

Transcript of remarks by STH

Following is the transcript of remarks at a media session by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, after attending a radio programme this morning (April 11):

Reporter: Could you explain how to help further the minibus operator? Because we know that two of the routes are already closing down. Could you also explain why the subsidy for public transport does not apply on buses but only on MTR?

Secretary for Transport and Housing: For the green minibus, for those employees under the green minibus operator, they are covered under the Employment Support Scheme. For green minibus operation, there is an employer and there are employees. Through the Employment Support Scheme, all these drivers will be covered. Of course, we all appreciate that there are drivers who are of age 65 or above, because they don't have their MPF (Mandatory Provident Fund) account. I understand from the Secretary for Labour and Welfare that they will look into alternatives as to how to offer support to these green minibus drivers who are of age 65 or above.

Reporter: How about the subsidy that only applies to MTR, right?

Secretary for Transport and Housing: For the subsidy, I think if you would like to take note of the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme, we have, in fact, lowered the threshold from \$400 to \$200 so as to enable more people to benefit. In fact, by lowering the threshold from \$400 to \$200, there would be 5 million Hong Kong people who benefit from the subsidy and the amount of subsidy, on average, would be increased from roughly about \$75 to \$99.9. The increase in subsidy is rather substantial in terms of percentage, roughly about one-third of the original.

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