

LCQ10: Issues relating to illegal parking

Following is a question by the Hon James To and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (April 22):

Question:

It has been reported that the situation of illegal parking has become more serious across the territory in recent months, and the shortage of parking spaces has aggravated the problem of illegal parking. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the numbers of vehicles (i) newly registered and (ii) deregistered last year, with a tabulated breakdown by class of vehicles;
- (2) of (i) the respective numbers of publicly and privately operated public parking spaces across the territory last year, and (ii) the respective estimated additional numbers of these two types of parking spaces this year, with a tabulated breakdown by District Council (DC) district and class of vehicles;
- (3) of the number of parking spaces in Hong Kong and the ratio of such number to the number of vehicles at present; whether it has considered amending the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines to raise the number of parking spaces needed to be provided for various types of facilities; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will consider taking measures to reduce the number of vehicles;
- (4) as the Government indicated in May last year that it had commissioned a consultancy study to take forward pilot projects of automated parking systems (APSs) at six suitable sites and an APS could increase the number of parking spaces by 30% to a double, of the progress of the study and whether it will identify more car parks for installation of APSs;
- (5) of the number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued in each of the past 12 months by the Police by invoking the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237) against various types of parking contraventions, with a tabulated breakdown by (i) police region and (ii) type of contravention;
- (6) whether there is a big difference when the number of FPNs issued by various police regions in respect of vehicles parked illegally in the past 12 months is compared with the relevant number in the preceding 12 months; if so, of the reasons for that;
- (7) of the current number of illegal parking black spots in Hong Kong, with a

tabulated breakdown by DC district; and

(8) as I have learnt that in locations where schools, tutorial schools and interest class studios stand in great numbers (e.g. Beech Street in Tai Kok Tsui, To Fuk Road and Rutland Quadrant in Kowloon Tong, Un Chau Street in Sham Shui Po, and Hing Wah Street and Castle Peak Road in Cheung Sha Wan), the problem of illegal stopping and waiting of private cars is serious during the hours of going to and finishing classes each day, and there are also a large number of goods vehicles and tourist coaches parked illegally at night, in respect of the illegal parking/stopping and waiting of vehicles in the aforesaid locations, (i) the number of patrol operations conducted and the average number of such vehicles found during each operation, and (ii) the number of FPNs issued, by the Police in each of the past six months; apart from stepping up patrol operations, of the Police's other measures to step up efforts in combating the problem of illegal parking/stopping and waiting of vehicles in the aforesaid locations?

Reply:

President,

After consultation with the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) and Transport Department (TD), my reply to the various parts of the Hon James To's question is as follows.

(1) The numbers of vehicles first registered and deregistered in 2019 with a breakdown by class of vehicles are tabulated at Annex 1.

(2) As at February 2020, the numbers of public parking spaces provided by the Government and parking spaces provided at privately-operated car parks available for public use across the territory are tabulated at Annex 2 and Annex 3 respectively. Since the number in the provision of new parking spaces hinges on a host of factors, including the views of stakeholders as well as the progress of seeking funding approval for and the actual implementation of the works projects, etc., TD does not have a specific projection on the number of parking spaces to be provided in 2020.

(3) As at December 2019, the number of private cars (including van-type light goods vehicles that can be accommodated within private car parking spaces) was 624 990 and the number of parking spaces available for private cars was 683 736. The parking space to private car ratio was 1.09.

In response to public aspirations, TD is reviewing the standards on parking spaces and loading/unloading bays for commercial vehicles as well as the standards on parking spaces for private cars stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) with a view to updating the relevant requirements, thereby increasing the number of parking spaces in future housing developments. We anticipate that after consulting relevant stakeholders, the revised guidelines will be promulgated within 2020. Prior to that, TD will continue to require developers to provide parking spaces at the higher end of the current parking standards under HKPSG for new

developments as far as practicable.

(4) TD is taking forward six pilot projects on automated parking systems (APSs) so as to acquire and consolidate experience in building, operating and managing different types of APSs and the associated financial arrangements. This will pave the way for wider application of APSs in government and privately-operated public car parks in future.

TD has so far identified four sites for launching the APS pilot projects, having regard to such criteria as parking demand, geographical environment, planning restrictions, impact on local traffic, etc. The identified sites include a short-term tenancy (STT) site on Hoi Shing Road, Tsuen Wan; a public open space site at the junction of Yen Chow Street and Tung Chau Street in Sham Shui Po; and two proposed sites for government buildings on Chung Kong Road in Sheung Wan and Sheung Mau Street in Chai Wan. For the above-mentioned STT site in Tsuen Wan, TD has already secured support from the Tsuen Wan District Council, and it is expected that tenders could be invited in mid-2020. As regards the pilot project in Sham Shui Po, TD is currently assessing the technical feasibility after securing support from the Sham Shui Po District Council. For the APS pilot projects in Sheung Wan and Chai Wan, TD will consult relevant District Councils in due course.

(5) The numbers of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued by the Police under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance, with breakdowns by police regions and offences, between February 2019 and January 2020 are tabulated at Annex 4.

(6) Since June 2019, Hong Kong has seen widespread vandalism committed by violent protestors across the territory. The Police have been discharging their duties with commitment and devotion with a view to restoring social order as soon as possible, and safeguarding the lives and property of the public.

On enforcement action against illegal parking, the Police issued a total of about 1.4 million FPNs against illegal parking in 2019. Given the Police's limited manpower, the traffic enforcement figures for the second half of 2019 indeed showed a decrease as compared to the corresponding period of 2018. Nevertheless, with less tension in the recent social atmosphere, all police districts in the territory have re-deployed their manpower to step up traffic enforcement operations and, as a result, traffic enforcement figures from December 2019 onwards have started to rebound.

(7) At present, the Police have no definition of what constitutes a "black spot" of illegal parking. Hence, no information on the number of illegal parking "black spots" in different districts could be provided. The Police will step up law enforcement at road sections where severe traffic congestion occurs. Drivers causing serious traffic obstructions and posing road safety hazards will be issued FPNs without prior warning, or even will have their illegally parked vehicles towed away by the Police.

(8) The Police have neither maintained figures on the number of patrol

operations conducted, the number of illegally parked vehicles found in each operation, nor the number of FPNs issued for specific road sections, and therefore no such information is available.

Road safety is one of the operational priorities of the Police. Changing the irresponsible behaviour of road users that causes traffic obstructions is also among the Police's traffic enforcement priorities. All along, the Police pay much attention to the problem of illegal parking and seek to change such undesirable behaviour through publicity and education, and combat illegal parking through patrols and law enforcement. For drivers who commit traffic offences by causing traffic obstructions, the Police will issue warnings or summons, or even tow away the vehicles concerned.

Regarding the illegal parking situation at the road sections mentioned in the question, the Police have reminded their relevant police districts to heighten their attention and step up law enforcement against illegal parking therein. Should there be serious illegal parking on individual road sections causing obstruction to traffic, members of the public may report such cases to the Police for prompt handling.