

Government proposes introduction of series of measures to enhance personalised point-to-point transport services

The Government will introduce the Road Traffic Legislation (Enhancing Personalized Point-to-point Transport Services)(Amendment) Bill 2023 and the Taxi-Driver-Offence Points Bill into Legislative Council on July 12, in order to implement a series of measures to enhance personalised point-to-point transport services.

A spokesman for the Transport and Logistics Bureau said today (July 5), "Personalised point-to-point transport services are an integral part of Hong Kong's transport system. The Government has all along maintained close communication with the taxi trade, and through publicity and education, encouraged them to enhance service quality. However, in recent years, there are widespread views in the community that the Government should strengthen the regulation of taxi services for enhancement of the quality and sustainability of taxi services. The taxi trade also recognised the imminent need to improve service quality and enhance the overall image of the trade. Meanwhile, some quarters of the community have also raised concerns over the safety of passengers in relation to traffic accidents involving illegal hire car services."

"In view of the expectation of the general public and the latest situation of the taxi trade, the Government has reviewed the overall taxi operation and management, and proposed to take forward a series of initiatives to enhance the overall quality of personalised point-to-point transport services," the spokesman added.

The proposed series of measures includes:

(1) introducing a taxi fleet regime, under which existing taxi owners may assemble taxis to form a fleet and apply to the Transport Department for a Taxi Fleet Licence to provide quality taxi services through professional fleet management under a regulated platform;

(2) increasing the maximum passenger seating capacity of taxis from five to six to provide more choices to passengers and increase the competitiveness of taxis;

(3) introducing a Taxi-Driver-Offence Points System and a two-tier penalty system for certain taxi-driver-related offences to strengthen the deterrent effect against malpractices of taxi drivers and improve the overall quality of taxi services; and

(4) increasing the penalties for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward by motor vehicles for enhancing the protection of passengers and other road users.

The spokesman said, "These measures are closely linked and complement each other. We believe the proposed series of measures can address the public demand for taxi services of higher quality and promote the healthy development of the taxi trade in the long run, while enhancing the protection of passengers and other road users."

The Road Traffic Legislation (Enhancing Personalized Point-to-point Transport Services)(Amendment) Bill 2023 and the Taxi-Driver-Offence Points Bill will be gazetted on July 7.