

Report of the Independent Review Committee on Hong Kong's Franchised Bus Service
Summary of Recommendations and the Government's Responses

Recommendations by the Independent Review Committee	Government's Responses
<p><i>(i) Safety Director</i></p> <p>(1) The Transport Department ("TD") to establish a structure to develop a proactive approach to bus safety.</p> <p>(2) The TD to appoint a Safety Director and a small bus safety team.</p>	<p><u>Planning to implement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will draw up the implementation plan for setting up a Safety Director and a small safety team. In the interim, the relevant divisions in the TD will continue to look after the safety issues relating to franchised bus safety. The TD will seek resources in accordance with established procedures in implementing the recommendation where appropriate.
<p>(3) Franchised bus operators to appoint their own Safety Directors.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will discuss with all franchised bus operators for the appointment of their own Safety Directors.
<p><i>(ii) Permanent Working Group on the enhancement of safety of franchised buses</i></p> <p>(4) Membership of the Permanent Working Group to be expanded to include independent members with expertise relevant to franchised bus safety.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has set up the Working Group on the Enhancement of Safety of Franchised Buses ("Working Group") shortly after the Tai Po Bus incident in March 2018 to consider and study possible measures to further enhance bus safety. The TD has already turned this Working Group into a permanent set up so as to provide a regular platform for the Government, franchised bus operators and relevant experts to continue discuss and follow up on various initiatives to enhance franchised bus safety.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD is identifying suitable expert(s) as to be included as member(s) of the Working Group.
<p><i>(iii) Technological safety devices: TD's technology team</i></p> <p>(5) A dedicated technology team to be formed urgently in the TD.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will establish the transport technology team in mid-2019.
<p>(6) The technology team to establish lines of communication with well-respected overseas jurisdictions, such as Transport for London ("TfL") and Land Transport Authority of Singapore ("LTA") to share information.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At present, lines of communication with well-respected overseas jurisdictions, such as TfL and LTA, to share information already exist. The transport technology team to be established would continue and further enhance such lines of communications and exchanges with overseas jurisdictions.
<p>(7) Franchised bus operators to appoint members of their own staff to be responsible for technological safety devices and to establish lines of communication with franchised bus operators in well-respected overseas jurisdictions to share information.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At present, franchised bus operators already have lines of communications with well-respected overseas jurisdictions to share information. The TD will discuss with franchised bus operators to appoint dedicated staff to be responsible for technological safety devices and to enhance lines of communication with franchised bus operators in well-respected overseas jurisdictions to share information.
<p><i>(iv) Subsidies</i></p> <p>(8) The TD to establish a small fund to provide grants to franchised bus operators to promote the uptake of new safety technology.</p>	<p><u>Planning to implement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will consider options (including making use of currently available funds) in providing funding to franchised bus operators to promote the uptake of new safety technology.
<p>(9) The TD to engage an independent consultant to conduct a cost/benefit analysis in respect of the retrofitting of seat belts</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p>

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on the upper decks of some franchise buses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before the release of this Report, the TD already deliberated the matter at the Working Group. All franchised bus operators already committed that all passenger seats of all new buses ordered from July 2018 onwards would be installed with seat belts as the additional cost would be marginal. On the other hand, for retrofitting of seat belts on passenger seats of existing buses, in light of the overseas experts' advice and that the use of seat belts is not common in urban routes because of the short journeys (in terms of both time and distance) taken by the urban buses and the moderate speeds on urban routes, the TD will conduct a vigorous cost/benefit analysis before implementing it. ● In this regard, the TD will engage a consultant in early 2019 with a view to completing the analysis in mid-2019.
(10) The TD to engage an independent consultant to conduct cost/benefit analyses in respect of the retrofitting of the electronic stability control system ("ESC") and speed limiters with retardation function ("speed limiting retarder"), and all other safety devices proved to be technically successful, before the TD requires installation of those devices by franchised bus operators.	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having considered the proven effectiveness of installing ESC and speed limiting retarder, the Working Group considered that it should be cost-effective to retrofit franchised buses with these safety devices if technically feasible. ● In response to the recommendation, the Working Group will further confirm the cost and benefits of retrofitting these safety devices.
<p>(v) Safety Performance Indicators</p> <p>(11) The TD to establish more nuanced Safety Performance Indicators ("SPIs").</p> <p>(12) The TD to seek elucidation and clarification from Transport for London ("TfL") of the Safety Performance Indicators adopted by TfL.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has already obtained information on TfL's SPIs and drawn up an initial set of proposed SPIs which cover various accident rates showing the general safety, bus passenger safety, operation and network safety, bus engineering safety, safety of drivers at work as well as safety management and assurance systems. ● The TD will discuss and finalise the SPIs with the franchised bus operators, and align and standardise the relevant data format in mid-2019, with a view to measuring the safety performance by the new set of key performance indicators starting from

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	the first quarter of 2020.
<p>(vi) <i>Franchised Bus Accident Data</i></p> <p>(13) The accident data material in the Bus Safety Chapter of the Forward Planning Programmes ("FPP") to be made public.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has already required and secured the agreement of franchised bus operators to have the accident data in the Safety Chapter of the FPP made public. ● The TD will align and standardise the accident data with a view to publishing the accident data contained in the FPP to be submitted in June 2019 by end 2019.
<p>(14) The TD to require the franchised bus operators to report all franchised bus accidents to the TD on a monthly basis.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has required the bus operators to report all franchised bus accidents to the TD on a monthly basis. ● The TD will maintain a standardised database on such accidents to facilitate common reporting and analysis system.
<p>(15) Consideration should be given by the TD to instituting a common reporting/analysis system of franchised bus accident data.</p>	
<p>(16) The TD to stipulate to the franchised bus operators common thresholds for reporting instances of excessive speeding and harsh braking.</p>	<p><u>Planning to implement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will explore the suitability and feasibility of stipulating common thresholds on excessive speeding, harsh braking and excessive acceleration among franchised bus operators in 2019.
<p>(17) The TD to stipulate to the franchised bus operators common thresholds of excessive acceleration.</p>	
<p>(vii) <i>Real-time alerts</i></p> <p>(18) The TD to require the franchised bus operators to provide real-time alerts of excessive speeding, deceleration and</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At present, the Kowloon Motor Bus Co. (1933) Ltd. ("KMB")/ Long Win Bus Co.

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<p>acceleration to bus captains and to generate records of those events.</p>	<p>("LW") have real-time alerts through the black box for speeding, excessive deceleration and acceleration, whilst Citybus Limited ("CTB")/New World First Bus Services Limited ("NWFB") and New Lantao Bus Co. (1973) Ltd. ("NLB") have real-time alerts for speeding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has evaluated the technical feasibility of providing real-time alerts by consulting relevant equipment manufacturers, and will discuss with CTB/NWFB and NLB to implement real-time alerts for harsh acceleration and deceleration. ● Through the deliberation under Working Group, the TD has required all franchised bus operators to conduct trial of geo-fencing technology for real-time monitoring of speeding on roads with different speed limits. CTB/NWFB implemented the geo-fencing technology in their full fleet for trials in September 2018, whilst KMB/LW and NLB embarked on trial of geo-fencing technology in 2018 with a view to evaluating its effectiveness in Q2 2019.
<p>(19) The TD and franchised bus operators to explore the feasibility of making use of the generation of real-time, or near real-time, of excessive speeding, deceleration and acceleration to provide an automatic alert to the franchised bus operators Control Room, permitting communication with the bus if appropriate.</p>	<p><u>Planning to implement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will explore with franchised bus operators on the feasibility and possible implementation timetable.
<p><i>(viii) Bus captain training</i></p> <p>(20) The TD to collaborate with the franchised bus operators to identify key indicators of the effectiveness of the bus captain</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Practice Note on bus captain training ("the Practice Note") issued by the TD has

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training system.	<p>been implemented by all franchised bus operators since October 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With experience gained from implementing the training programmes and management systems by individual franchised bus operators after one-year implementation, the TD will further collaborate with the franchised bus operators to identify and stipulate common key indicators of the effectiveness of the bus captain training system starting late 2019.
(21) The TD to stipulate that fatigue management form part of the training courses provided to bus captains.	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This will be follow up at the Working Group as part of the review of the Practice Note after one year of implementation in late 2019.
(22) The TD to provide funding for a special course/programme for bus captains to deal with abusive and angry passengers.	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Practice Note has already included a requirement on the inclusion of a module on customer services at which the subject of handling difficult passengers is covered. The TD will discuss how the modules should be further refined when the Practice Note is reviewed in late 2019. ● The TD plans to arrange special course/programme for drivers of passenger public transport vehicles to deal with abusive and angry passengers, including franchised bus drivers, as part of TD's large-scale annual road safety publicity campaign.
<p><i>(ix) Guidelines on Bus Captain Working Hours, Rest Times and Meal Breaks</i></p> <p>(23) The Guidelines on working hours, etc. to be stipulated in regulations.</p>	<p><u>Subject to study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will study the proposal and its wider implications in consultation with relevant government bureaux/departments.

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(24) An expert(s) on fatigue identification and management to be appointed as an <i>ad hoc</i> member of the Permanent Working Group.	<p><u>Subject to study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD reviewed the Guidelines with franchised bus operators in late 2017 and the latest Guidelines revised in February 2018 will be implemented in full by the second quarter of 2019, allowing time for franchised bus operators to recruit additional bus captains. ● It is worth noting that the revised Guidelines with the maximum working hours reduced from existing 14 to 12 hours is on par with Australia (12 hours a day) and more stringent than Singapore (14 hours) and UK (16 hours), while the maximum driving hours reduced from existing 11 to 10 hours is on par with UK (10 hours). Although a split shift of 14 hours is still in place, a new requirement of offering a consecutive three hours break in between has been imposed. ● The TD will review the Guidelines after the full implementation of the revised Guidelines for completion in mid-2020. ● The TD will study the need for appointing an expert(s) on fatigue identification and management to be appointed as an <i>ad hoc</i> member of the Permanent Working Group.
(25) Consideration to be given by the Permanent Working Group of whether permitting 14 hours of duty in a split shift is compatible with bus safety.	
(26) Consideration to be given by the Permanent Working Group to restricting the total hours of driving by a bus captain in periods of 14 or 28 days.	
(27) The Permanent Working Group to engage an independent consultant to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the effect of abrogating the special shift exception to the 22 hours of duty rule, in particular the potential safety improvements, the number and cost of the additional bus captains that would be required and the implication to franchised bus fares.	
(28) CTB/NWFB and TD to work closely together to ensure that CTB/NWFB provides adequate rest facilities for drivers working on split shifts.	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In September 2018, CTB/NWFB have provided a new rest room with sleeping area with beds and recliner chairs at Chai Wan Depot, and new rest facilities with beds and recliner chairs at the parking sites at Ocean Park and Sheung Wan for bus captains. The TD will continue to work with CTB/NWFB to explore provision of more rest facilities for bus captains at other convenient locations.
<p>(x) <i>Part-time bus captains: other employment</i></p> <p>(29) The TD to stipulate to the franchised bus operators the information that they are required to obtain, maintain and update in respect of the other employment of part-time</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Each franchised bus operator already has its own mechanism for the part-time

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captains, including the nature of the employment and the hours worked.	captains to report other employment. The TD will discuss with franchised bus operators to stipulate them to align the information obtained / kept regarding the part-time bus captains.
(30) The TD to require NLB to obtain information and maintain records of the duty and driving hours and off-duty breaks in their other employment of the bus captains provided to them by KCM, or any other supplier of buses and drivers to NLB, and that NLB is required to be satisfied that, when they are performing driving duties for NLB, they are compliant with the Guidelines on Bus Captain Working Hours, Rest Times and Meal Breaks.	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has required NLB, and NLB has committed, to obtain information and maintain records of the duty and driving hours and off-duty breaks in their other employment of the bus captains provided to them by supplier of buses and drivers.
<p><i>(xi) The provision of rest and toilet facilities for bus captains</i></p> <p>(31) The TD to amend the Transport Planning and Design Manual ("TPDM") to delete the provision that toilet facilities for bus operator's staff will not be required in a bus terminus if such facilities are available in a nearby development.</p> <p>(32) The TD to invite the Planning Department to amend paragraph 4.1.6 of Chapter 8 of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines ("HKPSG") to stipulate that the provision of toilets and rest facilities are required at bus termini.</p>	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● While the provision is currently in the TPDM, the TD has requested and the Food and Environment Department has agreed in principle to consider providing public toilets at new public transport interchanges during the planning stage since 2016. In any case, the relevant section of the TPDM is being revised with a view to completing the revision in mid- 2019. Once the TPDM has been revised, corresponding amendments will be made to the HKPSG.
(33) The Government to provide built-in structures of a bus regulator's office, and restrooms with toilets facilities at new public transport interchanges and bus termini.	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has already committed to incorporating such facilities in the planning of new public transport interchanges and bus termini.
(34) The TD to invite a representative of the Secretary for TH to	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u>

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become a member of the TD's task force monitoring the provision of ancillary facilities at public transport interchanges and bus termini.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● THB's representative will join the multi-departmental meeting coordinated by TD in monitoring the provision of ancillary facilities at public transport interchanges and bus termini.
<p><i>(xii) Abuse and assaults on bus captains</i></p> <p>(35) The TD and the Hong Kong Police Force ("HKPF") to conduct a long-term programme in the news print media, television and social media to educate the public and abusing a bus captain performing his duties is not only unacceptable but also a criminal offence.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD and the HKPF will follow up to conduct the long-term publicity programme.
<p>(36) The TD to require the franchised bus operators to display notices to remind franchised bus passengers that abusing a bus captain is unacceptable and constitutes a criminal offence.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● KMB has already displayed such a notice. The TD will require other bus operators to follow suit.
<p>(37) The TD to require the franchised bus operators to install video cameras with audio capability at the entrance of buses and where the bus captain is seated.</p>	<p><u>Subject to study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will discuss with the franchised bus operators on the recommendation.
<p>(38) The TD to propose specific legislation be enacted to make it an offence to make a threatening, abusive or insulting communication towards a bus captain performing his public duties.</p>	<p><u>Subject to study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will review the adequacy of the existing legislation in dealing with threatening, abusive or insulting communication towards a bus captain performing his driving duties and its wider implications, in consultation with relevant government bureaux/departments.
<p><i>(xiii) Illegal stopping by vehicles at and near franchised bus stops</i></p> <p>(39) Legislative provisions to be presented to the Legislative</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p>

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<p>Council as soon as possible to provide for the service of fixed penalty tickets, other than by affixing them to the vehicle or giving them to the vehicle driver, and to permit service by E-ticket.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For illegal stopping of vehicles at bus stop, existing legislation, viz. Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance (Cap. 240), already allows for serving fixed penalty tickets by post in addition to affixing the tickets to the vehicle or giving them personally to the person in charge of the vehicle. The Police are already conducting a territory-wide trial under which portable video cameras are used by police officers to record contraventions and take enforcement actions in respect of various offences under Cap. 240, including illegal stopping of vehicles at bus stops. For illegal parking of vehicles near a bus stop, existing legislation, viz. Fixed Penalty (Traffic Contraventions) Ordinance (Cap. 237), requires serving fixed penalty tickets by affixing the tickets to the vehicle or giving them personally to the person in charge of the vehicle only. After consulting the Legislative Council Panel on Transport in Q2 2019, the Government plans to introduce an amendment bill into the Legislative Council to expand the means of serving fixed penalty tickets under Cap. 237 and related legislation to permit service by E-ticket.
<p>(40) The TD and the Hong Kong Police Force to explore the feasibility of installing CCTV cameras at suitable vantage points, in particular lampposts, to monitor blackspots of illegal stopping by vehicles at and near franchised bus stops.</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD and Police are exploring the use of CCTV technologies to be mounted on lampposts to monitor blackspots of illegal stopping by vehicles. A trial is being planned to embark in 2019.
<p>(41) Franchised bus operators to cooperate with the police to make available CCTV recordings obtained by cameras mounted on franchised buses of illegal stopping by vehicles at and near franchised bus stops.</p>	<p><u>Subject to study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD will discuss with the Police and franchised bus operators on the recommendation.
<p><i>(xiv) Priority measures for franchised buses</i></p> <p>(42) The TD to give consideration to introducing a system of</p>	<p><u>Implemented/Being implemented</u></p>

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affording priority to buses as they exit bus stops to rejoin the highway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has drawn up a proposed design of the scheme, with a view to launching a trial in 2019. If the trial is successful, it will be implemented in selected locations.
(43) The TD to make greater use of bus lanes in appropriate locations.	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is an on-going effort. The TD will continue to make greater use of bus lanes in appropriate locations.
<p><i>(xv) Route risk assessment</i></p> <p>(44) The TD to require the franchised bus operators to provide the TD with a <i>route risk</i> assessment for each of the routes on which their buses ply.</p>	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The subject was discussed at the last Working Group meeting in December 2018, and will be further followed up at the Working Group.
<p><i>(xvi) Speed limits</i></p> <p>(45) The TD to identify suitable locations to conduct trials of a low-speed zone of 30 km/h.</p>	<u>Implemented/Being implemented</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The TD has identified suitable locations in Central and Sham Shui Po for the trial in 2019.

Transport and Housing Bureau
Transport Department
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