

## LCQ19: Supply of workforce

Following is a question by the Hon Tang Fei and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (April 24):

Question:

According to the latest data published by the Census and Statistics Department, the provisional estimate of the Hong Kong population was approximately 7.5 million at end-2023. While the population registered an increase for two consecutive years since normalcy resumed in Hong Kong, the population of Usual Residents has dropped by nearly 140 000 over the past three years, and there is also a drop in the labour force in the 20-39 age group. Regarding the supply of workforce, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the specific measures in place to attract and retain young or middle-aged workforce in Hong Kong, especially professional talents in the technology and financial industries as well as other high value-added industries, so as to ensure the long-term prosperity of Hong Kong;

(2) of the long-term plan in place to promote population growth, and the measures in place to prevent the labour market from shrinking as a result of changes in the demographic structure;

(3) as there are views that despite various talent-trawling measures adopted by the Government in recent years, the population of Usual Residents in Hong Kong still decreases, how the Government assesses the effectiveness of those measures, and of the new strategies to be put in place in the future to attract high-quality talents from outside Hong Kong to fill the vacancies in the local labour market; and

(4) how it will upgrade the skills of local young people, so as to help them adapt to the requirements of future economic development?

Reply:

President,

Hong Kong is facing challenges posed by ageing population and manpower shortages. Various policy bureaux have been closely monitoring changes in the local demography and manpower situation in different industries, and will review and enhance relevant strategies and initiatives under their purview in a timely manner to meet Hong Kong's economic and social development needs.

On the Member's question, after consolidation of the responses by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration's Private Office, the Education Bureau, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, the Transport and Logistics Bureau, and the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB), I reply on behalf of the Government as

follows:

(1) and (4) Workforce is the prime resource to drive sustainable economic development of Hong Kong. In light of the sustained economic growth after the pandemic, the labour market is anticipated to remain tight for some time in future. The main thrust of the Government's manpower policy is to nurture local talents and unleash local workforce. We launched a series of training initiatives covering different industries and professions and local young people are the main targets for some of them. In addition, the Government devotes great efforts to boost the economy and develop emerging industries so as to provide quality job opportunities with prospects to the local labour force, particularly young people and to attract them to stay in the local labour market to realise their full potentials and contribute to Hong Kong.

The Government makes significant investment in education to provide students with diversified and quality education and promote whole-person development, thereby allowing students to choose their own articulation pathways and join different industries according to their interests and abilities. The Government has been encouraging the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities to offer programmes which cater for Hong Kong's development needs and expand the talent pool in important areas such as innovation and technology. The UGC's strategic directions of the upcoming triennial planning exercise cover the support to strengthen growth impetus for Hong Kong and prepare talents for development, transformation and future challenges.

Meanwhile, Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) has long been an integral part of the education system in Hong Kong. The Government adopts the strategy of fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development, with further promotion of VPET under a multi-pronged approach to nurture more high-quality talents equipped with applied skills as well as provide young persons with diversified learning and employment opportunities. These will enable them to acquire the skills and knowledge as need in the society and the workplace. To further elevate the status of VPET at degree level, the 2023 Policy Address announced that the Government would press ahead with the establishment of universities of applied sciences (UAS), providing a pathway to success for young people who aspire to pursue a career in professional skilled sectors. The Government announced on March 21, 2024, that the Hong Kong Metropolitan University was qualified as the first UAS in Hong Kong.

The Government has also supported the Vocational Training Council (VTC) to provide a comprehensive system of education and training services so as to further strengthen VPET. The VTC offers more than a thousand in-service training short courses annually for upgrading skills and knowledge with over hundred thousand of student enrolments. The Apprenticeship Scheme each year provides on-the-job training and vocational education in different technical trades to more than a thousand registered apprentices. With the objective to attract more young people to participate in the scheme and work in relevant trades, each registered apprentice will, for a period of three years starting from 2024/25, receive an additional monthly training allowance of \$1,000, and, after commencing employment upon graduation, continue to be subsidised

to undertake training courses in relevant trades. Furthermore, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) provides eligible trainees with market-driven and employment-oriented courses to assist them in joining or re-joining the labour market. The ERB currently offers more than 700 training courses straddling 28 industry areas and on different generic skills, with more than hundred thousand of training places annually.

The Labour Department (LD) has also implemented various employment programmes to assist job seekers in employment, including the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged to encourage employers to engage job seekers aged 40 or above and provide them with on-the-job training; and the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme to increase the incentives for persons aged 40 or above who have not been at paid employment for three consecutive months or more to re-join the labour market to unleash potential workforce. In addition, the LD has implemented the Youth Employment and Training Programme and run the youth employment resource centres to assist young people in better understanding themselves and their work aptitudes while enriching their job skills and experience so as to enhance employability.

Specifically for the pillar and priority industries of Hong Kong, relevant policy bureaux have implemented different measures to attract, train and retain talents. For example, in the sectors of banking, asset and wealth management, insurance, finance, etc, the Government has in recent years launched programmes such as the Pilot Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Insurance Sector and the Asset and Wealth Management Sector to provide training and subsidies to tertiary students, graduates and practitioners. The Government has also sponsored exchange activities of relevant professionals.

In the innovation and technology sector, the Government, through the STEM Internship Scheme, encourages university students taking STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)-related programmes to gain experience in I&T-related work during their studies. In addition, the Government sponsors the Innovation and Technology Scholarship to subsidise university students to participate in I&T-related exchange activities. The Government also funds eligible companies or organisations through the Research Talent Hub (RTH) to engage university graduates in STEM-related disciplines to conduct research and development work. In 2023, the Government increased the allowance for engaging research talents under RTH and provided additional living allowance to research talents with doctoral degrees.

Regarding the aviation sector, the Government has all along been collaborating with the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA) and the aviation sector to introduce various measures to attract new blood. The Hong Kong International Aviation Academy (Academy), set up by the AA, is committed to training local and regional air transport talents. For instance, the Academy launched a cadet pilot programme in September 2023 and introduced in collaboration with a university Hong Kong's first Bachelor of Administration (Honours) degree programme with pilot training, thereby nurturing more quality local pilots for Hong Kong's aviation industry.

Different policy bureaux will continue to closely liaise with their industries, and formulate corresponding measures in response to the latest industry development and manpower situation so as to attract and train sufficient talents to maintain the competitiveness of relevant industries.

(2) and (3) The most fundamental way to drive population growth is to raise fertility rate. Therefore, the Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address an array of measures to promote fertility. These measures, including giving families newborns priority on flat selection and allocation, enhancing child care support, increasing tax concessions and providing Newborn Baby Bonus, etc. These are to encourage fertility by creating a conducive environment for childbearing to provide the manpower required for the long-term economic development of Hong Kong and to alleviate the problem of an ageing population.

In addition, it is most direct and efficient to replenish the local population and workforce by admission of quality outside talents. Since the Government's implementation of a series of talent attraction measures at end-2022 up to end-March 2024, more than 110 000 talents under various talent admission schemes have arrived in Hong Kong with their dependants.

From end-2022 to end-2023, there was a net inflow of 51 700 Hong Kong residents, with signs of reversing the population decline since 2020. According to the statistics released by the Census and Statistics Department, the Hong Kong population was 7.5 million at end-2023, representing an increase of 0.4 per cent from that at end-2022, which registered an increase in the population for the second consecutive year since Hong Kong's resumption of normalcy. Most of the immigrants are at working age. The local labour force (excluding foreign domestic helpers) also rebounded from the lowest of 3.43 million in 2022 to 3.48 million in the fourth quarter of 2023.

In addition to the positive responses of various talent admission schemes, incoming talents can enhance the local talent pool to cope with the manpower shortage in Hong Kong. For instance, the employment-tied schemes such as the General Employment Policy (GEP) and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMP) aim to enable enterprises to engage outside talents to fill job vacancies. In 2023, around 26 000 and 20 000 applications under the GEP and the ASMP were approved respectively. Amongst which, about 500 approved cases involved talents falling under the industry segments and professions on the Talent List whom enterprises could directly employ without the need to prove difficulties in local recruitment. Furthermore, many talents admitted to Hong Kong under the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), which targets high-income talents and graduates from the world's top universities to come to Hong Kong for development, have been in employment. In November 2023, the LWB conducted follow-up surveys with the TTPS entrants having arrived in Hong Kong for more than six months. Results showed that more than half of the talents under the TTPS had entered the local labour market and that more than 10 per cent of the accompanying spouses were in employment. The Hong Kong Talent Engage, established last year, will also formulate targeted recruitment and publicity strategies for different talent groups and provide support services to talents who arrived in Hong Kong in order to assist them in adapting to the new environment as

early as possible and integrating into the community.

In anticipation that the local workforce will remain tight in the future, the Government will continue to trawl for outside talents to fill vacancies in the local market. The LWB will review the TTPS and other enhanced talent admission arrangements in the middle of this year to ensure the competitiveness of relevant measures and their effectiveness in addressing Hong Kong's manpower demand.

In addition, the LWB is conducting the manpower projection to assess the manpower needs and shortage in 2028 in key industries driving economic growth in Hong Kong and main services supporting city operation. Key findings will be available in the third quarter of this year, followed by a detailed report to be released in early 2025. The projection findings will guide the Government in adjusting the policies relevant to manpower and training to meet the needs of economic and industries developments in Hong Kong.

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## [LCQ9: Immigration clearance for visitors to Hong Kong](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Rock Chen and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, in the Legislative Council today (April 24):

Question:

At present, visitors to Hong Kong are required to furnish a completed arrival card in paper form for immigration clearance. However, it is learnt that other regions, such as Japan, Korea and Singapore provide electronic versions of arrival cards for inbound visitors to fill in online before departure or entry. There are views pointing out that such arrangement can reduce the waiting time for visitors for immigration clearance, and can also reduce the physical contact between visitors and staff as well as the use of paper. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that Hong Kong is an international city and is striving to develop into a "smart city", whether the authorities have plans to streamline the procedures for immigration clearance of visitors and introduce an electronic version of the arrival card; if so, of the specific plan and implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it has collected and analysed the views and feedback of visitors to Hong Kong, so as to understand their expectations of and level of satisfaction with the existing immigration clearance procedures, and enhance the quality and efficiency of immigration clearance services in response to

their needs and suggestions; and

(3) whether the authorities have exchanged views with immigration control authorities of other regions to draw reference from their experience and effectiveness in the use of electronic forms or other technologies in handling immigration clearance, and explore possible opportunities for co-operation and mutual connection, so as to bring more convenience and better experience to visitors to Hong Kong?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the questions raised by the Hon Rock Chen is as follows:

(1) and (3) The Immigration Department (ImmD) has all along reviewed its existing policies and measures regularly, and explored the use of innovative technologies proactively, with a view to providing efficient and high-quality services to the public and visitors.

According to sections 5(4) and 5(5) of the Immigration Ordinance (Cap 115), except for persons exempted by the Director of Immigration under section 5(9), any person of or over the age of 16 years shall furnish a duly completed arrival or departure card in the prescribed form on his arrival in or prior to his departure from Hong Kong. If the person concerned is of or over the age of 7 years and under the age of 16 years and is accompanied by an adult, the adult shall furnish in respect of such person a duly completed arrival or departure card in the prescribed form.

To streamline the procedures for immigration clearance, eligible Hong Kong residents and certain categories of inbound visitors (i.e. (i) holders of Exit-Entry Permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao or a Chinese Travel Permit issued by the Mainland authorities or (ii) Macao permanent residents holding Macao Smart Permanent Identity Card) are currently not required to furnish the arrival or departure card for immigration examination. The ImmD will continue to review the arrangements of declaration from visitors upon arrival or departure from time to time.

Separately, the ImmD is also drawing reference from the experience and practices of other regions and actively studying the feasibility of introducing an electronic version of the arrival or departure card or other technologies in handling immigration clearance. The scope of study includes the related legal basis, system requirements, hardware facilities, and operational workflow, so as to further streamline the immigration arrangements and make it more convenient to visitors. The ImmD will strive to complete the relevant study by the end of this year and decide on the way forward of the improvement plan based on the study outcome.

(2) The ImmD attaches great importance to the suggestions of the public and visitors on its services and provides various channels, including telephone, fax, email or post, to facilitate the public and visitors to provide feedback

to the ImmD. Immigration officers at various control points are also willing to listen to suggestions provided by the public and visitors on ground. The ImmD will examine its existing facilities and arrangements from time to time and implement improvement measures having regard to the feedback collected, with a view to further enhancing the immigration services provided to the public and visitors.

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## LCQ10: Construction and protection of public facilities

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Chun-ying and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (April 24):

Question:

It is learnt that a large number of public and transport facilities were damaged during the period of black-clad violence, and apart from restoring the damaged facilities, the Government has also retrofitted the facilities with protective devices in certain districts. Moreover, some members of the public have relayed to me that some of the damaged public and transport facilities have not yet been fully restored so far. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has examined the status of the restoration of all the public and transport facilities damaged during the period of black-clad violence; if so, of the details, and set out in a table the latest status of the restoration of such facilities;

(2) whether it has reviewed the need to retrofit public and transport facilities with protective devices; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will, in the light of the extent of the damage caused to public and transport facilities during the period of black-clad violence, review the materials used in the construction of such facilities and consider using stronger and more durable materials in the future; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Security Bureau, the Environment and Ecology Bureau and other relevant departments, my reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Chan is as follows:

(1) The major public and transport facilities damaged during the black-clad violence have been restored with details as follows:

Facilities	Status of restoration
Pedestrian pavement	About 22 000 square metres of paving blocks were removed and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Railings	About 60 kilometres of railings were removed and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Traffic lights	About 740 sets of damaged traffic lights and traffic signal controllers were all repaired and have fully resumed operation.
Traffic bollards and traffic signs	About 2 700 traffic bollards and about 300 traffic signs were damaged (e.g. being removed or defaced, etc.) and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Bus stops and facilities of public transport interchange	All the damaged bus stops and facilities of public transport interchange were repaired and have fully resumed operation (Note).
MTR stations	All the damaged station facilities (including entry/exit gates, ticket issuing machines, lifts and escalators) (involving 85 heavy rail stations and 63 light rail stations) were repaired and have resumed service.
Highway structures (including vehicular/pedestrian footbridges, pedestrian subways)	About 700 highway structures were damaged (e.g. with lighting damaged or being defaced, etc.) and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Lifts/escalators	About 20 lifts/escalators were damaged (e.g. with glass panels damaged or being defaced, etc.) and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Lamp posts	About 1 500 lamp posts and about 100 control cubicles were damaged and the relevant restoration work was completed.

Litter bins and recycling bins	About 1 320 litter bins and about 130 recycling bins were damaged and all facilities were subsequently replaced.
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Note: Franchised bus operators and the Transport Department do not have record of the specific number of bus stops and facilities of public transport interchange that were damaged during 2019.

(2) The Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) and other relevant departments will from time to time review measures to retrofit protective devices on the facilities concerned in the light of the actual situation and in accordance with the principle of public safety.

For example, the Transport Department (TD) had installed protective devices for the traffic signal controllers and protective meshes for pedestrian traffic signal heads at some major road junctions. After co-ordination with the HKPF, as well as careful consideration and balancing of factors such as the installation and maintenance costs and the social conditions, the TD has ceased the installation and removed the protective devices installed earlier.

In addition, to meet the Government's need to enhance public safety, the Highways Department (HyD) has installed temporary fencing at about 60 vehicular/pedestrian footbridges to prevent the throwing of miscellaneous articles onto nearby roads, which may affect public travel. After co-ordination with the HKPF, and taking into account various factors, the HyD has removed the temporary fencing at six of these vehicular/pedestrian footbridges and will continue to review the need for the relevant measure.

(3) In view of the damage to major public and transport facilities, the relevant government departments have not only reviewed the materials of these facilities, but also further strengthened the facilities from the design aspect. Examples include:

- In resurfacing the footpath pavement, the HyD has taken into account the actual situation and needs (e.g. the number of underground utilities, appearance, pedestrian flow, etc.), as well as considerations of public safety and security, etc, and has suitably changed the material of the footpath pavement at individual locations by replacing the paving blocks with concrete which is more durable; or by applying joint stabilising sealer in the joints of the resurfaced paving blocks to enhance their stability, with a view to minimising the occurrence of damages and the maintenance work required;
- In reinstating roadside railings, the HyD has improved the design by reinforcing the connections of the railings to minimise the recurrence of damage to the railings that may affect road safety;

- Regarding the defacement of highway structures, apart from removing the graffiti, the HyD also carries out timely renovation and beautification works to tie in with the maintenance cycle of these facilities. The works include the use of plastic wallpapers with different patterns or colors, which not only further improve the overall appearance of the structures, but also make it easier to clean when they are defaced;
- In line with the principles of "waste reduction at source" and "maximising the use of resources", the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) will continue to use metal kerbside recycling bins. The EPD will require in the contract that the materials used in the manufacturing of the new recycling bins possess the characteristics of fire-resistance, corrosion-resistance and UV-resistance, etc, to ensure that the recycling bins are sturdy and durable for safe use by the public; and
- The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has trialed a new design of kerbside litter bins made of recycled plastic materials in phases starting from November 2023 to test whether they are more durable and sturdy than the existing bins made of fiberglass.

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## LCQ7: Loading pressure borne by MTR East Rail Line during peak periods of outbound travel

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (April 24):

Question:

It has been reported that during the long Easter holidays from the end of last month till early this month, there were over 1.98 million outbound passenger trips bound for the Mainland made by local residents. It is learnt that the flow of outbound passengers mainly concentrated at two rail-based boundary control points (BCPs), namely, Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, and the MTR East Rail Line (ERL) had been overloaded by a large number of cross-boundary passengers. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the daily total number of passenger trips carried by ERL between the 28th of last month and the 1st of this month;

(2) given that there are views that as the Labour Day holiday of the Mainland is approaching, a large number of Mainland residents will, upon arrival at Hong Kong via local rail-based BCPs, board ERL trains bound for the urban areas, whether the authorities have assessed the additional patronage that will be brought to ERL by Mainland visitors during the Labour Day holiday of the Mainland; and

(3) as there are views pointing out that ERL has been overloaded by a large number of cross-boundary travellers during the peak period of outbound travel, whether the authorities will arrange tour coaches travelling between urban areas and Heung Yuen Wai BCP as well as Shenzhen Bay Port during the peak period of outbound travel, so as to avoid ERL being overcrowded; if not, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Transport Department (TD) and the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), my reply to the question raised by the Hon Dominic Lee is as follows:

(1) According to the information provided by the MTRCL, the total patronage of the East Rail Line (EAL) between March 28 and April 1, 2024 is tabulated below:

	March 28 (Thursday)	March 29 (Friday)	March 30 (Saturday)	March 31 (Sunday)	April 1 (Monday)
EAL Total Patronage	907 700	738 600	718 200	749 300	653 200

During the Easter holidays, the MTRCL kept close contact with the relevant departments at the boundary control points (BCPs) and made corresponding adjustments to train frequencies in light of the situation at the BCPs. It also stepped up information dissemination and public announcement, and deployed additional staff to assist passengers and maintain station order.

(2) To meet the travel needs of passengers during festive periods, the relevant government departments will coordinate with the public transport operators in advance so as to enhance public transport services and crowd management according to the anticipated passenger flow. During the festive period, all relevant parties will also closely monitor and respond to the actual situation of travellers using the various BCPs and public transport services, to make timely adjustments to service arrangements.

For railway services, the MTRCL will assess patronage during the Labour Day holidays of the Mainland this year by making reference to the patronage

and travel patterns of passengers in the past festive periods and make preparations, including enhancing the services of various railway lines as needed. During the festive period, the MTRCL will maintain close contact with relevant departments at the various BCPs, so as to flexibly adjust the EAL train services in a timely manner according to the situation at the BCPs. Moreover, additional staff will be deployed to the busier stations to facilitate passenger flow and assist passengers. The MTRCL is devising plans for the train services during the Labour Day holidays and will announce the details in due course.

(3) There are currently a total of seven land BCPs between Hong Kong and Shenzhen. The Government has always been planning the appropriate public transport connections having regard to the respective nature and positioning of the BCPs. The Government and the public transport operators also closely monitor the changes in travel patterns and number of travellers, with a view to adjusting the relevant services as and when needed to facilitate the flow of people between the two places.

The TD has been working with the public transport operators to draw up plans ahead of the peak periods of cross-boundary travel to cope with the transport demand during the period. Regarding cross-boundary coach services, to address the transport demand of cross-boundary travellers and facilitate their travel via various BCPs/Ports during the Labour Day holidays, the TD has coordinated with the relevant Mainland authorities to issue additional ad-hoc quotas of 140 for Shenzhen Bay Port and 100 for Heung Yuen Wai Control Point to cross-boundary coach operators, so that the number of daily trips of the relevant cross-boundary coaches will increase by 30 per cent from 1 498 on normal days to 1 978 in total. The cross-boundary coach operators will also deploy adequate staff at the BCPs/Ports and major passenger pick-up points in the city to assist in maintaining order in passenger queueing and waiting.

Travellers can also make use of the various existing local franchised buses and public light buses to travel to/from the land BCPs, including Shenzhen Bay Port, Heung Yuen Wai Control Point and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point. The TD is co-ordinating with the various public transport operators to arrange for adequate staff and vehicles to meet the demand for cross-boundary land transport during the Labour Day holidays. The public transport operators will closely monitor changes in the number of travellers during the holidays and increase the service frequency timely during periods of particularly strong passenger demand, so as to expedite the dispersal of passengers.

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## **LCQ16: Cross-boundary arrangement for**

# Guangdong-Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars

Following is a question by the Hon Gary Zhang and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (April 24):

Question:

It is learnt that at present, Guangdong-Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars with a Guangdong-Hong Kong cross-boundary private car regular quota and a valid Closed Road Permit for cross-boundary vehicles are allowed to cross the boundary via Lok Ma Chau Control Point (LMCCP) during overnight hours after the closure of the designated boundary control points (BCPs) at night or midnight, and such arrangement applies to BCPs not providing round-the-clock services. However, Guangdong-Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars allocated to use Heung Yuen Wai Control Point (HYWCP) are not allowed to cross the boundary via LMCCP after the closure of HYWCP at night. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of Guangdong-Hong Kong cross-boundary private car trips diverted to LMCCP for boundary crossing due to the closure of various designated BCPs at night or midnight in each month of the past 12 months (broken down by BCP allocated for use by such private cars); and

(2) of the reasons why Guangdong-Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars allocated to use HYWCP are not allowed to cross the boundary via LMCCP after the closure of HYWCP at night, and whether such private cars will be permitted to do so in the future; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

At present, according to the arrangements agreed between Guangdong and Hong Kong, cross-boundary private cars holding the regular quota and closed road permit (the permit) for Lok Ma Chau Control Point can cross the border using that control point 24 hours a day. As for the cross-boundary private cars holding the regular quotas and permits for Shenzhen Bay, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok Control Points, they can cross the border using Lok Ma Chau Control Point during overnight period (i.e. from midnight to 6.30 the next morning) after the respective designated control points are closed. Cross-boundary private cars holding permits for various land control points (including Heung Yuen Wai Control Point) can cross the border using the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Hong Kong Port 24 hours a day.

Having consulted the Transport Department and the Hong Kong Customs and

Excise Department, our reply to the Hon Zhang's question is as follows:

(1) By each month in 2023, the numbers of trips of cross-boundary private cars that switch to use Lok Ma Chau Control Point after Shenzhen Bay, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok Control Points close at night are as follows:

2023	Numbers of trips of cross-boundary private cars that switch to use Lok Ma Chau Control Point after Shenzhen Bay, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok (Note 2) Control Points close at night (Note 3) (rounding up to nearest hundred)
January (Note 1)	0
February	2 900
March	5 800
April	7 600
May	9 600
June	10 400
July	11 600
August	13 000
September	12 300
October	14 300
November	13 400
December	15 100

Note 1: Lok Ma Chau Control Point has resumed operations at normal opening hours after the full resumption of travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong in February 2023.

Note 2: Cross-boundary passenger transport services at Sha Tau Kok Control Point remains suspended after the full resumption of travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong in February 2023.

Note 3: As some cross-boundary private cars hold permits for more than one control points, the above list does not include breakdown by control points.

(2) To facilitate cross-boundary private cars to cross the border beyond the operating hours of the respective designated control points, Guangdong and Hong Kong agreed to allow cross-boundary private cars holding the regular quotas and permits for Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok Control Points, as well as the regular quota and permit for Shenzhen Bay Control Point to cross the border using Lok Ma Chau Control Point during overnight period starting from 2003 and 2008 respectively. Heung Yuen Wai Control Point was opened in 2020 and cross-boundary private cars began to use the control point after the full resumption of travel in February 2023. Currently, cross-boundary private cars holding the permit for that control point can cross the border using that control point from 7am to 10pm every day, as well as using the HZMB Hong Kong Port to cross the border 24 hours a day. Regarding the suggestion of allowing

cross-boundary private cars holding the regular quota and permit for Heung Yuen Wai Control Point to use Lok Ma Chau Control Point during overnight period, the HKSAR Government is discussing with the relevant Mainland authorities and will release information in due course.