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Ms Sophie LAU
Clerk to Panel on Transport
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

27 July 2021

Dear Ms Lau,

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Letter from Hon CHAN Han-pan on the use of “Traffic Lights with Split Phase” at Shatin Tai Chung Kiu Road and safety of traffic lights

I refer to the Secretariat’s letter of 17 June 2021 to the Secretary for Transport and Housing enclosing the letter from Hon CHAN Han-pan. Having consulted the Transport Department (“TD”), we would like to furnish our reply as follows.

Traffic Lights with Split Phase

The purpose of installing red, amber and green traffic light with an additional green arrow signal, known as traffic light with split phase, is to allow vehicles travelling in different directions to cross a junction safely at the same time without conflict, and to enhance the efficiency of the junction. The green arrow signal is installed beside the standard three-colour traffic

light signal and its overall appearance is different from the normal traffic light signal such that it is easily distinguishable by motorists and not likely to cause confusion. Moreover, at the junctions where traffic lights with split phase are installed, road markings are painted on the traffic lanes concerned to match with the design of the traffic lights so as to remind the drivers to get in the appropriate lanes in advance. Such traffic light with split phase is widely used in Hong Kong as well as overseas countries and is one of the common types of traffic light signal facilities. The Road Users' Code published by TD has also explained in detail the meanings of different traffic light signals including traffic light with split phase. All persons who have passed the driving test, hold a valid Hong Kong driving licence and drive attentively shall be able to fully understand and comply with these traffic light signals.

Traffic improvement measures implemented at Tai Chung Kiu Road

In 2018, TD conducted a comprehensive review of the road design of Tai Chung Kiu Road and has implemented a number of traffic improvement measures at a total of seven junctions along the section of Tai Chung Kiu Road between Lion Rock Tunnel Road and Siu Lek Yuen Road to enhance its road safety. The improvement measures include-

- (1) adding double white lines to separate traffic lanes with different traffic directions at the junction approaches;
- (2) adding advance traffic signs "Traffic Lights Ahead" at the junction approaches to alert motorists to the presence of signalised junctions ahead;
- (3) relocating or removing those traffic signs or street name plates that may obscure the sight-lines of motorists;
- (4) installing railings at the junctions to channelise the pedestrians to use crossings;
- (5) installing backing boards at traffic lights to enable motorists to see traffic light signals more clearly;
- (6) adjusting the location of individual traffic lights, in particular those with split phase, to make the traffic signals clearer;
- (7) installing pedestrian lights at the entrance/exit of the Belair Garden; and
- (8) installing red light cameras at Tai Chung Kiu Road southbound near its junctions with Sha Tin Wai Road and Fo Tan Road respectively.

These improvement works were completed in phases from early 2019 to end 2020.

Noting the decrease in the overall numbers of traffic accidents and resulting casualties at Tai Chung Kiu Road after the completion of the improvement works, TD considers that the measures are effective to a certain extent. Furthermore, TD also plans to add a traffic island at the junction of Tai Chung Kiu Road and Sha Kok Street to separate traffic lanes in different directions. The works departments are now arranging relocation of affected underground utilities.

Further enhancement measures for Tai Chung Kiu Road

To further enhance the junction design of Tai Chung Kiu Road/Shatin Rural Committee Road/Shatin Wai Road, TD is planning to provide traffic islands at the concerned junction so as to obviously separate the traffic lanes for left-turning and straight ahead/right-turning movements, and to install additional traffic lights for each of these movements thereon, thus allowing motorists to see the traffic signals more clearly. Due to the complexity of the works, longer construction time will be required.

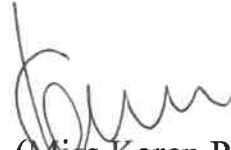
Since the works for construction of traffic islands takes time, TD has immediately implemented several enhancement measures at the concerned junction, which include provision of hatched road markings as well as temporary traffic cylinders to separate the traffic lanes for left-turning and straight ahead movements, and provision of "Slow" road marking at the junction approach of both bounds of Tai Chung Kiu Road as a reminder for the motorists to slow down. These road markings and temporary traffic cylinders were completed on 26 June 2021.

TD is now working on the design and construction details of the enhancement measures for the junction of Tai Chung Kiu Road/Shatin Rural Committee Road/Shatin Wai Road. The present assessment is that if all things go smoothly, the works would be completed in the fourth quarter of 2021. TD will also review the arrangements for other junctions of Tai Chung Kiu Road timely and implement similar enhancement measures where necessary.

Apart from implementing various road improvement works as aforesaid, TD has been working closely with the Road Safety Council and the Police to carry out various road safety publicity and educational activities, e.g. through government websites, the social media platform of Road Safety Council, Announcements of Public Interest on televisions and radios, Road Safety Bulletin and posters, etc, to disseminate road safety and safe driving messages and to remind the public to obey traffic rules.

Moreover, TD has regular meetings with the transport trade and organises seminars, as well as talks on safe driving, so as to constantly remind commercial vehicle drivers the importance of safe driving and thus enhancing their awareness.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Karen PO', written in a cursive style.

(Miss Karen PO)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c.:

Commissioner for Transport (Attn.: Ms Stella LEE) Fax no.: 2381 3799