

Laying of the Report Report No. 78 of the Director of Audit on the results of value for money audits was laid in the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) on 23 November 2022. The Public Accounts Committee (“the Committee”)’s Report (Report No. 78) was subsequently tabled on 15 February 2023, which met the requirement of Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure of LegCo that the Report be made within three months of the Director of Audit’s Report being laid.

2. **The Government Minute** The Government Minute in response to the Committee’s Report No. 78 was laid in LegCo on 24 May 2023. A progress report on matters outstanding in the Government Minute was issued on 26 October 2023. The latest position and the Committee’s further comments on these matters are set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 below.

Licensing services for drivers
(Chapter 2 of Part 4 of P.A.C. Report No. 78)

3. The Committee was informed that:

Provision of driving test services

- the Transport Department (“TD”) had enhanced the system for regularly updating the computerized question banks of driving written tests to ensure that review on the Location and Route Questions of the written test for taxi was conducted annually, whereas review on other question banks was conducted at least biennially or as necessitated by any substantial amendments of the existing legislation;
- TD launched a new webpage regarding “Scope of Written Test Questions” on TD’s website on 25 September 2023, which covered the Road Users’ Code and other new legislations related to road traffic. TD had enhanced the publicity and provided relevant information to the candidates through TD’s website and written test appointment letter to ensure that they were aware of the latest scope of the written tests. To allow time for the candidates to familiarize themselves with the related “Scope of Written Test Questions”, the scope would be effective from 6 November 2023;
- TD completed the review of duty reporting arrangement of Driving Examiners (“DEs”) and Driving Test Centre (“DTC”) officers in September 2023. With consideration of factors such as geographic

location and traffic condition, TD would launch a pilot scheme in the first quarter of 2024 in some of the DTCs, allowing DEs and DTC officers to report at DTC directly;

- in order to increase the driving test output, TD introduced the following measures since March 2023:
 - (a) arranging DEs to take up additional work on Saturdays. Up to late September 2023, around 7 000 additional early tests had been provided. To upkeep the improved service, the measure would be extended for six months until late March 2024. TD would review the effectiveness of the trial measure and consider the long term arrangement; and
 - (b) making use of electronic technology and utilize the time saved from the introduction of electronic test form to provide around 190 additional early tests per month in three non-commercial DTCs;
- TD had maintained close liaison with the relevant departments to seek suitable sites for setting up DTCs. TD was planning to develop a joint-user complex at the junction of Shing Tai Road and Sheung Mau Street in Chai Wan, in which three floors would be used for re-provisioning the Ap Lei Chau Driving School and DTC;
- TD conducted a new round of DEII recruitment exercise in August 2022. New recruits would assume duty by batches in the second half of 2023;
- after implementation of the respective measures for increasing driving test output and filling the vacancies of DE grade in 2023, TD would review the situation (including the actual driving test waiting time) in 2024, and explore drawing up a new performance pledge for non-commercial vehicle driving test (i.e. the number of waiting days for arranging road tests upon receiving the applications);
- TD reminded the driving instructor trade in January 2023 to arrange their candidates to receive sufficient driving training before taking the road test through various channels such as trade meeting;
- starting from 26 June 2023, TD had invited candidates attending driving test to provide information about the training hours taken. The information collected would be analyzed and assessed;

Management of driving training schools

Designation of driving training schools

- TD updated the internal guidelines in June 2022 to improve the documentation of endorsing the selection criteria for designation of driving improvement schools/pre-service training schools by the pertinent selection board and ensure a designated driving improvement school/pre-service training school was designated only after it had fully met all the requirements and submitted the relevant documents;
- TD would continue to conduct re-tendering exercises with the Lands Department for Designated Driving Schools located on government short term tenancy sites on a regular basis, and to examine enhancing the assessment criteria in future tender exercises. Apart from considering tenderers' previous experience in operating private driving schools or Designated Driving Schools, TD would also consider their relevant operating performance with a view to introducing more competition into the market;

Monitoring of driving training schools

- since October 2021, the required frequencies of inspections of driving training schools had been met. TD would continue to conduct surprise inspections in various driving training schools in accordance with the guidelines;
- TD had introduced a monitoring mechanism since April 2022 to issue reminder, advisory letter and warning letter to driving training schools based on the extent of delay in report submission. If the situation persisted, TD would revoke the designation of the concerned schools according to the updated guidelines. After introducing the mechanism, all driving training schools submitted the monthly reports on time;
- TD rectified the records with discrepancies between the lists of course results and the monthly reports/corresponding student performance assessment forms and enhanced the new automated marking system in the third quarter of 2021. In addition, TD had strengthened the spot checking of the lists of course results submitted by driving improvement schools by Transport Officer Grade staff and would take follow-up actions when necessary;

- TD had also explored possible measures with driving improvement schools (including reviewing of course results by computers) to ensure that the lists of course results tally with the corresponding reports and are accurate;
- TD would continue to closely monitor the provision of courses by pre-service training schools and take appropriate follow-up actions when necessary. Since the fourth quarter of 2022, the pre-service training schools had complied with the minimum provision requirement. TD had followed up with the schools which were unable to meet the requirement due to insufficient or no enrolment;

Licensing control of private driving instructors (“PDIs”)

- to strengthen the monitoring of inactive PDIs, starting from 26 June 2023, TD had invited candidates attending driving test to provide information of PDIs from whom driving training was provided. The information collected would be analyzed and assessed; and
- since mid-2022, the roving inspection hours of PDIs had been extended to cover all usual training hours including Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

4. The Committee wishes to be kept informed of further development on the subject, and provided with time frames, where possible, for actions to be taken on the outstanding matters.