

LCQ16: Lantau Closed Road Permits

Following is a question by the Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (June 2):

Question:

At present, the roads in South Lantau are designated as closed roads. Vehicles travelling on those closed roads must possess valid Lantau Closed Road Permits (LCRPs) issued by the Transport Department (TD). It has been reported that outside MTR Tung Chung Station during holidays, some people make use of vehicles with LCRPs for illegal carriage of passengers for reward, taking members of the public to places like Pui O and Cheung Sha via the closed roads in South Lantau for leisure activities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of (i) the number of LCRPs (excluding those issued under the Driving on Lantau Island Scheme) issued by the TD, with a breakdown by vehicle class and whether the applicant was issued LCRP for the first time, and (ii) the number of LCRPs revoked by the TD, with a breakdown by reason of revocation, in each of the past five years;

(2) given that only the residents and business operators in South Lantau may apply for LCRPs (with each residential or commercial unit being issued a maximum of one LCRP), but it has been reported that some of the successful LCRP applications were lodged by ineligible persons using borrowed residential addresses of the residents in South Lantau, of the new measures in place to eradicate such practice; and

(3) of the respective numbers of persons who were prosecuted and convicted for illegal carriage of passengers for reward using vehicles with LCRPs, the penalties imposed on those convicted, and the number of the relevant LCRPs revoked, in the past five years; the new measures in place to eradicate such illegal activity?

Reply:

President,

Currently, the roads on South Lantau are designated as closed roads. All vehicles travelling on the closed roads on Lantau have to possess valid Lantau Closed Road Permits (LCRPs) issued by the Transport Department (TD), while drivers of the vehicles concerned shall comply with the conditions stated in the LCRPs and the relevant approval letters.

After consulting the TD and the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police), my reply to the various parts of the Hon Frankie Yick's question is as follows:

(1) The number of LCRPs issued by the TD (including long-term and temporary ones, but excluding LCRPs issued under the Driving on Lantau Island Scheme)

with a breakdown by class of vehicles between 2018 and the first quarter of 2021 are tabulated below:

Class of Vehicles	Number of LCRPs (Percentage to the total number)			
	2018	2019	2020	Q1 2021
Private cars	About 8 800 (53%)	About 9 400 (54%)	About 8 800 (58%)	About 2 500 (53%)
Light goods vehicles	About 2 700 (16%)	About 3 000 (17%)	About 2 100 (14%)	About 700 (15%)
Public transport vehicles (e.g. franchised/non- franchised buses, taxis)	About 2 400 (15%)	About 2 000 (11%)	About 1 500 (10%)	About 900 (19%)
Goods vehicles (except light goods vehicles)	About 800 (5%)	About 1 400 (8%)	About 1 300 (8%)	About 200 (4%)
Other types of vehicles (e.g. motorcycles, government vehicles)	About 1 800 (11%)	About 1 700 (10%)	About 1 500 (10%)	About 400 (9%)
Total	About 16 500	About 17 500	About 15 200	About 4 700
(i) First application	(i) 9 500	(i) 9 500	(i) 7 100	(i) 2 800
(ii) Renewal	(ii) 7 000	(ii) 8 000	(ii) 8 100	(ii) 1 900

Note: The TD has started to take stock and keep the number of LCRPs issued with a breakdown by vehicle classes each year since 2018, and hence does not have the relevant figures before 2018.

In general, the main reason for revocation of LCRPs is that the holder returns the LCRP to the TD after moving out from South Lantau. In addition, some non-franchised bus companies may return their LCRPs, while some LCRP holders may return their original LCRPs as they request to change the particulars on their LCRPs. The TD does not keep the number of LCRPs revoked.

(2) All along, the TD approves and issues LCRPs having regard to the genuine needs of the applicants to enter the closed roads in accordance with established vetting criteria. For instance, residents and business operators on South Lantau would normally be issued with long-term LCRPs (valid for 12 months) to enter South Lantau. Applicants have to submit valid supporting documents, e.g. bill issued by the electricity company or the Rating and Valuation Department, land search document issued by the Land Registry or rental receipt together with the stamped tenancy agreement, as address proof. Each residential or business unit on South Lantau, regardless of whether the occupier is an owner or tenant, can only be issued with one LCRP, which can be used on more than one designated vehicle provided that only one vehicle is allowed at a time.

In addition, the TD also issues temporary LCRPs to those who have genuine needs to enter South Lantau temporarily (e.g. indigenous villagers going to South Lantau for tomb sweeping, residents of South Lantau moving home and those carrying out works on closed roads, etc.). When submitting applications, applicants have to state detailed reasons for entering South Lantau and provide relevant supporting documents; they also have to make related declaration on and sign the applications.

When examining each application, the TD will review if the applicant has submitted a completed application form according to the requirements, the nature and needs of the application and the adequacy of supporting documents submitted, e.g. verifying the particulars such as the name of applicant against the submitted identity document and address proof, so as to consider whether an LCRP can be issued. If it is found that an applicant has made a false declaration in applying for the LCRP, the TD would refer the case to the Police for follow-up actions.

(3) Upon receiving complaints on suspected unlawful use of LCRPs (including using the LCRPs for illegal carriage of passengers to South Lantau for hire or reward), the TD would refer the case to the Police for investigation and enforcement actions. The Police would arrange patrol, intercept vehicles for checking, or arrange decoy operation if necessary, to combat against the use of LCRPs for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward. The Police does not maintain the prosecution figures and relevant sentence records in respect of vehicles, issued with LCRPs, involving illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward. Where there is a conviction for unlawful carriage of passengers for hire or reward with the use of an LCRP by a particular vehicle, in addition to the penalty for that conviction, the TD will also revoke the relevant LCRP.