

Fewer traffic accidents recorded in first half of 2019

In the first half of 2019, Police continued to strengthen enforcement actions in view of the overall traffic situation. In the first six months of 2019, the number of enforcement actions taken against congestion related and moving vehicle offences amounted to 1,295,134 (including fixed penalty tickets, summonses and arrests), an increase of 27,151 comparing to the corresponding period of last year.

There were 7,565 traffic accidents (with person injured) in the first half of 2019, representing a drop of 165 cases (down 2%) when compared with the same period of last year. Among them, 49 were fatal traffic accidents, a drop of 11 cases (down 18%). A total of 9,375 persons were injured in traffic accidents, a decrease of 52 persons. There were 50 fatalities (29 were pedestrians, 16 were drivers and 5 were passengers), reduced by 29 persons from the corresponding period of last year (down 37%).

In the first half of this year, 1,433 pedestrians were injured or killed in traffic accidents, down 7% when compared with the corresponding period of last year. Police noticed that elderly citizens were the most vulnerable group. Among the 29 pedestrians killed in traffic accidents in the first half of 2019, 17 were aged 65 or above, amounting to 59% of the total number of pedestrian fatalities. The major cause of such fatal accidents was crossing carriageway without paying attention to the road situation.

In addition, from January to June 2019, there were 1,560 traffic accidents caused by "inattentive driving", accounting for 21% of the total number of traffic accidents. Twenty-two were fatal traffic accidents, down 8 cases from the corresponding period of last year. The number of fatalities decreased by 25 to 23 persons but it still accounted for about half of the number of fatalities in traffic accidents. According to Police figures, "inattentive driving" has been the top contributory factor for traffic accidents since 2009, and so motorists' driving attitude continued to be a concern.

In the first half of 2019, there were 103 traffic accidents involving drink driving, a drop of 9 cases (down 8%) from the corresponding period of last year. A total of 391 persons were arrested while the number of casualties was 72.

Road safety is one of the Commissioner's Operational Priorities in 2019. Aside from enforcement action taken under the Selected Traffic Enforcement Priorities programme, Police made effort to raise road safety awareness among road users, in particular senior citizens. More than 150 pedestrian safety activities were organized to publicise and educate the public in the first half of 2019. Police will continue to promote road safety, and will apply technology to assist enforcement work.

The new version of the "Automatic Number Plate Recognition System" came into full operation in March 2019. The system was installed in large estate vehicles operated by traffic officers, with cameras to identify four types of offending vehicles, namely "Unlicensed Vehicles", "Vehicles Licensed to Disqualified Drivers", "Vehicles Licensed to Persons Wanted for an Outstanding Traffic Warrant" and "Stolen Vehicles". When the system identifies a vehicle suspected in connection with the above, police officers will stop the vehicle for further enquiry. If other offences are disclosed during enquiries, officers will also take appropriate enforcement actions.

Starting from the third quarter of 2019, Police will introduce a pilot scheme on Electronic Fixed Penalty Tickets in seven Police Districts (including Wan Chai, Wong Tai Sin, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon City, Sha Tin, Yuen Long and Tai Po Police Districts). Under the scheme, 200 frontline Uniformed Branch police officers and traffic wardens will make use of mobile phone applications to capture the vehicle details by scanning the QR Code on the vehicle license to process illegal parking offences electronically and use portable printers to issue the tickets, thereby raising enforcement efficiency and accuracy.

Two 3D laser scanners were purchased in March 2019 for trial use in traffic accident investigation. Laser scanning can thereby reducing the time needed for enquiries at the scene. The Force will review the use of 3D laser Scanner and consider to equip all Regional Traffic Formations with the device in the future.

Upon the commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the usage of roads in nearby areas has been rising. The Force has implemented corresponding deployment and traffic control to ensure road safety and reduce congestion.

The roads in areas of Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai were open for traffic in the first half of 2019 while the Boundary Control Point is expected to be commissioned in the second half of this year. The Force will make reference to past experience to implement appropriate measures with other Government Departments to ensure smooth traffic flow.

In conclusion, the Force will continue its efforts towards promoting road safety and will explore the use of technology to make traffic enforcement more efficient. The Force will continue its efforts towards ensuring a smooth traffic flow and making our roads safer for all through a combination of engagement and enforcement.