

# Special boundary-crossing arrangements during Lunar New Year holidays and respective transport arrangements (with photo)

A spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (January 23) said that to facilitate diversion of cross-boundary passenger and vehicular movements during the Lunar New Year holidays, a consensus was reached with the relevant departments of Guangdong Province and Shenzhen Municipality to make the following special arrangements:

(1) Passenger and passenger vehicle clearance services at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point, which usually close at 12 midnight, will operate overnight, providing round-the-clock services, from February 9 to 13; and

(2) Passenger clearance service at the Lo Wu Control Point, which usually closes at 12 midnight, will be extended on February 9 and 11 to 2am the next day. The operating hours of the MTR East Rail Line will be extended correspondingly.

The spokesman said, "The round-the-clock services at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point can provide an option for cross-boundary passenger vehicles in the small hours, avoiding congestions caused by concentrated traffic at the Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang (LMC/HG) Control Point. It is believed that the extension of operation hours of the Lo Wu Control Point can attract some of the cross-boundary visitors taking passenger vehicles to switch to taking trains, thereby relieving the pressure on land boundary control points (BCPs) through the use of mass transit system."

For more effective diversion of cross-boundary private cars during the five-day implementation of round-the-clock clearance at the Shenzhen Bay Port, only cross-boundary private cars issued with a permit for the LMC/HG Control Point are allowed to cross the LMC/HG Control Point during early-morning hours. For cross-boundary private cars issued with a permit for the ports at LMC/HG, Shenzhen Bay, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok, they can use the Shenzhen Bay Port during early-morning hours.

"The support and co-ordination of the leaders and relevant departments of Guangdong Province and Shenzhen Municipality are crucial to the timely implementation of the special boundary-crossing arrangements, reflecting the effective and close co-operation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen," the spokesman said.

For bus services on the Hong Kong side, the Government has made arrangements with public transport operators to enhance bus services to and from various BCPs to meet the passenger demand during the Lunar New Year

holidays. These BCPs include Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point, Shenzhen Bay Control Point, LMC/HG Control Point, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Control Point and Heung Yuen Wai Control Point. Furthermore, to tie in with the special round-the-clock passenger clearance arrangements of the Shenzhen Bay Control Point, franchised bus operators will also operate two special overnight bus routes, Nos. NB2 and NB3, to provide services to and from Yuen Long/Tin Shui Wai and Tuen Mun respectively during the same period.

For cross-boundary coaches, the Government has also worked with cross-boundary coach service operators to arrange additional services using the Shenzhen Bay Port during early-morning hours, and to enhance the services using the LMC/HG Port, including cross-boundary coaches departing from stations in urban areas such as Jordan, Prince Edward, Wan Chai, etc, as well as Yellow Bus running between the Lok Ma Chau (San Tin) Public Transport Interchange and the LMC/HG Port.

The HKSAR Government will closely monitor the situation and take contingency actions promptly and deploy manpower flexibly where necessary to ensure orderly operations of the BCPs. The Transport Department (TD) and public transport operators will also monitor the passenger demand and make service adjustments as and when necessary.

Following the resumption of normal cross-boundary travel, coupled with a series of major events during the Lunar New Year holidays, the Government has to adopt the bottom-line thinking to formulate contingency plans for the cross-boundary passenger peak periods and make preparation as well as preventive and control measures to cater for various scenarios to provide more appropriate service arrangements. Relevant bureaux and departments have formulated the plans below.

First, with the extension of operating hours at certain BCPs during the Lunar New Year, the relevant departments have minimised leave for frontline officers and redeployed additional staff from other BCPs for flexible manpower deployment. All automatic channels and clearance counters will be in operation to divert passenger flow where necessary.

Second, in view of the surge in passenger and vehicular flow during festive periods, the Inter-departmental Joint Command Centre, composed of departments such as the Customs and Excise Department, the Hong Kong Police Force, and the Immigration Department, will be activated during the period to monitor the situation at the BCPs and take contingency actions where necessary. Manpower will also be deployed flexibly according to the passenger flow, and more e-Channels, counters and vehicle clearance kiosks will also be opened to facilitate passenger and vehicular movements, so as to ensure that the BCPs are operating in an orderly manner. The TD's Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre will operate 24 hours as usual to monitor the traffic conditions across districts, especially the ports and major stations, implement contingency measures when necessary, and disseminate the latest traffic information through various channels.

Third, the Security Bureau will activate the Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre in a timely manner to closely monitor the public order

situation and co-ordinate necessary actions at various BCPs, and facilitate interdepartmental follow-up actions where necessary. In the event of serious traffic congestion at any BCPs, the Government will disseminate early warnings as soon as possible so that passengers can make necessary preparation to use alternative BCPs.

