

Operation arrangements for Tate's Cairn Tunnel upon franchise expiry

The Transport Department (TD) today (July 3) announced the tunnel operation arrangements upon the expiry of the Tate's Cairn Tunnel (TCT) franchise.

"The TCT will be taken over by the Government on July 11. Pacific Infrastructure Management Limited, the management contractor of the TD, will take up the management, operation and maintenance of the TCT on the same day," a spokesman for the TD said.

The new management company will retain most of the existing management team and operation staff of the TCT to ensure the smooth operation of the tunnel. It will act according to the management procedures and standards stipulated in the Road Tunnels (Government) Ordinance as well as the contract conditions to manage and operate the tunnel.

"To facilitate the takeover arrangement, traffic in manual-toll lanes will be briefly stopped at about midnight on July 11. Traffic in auto-toll lanes will not be affected. Motorists should follow the instructions of tunnel staff. We shall monitor the transitional arrangements and work closely with the existing TCT franchisee and the new management company to ensure that the transition will be smooth," the spokesman added.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley tomorrow

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley tomorrow (July 4). The arrangements will come into effect one and a half hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp outside Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) will be closed except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the up-ramp outside HKJC will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Vehicles from eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road except for vehicles heading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements during the race meeting

1. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- The up-ramp on Wong Nai Chung Road outside HKJC leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the Public Stands of HKJC;
- Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East;
- and
- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of HKJC will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

The following traffic arrangements will be implemented from 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
- Vehicles from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Vehicles from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic on southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;

- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

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LegCo Secretariat releases Research Brief on “Health insurance for individuals in Hong Kong”

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council Secretariat (the Secretariat) today (July 3)

released a Research Brief on "Health insurance for individuals in Hong Kong".

In parallel with growing health consciousness in society, the number of local people covered by the individual-based health insurance (IHI) schemes has surged by 78 per cent within a decade to 2.4 million in 2016, along with a leap in the penetration ratio from 20 per cent to 34 per cent. Market premium has almost tripled to about \$10.3 billion in 2016.

However, less than three-fifths of the insured people covered by IHI policies were treated in private hospitals, indicating a general hesitation amongst IHI policy holders to patronise private hospitals. This could be partly attributable to caveats of existing IHI products in the market, including a lack of premium transparency and budget certainty, declined coverage of pre-existing conditions, no guaranteed renewal of policies, frequent reports of disputes and complaints over insurance claims.

Despite the robust penetration of health insurance, the diversion effect in overall healthcare system from the public sector to private sector is disproportionately small, partly due to higher administration cost in running the IHI system. Moreover, service expansion in the private sector was not fast enough to keep pace with the overall healthcare demand. During 2006-2016, the share of private sector in the total number of inpatient discharges declined from 20 per cent to 18 per cent, as well as the share in out-patient care from 71 per cent to 68 per cent. The public healthcare system remains highly congested.

To relieve the pressure on public sector and to broaden the source of healthcare financing, the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) will launch the Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme (VHIS) in early 2019, offering annual tax incentives of up to \$8,000 for individuals to purchase the certified IHI plans meeting prescribed minimum product requirements. FHB estimates that about 1.5 million people will join VHIS by the third year of implementation.

However, the regulatory regime is entirely voluntary and is confined to the Certified Plans under VHIS, while the stock of existing non-compliant policies in the market remains "lightly regulated". Coupled with the omission of high-risk pool from the prescribed minimum requirements and expectation of higher insurance premium of the certified plans, the policy target to cover 1.5 million people under VHIS within three years seems to be quite challenging.

This is the third issue of the Research Brief for 2017-2018 prepared by the Secretariat's Research Office of the Information Services Division with a view to enhancing information support for Members. It is a concise summary aiming at explaining a subject matter which may be of interest to Members and the general public.

The Research Brief is now available on the Legislative Council Website at www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/english/1718rb03-health-insurance-for-individuals-in-hong-kong-20180703-e.pdf.

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (July 3):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, you said you prefer reclamation and will make an announcement on land supply in October in your Policy Address. That's before the land supply task force publishes its report. Are you ready to reconsider your options if its outcomes, its conclusions, are different from your preference? If not, does it mean that public views are irrelevant in your decisions?

Chief Executive: Well, I think in future we'd better arrange simultaneous interpretation for this media standup because I kept on repeating the answers at each standup. I have answered exactly the same question in Cantonese, so I'm going to repeat what I said in Cantonese. But in future, the Director of Information Services may consider a better arrangement so that we don't need to waste time.

My answer is, land supply is always a very important topic in Hong Kong, especially after the announcement of the new housing policy initiatives on the 29th of June. There has been a very strong aspiration for the Government to respond to the question – so where will the land come from? We love your policy, we like the pricing of the subsidised sale flats, but where is the housing to satisfy their demand for home ownership or to reduce the waiting time for public rental housing? As a responsible senior official in Hong Kong administration, we have to be able to respond to that question. And creating land by reclamation and by that I mean reclamation outside of the Victoria Harbour, because I was the same government official who came out to declare that we are not going to reclaim from within the Victoria Harbour after the completion of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass. So, reclamation outside the Victoria Harbour is very obvious one of the important land supply options, and Hong Kong's development has always been relying on reclamation over many decades, so I'm just responding to that question and being very candid.

Coming back to the land supply task force's public consultation, they have already started it for two months now. I think by and large, we have received a lot of views, we have heard a lot of opinions, so I will of course respect the task force to continue its public engagement work. But I have also made it known to the Chairman that they may wish to find a way to reflect the community views to us so that I could be in a position to make a more definite response in the coming Policy Address. I may not be able to

provide all the solutions to Hong Kong's long-outstanding land shortage problem, but to make no response at all on land supply in October when I announce my second Policy Address will not be able to meet the people's aspiration.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)