

LCQ9: Public transport services between Tuen Mun and the Airport

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Following is a question by the Hon Cheung Hok-ming and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Ms Eva Cheng, in the Legislative Council today (November 2):

Question:

Some Tuen Mun residents have reflected that quite a number of residents in the district work at the Hong Kong International Airport (the Airport) due to insufficient employment opportunities in Tuen Mun; yet, at present only a few trips are made in the morning and afternoon daily by the buses of route E33P running between Siu Hong Railway Station in Tuen Mun and the Airport, and the service can hardly meet the demand during peak commuting hours. They have also indicated that as the first bus of this route from the Airport departs after 5pm, people who get off work earlier than that in the afternoon have to take buses of other routes which charge higher fares. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) whether it knows the percentage of the working population in Tuen Mun in the past three years who have to work across districts;

(b) in response to the situation that the workers engaged in many types of jobs at the Airport need to work shifts, whether the authorities will request the operator of the aforesaid bus route to arrange for the first bus to depart from the Airport earlier in the afternoon as warranted by the actual situation; and

(c) of the measures to improve the present public transport services between Tuen Mun (i.e. Butterfly Estate, Wu King Estate and Tuen Mun Ferry Pier) and the Airport?

Reply:

President,

(a) According to the result of the last Population By-census (Note) conducted by the Census and Statistics Department in 2006, the working population in Tuen Mun District with fixed place of work in Hong Kong was 212 978. Among them, 154 186 persons (i.e. 72%) worked outside Tuen Mun District.

(b) Currently, there are three franchised bus routes operating in Tuen Mun to and from Chek Lap Kok Airport. Route E33 (Tuen Mun Town Centre - Airport) provides all-day services, whereas the other two routes, E33P (Siu Hong Station - Airport) and A33 (Tuen Mun (Tuen Mun Station of West Rail) - Airport), run in peak hours. Supplementary to Route E33, Route E33P operates seven departures on weekday mornings (five trips on Sundays and public holidays) and three departures every afternoon between Siu Hong Station of West Rail and the Airport.

To enhance the service level, the concerned franchised bus company has planned to deploy one additional double-deck bus to serve Route E33P in the first quarter of 2012 and increase the frequency of the route, including arranging an extra and early departure from the Airport to Tuen Mun during peak hours in the afternoon. The franchised bus company will consult the concerned stakeholders and the locals on the proposed increase in frequency.

(c) At present, residents in the vicinity of Butterfly Estate, Wu King Estate and Tuen Mun Ferry Pier can take the Light Rail to Tuen Mun Town Centre where they can interchange with Route E33 to go to the Airport. An alternative for them during peak hours is taking the Airport-bound Route E33P at the nearby en-route stop on Wu Shan Road. Given that Tuen Mun Town Centre is the major transport interchange for the Light Rail and various franchised bus routes, the current arrangement can optimise the use of the existing resources of franchised buses in providing residents of various areas in Tuen Mun with the franchised bus services that meet their demand for journeys to and from the Airport. In the first quarter of 2012 when one more double-deck bus runs on Route E33P, the level of franchised bus services between Tuen Mun and the Airport will be further enhanced.

The Transport Department will continue to monitor the transport demand of the residents in Tuen Mun for going to and from the Airport, and will enhance the service of relevant franchised bus routes when necessary.

(Note) The Census and Statistics Department conducts a population census once every ten years, and a by-census in the middle of the intercensal period. The last population by-census was conducted in 2006. As regards the 2011 Population Census, the results will be available by phases as from 2012.

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