

LCQ3: Provision of parking spaces

Following is a question by the Hon Vincent Cheng and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (April 3):

Question:

In February last year, there were over 770 000 licensed vehicles across the territory and the number of parking spaces stood at 750 000, meaning that less than one parking space was available to each vehicle on average. In recent years, the problem of illegal parking has been worsening due to the shortage of parking spaces. Last year, the Police issued as many as 2.01 million fixed penalty notices against parking contraventions, which was nearly three times that of a decade ago. The Transport Department has recently proposed building, under a pilot scheme, Hong Kong's first underground public smart car park in Sham Shui Po, which is expected to provide 200 parking spaces. In respect of increasing the number of parking spaces, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has drawn up a vehicle-to-parking space target ratio in respect of each class of vehicles; if so, of the respective current shortfalls of parking spaces for the various classes of vehicles calculated on the basis of such ratios; of the respective projected numbers of new parking spaces to be provided by public and private organizations in the coming three years;

(2) of the number of car parks (including smart car parks) that the Government will build in the coming three years in government facilities and public open spaces under the principle of "single site, multiple use", and the number of parking spaces to be provided in such car parks; and

(3) whether it will take measures (e.g. providing incentives) to encourage private organizations to build smart car parks which can provide more parking spaces (including cylinder-vertical-lifting, lift-sliding and so-called "Ferris-wheel-style" mechanical parking spaces); if so, of the details (including the estimated number of extra parking spaces to be provided)?

Reply:

(Acting) President,

My reply to the various parts of the Hon Vincent Cheng's question is as follows:

(1) As at end December 2018, there were approximately 784 000 licensed vehicles across the territory, of which nearly 80% were private cars and van-type light goods vehicles. Over the past decade, the number of private cars and van-type light goods vehicles increased by 45% from around 424 000 to about 616 000, whereas the number of parking spaces available for use by

private cars and van-type light goods vehicles increased by about 9% from about 618 000 to around 675 000. As for commercial vehicles (CVs) (e.g. goods vehicles and non-franchised buses), the number of CVs recorded a slight drop of 3% from around 75 400 to around 73 100 over the past decade, whereas the number of parking spaces for CVs fell by 5% from about 49 300 to around 47 000, partly attributable to the resumption of a number of short-term tenancy (STT) car parks by the Government in recent years for long-term development.

Given the hard fact that land resources are limited in Hong Kong, coupled with the need to cater for competing land use demand to match the community and economic development, objectively speaking, it is virtually impossible for the Government to increase parking spaces continuously to catch up with the growth rate of the vehicle fleet. The Government's transport policy is to encourage the use of public transport as far as possible, and to expand the public transport capacity by enhancing services as and when necessary having regard to the demand of the public and the development need of each district, thereby facilitating wider use of the public transport system with greater convenience. In fact, Hong Kong enjoys a well-developed public transport network, with about 90% of passenger trips made through the public transport system every day, and such an utilisation rate is among the highest in the world.

We understand that some members of the public choose to commute by private car for various reasons. The Government's current policy in the provision of parking spaces is to accord priority to considering and meeting the parking demand of CVs, and to provide an appropriate number of private car parking spaces if the overall development permits, but at the same time not to attract passengers to opt for private cars in lieu of public transport, so as to avoid aggravating the road traffic. The Government has not set any specific targets for the provision of parking spaces for private cars and CVs. Nonetheless, the Transport Department (TD) is conducting a consultancy study on parking for CVs to comprehensively assess the shortfall situation, and to formulate short- to long-term measures to address the anticipated demand.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the parking needs of different districts and take measures to increase parking spaces as appropriate, including designating suitable on-street locations as night-time parking spaces; requiring developers to provide parking spaces at the higher end of the parking standards under the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines for new developments; following the principle of "single site, multiple use" to provide public car parking spaces in suitable "Government, Institution or Community" (GIC) facilities and public open space (POS) projects; and taking forward pilot projects on automated parking systems (APSS).

Since the provision of new parking spaces through the above measures is subject to the actual progress of individual projects, TD is not in a position to make a precise projection on the number of new parking spaces in the coming years.

(2) As indicated in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address, the Government will follow the principle of "single site, multiple use" to provide public car parking spaces in suitable GIC facilities and POS projects. Subject to technical feasibility, the Government expects that at least 1 500 public car parking spaces will be provided in suitable government facilities and POS projects over the next five years. However, in taking forward the various projects, TD will need to count on the support of relevant stakeholders (e.g. the local community) in order to ensure the smooth implementation of the projects.

(3) TD commissioned in early 2018 a consultancy study on the pilot use of APSs, with a view to identifying six suitable sites for providing different types of automated car parks and assessing the technical feasibility and financial viability of the relevant projects.

An APS is generally equipped with mechanical devices such as an express elevator and a revolving platform for transportation of vehicles, plus an automated system allowing for automatic location and retrieval of parked vehicles. Compared with conventional car parks, an APS can generally provide 30% to 100% more parking spaces within the same footprint.

To promote automated parking, we will explore the possibility of introducing APSs in GIC facilities and POS as well as requiring private operators of selected STT sites to install, operate and manage APSs.

Currently, TD is planning a total of six pilot projects based on the two above-mentioned modes with a view to gathering experience in building, operating and managing different types of APSs and the associated financial arrangements. Review will be conducted in due course on the further application of APSs in government car parks and privately operated car parks for public use in future. In this connection, TD is actively contemplating APS projects at three selected sites, including an STT site in Tsuen Wan, an open space at the junction of Yen Chow Street and Tung Chau Street in Sham Shui Po and the proposed government building on Chung Kong Road in Sheung Wan. District consultation will be conducted as soon as practicable in respect of the three selected sites and their project scope. As regards the three remaining sites, TD will work actively with relevant departments to explore the preliminary technical feasibility before making public the proposed sites in due course for consultation with relevant District Councils. I believe you all are aware that consultation has been carried in Sham Shui Po district yesterday.