

LCQ7: Promoting the use of electric vehicles

Following is a question by the Hon Tanya Chan and a written reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (November 20):

Question:

After the Government's reduction of the concessions on the first registration tax for electric private cars (e-PCs) on April 1, 2017, there was a significant drop in the number of first registered e-PCs. On February 28, 2018, the Government introduced a "One-for-One Replacement" Scheme (Replacement Scheme) whereby a vehicle owner who scraps his old private car (PC) that meets the eligibility criteria and buys a new e-PC may enjoy a higher tax concession. On January 28 this year, the Government relaxed the eligibility criteria for the Replacement Scheme. On promoting the use of electric vehicles (EVs), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of (i) the number of registered PCs, and (ii) the number of newly registered e-PCs, at the end of each month from January to October this year;

(2) of the (i) monthly and (ii) cumulative numbers of applications received and approved respectively, since the launch of the Replacement Scheme on February 28, 2018;

(3) of the number of PCs, as at January 28 this year when the eligibility criteria for the Replacement Scheme were relaxed, which met the new eligibility criteria; among such PCs, the number and percentage of those which have now been scrapped under the Scheme; the number of PCs meeting the eligibility criteria as at the 1st of this month;

(4) whether it knows the respective total numbers of (i) standard, (ii) medium and (iii) quick public EV chargers (chargers) throughout the territory as at the 1st of this month, with a breakdown by District Council district;

(5) as the Financial Secretary has indicated in this financial year's Budget that it will allocate \$120 million to extend the public EV charging networks in government car parks, of the respective numbers of (i) standard, (ii) medium and (iii) quick chargers it has planned to install, with a breakdown by name of car park;

(6) whether it will make provision for setting up a dedicated fund for the installation of EV charging-enabling infrastructure in the public car parks under the Hong Kong Housing Authority, including the installation of more chargers and the replacement of the existing standard chargers by medium or quick chargers; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(7) whether it will ask the MTR Corporation Limited to provide a certain

number of chargers in each of its park-and-ride (PnR) car parks, so as to facilitate EV drivers' participation in the PnR Schemes; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(8) as the Government has planned to allocate \$2 billion for launching a pilot scheme to subsidise the installation of EV charging-enabling infrastructure in car parks of eligible existing private residential buildings, and estimated that about 60 000 car parking spaces will be benefited, but as there were only about 12 000 EVs in the territory as at August this year, whether the Government has put in place measures to encourage vehicle owners of the car parks concerned to switch to e-PCs as soon as possible, so as to avoid wastage of resources?

Reply:

President,

On February 28, 2018, the Government introduced the "One-for-One Replacement" Scheme (Replacement Scheme) to incentivise owners of private cars (PCs) to opt for electric vehicles (EVs) when they need to replace their old PCs. Under the Replacement Scheme, PC owners who scrap and de-register their eligible old PCs and then first register new electric PCs (e-PC) will enjoy a higher first registration tax (FRT) concession up to \$250 000.

To strike a better balance between promoting wider use of EVs and not increasing the overall number of PCs, the Government, after examining the views of the public on the Replacement Scheme, announced on January 28, 2019 that two of the three eligibility criteria for 'Old PC' would be relaxed with immediate effect:

(i) Ownership period: revised from the PC owner must have been the registered owner of the Old PC for "three years or more", without interruption, immediately prior to its de-registration to "18 months or more"; and

(ii) Licensed period: revised from the "Old PC", with or without interruption, must have been licensed for at least 20 months (i.e. 608 days or more) within the 24 months immediately before its de-registration to the 'Old PC', with or without interruption, must have been licensed for at least 10 months (i.e. 304 days or more) within the 12 months immediately before its de-registration.

Regarding the criteria of vehicle age, the requirement of "the 'Old PC' must have been first registered in Hong Kong for at least six years" remains unchanged.

Having consulted relevant bureaux and departments, my reply to the question raised by the Hon Tanya Chan is as follows:

(1) Relevant monthly figures on registered PCs and e-PCs from January to October 2019 are tabulated below:

As at the End of	Total Number of Registered PCs (Total Number of Registered e-PCs)	Number of First Registered PCs (Number of First Registered e-PCs)
January	618 888 (11 130)	3 478 (51)
February	619 654 (11 166)	2 529 (37)
March	620 752 (11 237)	3 314 (80)
April	621 648 (11 276)	2 967 (44)
May	622 840 (11 430)	3 568 (158)
June	623 908 (11 519)	3 392 (94)
July	624 869 (11 622)	3 403 (106)
August	625 658 (11 773)	3 257 (155)
September	626 037 (12 341)	3 116 (571)
October	626 405 (12 650)	2 893 (314)

Note: Government vehicles not included.

(2) Upon the launch of the Replacement Scheme, the Transport Department (TD) received 1 844 applications in total as at October 31, 2019. Among these applications, 1 785 have been approved, 42 are being processed and 17 have been rejected for not meeting eligibility criteria. Details are tabulated below:

Figures on Applications under the Replacement Scheme

Month	Number of Applications Received	Number of Applications Approved
2018		
February	0	0
March	11	11
April	28	27
May	13	14
June	28	24
July	12	13
August	41	33
September	44	47
October	48	49(Note)
November	49	50
December	55	55
2019		
January	47	44
February	22	22
March	54	56
April	66	42
May	129	147
June	85	78

July	99	109
August	146	126
September	545	524
October	322	314
Total	1 844	1 785

Note: Including one case of withdrawal after approval of application.

(3) Since the corresponding computer system of the TD does not possess the statistical function to calculate the cumulative licensed period of PCs, the Government can provide neither the number of old PCs fulfilling all three requirements of the Replacement Scheme nor the number of old PCs scrapped under the Replacement Scheme.

Besides, from January 28, 2019 to October 31, 2019, a total of 1 385 e-PCs were first registered under the Replacement Scheme, accounting for around 80 per cent of the cumulative approved applications since the launch of the Replacement Scheme.

(4) The respective figures on public EV chargers (including those provided at the Government and non-governmental car parks) as at the end of September 2019 are tabulated below by districts.

District	Number of Chargers			
	Standard	Medium	Quick	Sub-total
Central and Western	62	110	36	208
Eastern	28	65	50	143
Southern	4	12	29	45
Wan Chai	66	121	37	224
Kowloon City	64	7	15	86
Kwun Tong	240	81	54	375
Sham Shui Po	17	104	71	192
Wong Tai Sin	24	46	11	81
Yau Tsim Mong	111	124	76	311
Kwai Tsing	25	13	33	71
Tsuen Wan	17	49	12	78
Sai Kung	24	37	25	86
North	58	25	12	95
Tai Po	28	3	7	38
Sha Tin	75	51	47	173
Yuen Long	50	33	18	101
Tuen Mun	12	10	17	39
Islands	18	115	27	160
Total	923	1006	577	2506

(5) The Government has allocated \$120 million to expand the public EV charging network at government car parks in the coming three years. We plan to install over 1 000 medium chargers at car parks fully or partially open to the public under the TD, Government Property Agency, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and Tourism Commission. Details are at the Annex.

(6) As recommended by the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG), the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will continue to provide EV chargers at 30 per cent of PC-parking spaces in indoor car parks of newly built public housing developments. As for the remaining 70 per cent of PC-parking spaces, the HA will also install EV charging-enabling infrastructure (including distribution boxes, cables, conduits and trunkings) and reserve spaces for the installation of EV chargers as needed in future. Regarding outdoor car parks, although there is no recommendation made in the HKPSG on the provision of charging facilities, the HA will reserve sufficient power supply and underground ducts at outdoor parking spaces for the installation of charging facilities in future.

The HA is proactively studying the impact of providing medium chargers in newly built public housing developments on the overall design of their power supply systems, and will strive to install EV charging facilities in accordance with relevant Government guidelines for EV charging and the HKPSG.

For its existing car parks, the HA will provide, on demand and where technically feasible, EV charging facilities for monthly parking spaces without such facilities. Moreover, the HA has conducted a feasibility study on the addition of medium chargers at hourly parking spaces of existing HA car parks, and will retrofit medium chargers at some of these spaces if existing electricity loading permits. To ensure optimum use of resources, the HA will carry out the retrofitting works in phases and consider gradually increasing the number of medium chargers in suitable existing HA car parks according to the utilisation of the chargers.

(7) We wrote to various corporations including the Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited (MTRCL) in November 2017, inviting them to install medium and quick EV chargers in their car parks, as well as upgrade their existing standard chargers to medium ones. The MTRCL replied in December the same year, stating that they would support the Government's policy of promoting the wider use of EVs. The MTRCL has started carrying out related works and devising planning. The Environmental Protection Department will continue to work with various corporations, including the MTRCL, to collaboratively advance the work concerned.

(8) To encourage PC owners to switch to EVs, the Government has implemented various measures over the past few years, including offering first registration tax concessions, introducing the Replacement Scheme, granting concessions on gross floor area for EV charging-enabling car parks in new buildings, expanding the public EV charging network, and establishing dedicated team and hotline to provide relevant information and technical support in setting up chargers.

Whether EV charging facilities can be installed at private residential parking spaces is one of the key considerations for PC owners switching to EVs. To further promote the steady development and popularisation of EVs in Hong Kong, the Government has earmarked \$2 billion to launch a pilot scheme to subsidise existing private residential building car parks meeting prescribed criteria to install EV charging-enabling infrastructure. As a preliminary estimate, the subsidy scheme can provide about 60 000 existing private residential parking spaces to equip with the charging-enabling infrastructure within about three years.

With the gradual technological advancement of e-PCs, more affordable e-PCs models with a long driving range are now available in the market. We therefore expect that the number of e-PCs will continue to grow. The abovementioned pilot scheme is a forward-looking measure to cater for the popularisation of e-PCs. Upon the launch of the scheme, we will review its progress and effectiveness in a timely manner in order to keep up with the development of promoting the use of EVs.

[Hong Kong Customs makes first-time seizure of fenethylline \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs made the city's first-time seizure of suspected fenethylline in the form of 1.57 million tablets from a transshipment container on November 8 at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound. With amphetamine as an active ingredient, which is controlled under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (DDO), the estimated seizure value of about \$245 million is also its biggest case in terms of market price as detected by Hong Kong Customs.

By means of risk assessment, Customs officers selected a transshipment seaborne container from Syria heading for Saudi Arabia via Hong Kong and the Mainland for inspection. The shipment manifest declared that it was a furniture product consignment. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected drugs concealed beneath the seat bases of 84 sofas.

An investigation revealed that the drugs are not for the local market. It is believed that the drug trafficking syndicate made a circuitous routing of different stops in an attempt to escape from law enforcement agencies and transport the drugs from the Middle East and back to the same region.

Fenethylline (or fenetylline) is usually in tablet form and was once used as medicine for mental or nervous system disorders in overseas countries. Being an addictive stimulant to the human central nervous system, it can cause euphoric intensity in users and has been exploited by criminal groups for profit-generating purposes.

Risk assessment has all along been an effective strategy by Hong Kong Customs to intercept the import and transit movements of dangerous drugs in various channels. The department will continue to step up anti-narcotic efforts by risk assessment and intelligence analysis.

Under the DDO, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[LCQ6: Hong Kong Human Rights and](#)

Democracy Act

Following is a question by the Hon Christopher Cheung and a reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (November 20):

Question:

Earlier on, the House of Representatives of the United States (US) Congress passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act (the Act). The Act, if passed by the Senate and signed by the President, will become a law. Some members of the business sector are worried that the Act, once implemented, will inevitably affect the exchanges between Hong Kong and the US, make the US Government review the special treatment granted to Hong Kong, and destabilise Hong Kong's external trade relations and its status as an international financial centre. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the latest assessment of the adverse impacts of the implementation of the Act on aspects such as Hong Kong's external trade relations, investment and listing of foreign-funded enterprises in Hong Kong, and importation of high technology products and know-how;

(2) whether it will step up efforts to lobby the political and business sectors of the US and explain to them the real situation of Hong Kong, so as to avoid the US authorities mistakenly making decisions that are unfavourable to Hong Kong; and

(3) of the contingency plans in place to reduce the impact on Hong Kong's economy to be brought about by the Act upon implementation?

Reply:

President,

Thank you for the question raised by the Hon Christopher Cheung.

Under "one country, two systems", the Basic Law confers on Hong Kong a unique status. Article 116 of the Basic Law stipulates that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is a separate customs territory and Article 151 provides that Hong Kong may, using the name "Hong Kong, China", participate in international organisations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation as a separate member.

Therefore, Hong Kong's unique status is not granted unilaterally by any other country, but is conferred by the Basic Law. Hong Kong's unique status is well recognised and respected by the international community. Our economic and trade status is on par with other WTO members, and we are making use of this capacity in the international economic and trade arena to establish mutually beneficial relations with our trading partners around the world.

In respect to Hong Kong's return to the Motherland, the United States (US) enacted in 1992 the US-Hong Kong Policy Act (the Policy Act) which set out its policy and principled positions towards Hong Kong. The relevant law is a policy act of the US itself but not an international or bilateral agreement. Over the years, the US has been conducting economic and trade exchanges with Hong Kong in accordance with the Policy Act, has been respecting Hong Kong as a separate customs territory, and has on this basis established mutually beneficial bilateral economic and trade relations with Hong Kong. The US is Hong Kong's second largest merchandise trading partner in the world, while Hong Kong is the US' tenth largest export market. According to the US' statistics, for the past ten years, the US has been enjoying the largest trade surplus with Hong Kong among its many global trading partners, valued at US\$33.8 billion in 2018 alone. In 2017, the US was the seventh major source of inward direct investment into Hong Kong and the ninth major destination of outward direct investment from Hong Kong. Moreover, there are 1 344 US companies in Hong Kong, of which 278 are regional headquarters. Separately, around 85 000 US citizens live in Hong Kong. The close and reciprocal bilateral relation between the two places is obvious.

Therefore, passage of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act (the Hong Kong Act) by the US Congress unilaterally is unnecessary and will certainly damage the mutually beneficial relationship, including the US' interests. The uncertainty so caused will inevitably affect the confidence of international investors and companies in Hong Kong. As for the actual impact on Hong Kong, it will depend on the specific measures and changes adopted by the US Administration after the Hong Kong Act is signed into law by the US President. The HKSAR Government will closely monitor development on the matter.

As a matter of fact, safeguarding human rights and freedoms is a constitutional duty of the HKSAR Government. Article 4 of the Basic Law stipulates that the HKSAR shall safeguard the rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and of other persons in the Region in accordance with law. Human rights and freedoms in Hong Kong are fully protected by the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and other legislation, in addition to the Basic Law. Provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as applied to Hong Kong remain in force. The position of the HKSAR Government is very clear: we oppose foreign legislatures interfering in any form in the internal affairs of the HKSAR.

As for explanatory work, the HKSAR Government has been explaining to countries around the world the successful implementation of "one country, two systems" since our return to the Motherland, and promoting Hong Kong's unique status under the Basic Law and "one country, two systems" as well as our own various advantages. Such work is done through exchanges of information, reciprocal official visits, participation in international conferences, and the regular liaison of the overseas Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs). The Financial Secretary visited the US in October 2019, while I visited the US three times in September 2018, June and September 2019 respectively, during which we met with US government officials, Congressmen, think tanks as well

as the business community there, and explained clearly Hong Kong's unique status and advantages. In respect of the Hong Kong Act, we have been explaining the situation in Hong Kong to relevant persons and organisations and actively clarifying misunderstandings, stressing that the changing of US policies towards Hong Kong is unwarranted and will bring negative impact on the exchanges of people and businesses between the two places. The Chief Executive, myself and officers of the ETOs have written many times to various interlocutors in the US to explain clearly and in detail the HKSAR Government's position.

The ETOs in Washington DC, New York and San Francisco have all along maintained regular contact with various sectors in the US, and they through meetings and other means have explained the actual and latest situation in Hong Kong. Among these, in the case of the ETO in Washington DC, the ETO has met over 200 political and business leaders in this year so far, including federal government officials responsible for Hong Kong affairs in the White House, Department of State, Department of Commerce and the US Trade Representative, as well as members and staffers of Congress.

Looking ahead, the HKSAR Government will continue to strengthen external connections on the above aspects.

Thank you, President.

Announcement by Judiciary

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Judiciary has announced that having regard to the situation in the vicinity of Jordan, subject to any directions of the presiding Judge or Judicial Officer concerned and until further announcement, all hearings of the Lands Tribunal and the Labour Tribunal originally scheduled from November 18 to tomorrow (November 21) and thereafter are refixed to a date and time to be notified by the court in due course. All relevant parties to the proceedings affected should keep in view any further notification by the court or public announcements by the Judiciary.

For enquiries, please call the following hotlines after 8.45am tomorrow:

Lands Tribunal: Hotline: (852) 3916 6147

Labour Tribunal: Hotline: (852) 3916 6148

The registries and offices of the two Tribunals will remain closed tomorrow until further announcement.

Transcript of remarks by CS, S for S, SCED and SED at media session (with video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau; and the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, met the media this morning (November 20). Following is the transcript of remarks from the media session:

Reporter: Secretary, what is your plan in trying to put through zeal religious leaders, teachers, lawmakers, as well as political heavy-weights and Uni heads, trying to persuade people inside the Polytechnic University to come out? But still, some still are remaining, some would rather go through the sewage system to try and make an escape. Is that wishful thinking on your side to continue to persuade them to peacefully come out and surrender themselves to you, speaking the same line as in the past couple of days? What is your plan to ensure the safe passage of those people out of the Polytechnic University, since you said that it is a dangerous environment inside?

Secretary for Security: I think it needs all parties to help. If you look at the figures that I have told you, we have around 800 to 900 people who are willing to surrender, so we keep working on that. For those who still haven't made up their mind to come out to surrender, then of course we will continue to persuade them through all sorts of means. And I think society's efforts collectively will help. And it is important, I think, that the right message given to them that whatever their self-proclaimed purpose is, if their act contravenes the law, then everybody has to take up their responsibility. And that is an important message because that will be important for Hong Kong to continue as a law-abiding city. And that message must be spread and particularly people who are in the legal sector. I think the message of rule of law is that everybody is equal before the law. And of course I am sure the court will take into consideration individual circumstances and the circumstances regarding individuals. So we have full faith that the whole thing will be dealt in a very just way. (The Secretary for Security met the media again at 2.20pm at the Legislative Council Complex on the same issue. Please refer to [the transcript of remarks](#) issued at 4pm for details.)

Reporter: Mr Lee, do you think the election this week can help to ease the current unrest in Hong Kong or make things worse?

Secretary for Security: Well, I do not want to speculate on anything. But the most important thing is we will have to tell everybody who are still remaining on the campus, that first of all, it will be dangerous for them to remain. And it will be something that they have to admit that if they contravene the law, they have to face the consequences of the law. The rule of law will ensure that everybody will be dealt with justly. The Police's effort and the Government's effort and I think the whole society's effort is to ensure that the whole thing will be resolved in a peaceful manner as much as we can. So I will not speculate on any positive action to whatever is happening now. But I think it is important that we all try to de-escalate the whole matter.

Reporter: Secretary, could you talk about the images we have seen this morning of uniformed students being lined up at some MTR stations and being checked by the Police? Do you have any concerns on the psychological impact on those students?

Secretary for Education: I am not too sure about the details of the particular incidents that you mentioned. But I think when the Police need to take some action, they are just trying to protect the law and order of society. And I think every citizen in society should comply with that. When you talk about whether they will have any psychological effect, I think the school will try their best to help the students to understand what the Police are doing.

Reporter: Mr Cheung, can I ask you, the elections this weekend, how important are they for Hong Kong? Do you think they will help ease the current unrest or make things worse?

Chief Secretary for Administration: The Government attaches great importance to this upcoming election. This election will be the largest ever. Every single seat will be contested, so it's a really meaningful, democratic exercise. That's why we are extremely keen, I stress extremely keen, to see a proper, a safe, a fair, honest and particularly impartial election this Sunday. But much depends on the co-operation of violent protesters. It takes two to tango. No matter how committed we are to maintain law and order, it really counts on whether they co-operate. If they start vandalising, start violence, start arson in many places, blocking the roads, stopping traffic, it will be very difficult for people to go to the election and feeling unsafe, then it will really ruin this election. So I call on everybody to treasure this opportunity, cast your vote, exercise a civic right and protect this upcoming election.

Reporter: Is the Hong Kong Government threatening because you kept saying that there will be harm to bilateral relations. It is also a special status given to Hong Kong by the US (United States). Do you have any specific evidence or views that contribute to your repeated statement that this is meddling with Hong Kong's internal affairs?

Chief Secretary for Administration: I will leave this to Mr Yau.

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: Let me clarify one point. You were saying that Hong Kong's separate customs territory status is given by the US. This is factually wrong. Constitutionally, under Article 116 and Article 151 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong is given this special status where we can represent ourselves as a separate customs territory and also represent ourselves using Hong Kong, China, differentiating from the Mainland in taking part in many of the multilateral trading regimes, such as APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Just to give you some examples. This is not a gift from a single country. It is a constitutional right and a privilege given to Hong Kong under the "one country, two systems" principle.

The second point is that the US has all along been respecting this "one country, two systems" principle, as they often proclaim. I think the existing US policy towards Hong Kong gives us that respect. Any unilateral change of their stance will not change Hong Kong's constitutional status because we will remain a separate customs territory, and a member alongside with the Mainland of China and the US in the WTO. Certainly, I think such unilateral measure will affect, if not harm, the mutual and common interests between Hong Kong and the US, noting that we are major trading partners, not to mention that every year, the US enjoys the largest trade surplus from Hong Kong and trade is a two-way street. Any ways that affect the relationship will certainly hamper the relationship.

I also mentioned that our relationship is more than trade and dollar sign. When we are talking about human rights and democracy, I must say that these rights are protected by the Basic Law of Hong Kong. Article 4 of the Basic Law protects human rights. We have seen all these rights including rights given to anybody working and reporting in Hong Kong being protected. On these we have our self-interests to do good, so I don't see any valid reasons for changing that. That also explains why in our statement, we strongly object to any attempt by any country to try to influence Hong Kong's own interests, and that's also why I said the US' piece of Act recently passed by the House and the Senate respectively is unwarranted and unnecessary.

I also mentioned that the passage of such legislative attempt would stand a chance of sending a wrong signal to the situation of Hong Kong. I don't want people to be mistaken. The unwarranted foreign intervention is adding fuel to fire in this rough situation of Hong Kong. Certainly, I don't see there's any possible way that this will de-escalate the situation we are having, so I would urge people to refrain from meddling with the already delicate situation of Hong Kong. The problem of Hong Kong is of course a matter for Hong Kong people, the Hong Kong community and our government. We are trying every endeavor to improve the situation and I would urge all parties to work together. As the Chief Secretary and our colleagues often mention, we are working on a very tough pathway, we need people to understand and work together and certainly we don't want any distorted pictures to make the situation more convoluted. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)