

LCQ5: Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles

Following is a question by the Hon Lai Tung-kwok and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, in the Legislative Council today (June 11):

Question:

It is reported that following the completion of the automated car park on the Hong Kong Port Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) by the end of this year, the authorities plan to implement the Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles in phases starting as early as the end of this year. The scheme runs with quotas and Guangdong vehicles allocated with quotas under the first phase will only be allowed to park at the automated car park at the HZMB Hong Kong Port. Passengers may proceed directly to the restricted area of Hong Kong International Airport and depart Hong Kong by plane without going through immigration clearance, or enter Hong Kong via the HZMB Hong Kong Port and then transfer to other modes of transport to reach the urban areas. Guangdong vehicles will only be allowed access to the urban areas under the second phase of the Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the reasons for implementing the Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles in two phases; whether it will consider implementing the two phases in one go by merging them, so as to address the calls from various sectors for attracting road trip visitors more expeditiously;

(2) whether it will designate no-entry zones for Guangdong vehicles in specific urban areas with heavier traffic, and whether it will increase the daily quota for the Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles on weekends, Sundays, and Hong Kong public holidays when urban traffic is relatively light and smooth; and

(3) whether it has assessed the economic benefits brought to Hong Kong upon the full implementation of the Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles?

Reply:

President,

Guangdong and Hong Kong have been committed to implementing various cross-boundary transport measures to jointly develop the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), and to make good use of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB). Since the successful implementation of Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles (the Northbound Travel Scheme) in July 2023, eligible Hong Kong single-plate private cars are allowed to travel under the customs guarantee-free policy to various commercial centres, countryside, tourist hotspots, etc, in the Guangdong Province via the HZMB for business, visiting

families or sight-seeing on a short-term basis upon making simple bookings; thus allowing greater convenience for Hong Kong travellers to plan their travel. The number of northbound Hong Kong private cars to the Guangdong Province has been on the rise, with over 100 000 private cars which have participated in the scheme. The usage of the HZMB has also recorded new highs, with its two-way vehicular flow reaching a total of 450 000 vehicles in May 2025 (i.e. a daily average of about 15 000 vehicles), representing an increase of about 170 per cent as compared to that before the implementation of the Northbound Travel Scheme; among which vehicles under the Northbound Travel Scheme account for about 40 per cent of the HZMB's vehicular flow (i.e. a daily average of about 6 000 vehicles). Meanwhile, to meet the keen expectations of the public on two-way travel, and to provide diversified experiences for Mainland travellers to visit Hong Kong, we are actively working with the relevant Mainland authorities on the implementation arrangements for the Southbound Travel for Guangdong Vehicles (the Southbound Travel Scheme).

In response to the three parts of the question raised by the Hon Lai Tung-kwok, my reply is as follows:

(1) The experience of implementing the Northbound Travel Scheme provides pragmatic and substantive reference for the planning of the Southbound Travel Scheme between Guangdong and Hong Kong. The governments of Guangdong and Hong Kong have been monitoring the application and travel experience of the citizens in a bid to roll out a number of enhanced arrangements, which include gradually increasing the maximum number of applications received per day from 200 at the beginning to the current 500; increasing the number of vehicle inspection centres from one at the beginning to three at present; expanding the travel booking timeslots, while deferring the deadline of booking and cancellation of booking. Guangdong and Hong Kong have also worked together to enhance port clearance at the HZMB ports, so as to address the increasing vehicular flow of the HZMB. Meanwhile, various parts of Guangdong are successively providing ancillary facilities to facilitate the vehicles under the Northbound Travel Scheme and launching promotion.

As regards the Southbound Travel Scheme which is the reverse reciprocal arrangement of the Northbound Travel Scheme, eligible Guangdong private cars without regular quotas will also be allowed to travel to Hong Kong via the HZMB for business, visiting families or sight-seeing on a short-term basis under the condition that advance bookings have been made. Drawing on the experience from the Northbound Travel Scheme, we need to ensure that the Southbound Travel Scheme is taken forward in a prudent manner while enhancing speed and efficiency. We have earlier announced the two automated carparks near the HZMB Hong Kong Port as part of the Southbound Travel Scheme, where private cars from Guangdong and Macao can park when they come to Hong Kong via the HZMB. Visitors who park their cars at the "Park and Fly" carpark could transfer flight at Hong Kong International Airport, thereby further facilitates the transport of travellers of the GBA to and from all parts of the world via Hong Kong, as well as consolidate Hong Kong's position as a leading international aviation hub. Visitors who park at the "Park and Visit" carpark could go through immigration clearance at the passenger clearance

building of the HZMB, which provides visitors to Hong Kong with an additional option, thereby promotes the flow of people between the two places and drives economic growth. At present, the Government and the Airport Authority Hong Kong are actively undertaking preparatory work for the commencement of operation, including conducting tests and drills, as well as formulating the details in respect of the booking and use of the carparks. Our objective is to streamline the procedures as far as possible to provide maximum convenience for travellers. In addition, we are planning promotional activities and discounts, with a view to attracting self-drive visitors, which will in turn stimulate the retail, food and beverage, hotel and related service sectors in Hong Kong.

(2) Meanwhile, we are also working with Guangdong to make early preparation for Guangdong vehicles to enter Hong Kong urban area. We are taking comprehensive consideration of various aspects, including total volume control, port clearance, risk management and enhancement of supporting facilities. On one hand, we will assess traffic at the port and the capacity of nearby roads, divert traffic away from peak hours, and strengthen port clearance as well as ancillary transport arrangements and contingency plans; on the other hand, we will properly manage the risks, such as requiring southbound vehicles to comply with the rules and regulations of Hong Kong to ensure the safety of their vehicles and take out a Hong Kong third party insurance. We are also formulating publicity information covering application procedures, driving rules and ancillary facilities. Where risks are controllable, we will streamline the application procedures and provide convenience for applicants. Following the above arrangements, the Southbound Travel Scheme will be implemented in orderly manner, welcomed by users, to the satisfaction of the public, and beneficial to the community at large; thereby obviating the need to impose restricted zones or roads for Guangdong vehicles.

(3) We believe that under the conditions of orderly implementation, total volume control, and appropriate supporting measures, the Southbound Travel Scheme will provide visitors with convenient and flexible new travel option to Hong Kong for travel, business, attending exhibitions or conferences, participating in concerts or other large-scale events, seeking various professional services, leisure and dining, etc, according to their need. It is expected that various industries in Hong Kong will benefit; and the synergy effect achieved with the Northbound Travel Scheme will also add extra impetus to the economies of Guangdong and Hong Kong, and the integration and development of the GBA.

The HKSAR Government is proactively working with respective Mainland authorities to formulate the implementation arrangements and timetable for taking forward the Southbound Travel Scheme in an orderly manner. I myself have also been leading a team to discuss with Guangdong side, with a view to striving for early announcement of the details of the scheme within this year.

Thank you, President.