

TCU's first quarterly report of 2018 released

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Complaints Unit (TCU) of the Transport Advisory Committee received 5 543 complaints and suggestions in the first quarter of 2018, with 31 pure suggestions. The total number of cases represents a decrease of 16.8 per cent as compared with 6 666 cases in the previous quarter and a decrease of 5.6 per cent when compared with 5 874 cases in the same quarter of 2017.

The complaints and suggestions received during the quarter were mostly related to public transport services (86 per cent), enforcement matters (10 per cent) and traffic conditions (2 per cent).

The number of cases on public transport services decreased by 16 per cent from 5 727 in the previous quarter to 4 811 this quarter, while complaints and suggestions on traffic conditions decreased from 136 to 106. Cases about road maintenance increased from 28 to 29 and the number of complaints about illegal parking and other enforcement matters decreased from 747 to 569.

All the complaints and suggestions received by the TCU in the quarter were referred to the relevant government departments and public transport operators for follow-up action.

During the period under review, investigations into 6 501 cases were completed. Of these, 4 620 cases (71 per cent) were found to be substantiated, 76 cases (1 per cent) were unsubstantiated, and the remaining 1 805 cases (28 per cent) could not be pursued due to lack of evidence.

For the substantiated cases, the relevant government departments and public transport operators have either taken steps to rectify the situation or are considering possible solutions to the problems identified.

During the quarter, the relevant government departments and public transport operators took on board 16 suggestions made by the public to enhance public transport services and improve traffic conditions. A summary of the cases is at the Appendix.

Members of the public may make their suggestions or complaints to the TCU by dialling the hotline 2889 9999 (a voice mail service is available outside office hours), by fax to 2577 1858, by e-mail to info@tcu.gov.hk or by filling in a form on the TCU website (www.info.gov.hk/tcu).

Operators of unlicensed guesthouses fined

Two men and a woman were fined from \$4,000 to \$8,000 at Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (May 29) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that in October last year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected three suspected unlicensed guesthouses on Des Voeux Road West in Sai Ying Pun, Bonham Strand and Bonham Strand West in Sheung Wan. During the inspections, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented rooms in these guesthouses on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's records, these guesthouses did not possess licences under the Ordinance on the days of inspection. The men and woman responsible for operating the premises were charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and will lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (Tel: 2881 7498), by email (hadlaenq@had.gov.hk), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website (www.hadla.gov.hk), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

FS to visit Dublin

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, will set off tomorrow night (May 30) for Dublin, Ireland.

During his stay, he will deliver a keynote speech at a seminar co-organised by Invest Hong Kong and Enterprise Ireland to promote co-operation between Hong Kong and Ireland in financial technologies and aircraft leasing business.

He will also meet with senior government officials of Ireland as well as members of the banking and business sector to brief them on the latest developments of Hong Kong.

Mr Chan will return to Hong Kong in the morning of June 3.

In his absence, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, will act as Financial Secretary.

TAC briefed on regulation of non-franchised bus operation and measures under Public Transport Strategy Study

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was briefed at a meeting today (May 29) by the Government on the implementation progress of various recommendations raised earlier by the Audit Commission on the regulation of non-franchised bus operation, and the progress of implementing the measures under the Public Transport Strategy Study (PTSS).

The TAC Chairman, Mr Larry Kwok, said, "Members noted various recommendations on the operation of non-franchised buses raised by the Audit Commission as well as the Transport Department's latest implementation progress in this regard, in particular the measures to streamline the administration of the licensing requirements and strengthen the regulatory controls over unauthorised operations."

As regards the implementation progress of measures under the PTSS, members noted that the Government completed the PTSS in June 2017 and has been actively taking forward 67 recommended measures under the study, of which 29 measures have been implemented, to enhance the arrangement of the public transport system.

Mr Kwok said, "Members note that the Government will continue to actively take forward the remaining measures under the PTSS. The implementation of these measures will help reinforce the important roles played by public transport services other than heavy rail, while ensuring that the public can enjoy highly efficient, convenient and diversified public transport services."

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Sha Tin tomorrow

Police advise motorists that special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Sha Tin to facilitate the race meeting tomorrow (May 30).

The arrangements will come into effect two hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

Appropriate traffic signs will be put up and police will be on hand to guide motorists.

The Police also appeal to people going to Sha Tin Racecourse for the race meeting and to Happy Valley Racecourse for cross betting to make maximum use of public transport.

Parking spaces at the two racecourses are available only to holders of appropriate permits issued by Hong Kong Jockey Club and any vehicles illegally parked will be towed away.