

# Exempting toll for franchised buses using government tunnels, Tsing Ma and Tsing Sha Control Areas

The Road Tunnels (Government) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2018, the Tsing Ma Control Area (Tolls, Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulation 2018 and the Tsing Sha Control Area (Tolls, Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulation 2018 were gazetted today (November 30) to exempt the toll for franchised buses using government tunnels as well as the Tsing Ma and Tsing Sha Control Areas.

The three Amendment Regulations seek to implement the proposed toll exemption for franchised buses using tolled government tunnels as well as the Tsing Ma and Tsing Sha Control Areas, announced by the Chief Executive in her Policy Address 2018, with a view to relieving fare increase pressure of franchised bus operators and benefiting the general public.

A government spokesman said, "Each franchised bus operator will set up its own dedicated fund account for keeping the toll saved. When the franchised bus operator applies for a fare increase and the Chief Executive-in-Council considers that there is a justifiable need to increase the fare, the franchised bus operator will be required to offset the increase by first using the balance in the fund. Hence, the magnitude of the fare increase shouldered by the passengers will be lowered, and the public can enjoy a more affordable yet efficient franchised bus service."

The three pieces of Amendment Regulations will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on December 5, 2018. Upon completion of the procedures, the Amendment Regulations will come into operation on February 17, 2019.