

## TD campaign encourages commercial vehicle drivers to drive safely and maintain good health (with photo)

The Under Secretary for Transport and Housing, Dr Raymond So Wai-man, today (December 14) attended a ceremony in support of the Safe Driving and Health Campaign organised by the Transport Department (TD) and encouraged commercial vehicle drivers to drive safely and maintain good health.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr So said that inattentive driving and speeding as well as turning and reversing at blind spots are the major causes of traffic accidents. He pointed out that there were about 10 000 deaths and casualties in traffic accidents involving commercial vehicles in the first 10 months of this year, accounting for 63 per cent of the overall deaths and casualties. The Government therefore will strive to enhance the driving attitudes and habits of commercial vehicle drivers.

Regarding a serious traffic accident involving a non-franchised bus (NFB) in the past month, Dr So said that the Government and the trade are studying together on a number of measures including installation of seat belts on newly purchased NFBs, the use of technologies to enhance operational safety and formulating guidelines on working hours and rest time for NFB drivers. He also called on passengers to fasten seat belts properly if provided so as to ensure personal safety.

Moreover, Dr So added that the Government is very concerned about drink driving and drug driving. He noted that although there was a downward trend of the number of arrests in relation to these two offences last year, the Government will spare no effort in carrying on its publicity work to heighten the vigilance of commercial vehicle drivers for public safety.

Dr So reminded drivers to stay alert to their health conditions and take rest appropriately for the sake of attentive driving. The TD arranged free health check-ups for more than 1 900 commercial vehicle drivers last year and the free health check-up campaign this year has also started. Dr So appealed to commercial vehicle drivers to make a reservation for a check-up. They can also encourage their counterparts to join the campaign.

In addition, the TD will continue to disseminate road safety messages to commercial vehicle drivers through seminars and workshops, regular meetings with the public transport sector and free publications for the trade.

This is the 10th consecutive year that the TD has organised the Safe Driving and Health Campaign. Besides the four main themes, i.e. observing good driving attitudes, respecting other road users, not driving after drinking or taking drugs, and maintaining good health at all times, a new theme of "mutual respect between drivers and passengers" is added this year.

With mutual respect and politeness between drivers and passengers, commercial vehicle drivers can keep in a good mood when driving, thus enhancing road safety.

Other officiating guests at today's ceremony included the Commissioner for Transport, Ms Mable Chan; the Chairperson of the Road Safety Council, Mr Tang Ping-keung; the Chairman of the Transport Advisory Committee, Professor Stephen Cheung; and the Chairperson of the Road Safety Campaign Committee of the Road Safety Council, Miss Ma Ka-wai.

