

LCQ3: “HKeMobility” mobile application

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Han-pan and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (January 20):

Question:

The Transport Department (TD) launched in July 2018 the "HKeMobility" mobile application (app) to allow members of the public to search for real-time traffic and transport information anytime to facilitate their route planning. Regarding the app, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the up-to-date number of downloads and daily user count of the app, and whether such figures meet the targets set when the app was launched;
- (2) given that quite a number of members of the public wish to obtain, via the app, the real-time arrival information of franchised buses and green minibuses to facilitate their route planning, of the measures put in place by the Government to spur all relevant public transport operators to provide the app with such information;
- (3) of the number of public car parks operated by the private sector the real-time parking vacancy information of which is currently available on the app; whether, in order to facilitate drivers' search for car parking spaces, the Government will consider spurring, by way of enacting legislation or other measures, the operators of such car parks to supply such information to the app;
- (4) of the (i) up-to-date development cost and (ii) annual operating expenditure of the app; and
- (5) whether the TD will step up the promotion of the app and enhance the app's functions?

Reply:

President,

The Transport Department (TD) launched in July 2018 the "HKeMobility" mobile application, integrating three previous mobile applications, namely "HKeRouting", "Hong Kong eTransport" and "eTraffic News", to provide a one-stop platform for the public to conveniently search for information including routes of different transportation modes, journey time, transport fares, etc. for their planning of the most suitable travel arrangements (including walking, driving, taking public transport, etc.).

Having consulted the TD, the Government's reply to the various parts of the Hon Chan Han-pan's question is as follows:

(1), (4) and (5) The TD developed the "HKeMobility" mobile application at an expenditure of approximately \$600,000. The operating expenditure incurred after its launch (including maintenance, system hosting services, enhancement of functions, etc.) is set out below:

Financial Year	Operating Expenditure
2018-19	\$1,400,000 (Note)
2019-20	\$3,320,000
2020-21	\$3,250,000 (Estimate)

Note: Excluding the expenditure for integrating three previous mobile applications.

As at end December 2020, "HKeMobility" recorded cumulative downloads of about 2.25 million, with an average daily hit rate of about 40 000. The TD has not pre-set targets for the download and hit rates.

The TD will continue to disseminate more real-time traffic information via "HKeMobility" and continue to promote "HKeMobility" through various channels to provide greater convenience to the public.

(2) The Government has all along encouraged public transport service operators to open up data. Since August 2019, real-time arrival information and data of the New World First Bus Services Limited, the Citybus Limited, the New Lantao Bus Company (1973) Limited and four Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Lines (namely the Airport Express, Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Line and West Rail Line) have been disseminated to the public for free via "HKeMobility" and the Public Sector Information Portal (data.gov.hk).

Currently, the MTR Corporation Limited is exploring to extend the opening up of real-time arrival information to more MTR Lines, and is formulating details of implementation. The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and the Long Win Bus Company Limited have also responded positively, and are ready to make available the raw data of real-time arrival information to the Government. The TD is carrying out the preparatory work for disseminating the said data via "HKeMobility" and the Public Sector Information Portal (data.gov.hk) tentatively by mid-2021.

With regard to minibuses, the TD has conducted a test-launch of the real-time arrival information system on Hong Kong Island green minibus (GMB) route numbers 69, 69A and 69X since December 31, 2020. To facilitate passengers' trip planning, relevant real-time arrival information is now available at "HKeMobility" and the Public Sector Information Portal (data.gov.hk). Subject to the system performance, the TD plans to disseminate the real-time arrival information of about 70 GMB routes in March 2021, followed by that of the remaining 500 or so GMB routes by phases, with a view to achieving full implementation in 2022.

(3) The TD has been encouraging operators of non-government car parks to release real-time parking vacancy information to the public via "HKeMobility" and the Public Sector Information Portal (data.gov.hk), so as to facilitate motorists in finding parking spaces and reduce traffic congestion caused by vehicles circulating on roads in search of such.

The number of car parks releasing parking vacancy information via "HKeMobility" has increased from about 220 in July 2018 to about 420 as at end December 2020, of which about 350 are non-government car parks.

Further, in response to the TD's suggestion, the Lands Department has incorporated since mid-2018 provisions into new short-term tenancy agreements of fee-paying public car parks, requiring operators to provide the TD with relevant real-time parking vacancy information. The Government will also incorporate provisions into new land leases as appropriate, requiring developers to provide the TD with real-time parking vacancy information after completion of relevant new development projects.