

Substantial reduction of tolls and implementation of HKeToll mostly smooth at Tai Lam Tunnel (with photos)

The Transport Department (TD) said that the Government has taken over the Tai Lam Tunnel (TLT) at 0.00am today (May 31), and that the implementation of the new tolls and the HKeToll has mostly been smooth so far.

The Commissioner for Transport, Ms Angela Lee, visited the TLT Administration Building in the small hours today and was briefed by the operator's management on the switchover works conducted during its full closure. She also oversaw the tests and preparations prior to the introduction of the HKeToll at the control centre. She met with tunnel management and engineering personnel of the operator and thanked the team for racing against time in completing the takeover work thoroughly, efficiently and smoothly.

Ms Lee was glad to note that the TLT reopened at 5am as scheduled with the launch of the HKeToll. She appreciated the tireless efforts of the multidisciplinary team comprising the TD, the Highways Department and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department in completing the necessary drills as well as installing adequate traffic signs and road markings, providing motorists with a smoother road experience as they do not have to stop or queue for payment.

The TD's Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre (ETCC) has been closely monitoring the traffic conditions before and after the takeover of the TLT, and the traffic in both directions has generally been smooth so far. In addition, the traffic of alternative routes, such as Tuen Mun Road and Tolo Highway, has largely been smooth. The ETCC will closely monitor the overall traffic conditions on June 2, the first working day, including the application of time-varying tolls on private cars and motorcycles at the TLT for the first time.

Under the new tolls, tolls for all vehicle types are lower than previous tolls by 22 to 80 per cent. Among them, tolls for private cars in the peak, normal and off-peak time slots from Monday to Saturday are \$45, \$30 and \$18 respectively, with a fixed toll of \$18 throughout the day for Sunday and general holidays. The motorcycle toll for all time slots is set at 40 per cent of the private car toll, i.e. between \$7.2 and \$18. Taxis and other commercial vehicles (such as goods vehicles and buses) continue to have a fixed toll on all days: \$28 for taxis and \$43 for other commercial vehicles.

Ms Lee said, "As motorists, transport trades and members of the public may take time to adapt to new routes and adjust their commuting habits, we will closely monitor the traffic flow and public transport services in the

vicinity of the TLT. Following the substantial reduction of tolls and the roll-out of the HKeToll, we hope to make optimal use of the TLT's spare capacity effectively to alleviate the busy traffic on alternative routes, such as Tuen Mun Road, thereby improving the flow of people and freight between the New Territories West/North and the urban areas, as well as achieving the objective of providing a smooth commute and bringing benefits to all sectors."

Motorists may refer to the TLT's toll displays or the TD's HKeMobility mobile application for real-time toll information. Those who have yet to apply for an HKeToll vehicle tag and account should do so as soon as possible.

