occupation of on-street metered parking spaces by shops and enquired about measures to curb such acts. The Secretary for Transport and Housing replied that currently, the management of parking meter system was carried out by a contractor outsourced by TD, who would refer the cases for follow-up by relevant government departments. Furthermore, the Administration had plans to install a new generation of parking meters fitted with sensors to detect whether the relevant on-street parking space was occupied or not. The backend computer of the parking meter system could consolidate the utilization situation and payment information collected by the sensors, thereby identifying the locations of parking spaces being occupied without payment of parking fees. The Police could then deploy frontline officers to the locations concerned to take enforcement actions.

Increasing the maximum fee for parking meters

9. Members expressed strong views on the proposed increase in the maximum fee of metered parking space as private car park operators might follow suit thereby causing a vicious cycle of an increase in parking fee. Some members also expressed concern over the shortage of parking spaces and urged the Administration to review the parking policy and the standards of parking space provision in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines ("HKPSG").

10. The Administration explained that various measures had been taken forward to increase the supply of parking spaces, such as actively identifying suitable locations for constructing multi-storey public car parks and providing more on-street parking spaces. TD would also review relevant standards in HKPSG as appropriate.

Policy on electric vehicles ("EVs")

11. On members' suggestions of equipping the new parking meters with public charging facilities to promote the use of EVs, the Administration responded that on-street metered parking spaces were provided to cater for short-term parking needs of motorists. Equipping parking meters with charging facilities might bring about extra demand for parking space arising from the charging needs of EVs and the Administration had to be cautious in this regard.

Latest development

12. At the special House Committee meeting on 8 May 2020, Members agreed to form a Bills Committee to study the Amendment Bill.

Relevant papers

13. A list of relevant papers is at **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
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Outlook of the New Parking Meters

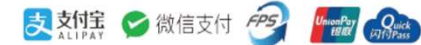
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Road Traffic Legislation (Parking Spaces)(Amendment)Bill 2019

List of relevant papers

Date	Meeting	Paper
19.1.2018	Panel on Transport	<p>Agenda https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr17-18/english/panels/tp/agenda/tp20180119.htm</p> <p>Minutes https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr17-18/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20180119.pdf</p>
28.2.2018	Council Meeting	<p>Question No. 6 – On-street metered parking spaces https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201802/28/P2018022800258.htm?fontSize=1</p>
13.11.2019	-	<p>LegCo Brief https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr19-20/english/bills/brief/b201911151_brf.pdf</p>
15.11.2019	-	<p>The Bill https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr19-20/english/bills/b201911151.pdf</p>
4.12.2019	-	<p>Report by the Legal Services Division https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr19-20/english/hc/papers/hcls-22-e.pdf</p>