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25 June 2021

Mr Patrick Choi  
Secretary of Establishment Subcommittee  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex,  
1 Legislative Council Road,  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Choi,

**Establishment Subcommittee of  
the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council**

**Follow-up matters for the meeting on 9 June 2021**

Thank you for your letter dated 9 June. The Establishment Subcommittee discussed at the meeting on the same day the Government's proposal of creating three supernumerary posts in the Transport Department (TD) to strengthen the oversight and support in enhancing the safety of franchised buses (FBs). In response to the enquires raised by Members, we now submit the following supplementary information.

**Progress of the follow-up actions on the recommendations of the Report of the Independent Review Committee on Hong Kong's Franchised Bus Service (IRC)**

Please refer to Annex for a summary of the latest progress of the Government's follow-up actions on the various recommendations of the IRC Report.

### **Manpower changes of TD in enhancing FB safety in the past ten years**

Over the years, TD does not have a dedicated team responsible for FB safety. Relevant duties span across the Bus Development Division (BDD), Vehicle Safety and Standards Division (VSSD) and Road Safety and Standards Division (RSSD). The detailed scope of work of each division is as follows –

- (a) BDD is led by one Principal Transport Officer (PTO) (D1). In addition to overseeing bus safety, the PTO is responsible for overseeing the service planning, development and regulation of FB companies, including handling annual review on bus network and taking forward bus route rationalisation in order to enhance the efficiency of the bus service network and improve the quality of service. The PTO is also responsible for the planning of more diversified bus services, monitoring of the financial performance of bus companies, processing of bus fare increase applications, etc. With the continuous expansion of the bus network over the years (there are currently more than 650 bus routes in Hong Kong), BDD has been stretched in overseeing various tasks at the same time, including the planning of new FB service networks and associated facilities to meet the transport needs of new development areas, regular review of the existing bus network (e.g. annual exercise of bus route planning programme), as well as handling of housekeeping matters of the FB operators (including the monitoring of their financial performance). BDD is already fully stretched and has no spare capacity to take up some key tasks to further enhance FB safety, such as bus captain training, fatigue management and safety performance management.
- (b) RSSD is led by one Chief Traffic Engineer (CTE) (D1), who is responsible for all road safety work in Hong Kong, including setting standards for traffic management and road design. The CTE also needs to take forward improvement measures for enhancing bus safety, and is responsible for the detailed review of the improvement proposals submitted by FB operators on traffic management and road infrastructure. As there is currently no dedicated directorate officer leading the road safety work related to buses, TD can only take a reactive approach by responding to the proposals submitted by FB operators. If the proposed posts were approved, it is expected that under the dedicated leadership at directorate level, TD can take a more proactive role in formulating road safety and bus-friendly measures by conducting comprehensive reviews on FB-related accident trends, with a view to enhancing the safety

performance of FB operators.

- (c) VSSD is led by one Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer (CEME) (D1), who is responsible for the daily administration of the safety for all vehicle classes in Hong Kong (including private cars, taxis, light buses, buses, goods vehicles, etc.). The work of CEME covers type approval, oversight and support for all vehicle classes Hong Kong, no matter whether they are public vehicles, commercial vehicles or private vehicles. This also includes type approval and annual vehicle examination for FBs. The number of registered vehicles in Hong Kong has increased by more than 37% in the past ten years. There are currently more than 878 000 registered vehicles (including about 6 000 FBs) in Hong Kong, while about 596 000 vehicles are examined each year. In addition, VSSD provides type approval service to different manufacturers for an average of more than 1 200 new vehicle models each year, which involves review of vehicle specifications and their safety test reports, as well as testing of vehicle safety-related items (such as braking system, steering system, tires, suspension system, vehicle body specifications, tilt-tests for light buses and buses, etc.). All these require the leadership of higher-level personnel. With the ever-increasing workload of VSSD, it is really difficult for the CEME to spare adequate time to focus on the research, review and development of safety measures related to FBs in addition to undertaking the above tasks.

FBs carry an average of about four million passenger trips per day, and ensuring bus safety is of utmost importance. The proposed staffing support would help further instil a "safety-first" culture not only with TD but also into FB operators. It would also enable TD to keep abreast of the rapid advances in FB safety-related technology and meet the growing public expectation.

It can be seen from the above that there is an imminent need for TD to set up a dedicated FB Safety Team. The proposed three directorate officers (i.e. a supernumerary/non-civil service post of Assistant Commissioner for Transport, one supernumerary PTO post and one supernumerary CEME post) would lead the FB Safety Team to strengthen oversight and support in enhancing the safety of FBs. The TD has not increased any directorate manpower for monitoring bus safety in the past ten years.

**Expected work target and achievement on promoting FB safety in the next five years**

After the creation of the three proposed posts, the Safety Director and the proposed PTO and CEME would lead the FB Safety Team in the next five years to formulate a forward-looking and proactive overall strategy to enhance FB safety, strengthen TD's role in supervising the FB safety and implement all aspects of FB safety-related work, including overseeing the formulation and implementation of all FB safety measures within TD and across FB operators, monitoring the safety performance of all FB operators, maintaining regular contact with the Safety Director of each FB operator and advising them on measures for enhancing FB safety, and at the same time, maintaining regular communication with the bus trade unions. We will conduct open recruitment to identify the most suitable local or non-local candidate to serve as the Safety Director. We expect the Safety Director would transfer knowledge and experience to the relevant Transport Officer grade officers in TD during the appointment, so that we can continue to follow up and handle FB safety related work more effectively.

The newly established FB Safety Team has the following main objectives for enhancing FB safety –

**(i) Developing a training framework for FB captains and introducing a “Bus Captain Accreditation Programme”**

FB Safety Team would formulate and standardise course modules in relation to bus captain training courses (such as induction courses and refresher courses) and approve syllabi for FB operators to follow. In addition, TD would develop mechanisms to oversee the delivery of training courses by the FB operators as well as the ways they maintain proper training records, and introduce a “Bus Captain Accreditation Programme” in the long run. By adopting a documented approach to training and accreditation, it would ensure that all bus captains receive continuous training and demonstrate continued driving competence for providing safe FB services in Hong Kong.



**(ii) Formulating a fatigue management strategy for bus captains**

FB Safety Team would oversee a comprehensive study on the identification and management of fatigue driving in the FB industry in Hong Kong. The preliminary study directions include –

- understanding the overall situation of fatigue driving of FB captains, the root of the problems and the causes;
- studying the correlation between FB captains' working hours, rest times and duty roster arrangement (including special shifts) stipulated in the existing Guidelines on Bus Captain Working Hours, Rest Times and Meal Breaks and fatigue driving of bus captains; and
- exploring corresponding improvement strategies and measures.

The findings and recommendations of the study would form the basis for developing a comprehensive strategy on fatigue identification and management of bus captains, which would enable TD to formulate short-term, medium-term and long-term measures and requirements in relation to the bus captains' working and rest hours, working environment, fatigue identification, training, promotion of fatigue management culture, etc. with a view to reducing the safety risks arising from fatigue driving.

**(iii) Strengthening the safety performance management of FB operators**

FB Safety Team would continue to comprehensively review the performance and trends in respect of the Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs) of FB operators (including a set of 19 indicators covering six areas, i.e. general safety issues, bus passenger safety, bus operation and network safety, bus engineering safety, safety of employees at work, and management assurance systems), and provide the Safety Director with professional support and advice on matters related to FB safety performance and management with a view to facilitating targeted studies and measures for further enhancing FB safety.

**(iv) Accident data analysis**

TD requires FB operators to report all accidents involving FBs to the Department on a monthly basis. A database on FB accidents has been maintained since 2019. TD has also worked with FB operators to standardise the reporting arrangement and analysis of FB accident data. FB Safety Team would continue to conduct thorough and rigorous data analysis and identify the root cause of accidents involving FBs. Evidence-based and systemic safety improvement measures and initiatives, including road traffic improvement and bus friendly measures, could then be derived and implemented for further enhancing FB safety.

**(v) Exploring the development of comprehensive specifications and requirements of FB vehicles and in-vehicle devices and installations suiting the unique operational needs in Hong Kong**

The design and production of FBs are very different from other vehicles. FBs are usually assembled and produced by individual bus chassis manufacturers, different body manufacturers and installation suppliers. Besides, FBs are usually designed and produced based on the different requirements and operating modes of individual operators, and are not ready-made products. Therefore, each batch of FBs could have different specifications. FB Safety Team would formulate and oversee the new safety requirements for the internal and external design and specifications of buses (including FBs and non-franchised buses), and provide professional support to the Safety Director to actively promote forward-looking research and development plans for enhancing bus safety.

**(vi) Exploring the introduction of quality assurance scheme**

FB Safety Team would endeavour to introduce a new quality assurance scheme for the maintenance of FBs. TD plans to start a number of tasks this year, including the introduction of quality control standards for the bus maintenance management system. Specifically, the relevant specifications and requirements would cover bus design standards, application of new vehicle technologies, bus maintenance management system, cause analysis and follow-up of mechanical failures as well as review on capabilities, training and qualifications of maintenance staff, etc.

**(vii) Introducing new vehicle technologies for enhancing bus safety**

FB Safety Team would maintain close liaison with stakeholders and local and non-local experts in the identification, research and testing of the latest bus safety technologies as well as formulation of relevant legal, regulatory and technical requirements, with a view to encouraging manufacturers and local operators to test and apply relevant technologies. In addition, FB Safety Team would closely monitor the safety and reliability performance of FBs, analyse trends of failure rates, and detect and eradicate systemic problems as early as possible. FB Safety Team would also make reference to the maintenance strategies of different operators in order to promote the best industrial codes for enhancing the overall safety and reliability of buses in the long run. Furthermore, FB Safety Team would need to keep abreast of the latest developments in vehicle/bus technologies, formulate relevant parameters and requirements to ensure the smooth operation of buses and enhance safety, and develop in-vehicle devices/technologies for buses that suit the operating environment in Hong Kong, such as integrated bus monitoring and control system (equipped with real-time monitoring of bus operation and emergency diversion navigation functions) and advanced driver assistance systems (including forward collision warning, lane departure warning, driver monitoring functions, etc.). In conclusion, TD expects that the FB Safety Team could expedite the introduction of well-developed safety equipment in the short term and keep abreast of the development of various safety systems around the world.

**(viii) Enhancement of safety of non-franchised buses**

FBs and non-franchised buses have many common grounds. In exploring and studying various matters, FB Safety Team would collaborate with the existing team responsible for non-franchised buses in order to enhance the safety of non-franchised buses as well.

Prior to obtaining the approval for creating the three proposed posts, TD has endeavoured to redeploy its existing manpower as far as possible to handle the more important tasks in enhancing FB safety in order of priority. In order to effectively take forward the new, extensive and strategic key tasks mentioned above, it is necessary to set up a team with dedicated leadership at the directorate level and with skill sets and perspectives different from those required for bus service planning. The FB Safety Team will coordinate and concentrate efforts on

implementing related initiatives and conduct necessary and comprehensive reviews on a regular basis to ensure that our FB safety strategy could cope with the challenges brought about by the ever-changing operating environment and technological development. Enhancing and ensuring the safety of FB should be a long-term and on-going exercise. The Government will keep in view the implementation of the major tasks mentioned above and based on the work progress and effectiveness, review the need for the dedicated FB Safety Team in the long term.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Jerry Ji', written in a cursive style.

(Ms Jerry Ji)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c. Commissioner for Transport (Attn.: Mr Felix Yim)

**Report of the Independent Review Committee on  
Hong Kong's Franchised Bus Service**

**Summary of recommendations and the latest progress on the follow-up actions**  
(as at 31 May 2021)

<b>Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee</b>	<b>Latest progress on the follow-up actions</b>
<b><i>(i) Safety Director</i></b>	
(1) Transport Department (TD) to establish a structure to develop a proactive approach to bus safety.	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <p>TD has drawn up the various arrangements for appointing a Franchised Bus (FB) Safety Director and setting up a FB safety team, including the staff establishment and scope of work, etc. Subject to the approval by the Legislative Council on the staffing proposal, it is expected that TD will set up a FB Safety Team to be led by a FB Safety Director in 2021-22, so as to develop a proactive approach to take forward and implement relevant measures to ensure FB safety.</p>
(2) TD to appoint a Safety Director and a small bus safety team.	
(3) Franchised bus operators to appoint their own Safety Directors.	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <p>All FB operators have appointed their own Safety Directors.</p>
<b><i>(ii) Permanent Working Group on the Enhancement of Safety of FBs</i></b>	
(4) Membership of the Permanent Working Group to be expanded to include independent members with expertise relevant to FB safety.	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Working Group on the Enhancement of Safety of FB was turned into a permanent setup, and was revamped and renamed as the Committee on Enhancement of FB Safety (FB Safety Committee) in early 2019. Two local academic experts joined as members <sup>Note<sup>1</sup></sup>.</li> <li>• There are two sub-committees under the FB Safety Committee, namely the “Sub-Committee on In-vehicle Safety Devices</li> </ul>

Note <sup>1</sup> Members of the FB Safety Committee include representatives from TD and all FB operators as well as two local academic experts, i.e. Professor Wong Sze-chun, Associate Dean (Development and External Relations) of the Faculty of Engineering and Chair of the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Hong Kong, and Professor Chetwyn Chan, Vice President (Research and Development) of the Education University of Hong Kong (term of office effective from 1 July 2021).

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	<p>and Technologies” and the “Sub-Committee on Training, Fatigue and Work Hour Management of Bus Captains”. The sub-committees focus on the discussion of respective topics and the monitoring of relevant follow-up actions, and report their work progress to the FB Safety Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 2019 to May 2021, the FB Safety Committee and the two sub-committees held a total of 17 meetings.</li> </ul>
<b><i>(iii) Technological safety devices: TD’s technology team</i></b>	
(5) A dedicated technology team to be formed urgently in TD.	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the basis of individual technology projects being carried out by different divisions in TD, additional staff were deployed to respective divisions to provide dedicated support for transport technology matters.</li> <li>Upon the establishment of the FB safety team in future, the team will be dedicated to handling matters on FB safety and installation of technological safety devices.</li> </ul>
(6) The technology team to establish lines of communication with well-respected overseas jurisdictions, such as the Transport for London (TfL) and Land Transport Authority (LTA) to share information.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>TD has already established lines of communication with well-respected authorities in overseas jurisdictions, including TfL of the United Kingdom (UK) and LTA of Singapore, to share information. TD will maintain and further strengthen the lines of communications and exchanges with relevant overseas authorities.</p>
(7) FB operators to appoint members of their own staff to be responsible for technological safety devices and to establish lines of communication with FB operators in well-respected overseas jurisdictions to share information.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local FB operators have already established lines of communications with FB operators in overseas jurisdictions to share information.</li> <li>The Safety Directors of the FB operators have made coordinated efforts in handling matters on technological safety devices and strengthening lines of communication and</li> </ul>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	exchanges with non-local FB operators, including visits to overseas (e.g. Singapore, Japan and the UK, etc.) and Mainland China to communicate and exchange with local bus operators and manufacturers in respect of topics such as bus safety and application of advanced technologies, etc.
<b>(iv) Subsidies</b>	
<p>(8) TD to establish a small fund to provide grants to FB operators to promote the uptake of new safety technology.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD has reviewed various existing funds established by the Government, and learnt that the scope of funding of the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) under the Innovation and Technology Commission should be able to cover new safety technology of FBs. The ITF (including its Partnership Research Programme and Technology Voucher Programme) provides financial support to local universities, public research institutions, local enterprises, trade associations, etc. to encourage and help them upgrade the technological level and introduce more innovative ideas into their businesses.</li> <li>• TD has informed FB operators of the funding scope of the ITF and encouraged them to apply for the fund to facilitate the research and application of new technology to enhance the safety and operations of FBs.</li> <li>• In addition, TD has been providing subsidies to FB operators for retrofitting existing double-deck buses with electronic stability control (ESC) and speed limiting retarders, as well as seat belts on the upper decks [please refer to Item 10 below for details].</li> </ul>



Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
<p>(9) TD to engage an independent consultant to conduct a cost/benefit analysis in respect of the retrofitting of seat belts on the upper decks of some FBs.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD engaged an independent consultant<sup>Note 2</sup> to conduct a cost/benefit analysis in respect of retrofitting seat belts on FBs in February 2019. The study was completed in September 2019. It was revealed from the analysis that the Government should consider installing seat belts on the upper decks of double-deck buses registered in or after 2016 (around 1 900 buses). Moreover, the study also opined that those buses fitted with seat belts should first be deployed to routes operating via expressways and with longer journey distance.</li> <li>• In the light of the study findings, TD and FB operators are arranging for the installation of seat belts on the upper deck of around 1 900 existing double-deck buses. The installation works have commenced progressively from the third quarter of 2020 for target completion within three years. The Government subsidises FB operators 80% of the related installation costs, while the rest of the installation costs and future maintenance cost will be borne by FB operators.</li> <li>• In addition, all new buses procured from July 2018 onwards have all their seats installed with seat belts. As at end of May 2021, about 800 newly procured buses with seat belts installed have been put into service.</li> <li>• Upon completion of the retrofitting works within three years (counting from the third quarter of 2020), it is estimated that there would be more than 3 000 buses (including newly procured buses) fitted with seat belts. TD and FB operators will arrange</li> </ul>

Note 2 The study was conducted by an independent consultant, i.e. a team of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The study report has been submitted to the FB Safety Committee and uploaded on TD's website.

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	to deploy these buses with priority given to long-haul routes operating via expressways with relatively fewer bus stops.
<p>(10) TD to engage an independent consultant to conduct cost/benefit analyses in respect of the retrofitting of ESC and speed limiters with retardation function (speed limiting retarder), and all other safety devices proved to be technically successful, before TD requires installation of those devices by FB operators.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the proven effectiveness of ESC and speed limiting retarder, TD has conducted a cost/benefit review based on the cost information provided by bus manufacturers and FB operators with reference to findings of relevant overseas studies. The review has been completed and the findings revealed that the Government should consider retrofitting all existing buses (around 4 000 buses) with ESC and speed limiting retarder if technically feasible.</li> <li>In the light of the study findings, TD and FB operators are arranging for the retrofitting of ESC and speed limiting retarder on around 4 000 existing double-deck buses. The installation works have commenced progressively from the third quarter of 2020 for target completion within four years. The Government subsidises FB operators 80% of the related installation costs, while the rest of the installation costs and future maintenance cost will be borne by FB operators.</li> <li>In addition, all new buses procured from July 2018 onwards have been installed with ESC and speed limiting retarder. Upon completion of the retrofitting works within four years (counting from the third quarter of 2020), it is estimated that there would be more than 5 500 buses (including newly-procured buses) equipped with ESC and speed limiting retarder.</li> </ul>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
<b><i>(v) Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs)</i></b>	
<p>(11) TD to establish more nuanced SPIs.</p> <p>(12) TD to seek elucidation and clarification from TfL of the SPIs adopted by TfL.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an ongoing task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawing reference from the SPIs of TfL, TD has finalised the SPIs to be adopted in Hong Kong and standardised the relevant data format with FB operators.</li> <li>• The number of items covered in the newly adopted SPIs has increased from two <sup>Note 3</sup> to 19 <sup>Note 4</sup>. These items cover six areas (including general safety, bus passenger safety, operation and network safety, bus engineering safety, safety of employees at work, and management and assurance systems), with a view to reviewing the performance and trends on FB operators' safety in a holistic manner, so as to facilitate targeted studies and measures for further enhancement of FB safety.</li> <li>• TD and FB operators have adopted the new set of SPIs to measure safety performance since January 2020.</li> </ul>
<b><i>(vi) FB accident data</i></b>	
<p>(13) The accident data material in the Bus Safety Chapter of the Forward Planning Programmes (FPP) to be made public.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an ongoing task)</u></b></p> <p>TD has consolidated the data and finalized relevant publishing arrangement with FB operators. Since 2020, FB operators have made public the accident data in the Bus Safety Chapter of the FPP via their websites annually.</p>

Note 3 The two items were: (i) safety-related defects per bus examination; and (ii) number of buses involved in accidents per million vehicle-km.

Note 4 For details, please refer to Annex A to Enclosure 1 of ESC Paper No. EC(2021-22)6.

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
(14) TD to require the FB operators to report all FB accidents to TD on a monthly basis.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an ongoing task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD has required FB operators to report all accidents involving FBs to TD on a monthly basis.</li> <li>• TD has been maintaining a database on bus accidents since 2019 and has standardised with FB operators the reporting/analysis arrangement for regular reporting to the FB Safety Committee and follow-up actions as appropriate.</li> </ul>
(15) Consideration should be given by TD to instituting a common reporting/analysis system of FB accident data.	
(16) TD to stipulate to the FB operators common thresholds for reporting instances of excessive speeding and harsh braking.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an ongoing task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD has completed the setting of target common thresholds in respect of instances of excessive speeding and harsh braking. All FB operators have implemented the common thresholds since end 2020. Real-time alerts are provided to bus captains and records are generated for taking follow-up actions with the bus captains concerned. Relevant thresholds are as follows:</li> </ul> <p>(i) Excessive speeding</p> <p>Real-time alerts – speed exceeding 50km/h or 70km/h (depending on speed limit of the road section);</p> <p>Generation of record – speed exceeding 55km/h or 75km/h consecutively for 10 seconds; and</p> <p>(ii) Harsh braking</p> <p>Generation of record – force exceeding 0.4G</p>
(17) TD to stipulate to the FB operators common thresholds of excessive acceleration.	
<b><i>(vii) Real-time alerts</i></b>	
(18) TD to require the FB operators to provide real-time alerts of excessive speeding, deceleration and acceleration to bus captains and to generate records of those events.	
(19) TD and FB operators to explore the feasibility of making use of the generation of real-time, or near real-time, of excessive speeding, deceleration and acceleration to provide an automatic alert to the FB operators Control Room, permitting communication with the bus if appropriate.	<p><b><u>Being studied</u></b></p> <p>TD is reviewing with FB operators on the implementation of common thresholds for providing real-time alerts to bus captains on excessive speeding and harsh braking, and would further explore the feasibility of providing real-time or near real-time alerts to the FB operators Control Room.</p>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
<b>(viii) Bus captain training</b>	
(20) TD to collaborate with the FB operators to identify key indicators of the effectiveness of the bus captain training system.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an ongoing task)</u></b></p> <p>TD has all along formulated the “Practice Note on Training Framework for Franchised Bus Captains” for adoption by the FB operators. At end 2020, TD completed the review with various FB operators on the implementation of the Practice Note, including the setting of common key performance indicators, which have been implemented from January 2021 onwards. The relevant key performance indicators are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Number of blameworthy traffic accidents with person injury that involve bus captains after training; and</li> <li>(ii) Number of substantiated complaints that involve bus captains after training.</li> </ul>
(21) TD to stipulate that fatigue management form part of the training courses provided to bus captains.	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At present, FB captain training courses have already included elements of fatigue management. Bus captains are reminded to, amongst others, have enough rest to recover their mental and physical strength, avoid fatigue from prolonged working, be mindful of their personal physical conditions and endurable working hours to ensure they are mentally fit for driving, do more exercises to maintain good health, etc.</li> <li>• In studying the topic of fatigue identification and management, TD will also explore the feasibility of further strengthening the relevant training to bus captains.</li> </ul> <p>[Please also refer to Items 25 to 27 below.]</p>
(22) TD to provide funding for a special course/programme for bus captains to deal with abusive and angry passengers.	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD is producing training materials for FB captains on how to handle difficult passengers. The teaching materials, mainly in the form of short videos, will cover the following three topics:</li> </ul>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Emotional and psychological qualities of bus captains for dealing with difficult passengers;</li> <li>(ii) Dealing with difficult passengers in daily bus operations; and</li> <li>(iii) Dealing with difficult passengers in contingencies.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD has been working out relevant training materials and implementation arrangement with FB operators for expected completion in the second half of 2021.</li> </ul>
<b><i>(ix) Guidelines on Bus Captain Working Hours, Rest Times and Meal Breaks (Guidelines)</i></b>	
(24) An expert(s) on fatigue identification and management to be appointed as an ad hoc member of the Permanent Working Group.	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <p>TD has appointed local experts to be members of the FB Safety Committee.</p> <p>[Please refer to Item 4 above.]</p>
(23) The Guidelines on working hours, etc. to be stipulated in regulations.	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2018, TD issued the latest revised Guidelines, which have been fully implemented by all FB operators since the second quarter of 2019.</li> </ul>
(25) Consideration to be given by the Permanent Working Group of whether permitting 14 hours of duty in a split shift is compatible with bus safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking into account that FB operators are required to address the transportation needs of the public during the morning and afternoon peak hours, bus companies are allowed to make appropriate arrangements under the revised Guidelines in such a way that the maximum duty hours of a special shift will not exceed 14 hours. Nonetheless, all FB operators have implemented the arrangement of having not more than 13 hours per shift.</li> </ul>
(26) Consideration to be given by the Permanent Working Group to restricting the total hours of driving by a bus captain in periods of 14 or 28 days.	
(27) The Permanent Working Group to engage an independent consultant to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the effect of abrogating the special shift exception to the 22 hours of duty rule, in particular the potential safety improvements, the number and cost of the additional bus captains that would be required and the implication to FB fares.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to following up on and monitoring the implementation of the revised Guidelines by FB operators, TD has been studying matters relating to fatigue identification and management.</li> <li>• After studying overseas research reports and practices, as well as discussing with</li> </ul>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	<p>expert members of the FB Safety Committee and two other local experts  Note 5, TD has appointed independent local expert(s) to conduct research on identification and management of fatigue driving in the FB industry in Hong Kong, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) understanding the overall situation of fatigue driving of bus captains, the root of the problem and the causes;</li> <li>(ii) studying the correlation between FB captains' working hours, rest times and duty roster arrangement (including special shifts) stipulated in the existing Guidelines and fatigue driving of bus captains; and</li> <li>(iii) exploring corresponding improvement strategies and measures.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study has commenced since March 2021. FB operators and their bus captains have been engaged in the study.</li> <li>• TD expects that the study results and recommendations can form the basis for formulating comprehensive fatigue identification and management strategies, covering the following three aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) A comprehensive review on bus captains' working hours, rest times, rest days, duty roster arrangement, route deployment, etc.;</li> <li>(ii) In respect of the management of FB operators, how to provide an appropriate working environment (such as resting facilities, depot design, arrangement of the driver's cab, etc.), manage and identify whether the state of an individual bus captain is suitable for work, and further enhance bus captain training; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Note 5 One is a registered occupational therapist, chartered safety and health practitioner, certified work capacity evaluator and registered driving assessor, and the other is an industrial engineer whose research focuses on the application of human factors on health care work system.



Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	<p>(iii) In respect of bus captains, how to promote and cultivate a fatigue management culture, and formulate guidelines on personal life routines for bus captains to reduce the risk of fatigue driving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As regards the recommendation to stipulate the Guidelines on working hours in the regulations, it will be followed up as part of the study on identification and management of fatigue driving.</li> </ul>
<p>(28) Citybus Limited (CTB) / New World First Bus (NWFB) and TD to work closely together to ensure that CTB/NWFB provides adequate rest facilities for drivers working on split shifts.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, there are 307 bus termini in Hong Kong (including those of MTR bus routes). FB operators have been progressively providing additional toilets and resting facilities at existing bus termini to cater for the needs of bus captains. At present, toilets are either located at or within a walking distance of three minutes at over 95% of the bus termini. For the remaining bus termini, toilets are basically located within a walking distance of around four to seven minutes. Besides, about 90% of the bus termini have been provided with resting facilities for bus captains.</li> <li>From 2017 to April 2021, the Government has granted approval to 108 applications made by FB operators for providing working spaces/rest rooms/resting facilities for bus captains.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>(x) Part-time bus captains: other employment</i></b></p>	
<p>(29) TD to stipulate to the FB operators the information that they are required to obtain, maintain and update in respect of the other employment of part-time captains, including the nature of the employment and the hours worked.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>At present, each FB operator has already put in place its own mechanism for the part-time captains to report other employment.</p>

<b>Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee</b>	<b>Latest progress on the follow-up actions</b>
<p>(30) TD to require New Lantao Bus (NLB) to obtain information and maintain records of the duty and driving hours and off-duty breaks in their other employment of the bus captains provided to them by Kwoon Chung Motors Company Limited, or any other supplier of buses and drivers to NLB, and that NLB is required to be satisfied that, when they are performing driving duties for NLB, they are compliant with the Guidelines.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>As required by TD, NLB has obtained information and maintained records of the duty and driving hours and off-duty breaks in their other employment of the bus captains provided to them by other supplier(s) of buses and drivers.</p>
<p><b><i>(xi) The provision of rest and toilet facilities for bus captains</i></b></p>	
<p>(31) TD to amend the Transport Planning and Design Manual (TPDM) to delete the provision that toilet facilities for bus operator's staff will not be required in a bus terminus if such facilities are available in a nearby development.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In August 2019, TD revised the relevant provisions in the TPDM to include guidelines on the requirement of providing fundamental facilities such as rest rooms, toilets etc. for bus captains and staff in the planning of new public transport interchanges and bus termini, and provided a layout template with the concerned area provision for the planners' reference.</li> <li>• In December 2019, the Planning Department amended the relevant provisions in the HKPSG.</li> </ul>
<p>(32) TD to invite the Planning Department to amend paragraph 4.1.6 of Chapter 8 of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) to stipulate that the provision of toilets and rest facilities are required at bus termini.</p>	
<p>(33) The Government to provide built-in structures of a bus regulator's office, and restrooms with toilets facilities at new public transport interchanges and bus termini.</p>	
<p>(34) TD to invite a representative of the Secretary for Transport and Housing to become a member of TD's task force monitoring the provision of ancillary facilities at public transport interchanges and bus termini.</p>	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>The Transport and Housing Bureau's representative has joined and participated in the inter-departmental meetings coordinated by TD in monitoring the provision of ancillary facilities at public transport interchanges and bus termini.</p>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
<b>(xii) Abuse and assaults on bus captains</b>	
(35) TD and the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) to conduct a long-term programme in the news print media, television and social media to educate the public and abusing a bus captain performing his duties is not only unacceptable but also a criminal offence.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2019, TD rolled out a series of television and internet Announcements in the Public Interest (API) to raise passengers' awareness of safety and courtesy (including respect for bus captains) when using public transport services.</li> <li>• TD and HKPF have formulated the long-term publicity programme to raise awareness on matters such as passenger safety and behaviours, etc. through various channels (including internet and radio APIs, Road Safety Bulletin, etc.). TD and HKPF will review the implementation of the publicity programme on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
(36) TD to require the FB operators to display notices to remind FB passengers that abusing a bus captain is unacceptable and constitutes a criminal offence.	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <p>TD has standardised the content of the notices, and FB operators have displayed them inside bus compartments to remind passengers not to disturb bus captains while driving.</p>
(37) TD to require the FB operators to install video cameras with audio capability at the entrance of buses and where the bus captain is seated.	<p><b><u>Completed</u></b></p> <p>FB operators have retrofitted audio-recording equipment on their buses installed with CCTV at bus captain cabins, and have activated the function concerned.</p>
(38) TD to propose specific legislation be enacted to make it an offence to make a threatening, abusive or insulting communication towards a bus captain performing his public duties.	<p><b><u>Being studied</u></b></p> <p>TD is reviewing relevant existing legislative provisions to see if they are adequate for the prosecution of a passenger who makes threatening, abusive or insulting communication towards a bus captain who is performing public duties. TD will consult relevant government bureaux/departments in parallel.</p>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
<i>(xiii) Illegal stopping by vehicles at and near franchised bus stops</i>	
<p>(39) Legislative provisions to be presented to the Legislative Council as soon as possible to provide for the service of fixed penalty tickets, other than by affixing them to the vehicle or giving them to the vehicle driver, and to permit service by E-ticket.</p>	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On technology-assisted traffic enforcement, HKPF launched an Electronic Fixed Penalty Tickets (E-Ticketing) pilot scheme in all police districts in Hong Kong in April 2020, allowing frontline enforcement officers to retrieve data on illegally parked vehicles via mobile devices and instantly print out fixed penalty notices. HKPF expanded the pilot scheme in March 2021 to cover traffic offences under the Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance (Cap. 240) (e.g. vehicles illegally parked at bus stops, vehicles allowing passengers to board/alight or load/unload goods in restricted areas, etc.). Besides, we have obtained funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council to establish a new electronic traffic enforcement system through electronic processing of fixed penalty tickets involving traffic contraventions.</li> <li>To expand the means of serving fixed penalty tickets under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237) and the Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance (Cap. 240), the Government plans to submit relevant bills to the Legislative Council in the next legislative session.</li> </ul>
<p>(40) TD and HKPF to explore the feasibility of installing CCTV cameras at suitable vantage points, in particular lampposts, to monitor blackspots of illegal stopping by vehicles at and near franchised bus stops.</p>	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <p>HKPF conducted a territory-wide pilot scheme in 2018. Police officers used hand-held video cameras to record traffic crimes under the Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance (Cap. 240), including vehicles illegally parked at bus stops, vehicles allowing passengers to board/alight or load/unload goods in restricted areas, etc., and deliver fixed penalty tickets by mail afterwards. Upon completing the review, HKPF decided to</p>

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	regularise this pilot scheme as one of the traffic law enforcement modes. HKPF will continue to utilise their existing resources and equipment for enforcement operations of traffic offences.
(41) FB operators to cooperate with the police to make available CCTV recordings obtained by cameras mounted on FBs of illegal stopping by vehicles at and near franchised bus stops.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>FB operators have liaised with HKPF on the matter, and have been providing HKPF with CCTV footages of illegal stopping of vehicles at and near franchised bus stops from time to time to facilitate follow-up actions by HKPF.</p>
<b><i>(xiv) Priority measures for FBs</i></b>	
(42) TD to give consideration to introducing a system of affording priority to buses as they exit bus stops to rejoin the highway.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>TD has launched the new bus-friendly traffic measure comprising the use of a newly designed “Give way to bus” traffic sign and road markings to encourage motorists to give way for FBs to exit more easily from bus bays to adjacent traffic lanes. The trial scheme completed in early 2020. In view of the positive results, TD has included the measure as one of the standard traffic management tools in the TPDm. TD is now extending this new measure to other suitable bus stops.</p>
(43) TD to make greater use of bus lanes in appropriate locations.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <p>TD is committed to taking forward this item wherever possible. As at May 2021, there are 84 bus-only lanes and 15 designated bus gates in the territory. TD will continue to set up more bus-only lanes in appropriate locations.</p>
<b><i>(xv) Route risk assessment</i></b>	
(44) TD to require the FB operators to provide TD with a route risk assessment for each of the routes on which their buses ply.	<p><b><u>Completed (became an on-going task)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TD has finalised detailed arrangement for route risk assessment with various FB operators. When conducting route risk assessment, FB bus operators must check and evaluate the actual operating conditions of each bus route (including road sections,</li> </ul>

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Latest progress on the follow-up actions
	<p>nearby environment, other vehicular or pedestrian activities, etc.), and provide adequate and appropriate driving instructions to the bus captains in the light of the unique operating conditions of each bus route.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By end 2020, FB operators have completed route risk assessment on all of their bus routes, provided adequate and appropriate driving instructions to the bus captains and submitted the reports to TD. FB operators will regularly review route risk assessments for each route (at least once every two years).</li> </ul>
<b><i>(xvi) Speed limits</i></b>	
(45) TD to identify suitable locations to conduct trials of a low-speed zone of 30 km/h.	<p><b><u>Being implemented</u></b></p> <p>TD has conducted a trial of low speed zone of 30km/h in Wai Chi Street, Sham Shui Po (the section between Woh Chai Street and Nam Cheong Street) since November 2020 and targets to complete the review of the trial scheme in the third quarter of 2021.</p>