

TAC briefed on recommended measures to enhance safety of franchised buses and taxi service quality

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was briefed today (July 31) by the Government on the recommended measures to further enhance the safety of franchised buses (FBs) and taxi service quality.

Following the fatal traffic accident involving an FB on Tai Po Road in February 2018, the Transport Department (TD) set up a Working Group which comprises members from all FB operators and the major bus manufacturers to study possible measures to further enhance FB safety.

The TAC Chairman, Mr Larry Kwok, said "Members noted that under the recommendations of the Working Group, all new double-decker buses procured by all FB operators from July 2018 onwards will have an Electronic Stability Control system and a Speed Limiting Retarder incorporated with a view to enhancing driving safety. All passenger seats of all new buses ordered from July 2018 onwards will also have seat belts installed so as to give extra protection to passengers."

The TAC also noted that FB operators will conduct testing and technical assessment on the feasibility of installing the above-mentioned devices in existing buses and other technological devices. Meanwhile, the TD will prepare a practice note on the training framework to align the bus captain training arrangements of the FB operators.

"Members of the TAC welcome the recommended measures to further enhance the safety of FBs with a view to sustaining safe and reliable FB services in Hong Kong," Mr Kwok said.

As for enhancing taxi service quality, the TAC welcomed various proposed measures for enhancing taxi service quality taken forward by the Government and the trade in concerted efforts, which include updating the taxi service standards and guidelines, enhancing the training courses on in-service taxi drivers' service quality, and reviewing the existing sanctions for various taxi malpractices.

"Members are concerned that the complaint figures in relation to taxi service have remained high and welcome the Government's proposal to implement a two-tier penalty system for the six offences of a more serious nature, including overcharging, refusal to hire, not using the most direct practicable route, soliciting and defacing, damaging or altering of taximeters, as well as to introduce a Taxi Driver-Offence Points System. These measures will help strengthen the overall deterrent effect, so as to enhance taxi service quality," Mr Kwok added.