

Government gazettes amendment regulations to implement electronic vehicle licence initiative and tackle prolonged non-licensed vehicles

The Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulation 2024 (RLV Amendment Regulation), Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2024 (RLV (No. 2) Amendment Regulation) and Motor Vehicles Insurance (Third Party Risks) (Amendment) Regulation 2024 (TPR Amendment Regulation) were gazetted today (October 18).

The Amendment Regulations seek to implement an electronic vehicle licence (eVL) of the Transport Department (TD) by obviating the need of vehicle owners to replace their paper-form vehicle licences on each renewal, to simplify the supporting documents required for vehicle licence (VL) applications; as well as to tighten the vehicle registration and licensing regime by introducing a penalty for taking no action on vehicles unlicensed for two years or more.

A spokesman for the Transport and Logistics Bureau said, "The eVL initiative will streamline the process for vehicle licence applications and bring greater convenience to vehicle owners. The TD will issue a notice to the vehicle owners containing the new licensed period in lieu of a paper-form VL, so that the vehicle owners will not need to replace the paper-form VL with a new one on each renewal after its first issuance bearing no expiry date. The amendments to the law will also simplify the documents accompanying a VL application by repealing the requirement of presenting the Vehicle Registration Document; whereas online VL applicants will have the option not to present the scanned copy of policy of insurance or security, but providing information (such as name of the vehicle owner, identity document number of the vehicle owner, vehicle registration mark, etc) to be specified by the Commissioner for Transport.

"Moreover, to address at source the issue of improper abandonment of unlicensed vehicles in a public area, amendments will be made to hold vehicle owners responsible for their vehicles on a continuous basis. The registered owners of vehicles unlicensed for two years or more must, within three months of the date of a notice to be issued by the TD, either have the vehicle relicensed, or cancel the registration of the unlicensed vehicle in accordance with the requirement, failing which will constitute an offence," the spokesman added.

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Transport and the Transport Advisory Committee were briefed on the above, and members generally supported and welcomed the proposed arrangements. The Amendment Regulations will be tabled at the LegCo on October 23 for negative vetting. Subject to scrutiny

by the LegCo, the RLV Amendment Regulation and TPR Amendment Regulation will be effective from December 30 this year. To allow sufficient time for vehicle owners to take appropriate actions on their unlicensed vehicles, the RLV (No. 2) Amendment Regulation will come into operation on a date to be fixed by notice in the Gazette, tentatively in the fourth quarter of 2025.