

Public consultation on ways to rationalise utilisation of road harbour crossings launched

The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) issued a public consultation document today (November 9) on the findings and recommendations of the Consultancy Study on Rationalising the Utilisation of Road Harbour Crossings (RHCs).

The THB also launched a three-month public consultation (until February 9, 2011) on the various recommendations to redistribute the traffic of the RHCs.

A THB spokesman said, "the Government appreciates the public's concern about the undesirable traffic distribution among the three RHCs, namely the Cross Harbour Tunnel (CHT), the Eastern Harbour Crossing (EHC) and the Western Harbour Crossing (WHC)."

"The Government has, therefore, commissioned a consultancy study for a comprehensive analysis of all relevant factors that affect the distribution of traffic amongst the three RHCs, with the objective of identifying the optimum level of traffic for the three RHCs, taking into account their geographic locations and the capacity of the connecting road networks, and recommending feasible options to achieve the optimum traffic result."

The consultancy report set out various combinations of toll adjustments, including adjusting the tolls of CHT (only); adjusting the tolls of all three RHCs, and adjusting the tolls of CHT and EHC, which could achieve effective traffic re-distribution.

The consultants examined a wide range of implementation options advocated by various sectors of the community, including buy-back tunnels, franchise extension, common ownership and peak hour surcharge, etc. They also suggested the implementation of options such as provision of toll rebate to tunnel users or concession to franchisees to achieve better traffic re-distribution.

"The Government maintains an open mind on all proposals and will listen to and carefully consider the views of various sectors of the community and stakeholders, including the Legislative Council Members, the Transport Advisory Committee, the transport trade, road users and members of the public before deciding the way forward," the spokesman said.

"We note that some of the toll adjustment combinations raised by the consultants will increase operating costs for commercial vehicles. We will fully and carefully consider the potential impact of these combinations on various sectors."

"A three-month consultation will be launched starting from November 9. Members of the public are welcome to give their views to us on or before February 9, 2011," the spokesman said.

The public consultation document and the full report have been uploaded to the THB's website (www.thb.gov.hk). Members of the public may send their views to the Transport and Housing Bureau by post to: The Transport and Housing Bureau (c/o Team 2), 14/F, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central; or fax (3904 1774), or e-mail (rhc_consultation@thb.gov.hk).

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