

## ***Road Safety and Transport Management***

### *Road Safety Related Proposals*

On 20 February 2006, the TAC discussed the methodology for and the findings of the studies on enhancement of bridge parapets and roadside barriers. Members were glad to see that the enhanced designs of bridge parapets and roadside barriers were proven to be adequate in preventing vehicles from penetrating through or passing over them. Members also noted that the Government, in collaboration with the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, had conducted a comprehensive review of the containment level standards and recommended standards suitable for use in Hong Kong. Members advised that the recommended standard would provide a useful guideline for the construction of highways in the future. At the meeting, members were also updated on the progress of the works on strengthening bridge parapets and roadside barriers at the 39 priority locations identified by the Tuen Mun Road Traffic Incident Independent Expert Panel, and noted that all the strengthening works had been completed by January 2006. The TAC was appreciative of the Government's efforts in implementing the enhancement works.



At the meeting of 20 February 2006, members discussed the existing measures to combat drink driving and use of hand-held mobile phone while driving. Members noted that the Government had been taking active steps to combat these

two inappropriate driving practices through legislation and enforcement, as well as publicity and education. The TAC advised that driving attitudes and behaviour had the greatest bearing on road safety, and that it was important for the Government to monitor accident statistics and continuously review the effectiveness of legislation. Continuous enforcement action must be carried out together with steps to provide further education and publicity initiatives to combat these inappropriate driving practices.

At the meeting of 25 November 2004, members considered the proposed measures to enhance road safety in Hong Kong. Members noted that a whole range of measures covering legislation, enforcement, publicity, education as well as application of

technology had been put forward to combat improper driving behaviour and enhance awareness of safe driving. The TAC welcomed the comprehensive package of initiatives proposed by the Administration. At the meeting of 20 December 2005, members discussed the progress of the measures to enhance road safety and safety of Public Light Bus (PLB) operations in Hong Kong. The TAC appreciated that Government had taken active steps to combat inappropriate driving behaviour and to enhance safety of PLB operations, and advised that it was essential for the Government to carry out continuous education and publicity to instill in drivers a correct driving attitude.

Members considered the outcome of a speed limit review exercise at their meeting of 25 October 2005. Members noted that regular reviews were conducted on the speed limits of trunk roads and primary distributors by a Working Group comprising representatives from the Transport Department, the Police,



the Hong Kong Automobile Association and the Institute of Advanced Motorists Hong Kong. The TAC supported the Working Group's priority to ensure the safety of road users, and welcomed further reviews conducted by the Working Group in future.

Members discussed the Administration's response to the Report on the Enhancement of the Highway Safety by the Tuen Mun Road Traffic Incident Independent Expert Panel on 27 January 2004. The Administration had drawn up an implementation plan for key areas including driving behaviour, legislation and enforcement, traffic engineering and management, vehicle control and vehicular parapet design. The TAC was glad that the Government had accepted all the recommendations in the report and come up with the improvement measures. Members were updated on the progress of implementing the improvement measures on 15 September 2005. The TAC considered that the Government had made good progress in implementing various recommendations to enhance highway safety.

At the meeting of 26 May 2005, the TAC considered the Administration's proposal on the way forward of a registration scheme for vehicle mechanics. Members noted from the findings of the survey that the majority of vehicle workshop operators and mechanics preferred to adopt an incremental approach by first launching a voluntary

scheme, and supported the Administration's proposal to proceed along this line. The TAC was of the view that this would facilitate acceptance and early implementation of the registration scheme, which would be beneficial to both the trade and the community whilst minimizing the impact on the employment situation of the trade.

On 19 October 2004, the TAC discussed the proposal to introduce the Probationary Driving Licence Scheme to novice private car and light goods vehicle drivers. The TAC welcomed this proposal as the Probationary Driving Licence Scheme could serve as extended training for inexperienced drivers, allowing them to accumulate sufficient on-road driving experience safely.

On 20 April 2004, members discussed the proposed measures to enhance the safety of passengers on school transport vehicles. Apart from stepping up publicity on the safety of school transport vehicles, the Administration proposed to require newly registered school transport vehicles to be equipped with safer seats according to the Transport Department's specifications and to make provision of escorts compulsory for school public light buses with 16 seats or less that serve kindergartens. The TAC advised that it was important to offer good protection to children on board school transport vehicles, and welcomed the Administration's proposals to further enhance their safety.

### *Traffic Management Initiatives*

At the meeting of 19 July 2005, the TAC considered the Report of the Task Force on Emergency Transport Coordination led by Ms Teresa Cheng, Chairman of TAC and comprising Mr Herbert Hui and Prof Lo Hong-kam. Members were glad to see that the Administration had responded to the relevant recommendations positively and had proposed concrete follow-up actions. The TAC considered that with a thorough review of the traffic incident on 9 May 2005 and the extensive experience gained by the Administration, the relevant parties would be able to perform better in handling traffic emergencies in the future. On 14 March 2006, members were updated on the progress of implementing the recommendations of the Task Force. Members were pleased to note that the Government had made good progress in implementing various recommendations to refine and align the crisis management arrangements, enhance

communication and coordination both within and between departments, harness technologies for better traffic management, and take all possible steps to disseminate traffic information to the public in a timely manner. Members advised that all relevant departments should continue their efforts in improving emergency transport coordination.

On 22 November 2005, the TAC considered the special traffic and transport arrangements to be implemented during the Sixth Ministerial Conference (MC6) of the World Trade Organisation which was held from 13 to 18 December 2005. The TAC took note of the various special traffic and transport arrangements for the MC6 period.

At the meeting of 19 April 2005, members discussed the various options to enhance the distribution of traffic at the three road harbour crossings -- the Cross-Harbour Tunnel, the Eastern Harbour Crossing and the Western Harbour Crossing. The TAC appreciated the efforts made by the Administration in drawing up the various options, and supported the major principles that any measures to be taken should be in the overall interest of the public, be fair to taxpayers and be effective in alleviating congestion. The TAC advised that the Government should explore such options, and discuss with the franchisees in greater detail.

At the meeting of 25 May 2004, members also considered the findings of a trial scheme on the new autotoll signage and road marking arrangements at road tunnels and bridges, and supported the Government's proposal to extend them to all tolled roads and bridges to further enhance road safety at toll plazas.

## *Parking Policy*



Members considered on 25 May 2004 the latest demand and supply situation of parking provisions in Hong Kong and the progress of implementing the recommendations of the Second Parking Demand Study to address parking-related problems. The TAC supported the improvement measures adopted by the Government to address the parking needs of different categories of vehicles.