

LCQ10: Construction and protection of public facilities

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Chun-ying and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (April 24):

Question:

It is learnt that a large number of public and transport facilities were damaged during the period of black-clad violence, and apart from restoring the damaged facilities, the Government has also retrofitted the facilities with protective devices in certain districts. Moreover, some members of the public have relayed to me that some of the damaged public and transport facilities have not yet been fully restored so far. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has examined the status of the restoration of all the public and transport facilities damaged during the period of black-clad violence; if so, of the details, and set out in a table the latest status of the restoration of such facilities;

(2) whether it has reviewed the need to retrofit public and transport facilities with protective devices; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will, in the light of the extent of the damage caused to public and transport facilities during the period of black-clad violence, review the materials used in the construction of such facilities and consider using stronger and more durable materials in the future; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Security Bureau, the Environment and Ecology Bureau and other relevant departments, my reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Chan is as follows:

(1) The major public and transport facilities damaged during the black-clad violence have been restored with details as follows:

Facilities	Status of restoration
Pedestrian pavement	About 22 000 square metres of paving blocks were removed and the relevant restoration work was completed.

Railings	About 60 kilometres of railings were removed and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Traffic lights	About 740 sets of damaged traffic lights and traffic signal controllers were all repaired and have fully resumed operation.
Traffic bollards and traffic signs	About 2 700 traffic bollards and about 300 traffic signs were damaged (e.g. being removed or defaced, etc.) and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Bus stops and facilities of public transport interchange	All the damaged bus stops and facilities of public transport interchange were repaired and have fully resumed operation (Note).
MTR stations	All the damaged station facilities (including entry/exit gates, ticket issuing machines, lifts and escalators) (involving 85 heavy rail stations and 63 light rail stations) were repaired and have resumed service.
Highway structures (including vehicular/pedestrian footbridges, pedestrian subways)	About 700 highway structures were damaged (e.g. with lighting damaged or being defaced, etc.) and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Lifts/escalators	About 20 lifts/escalators were damaged (e.g. with glass panels damaged or being defaced, etc.) and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Lamp posts	About 1 500 lamp posts and about 100 control cubicles were damaged and the relevant restoration work was completed.
Litter bins and recycling bins	About 1 320 litter bins and about 130 recycling bins were damaged and all facilities were subsequently replaced.

Note: Franchised bus operators and the Transport Department do not have record of the specific number of bus stops and facilities of public transport interchange that were damaged during 2019.

(2) The Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) and other relevant departments will from time to time review measures to retrofit protective devices on the

facilities concerned in the light of the actual situation and in accordance with the principle of public safety.

For example, the Transport Department (TD) had installed protective devices for the traffic signal controllers and protective meshes for pedestrian traffic signal heads at some major road junctions. After co-ordination with the HKPF, as well as careful consideration and balancing of factors such as the installation and maintenance costs and the social conditions, the TD has ceased the installation and removed the protective devices installed earlier.

In addition, to meet the Government's need to enhance public safety, the Highways Department (HyD) has installed temporary fencing at about 60 vehicular/pedestrian footbridges to prevent the throwing of miscellaneous articles onto nearby roads, which may affect public travel. After co-ordination with the HKPF, and taking into account various factors, the HyD has removed the temporary fencing at six of these vehicular/pedestrian footbridges and will continue to review the need for the relevant measure.

(3) In view of the damage to major public and transport facilities, the relevant government departments have not only reviewed the materials of these facilities, but also further strengthened the facilities from the design aspect. Examples include:

- In resurfacing the footpath pavement, the HyD has taken into account the actual situation and needs (e.g. the number of underground utilities, appearance, pedestrian flow, etc.), as well as considerations of public safety and security, etc, and has suitably changed the material of the footpath pavement at individual locations by replacing the paving blocks with concrete which is more durable; or by applying joint stabilising sealer in the joints of the resurfaced paving blocks to enhance their stability, with a view to minimising the occurrence of damages and the maintenance work required;
- In reinstating roadside railings, the HyD has improved the design by reinforcing the connections of the railings to minimise the recurrence of damage to the railings that may affect road safety;
- Regarding the defacement of highway structures, apart from removing the graffiti, the HyD also carries out timely renovation and beautification works to tie in with the maintenance cycle of these facilities. The works include the use of plastic wallpapers with different patterns or colors, which not only further improve the overall appearance of the structures, but also make it easier to clean when they are defaced;
- In line with the principles of "waste reduction at source" and

"maximising the use of resources", the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) will continue to use metal kerbside recycling bins. The EPD will require in the contract that the materials used in the manufacturing of the new recycling bins possess the characteristics of fire-resistance, corrosion-resistance and UV-resistance, etc, to ensure that the recycling bins are sturdy and durable for safe use by the public; and

- The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has trialed a new design of kerbside litter bins made of recycled plastic materials in phases starting from November 2023 to test whether they are more durable and sturdy than the existing bins made of fiberglass.