

Government strives to prevent abuse of Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme

In response to the arrest of two green minibus (GMB) drivers suspected of abusing Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the Scheme) by the Police today (June 14) and yesterday (June 13) respectively, a Government spokesman said that the Government attached great importance to the implementation of the Scheme, and would continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure that the Scheme would not be abused.

The Scheme has, since June 2012, been implemented in phases on the general Mass Transit Railway lines, franchised buses, ferries and GMB services, aiming to encourage elderly people and eligible persons with disabilities to participate more in community activities by enabling these groups to enjoy a concessionary fare of \$2 per trip.

The spokesman said, "The Transport Department (TD) has established a series of monitoring measures with the public transport operators that have joined the Scheme, including requesting the public transport operators to strengthen their internal control systems, and regularly submit to the Government the audit and assurance reports prepared by independent auditors in accordance with the relevant standards issued by the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and deploying TD staff to conduct on-site inspections to monitor the implementation of the Scheme by the public transport operators and the situation of eligible passengers when enjoying the concessionary fare. The TD regularly examines the patronage and differential fare settlement reports submitted by the public transport operators and Octopus Cards Limited to prevent the Scheme from being abused. If abnormal data and suspected abuse cases are detected during the examination of the reports, TD will refer the case to Police for follow-up action.

"This suspected abuse case was found during the examination works conducted by the TD as mentioned above and the TD immediately referred the case to Police for follow-up action. As the case is still under investigation, the Government has no further comments," the spokesman added.

The spokesman appeals to members of the public not to defy the law by abusing the Scheme.