

LCQ10: Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Pak-leung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, in the Legislative Council today (May 24):

Question:

Some members of the tourism industry have relayed that after the implementation of full resumption of normal travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland on February 6 this year, the number of Mainland visitor arrivals to Hong Kong has steadily increased, and the Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point (BCP) has become a major control point used by inbound and outbound tour group travellers. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that the BCP has only nine parking spaces available for picking up/setting down passengers by local tourist coaches, with the number of inbound and outbound tour group travellers increasing continuously, the parking spaces concerned will be insufficient to meet the demand, whether the Government will consider adjusting the layout of the public transport interchange at the Passenger Terminal Building of the BCP, so as to ease passenger and vehicular flows there;

(2) of the Government's plans to enhance the public transport connections at the BCP to cope with the increasing number of travellers in the future;

(3) as some members of the public have relayed that although they found vacant parking spaces in the public car park at the BCP, the online booking system showed that the parking spaces in the car park were full, whether the Government will enhance the booking system to identify vehicles which have left the car park early, and update the number of parking spaces that are available for booking via the booking system in a timely manner, so as to expedite the turnover of parking spaces in the car park, thereby optimising the use of resources in the car park; and

(4) as some members of the tourism industry are of the view that with the current opening hours of the BCP being from 7am to 10pm, it is difficult for them to arrange for tour groups to depart via the BCP after having dinner in Hong Kong, whether the Government has considered extending the opening hours of the BCP to 11pm, so as to facilitate Mainland visitors' entry to and departure from Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point (HYW BCP) is the first BCP which adopts the design of "direct access to people and vehicles". It has been well received by the members of the public since commissioning of passenger clearance service in February 2023. Apart from taking local public transport services including franchised buses (FBs), green minibus (GMBs) and taxis, members of the public may also access the BCP by private cars or on foot through the connecting pedestrian subway. The Government has been closely monitoring the operation of the BCP and adopting appropriate measures to facilitate members of the public to travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong. In consultation with the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Security Bureau, the reply to the question raised by the Hon Yiu Pak-leung is as follows:

(1) During the planning of the HYW BCP Public Transport Interchange (HYW PTI), various operational facilities, including the boarding and alighting facilities for FBs, GMBs, taxis as well as local non-franchised buses (local NFBs), have been arranged in different areas having regard to the operational needs of different public transport services. Among the facilities, there are nine spaces for picking up and dropping off passengers by local NFBs. The Government has also reserved an area in the vicinity of the HYW BCP for temporary parking of 30 local NFBs where needed. In addition, the Transport Department (TD) has reminded relevant operators that tour coaches should, as far as possible, enter the HYW PTI to pick up passengers only after all tour group members have assembled, so as to better utilise the parking spaces and speed up the vehicular flow. According to the TD's observation during the recent Labour Day Golden Week period, the boarding and alighting spaces for local coaches were in general operating smoothly. To avoid affecting the operation of other public transport services including FBs and GMBs, we have no plan to convert the boarding and alighting facilities for other public transport modes into facilities for use by local NFBs.

(2) In respect of local public transport services connecting to the HYW BCP, currently passengers may take Citybus Route B7 for travelling to and from Sheung Shui (Po Wan Road) via Fan Ling or GMB Route 59S for travelling to and from MTR Sheung Shui Station. On Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, passengers may also take Citybus Route B8 for travelling to and from MTR Tai Wai Station via Tai Po, and Kowloon Motor Bus Route B9 for traveling to and from MTR Tuen Mun Station via Yuen Long. The TD has been closely monitoring the passenger flow and actual situation at the HYW BCP, and would liaise with the public transport operators to adjust services as necessary to meet passenger demand. At the request of the TD, the relevant operators have also arranged spare buses/GMBs during peak hours for enhancing services when needed to reduce queues. As at late April, the average occupancy rates during peak hours of the FB routes serving the HYW BCP ranged from 50 per cent to 90 per cent. The headway of the GMB service during peak periods was about five minutes on average. Overall, the current public transport services are able to meet passenger demand.

(3) To facilitate the public to travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong through the HYW BCP, the Government Property Agency (GPA) has implemented enhancement measures since February 17 this year to ensure the smooth

operation of the HYW BCP public car park (HYW car park), after reviewing the operation of the HYW car park. Only vehicles with online booking are allowed to park at the HYW car park and vehicles without prior booking are not accepted. Currently, the online booking system of the HYW car park allows the public to reserve parking spaces from two hours to seven days prior to entry and the reserved parking period is from a minimum of two hours up to a maximum of seven days, with a view to facilitating the public to arrange their travel plans. The public can reserve parking spaces that have not been reserved or used by other vehicles through the online booking system of the HYW car park.

Turnover of parking spaces in the HYW car park is dynamic. If vehicles with reserved parking spaces arrive late or leave early, there may be the situation where the online booking system shows that there are no parking spaces available for booking but some parking spaces in the HYW car park are unoccupied.

The GPA will continue to closely monitor and review the operation of the HYW car park, particularly during weekends or cross-boundary peak periods. Besides, the GPA will review the operation mode of the HYW car park and the functions of the online booking system from time to time, and arrange enhancement measures as necessary, so as to facilitate the public to travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong through the HYW BCP.

(4) At present, among various land boundary control points, Lok Ma Chau Control Point and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port provide 24-hour passenger clearance service.

Also, in the light of the full resumption of normal travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong since early February this year, the Hong Kong and Shenzhen governments will monitor the demand for cross-boundary travel, and implement 24-hour passenger clearance service at the Shenzhen Bay Port in due course to further facilitate the flow of people between the two places.

With regard to the HYW BCP, as it is still at the initial stage of commissioning, and as 24-hour clearance service is already available at other control points, both the Hong Kong and Shenzhen governments will continue to closely monitor the operation of the HYW BCP, and consider whether it is necessary to extend its opening hour based on actual demand for passenger clearance service.