

Interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements releases latest information on special boundary-crossing and corresponding public transport service arrangements during New Year's Eve and New Year holidays

The interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, released the following information today (December 27) on the special boundary-crossing and corresponding public transport service arrangements during New Year's Eve and the New Year holidays.

To facilitate diversion of cross-boundary passenger and vehicular movements during New Year's Eve and the New Year holidays, while the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Port and the Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang (LMC/HG) Port will maintain 24-hour operations as usual, a consensus was reached with the relevant departments of Guangdong Province and Shenzhen Municipality to make the following special arrangements on New Year's Eve (December 31):

- (1) Passenger and passenger vehicle clearance services at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point, which usually close at midnight, will operate overnight, providing round-the-clock services; and
- (2) Passenger clearance services at the Lo Wu Control Point, which usually close at midnight, will be extended to 2am the next day. The operating hours of the MTR East Rail Line will be extended correspondingly, with the departure of the last East Rail Line train from Admiralty to Lo Wu extended to 12.56 am.

For more effective diversion of cross-boundary private cars on New Year's Day with the implementation of round-the-clock clearance at the Shenzhen Bay Port, only cross-boundary private cars issued with Closed Road Permits (Permits) for the LMC/HG Control Point are allowed to cross the LMC/HG Control Point during early-morning hours on January 1. For cross-boundary private cars issued with Permits for the ports at LMC/HG, Shenzhen Bay, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok, they can use the Shenzhen Bay Port during early-morning hours.

For cross-boundary coaches, the Government has also worked with cross-boundary coach service operators to arrange additional services using the Shenzhen Bay Port during early-morning hours, and to enhance the services using the LMC/HG Port, including cross-boundary coaches departing from stations in urban areas such as Wan Chai, Prince Edward, Yau Ma Tei and Jordan, etc, as well as a shuttle bus running between the Lok Ma Chau (San

Tin) Public Transport Interchange and the LMC/HG Port (Yellow Bus), and the HZMB shuttle bus (Gold Bus). Moreover, a dedicated passage will be established at the HZMB Port, LMC/HG Port, and Shenzhen Bay Port when necessary, to ensure the smooth operation of public transport services.

As regards local public transport services connecting to boundary control points (BCPs), to tie in with the special round-the-clock passenger clearance arrangements of the Shenzhen Bay Control Point on January 1, franchised bus operators will operate two special overnight bus routes, Nos. NB2 and NB3, to provide services to and from Yuen Long/Tin Shui Wai and Tuen Mun respectively during the overnight period. Furthermore, in the case of travellers using overnight services of the MTR East Rail Line that night, after the closure of the Lo Wu Control Point, they may also take the specially arranged short-working bus service, route No. N73, from MTR Sheung Shui Station to Lok Ma Chau (San Tin) Public Transport Interchange, and transfer to the Yellow bus for their journey to Shenzhen.

The Transport Department's Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre will operate 24 hours to closely monitor the traffic conditions and public transport services of various districts, the ports and major stations; implement contingency measures when necessary to meet service demands; and disseminate the latest traffic information through various channels.

"The full support and co-ordination of the leaders and relevant departments of Guangdong Province and Shenzhen Municipality are crucial to the implementation of the special boundary-crossing arrangements, reflecting the effective and close co-operation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen," the spokesman said.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government will closely monitor the situation and take contingency actions promptly where necessary and deploy manpower flexibly to ensure orderly operations of the BCPs. The Government has formulated contingency plans for the peak periods of cross-boundary travel and made preparations for preventive and control measures to cater for different scenarios. Relevant bureaux and departments have formulated the plans below.

First, with the extension of operating hours at certain BCPs on New Year's Eve, the relevant departments have minimised leave for frontline officers and redeployed additional staff from other BCPs for flexible manpower deployment. All clearance counters and channels will be in operation to divert passenger and vehicular flow where necessary.

Second, the Inter-departmental Joint Command Centre set up by the Hong Kong Police Force, the Immigration Department, the Customs and Excise Department and other relevant departments will monitor the real-time situations at various BCPs and regularly report to the interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements, maintain close liaison with Mainland port authorities, and take timely contingency actions to flexibly deploy manpower and open more clearance counters and channels to ensure smooth operation of the BCPs.

Third, the Security Bureau will activate the Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre in a timely manner to closely monitor public order matters and co-ordinate any necessary actions at various BCPs, and support the working group in facilitating interdepartmental follow-up actions where necessary to respond promptly to various kinds of emergencies.

The interdepartmental working group on festival arrangements is tasked with holistically co-ordinating and steering the preparatory work of various government departments for welcoming visitors to Hong Kong during the New Year's Eve and New Year holidays, as well as strengthening information dissemination to enable the public and visitors to plan their itineraries according to the latest situation.