

LCQ2: Parking vacancy information

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (October 23):

Question:

As at the end of February this year, there were a total of 276 government and commercial public car parks disseminating vacancy information of their car parking spaces to the public through "HKeMobility", a mobile application of the Transport Department. However, the vacancy information of car parking spaces of government car parks disseminated through the application is not real-time, and the application does not cover all commercial public car parks. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective current numbers of government and commercial public car parks disseminating vacancy information of their car parking spaces through the application; the respective numbers of car parking spaces of these two types of car parks and their percentages in the relevant totals;

(2) of the reasons why the application cannot cover all public car parks in Hong Kong; and

(3) whether it will make improvements, first by disseminating real-time vacancy information of car parking spaces of government car parks through the application, and then by introducing measures to encourage operators of commercial public car parks to disseminate such information; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Our reply to the various parts of the Hon Yiu Si-wing's question is set out below:

(1) To promote smart mobility and assist motorists in finding parking spaces, the Transport Department (TD) disseminated parking vacancy information to the public through its "HKeRouting" mobile application since 2016. Subsequently, TD launched in July 2018 an all-in-one mobile application "HKeMobility", integrating "HKeRouting" and two other mobile applications in relation to public transport and driving information to provide one-stop public access to such information.

As at end September 2019, "HKeMobility" provided parking vacancy information of 28 government public car parks and 302 non-government public car parks, involving over 53 500 parking spaces. Government public car parks mainly cover car parks managed by government departments, such as TD, Government Property Agency (GPA) and Housing Department (HD). Of the above-

mentioned over 53 500 parking spaces, about 6 900 are managed by the Government, while the remaining 46 600 parking spaces are in non-government public car parks. These parking spaces account for about 57 per cent and 24 per cent of the total number of parking spaces in these two categories of public car parks respectively.

(2) We understand the community expectation for dissemination of additional real-time parking vacancy information by the Government. In this connection, TD has been encouraging other government departments and operators of non-government car parks to provide real-time parking vacancy information and data of their car parks to the public through TD's "HKeMobility" and the Government's Public Sector Information Portal "data.gov.hk".

The progress of disseminating real-time parking vacancy information is, nonetheless, subject to other constraints, including that some car parks are not installed with real-time parking vacancy information systems, and that there are no provisions in the existing land leases of non-government car parks requiring car park operators to provide real-time parking vacancy information.

TD will continue its efforts to encourage more car park operators to open up their parking vacancy information and data.

(3) Of the existing 28 government car parks with parking vacancy information disseminated, 11 are managed by TD. To make available additional real-time parking vacancy information of government car parks, except for the Yau Ma Tei Car Park which will be demolished to make way for the construction of the Central Kowloon Route, TD completed in June 2019 enhancement of the access control systems of ten multi-storey car parks under its management. The original manual updating of parking vacancy information at half-hourly intervals has thus been upgraded to automatic updating of real-time parking vacancy information for dissemination through "HKeMobility" and "data.gov.hk". The above-mentioned ten multi-storey government car parks involve a total of some 4 700 parking spaces, the real-time parking vacancy information of which has been fully disseminated. As regards the Wong Tai Sin Public Transport Terminus Car Park commissioned in September 2019, TD expects that its real-time parking vacancy information will be disseminated by the end of this year.

On the other hand, TD has held follow-up meetings with other government departments for sharing of experience and to brief them on practical technological solutions to facilitate their adoption of suitable measures for collecting and disseminating parking vacancy data. In this connection, GPA, HD and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department have taken steps to incorporate new requirements into their new contracts for car park management, requesting car park operators to disseminate parking vacancy information. With the progressive renewal of car park management contracts, we expect that the parking vacancy information of all government car parks could be fully disseminated in three to four years.

Regarding non-government car parks, after discussion between TD and the Lands Department (LandsD), LandsD has incorporated since mid-2018 provisions

into new short-term tenancy agreements of fee-paying public car parks, mandating operators to provide parking vacancy information and data of their car parks to the Government. With the gradual replacement of old short-term tenancy agreements by new ones containing the above-mentioned new provisions, TD expects that the number of short-term tenancy car parks providing parking vacancy information will be on the rise.

TD will continue to liaise with developers and operators of other non-government public car parks, and appeal for and encourage their participation in providing parking vacancy information. In line with the prevailing trend of open data, they will also be encouraged to provide real-time data as early as practicable with a view to promoting smart city development and fostering smart mobility. Indeed, with TD's efforts in the past few years, some developers and operators of non-government public car parks have been providing relevant information to TD progressively.

On the other hand, TD will install a total of 12 000 new generation of parking meters by batches starting from the first half of 2020. The new parking meters will be equipped with vehicle sensors to detect whether individual parking spaces are occupied, and such real-time information and data will be disseminated through TD's website, "HKeMobility" and "data.gov.hk" for reference and use by the public and the technology sector. We expect that the installation works will be fully completed in the first half of 2022. Motorists will then be able to get hold of the real-time parking vacancy information of on-street metered parking spaces, which will facilitate their search for parking spaces and help reduce the traffic generated by vehicles circulating on roads in search of parking spaces.