

# LCQ15: Traffic management and law enforcement

Following is a question by the Hon Wilson Or and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (June 9):

Question:

It has been reported that the situation of illegal parking has become increasingly serious in recent years, and one of the causes for this is the shortage of car parking spaces. Moreover, this Council passed in November last year a Member's motion not intended to have legislative effect, urging the Government to take measures to alleviate road traffic congestion, including increasing the supply of commercial vehicle parking spaces and public car parking spaces. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as the Transport Department has indicated that the newly revised standards for parking facilities in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines will be promulgated immediately after consultation with the relevant stakeholders, of the promulgation date of such standards;
- (2) given that the Government plans to develop a new Traffic e-Enforcement System to reduce traffic accidents and illegal parking through efficient traffic law enforcement actions, thereby alleviating the traffic congestion caused by such situations, of the expected effectiveness of the said system in quantifiable terms;
- (3) given that the Police have, since September last year, implemented traffic management measures in the Kwun Tong Business Area to tackle the problems of traffic congestion black spots and illegal parking in the area, whether it has evaluated if such measures have achieved notable results; if it has evaluated and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether it will extend such measures to other districts where the problem of illegal parking is serious; and
- (4) apart from the measures mentioned in (2) and (3), of other practicable measures in place to solve the traffic congestion problem caused by illegal parking and shortage of car parking spaces?

Reply:

President,

The Government's existing policy on the provision of car 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 encourage frequent users of public transport 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 the Transport Department (TD), my reply to the various parts of the Hon Wilson Or's question is as follows:

(1) The TD has substantially completed the review of the standards for parking facilities specified in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG), and consulted relevant stakeholders. The Government will promulgate revised parking standards after duly considering the views gathered. The revised parking standards will increase the number of PC parking spaces in private and public housing developments and the number of CV parking spaces in public housing in future.

(2) At present, the workflow of traffic enforcement is mainly operated manually. Since March 2020, the Police has progressively commenced an e-Ticketing Pilot Scheme (the Pilot Scheme). Under the Pilot Scheme, frontline law enforcement officers use their mobile devices to retrieve or input data on illegally parked vehicles and offending drivers and instantly print out the fixed penalty notices (FPNs).

Electronic traffic enforcement can improve the current workflow which will in turn enhance the overall enforcement accuracy and efficiency. The Pilot Scheme has demonstrated that issuing FPNs by electronic means can significantly reduce the number of FPNs withdrawn due to human errors and shorten the processing time of FPN issuance by about 15 minutes. By taking more efficient and prudent traffic enforcement actions, it may more effectively deter vehicle owners and drivers from committing traffic offences and foster good driving attitude, which is conducive to reducing traffic accidents and illegal parking, thereby alleviating traffic congestion in the long run.

Given the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme, the Police has proposed to develop a new Traffic e-Enforcement System for processing the FPNs and summons applications relating to traffic contraventions by electronic means. The system will also manage all traffic enforcement related information and data with a view to facilitating traffic management work of the Police.

The Government consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Transport on the proposed system in April 2021, and will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council within this legislative year for developing the proposed system.

(3) The Police has been very concerned about the traffic conditions in the Kwun Tong Business Area (KTBA) and has implemented a host of traffic management measures in that area during weekdays since September 2020. These include deployment of police officers to direct traffic at the dominant entrances, as well as exits of the KTBA (viz. Hoi Yuen Road roundabout, Lai Yip Street/Wai Yip Street junction and Chong Yip Street/How Ming Street junction) and to advise and warn the drivers not to stop, park and pick up/drop off illegally. In November 2020, the Kwun Tong Police District set up the District Traffic Enforcement Team dedicated to handling of traffic

complaints and scenes of traffic accidents in the district. Regarding the enforcement against illegal parking, the Police is taking actions against illegally parked vehicles at irregular hours on a daily basis to enhance the deterrent effect. For illegal parking that causes obstruction to traffic or endangers other road users, the Police will issue multiple FPNs for continuous illegal parking and tow away the vehicles concerned, in order to achieve greater deterrent effect. In the first quarter of 2021, the Police issued a total of about 32 000 FPNs against illegal parking in the Kwun Tong Police District, representing an increase of nearly 50 per cent as compared with about 22 000 FPNs issued in the same period in 2020. The Police stated that the traffic management measures implemented so far have been effective, and have received support from the public and stakeholders in the district. In the first quarter of 2021, the number of traffic complaints concerning the district received by the Kwun Tong Police District is 10 per cent less as compared with that of the same period last year. The Police will continue with the efforts in order to further improve the traffic conditions during peak hours in the area, and will keep on deploying resources flexibly according to the actual traffic conditions in various districts, as well as taking targeted enforcement actions during peak hours, with a view to changing the behaviour of drivers that contravenes the law.

(4) The Government adopts a multi-pronged strategy to alleviate road traffic congestion, including efforts to improve transport infrastructure, expand and enhance public transportation system, as well as managing the use of road. In addition to the aforementioned measures, the Government has all along been actively pursuing a host of short- and medium- to long-term measures to increase car parking spaces as appropriate, which include:

(a) designating suitable on-street locations as night-time parking spaces for CVs;

(b) encouraging schools to allow student service vehicles to park within school premises after school hours;

(c) requiring provision of parking spaces at the higher end of the current parking standards specified in the HKPSG for all new developments, prior to the promulgation of revised standards under HKPSG; and

(d) taking forward pilot projects on automated parking systems, and providing new public car parks in suitable "Government, Institution or Community" facilities and public open space projects following the principle of "single site, multiple uses". Subject to technical feasibility and timely funding approval, about 20 suitable works projects are expected to provide a total of around 5 100 public parking spaces in batches and are expected to complete gradually from 2024-25 onwards.

The TD and the Police have all along been working closely with the Road Safety Council on using various suitable ways and channels, such as producing publicity video clips, leaflets as well as Road Safety Bulletin, and making use of social media platforms and through organising events, to call on drivers to comply with road safety regulations, thereby alleviating the problem of illegal parking and traffic obstruction. The Government will

continue to step up related efforts in publicity and education.