

LCQ7: Combatting speeding

Following is a question by the Hon Michael Tien and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (January 30):

Question:

It is learnt that some road sections are unsuitable for installing speed enforcement cameras (SECs). Even at those road sections installed with SECs, speeding drivers can get away without punishment by driving in such a way that makes their vehicles slow down before, and accelerate after, passing an SEC. As a result, SECs have lost deterrent effects on speeding and are virtually useless. Speeding vehicles not only pose danger to other road users, but also generate noise (which is particularly serious when a vehicle is driven at the aforesaid uneven speeds as a vehicle generates greater noise when accelerating), thereby causing great nuisance to nearby residents. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it will conduct a study on adopting the approach of detecting the average vehicular speed (i.e. calculating the average speed of a vehicle when it passes through a road section) to combat speeding, so as to provide greater flexibility in the locations for installing SECs and to eliminate drivers' circumvention of speed limits by driving in the aforesaid manner; if so, of the details and the implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the Hon Michael Tien's question is as follows:

The Government attaches great importance to road safety. To this end, the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) have been combatting speeding offences. Apart from using fixed speed enforcement cameras for regular traffic enforcement, the Police also deploy mobile instruments such as laser guns, mobile radar and in-car video recording systems for ad hoc enforcement operations. These allow greater flexibility in anti-speeding operations and make motorists remain alert at all times, thereby reducing the risk of traffic accidents and enhancing road safety.

As regards the average speed camera system, the Government previously consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Transport in May 2013 on a trial scheme of such system. Some Panel members were of the view that, at that juncture, such a system had not proven to be cost effective or perform better than the existing speed enforcement cameras at that time. Hence, they had reservations on the trial scheme. Given that the trial scheme was not supported by the majority of the Panel members, the Government did not pursue it then.

In view of technological advancements, the Transport Department is

currently discussing with the Police about testing cameras featuring different speed enforcement technologies so as to ascertain the technical feasibility of such camera systems and their suitability for use in Hong Kong. The Government will keep close track of technological developments, make reference to overseas experience in and examples of speed detection, and conduct timely reviews of the features of the technologies concerned and their suitability for use in Hong Kong.