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Panel on Transport
Meeting on 17 June 2022

Background brief on implementation of Traffic e-Enforcement

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the implementation of a new Traffic e-Enforcement System (“the System”) proposed by the Administration. It also summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by the Panel on Transport (“the Panel”) on the subject.

Background

2. At present, the issuance of Fixed Penalty Notices (“FPNs”) in accordance with Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contravention) Ordinance (Cap. 237) and Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceeding) Ordinance (Cap. 240) relevant to offences such as illegal parking, speeding and so forth, are processed manually by the Hong Kong Police Force (“the Police”).¹ To enhance enforcement accuracy and efficiency, the Police has launched in March 2020 an “e-Ticketing Pilot Scheme” where Police officers would use handheld devices to input or extract data through scanning the QR code² displayed on the vehicle’s windscreen when undertaking enforcement duties against illegal parking. The officers could also capture images of the incident as supporting evidence, fix the electronic FPNs (“e-FPNs”) instantly printed out on the vehicle’s windscreen and upload all details captured to the backend system for further processing. Between April and December

¹ For traffic contraventions not covered under Cap. 237 and Cap. 240, the Police will submit the “Traffic Summons Application Forms” to the Judiciary under the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374) and the Judiciary will then issue the summons to the offenders.

² In tandem with the launch of the Pilot Scheme, the Transport Department (“TD”) has been issuing vehicle licences with encrypted QR code to new or renewal applicants since April 2020. The newly issued vehicle licence with encrypted QR code carries the same types of information shown on the vehicle licence displayed on the vehicle’s windscreen. As at 31 January 2021, TD has issued about 0.7 million vehicle licences with encrypted QR code.

2020, the Police issued a total of 2.2 million of FPNs against illegal parking, of which more than 40% were e-FPNs.

Implementation of the System

3. Having regard to the success of the Pilot Scheme, the Administration proposed to develop the System to deal with all traffic violations. The System will digitalize the existing manual traffic enforcement workflows. In addition, TD plans to develop a citizen-centric Traffic e-Enforcement thematic portal where members of the public can view details of the e-FPNs including photos or videos of relevant offences,³ make online payment to settle the penalty and raise enquiries and dispute liabilities on prosecution. The System will process all traffic enforcement related information and data from various devices and interface with the Vehicle and Driver Licensing Integrated Data System under TD. With this centralized platform, traffic enforcement data can be better integrated and analyzed to facilitate traffic management work.

4. To provide legal basis for the System, the Administration plans to introduce legislative proposals into the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) in the 2022 legislative session for the phased implementation of the System starting from 2023. The Administration has sought funding approval of HK\$351.6 million from the Finance Committee of LegCo in June 2021 for developing the System. Upon implementation of the System, the Administration envisaged that there will be realizable savings in terms of manpower savings and other administrative procedures streamlined.

Major views and concerns of members

5. The Administration briefed the Panel at its meeting on 20 April 2021 on the financial proposal of the System and the preliminary legislative amendment proposal. Major views and concerns expressed by members are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Cost-effectiveness and implementation of the System

6. Some members expressed concern about cost-effectiveness of the System and enquired whether a value for money assessment had been conducted. They further opined that the System should be more than an electronic system facilitating the processing of FPNs for traffic contraventions, but dovetailing with

³ If the Police possesses the relevant traffic offence photos and/or videos, the offenders have to submit applications to the Police and can only view the requested information online after having the approval.

other Smart Mobility initiatives for achieving bigger objectives like alleviating congestion, minimizing traffic accidents and making efficient use of road space.

7. The Administration explained that apart from digitalizing the existing manual traffic enforcement workflow, the System would also build an internal traffic enforcement platform and provide a one-stop-service for the public to view e-FPNs and handle payment matters online. With the reduction in human errors, it was envisaged that the number of enquiries and dispute liabilities on prosecutions would be reduced, thereby increasing the realizable savings in manpower. In addition, the Administration had been pursuing smart mobility on various fronts and relevant law enforcement agencies had been studying with various government departments to leverage on technology to perform enforcement duties.

8. On members' concern regarding phased implementation of the System, the Administration advised that the public could access the thematic portal via the one-stop "iAM Smart" mobile application. Since lead time was required to go through the requisite legislative amendment and installation of the System, the Police targeted to implement the System in two phases. The basic thematic web portal would be launched in the first quarter of 2023 for the public to view e-FPNs online. Members of the public could view the traffic offence photos and/or videos through the thematic portal upon full implementation of the System. There was a suggestion that the Administration should consider consolidating different government website or applications with a view to bringing more convenience to the public.

Application of technology on traffic management and enforcement

9. An enquiry was raised on whether traffic offence data related to illegal parking collected through the System would be shared to TD or other relevant government departments for analysis, so as to formulate corresponding strategy to combat illegal parking. There was also a suggestion of allowing members of the public to report alleged traffic contraventions through the System for the Police to take enforcement actions.

10. The Administration responded that it would continue to make use of information technology for traffic and transport management. After passage of relevant legislative proposals which enabled issuing e-FPNs, members of the public could report alleged parking offences for the Police to prioritize its traffic management enforcement actions. The Police would explore different approaches to enhance enforcement efficiency.

11. A member enquired about the feasibility of collecting traffic offence evidences by installing video cameras at traffic black spots. The Administration

advised that the Police had been exploring with relevant departments on the application of technology to enhance law enforcement capabilities. For instance, the Police had been collaborating with the Energizing Kowloon East Office of the Development Bureau to conduct the Proof-of-concept trials on the effectiveness of using closed-circuit television cameras and video analytics technology to detect illegal parking and improper use of loading and unloading bays in Kwun Tong.

Security and privacy issues

12. Members raised concern about system security and enquired about measures to ensure that there would be no leakage of vehicle owners/drivers' personal data. The Administration stressed that the specifications of the computer systems of the Police were in strict compliance with relevant security-related regulations and guidelines promulgated by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Besides, information security risk assessments and audits would be performed as and when necessary before and after the System had been implemented. On members' further enquiry on the handling of data, the Administration advised that frontline law enforcement officers could utilize the designated handheld devices provided by the Police to take pictures and/or videos to record the evidence. The photos and/or videos captured at the scene would be uploaded to the Police's backend system in real-time using mobile connection. Such evidence would be kept for a maximum of two years should there be no dispute arising out of the case.

13. Regarding the enquiry on how vehicle owners who had committed traffic offences could receive FPN notifications, the Administration advised that they could choose to receive FPNs by electronic means or by post. After the passage of relevant legislative amendments, it would be mandatory for all vehicle owners and drivers to provide to the Transport Department their mobile phone numbers or email addresses. In response to members' concern that some vehicle owners or drivers might not be familiar with the use of smart mobile phones and did not have access to the Internet, the Administration advised that notifications of e-FPNs via Short Message Service could be received by both smart and non-smart mobile phones.

Latest position

14. The Administration will consult the Panel on the legislative proposal for the implementation of Traffic e-Enforcement and to enable the issuing of fixed penalty notices by electronic mean at the Panel meeting to be held on 17 June 2022.

Relevant papers

15. A list of relevant papers is in **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
10 June 2022

Implementation of Traffic e-Enforcement

List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Panel/ Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
20.4.2021	TP	Administration's paper on implementing Traffic e-Enforcement System	<u>CB(4)619/20-21(07)</u>
		Minutes of meeting	<u>CB(4)1262/20-21</u>
25.6.2021	Finance Committee	Administration's paper on Development of Traffic e-Enforcement System	<u>FCR(2021-22)37</u>
		Minutes of meeting	<u>FC221/20-21</u>
9.6.2021	Council meeting	<u>Hon Wilson OR raised a question on traffic management and law enforcement</u>	
23.5.2018	Council meeting	<u>Hon James To raised a question on pilot scheme to combat traffic contraventions</u>	

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