

LCQ15: Parking spaces on Hong Kong Island

Following is a question by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (July 15):

Question:

Some members of the public have relayed that car parking spaces on the Hong Kong Island have all along been in short supply, resulting in illegal on-street parking of vehicles as well as activities of picking up/setting down passengers and loading/unloading goods by vehicles from time to time, which have aggravated the problem of traffic congestion and caused inconvenience to the residents. On the other hand, the Government has planned to implement pilot projects on automated parking systems in two government buildings proposed to be built on Chung Kong Road in Sheung Wan and Sheung Mau Street in Chai Wan. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the details of the law enforcement actions taken last year by the Police on the Hong Kong Island against illegal parking (including the number of fixed penalty notices issued, and the number and locations of large-scale operations conducted), and how the frequency of such actions compares with that of the year before;

(2) of the respective current numbers of on-street parking spaces and those parking spaces in the public and the private car parks on the Hong Kong Island, with a breakdown by District Council district and type of vehicles that may be parked therein; the increase/decrease in such numbers in the coming year as estimated by the Government;

(3) of the respective dates for (i) public consultation and (ii) commencement of works in respect of the two aforesaid pilot projects; the respective estimated numbers of parking spaces to be provided by the two projects, with a breakdown by type of vehicles that may be parked therein; and

(4) whether it has put in place new measures for the short or medium term to alleviate the shortage of parking spaces on the Hong Kong Island and the problems arising therefrom (including traffic congestion and air pollution); if so, of the details?

Reply:

President,

The Government's current policy on the provision of parking spaces is to accord priority to considering and meeting the parking demand of commercial vehicles (CVs) and to provide an appropriate number of private car (PC)

parking spaces if the overall development permits, but at the same time not to attract passengers to opt for PCs in lieu of public transport, so as to avoid aggravating the road traffic. After consulting the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) and Transport Department (TD), my reply to the various parts of the Hon Kwok Wai-keung's question is as follows:

(1) The numbers of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued by the Police against illegal parking in the Hong Kong Island Region under the Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237) between 2018 and May 2020 and the percentage changes as compared with the corresponding period of the previous year are tabulated below:

Year	Number of FPNs issued against illegal parking	Percentage changes as compared with the corresponding period of the previous year
2018	385 196	-
2019	287 149	-25 per cent
2020* (January to May)	208 844	+32 per cent

*Provisional figure

The Police have not maintained records on the numbers and locations of enforcement actions conducted against illegal parking for specific districts.

(2) As at May 2020, the numbers of on-street parking spaces as well as parking spaces in car parks provided by the Government and privately-operated car parks on the Hong Kong Island, with breakdowns by district and by vehicle type, are tabulated below:

1. On-street parking spaces on the Hong Kong Island

District	PCs#	CVs@	Motorcycles	Total*
Central & Western	471	215	587	1 273
Wan Chai	1 003	35	687	1 725
Eastern	441	124	653	1 218
Southern	628	192	415	1 235

2. Parking spaces in car parks provided by the Government on the Hong Kong Island

District	PCs#	CVs@	Motorcycles	Total
Central & Western	4 134	482	345	4 961

Wan Chai	2 766	318	267	3 351
Eastern	3 147	348	356	3 851
Southern	2 725	193	482	3 400

3. Parking spaces in privately-operated car parks on the Hong Kong Island

District	PCs#	CVs@	Motorcycles	Total
Central & Western	34 053	609	483	35 145
Wan Chai	35 811	190	351	36 352
Eastern	43 111	1 738	1 452	46 301
Southern	36 031	1 130	965	38 126

Note:

PC parking spaces can be used by PCs, taxis as well as van-type light goods vehicles (LGVs) with such sizes that can be accommodated within PC parking spaces.

@ CVs include LGVs, medium goods vehicles, heavy goods vehicles, coaches and non-franchised public buses, but exclude van-type LGVs as they may be parked at PC parking spaces.

* About 60 parking spaces reserved for special public services (such as refuse collection or post offices' vehicles) are excluded.

TD has been closely monitoring the parking needs of different districts and is committed to taking forward various measures to increase car parking spaces. Nevertheless, the provision of parking spaces hinges on views of local stakeholders, site constraints and the progress of individual development projects. Hence, TD is not in a position to make a precise projection on the change in the number of parking spaces on the Hong Kong Island for the coming year.

(3) TD is taking forward 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 financial arrangements. This will pave the way for wider application of APSS in public car parks in future. So far, having regard to such criteria as parking demand, geographical environment, planning restrictions, impact on local traffic, etc, TD has identified four sites for launching APSS pilot projects, including the proposed government building site at Chung Kong Road in Sheung Wan and another at Sheung Mau Street in Chai Wan. Since TD is conducting feasibility assessments on the two pilot projects in Sheung Wan and Chai Wan, the implementation timetables and numbers of parking spaces involved are not available yet. Upon completion of the assessments, TD will consult relevant District Councils.

(4) To increase car parking spaces as appropriate, the Government is actively pursuing a host of short- and medium-to-long-term measures, including the following:

- (i) designating suitable on-street locations as night-time parking spaces for CVs;
- (ii) encouraging schools to allow school buses to park within school premises after school hours;
- (iii) reviewing the standards on parking spaces and loading/unloading bays for CVs as well as the standards on parking spaces for PCs stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines with a view to updating the relevant requirements, thereby increasing the number of ancillary parking spaces in future housing developments; and
- (iv) following the principle of "single site, multiple uses" to provide public parking spaces in suitable "Government, Institution or Community" facilities and public open space projects.

Besides, TD plans to install a total of 12 000 new generation of on-street parking meters by phases starting from the fourth quarter of 2020. Each of the new parking meters will be equipped with space sensor(s) to detect whether the relevant on-street parking spaces are occupied. For this purpose, the Government introduced the relevant bill into the Legislative Council (LegCo) in November 2019. If the bill is passed by LegCo within the current legislative session, TD will activate the space sensors of the new parking meters with the legal backing provided by the relevant legislation. Real-time information of the relevant parking spaces will then be disseminated through TD's website and "HKeMobility" mobile application to facilitate motorists' search for vacant parking spaces, thereby reducing traffic and air pollutants generated by vehicles circulating on roads in search of parking spaces.

Apart from the above-mentioned new initiatives, the Police all along pay much attention to the problem of illegal parking, and changing the irresponsible behaviour of road users that causes traffic obstructions is among the Police's traffic enforcement priorities in 2020. The Police will continue to 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. 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.