

Government welcomes MTRCL's extension of fare concession

The Government is concerned about the public transport expenses of the public and has closely monitored the public concern about the MTR fare adjustment. Since the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) confirmed earlier that the fare adjustment for 2019/20 would be +3.3 per cent, the Government has requested the MTRCL to favourably consider providing more fare concessions to the public while taking into account its financial viability.

The MTRCL stated today (April 24) that it will provide Octopus passengers with a "3.3 per cent rebate" for each trip in 2019/20, extending it from the original six months to 40 weeks.

The Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, said he was pleased that the MTRCL has responded to the public concern and set aside additional resources to extend the "3.3 per cent rebate" for passengers. In effect, the fares of around 5 million Octopus passengers will remain unchanged for 40 weeks.

The existing MTR Fare Adjustment Mechanism is based on open and objective data with a direct-drive formula. The Government introduced a penalty arrangement for serious service disruption, a "Profit Sharing Mechanism", and an arrangement to take care of affordability for the public when the Government reviewed the mechanism with the MTRCL in 2013 and 2017. The MTRCL confirmed that the fare adjustment rate for 2019/20 would be +3.3 per cent.

The Government will continue to safeguard public interest and require the MTRCL to adjust its fare according to the mechanism. At the same time, the MTRCL should also respond to the public concern and offer more fare concessions for passengers, especially when the MTRCL is financially viable.