

LCQ7: Government public transport fare concession scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Michael Tien and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (May 14):

Question:

Starting from August 25 last year, people aged 60 or above must use the JoyYou Card to enjoy a concessionary fare of \$2 per trip under the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the new measure). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the number of contravention cases uncovered by the MTR Corporation Limited involving the use of JoyYou Card to enjoy the concessionary fare of \$2 since the implementation of the new measure and, among such cases, the number of those referred to the Police for follow-up;

(2) in respect of the cases referred to the Police for follow-up as mentioned in (1), of the respective numbers of cases prosecuted and not prosecuted by the Police; the reasons for the Police not prosecuting such cases; and

(3) in respect of the prosecution cases mentioned in (2), of the number of convicted persons who were eventually sentenced to imprisonment?

Reply:

President,

The Government has implemented in full a real-name registration system for the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the \$2 Scheme) starting from August 25, 2024, mandating Hong Kong residents aged 60 or above to use a JoyYou Card, and eligible persons with disabilities aged below 60 to use a Personalised Octopus card encoded with the "Persons with Disabilities Status", to enjoy the \$2 Scheme.

The Transport Department (TD) has all along been requesting public transport operators (PTOs) to strengthen ticket inspection and passenger identity verification work and to strictly enforce the penalty as set out in relevant legislation and by-laws to prevent any abuse. The TD also conducts surveys and monitors the situation. The TD also conducts joint inspection and enforcement actions with PTOs from time to time and refers abuse cases with sufficient evidence to the Police for criminal investigation so as to achieve deterrent effect.

In respect of the enforcement actions carried out by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) during the period from the full implementation of the real-name registration system to April 2025, the number of abuse cases of the \$2 Scheme with surcharges imposed was 280 (i.e. eight cases per week on average). The number of cases concerned has been lowered significantly as compared to the 9 624 cases (i.e. 158 cases per week on average) before the implementation of the real-name registration system from June 25, 2023, to August 24, 2024.

After the full implementation of the real-name registration system, the MTRCL had sought assistance from the Police for 14 suspected cases of abuse of the \$2 Scheme using JoyYou Card. Police officers were deployed to the scene for each case. Among the 14 cases, five arrests were made after investigation by the Police. One of those arrest cases had completed prosecution (with the arrested person convicted of theft and fined \$400), while the arrested person of another case was prosecuted by the Police for theft (with the hearing taking place on May 9, 2025) and two cases are still under investigation. Another case was referred to the MTRCL for follow-up as a case of violation of the Mass Transit Railway By-laws since no criminal elements were found after investigation by the Police. The remaining nine cases had also been referred to the MTRCL for follow-up as cases of violation of the Mass Transit Railway By-laws since no arrestable offences were identified after investigation by the Police.