

LCQ17: Handling of waste vehicle tyres

Following is a question by the Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

According to the paper submitted by the Environment and Ecology Bureau to the Panel on Environmental Affairs of this Council in November 2023 (the paper), nearly 30 000 tonnes of waste vehicle tyres were generated in Hong Kong in 2021, of which 70 per cent were generally first cut and disposed of at landfills, and only some 20 per cent were retreaded and reused or recycled. It has been learnt that although waste vehicle tyres disposed of at landfills will be cut first, it still takes a long time for them to decompose, which also leads to the problem of landfills being exhausted. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total weight of waste vehicle tyres generated in Hong Kong in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by the following methods for their disposal: (i) recovered and recycled locally, (ii) recovered and exported after treatment, and (iii) disposed of at landfills;

(2) of the weight of landfilled waste vehicle tyres that were handled by the Government in the past three years, and its percentage in the weight of all waste vehicle tyres disposed of at landfills; the reasons for not recovering and recycling such waste vehicle tyres;

(3) Whether the Government has compiled statistics on the maximum handling capacity, actual handling capacity and remaining handling capacity of waste vehicle tyre recyclers in the market at present; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will compile such statistics;

(4) Given that it has been learnt that in order to promote the local recycling industry, the Government had allocated 20 sites for lease to the industry by January 2024, of the details of such sites, including their location and size, the recycling projects involved, and the number of such sites used for handling waste vehicle tyres; and

(5) Given that the paper proposes that landfills no longer accept and handle the disposal of waste vehicle tyres, when the proposal is expected to be formally implemented?

Reply:

President,

About 20 000 tonnes of vehicle tyre waste are generated in Hong Kong every year, of which some are retreaded for reuse or recycled. Vehicle tyre

waste can be processed to recover metals, cut and shredded into crumb rubber as raw materials for other products, or utilised as alternative fuel as a means of converting waste to energy.

The reply to the question raised by the Hon Frankie Yick is as follows:

(1) Statistics on vehicle tyre waste generation by weight and handling method each year from 2021 to 2023 are tabulated below. The figures show that the proportion of vehicle tyre waste being recycled and retreaded for reuse is increasing year by year. Statistics for 2024 are still under compilation.

Year	Quantity recycled locally (tonnes)	Quantity exported for recycling (tonnes)	Quantity disposed of at landfills (Note 1) (tonnes)	Total quantity of vehicle tyre waste (Noted 1, Note 2) (tonnes)
2021	7 600	40	19 900	27 500
2022	10 200	0	16 200	26 500
2023	13 900	20	14 300	28 300

Note 1: The quantity includes a small quantity of other tyres which cannot be classified.

Note 2: The sum of individual items may not equal to total due to rounding.

(2) and (5) At present, tyres replaced during vehicle maintenance services undertaken by government departments are usually sent to contractors for retreading and reuse, or to recyclers for shredding and recycling. Vehicle tyre waste collected in public places by government departments and their outsourced service contractors is currently delivered to landfills for disposal. The relevant figures from 2021 to 2023 are tabulated below. Statistics of 2024 are still under compilation.

Year	Quantity of landfilled vehicle tyre waste collected by government departments (tonnes)	Percentage to vehicle tyre waste disposed of at landfills (Per cent)
2021	2 160	11
2022	2 570	16
2023	2 530	18

The Government has been maintaining regular meetings with the tyre trade and disseminating information on recycling of vehicle tyre waste (such as contact information of collectors and recyclers) through relevant trade associations, tyre dealers, retailers as well as vehicle repair workshops, with a view to facilitating their recycling arrangement.

Meanwhile the Government plans to introduce an amendment bill to the Legislative Council in the first half of 2025 to establish a common

legislative framework for the producer responsibility schemes (PRSs). Upon the passage of the amendment bill by the Legislative Council, we will progressively cover more products under the PRSs, including vehicle tyres, in the light of prevailing circumstances. The Government shall implement the PRSs based on a market-led approach by which recycling service will be provided by the market, allowing the relevant stakeholders to jointly share the eco-responsibility. We will also set statutory recovery targets in order to ensure vehicle tyre waste are properly collected and treated, for the sake of enhancing the recycling rate of vehicle tyre waste as well as promoting the development of local circular economy.

In addition, the amendment bill will amend the scope of waste control to accommodate the subsequent implementation of various PRSs. Upon the implementation of the PRS for vehicle tyres in future, designated waste disposal facilities (including landfills) will no longer accept and handle vehicle tyre waste, for the purpose of diverting them to recycling facilities for recycling.

(3) Based on the Waste Recovery Survey conducted by the Environmental Protection Department, the maximum recycling capacity for vehicle tyre waste was around 25 000 tonnes while the actual recycling quantity was around 14 000 tonnes in 2023.

(4) As of January 31, 2025, among the 20 short-term tenancy (STT) sites for exclusive bidding and use by the recycling industry, one of them is being used for the processing of tyre waste. Information on the 20 STT sites is set out at Annex.

LCQ12: Non-governmental organisations' acceptance of advantages from overseas organisations

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Junius Ho and a written reply by the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

It has been reported that the new-term United States Government has recently planned to substantially reduce the spending of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It is learnt that USAID has been providing funding support for overseas non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on a long-term basis, and assisting such NGOs in carrying out work that endangers the national security of the place where the NGOs are based,

such as exporting Western values, performing infiltration and sabotage, and inciting riots. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Government currently has a mechanism in place to verify if local NGOs have accepted advantages from overseas organisations (such as USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy of the United States); if it has, of the details;

(2) whether it has assessed if the acceptance of financial contributions from overseas organisations by NGOs in Hong Kong violates the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance; and

(3) whether the Government will consider establishing a mechanism to regulate the acceptance of financial contributions from overseas organisations by NGOs in Hong Kong, and regularly review if the financial contributions accepted by NGOs pose risks to national security?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has all along been steadfast in safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, fully and faithfully upholding the highest principle of "one country, two systems", while protecting the legal interests, rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents and other people in Hong Kong in accordance with the law. It will resolutely safeguard the overall interest of the community and the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, ensuring the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems".

With the promulgation of the Hong Kong National Security Law (HKNSL) on June 30, 2020 and the commencement upon gazettal of the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) on March 23, 2024, the legal system and enforcement mechanisms of the HKSAR for safeguarding national security have been improved. The HKNSL and the SNSO are compatible and complementary, building a strong line of defence to safeguard national security in the HKSAR, ensuring the effective protection of national security, and enabling the HKSAR to make good use of the relevant laws to effectively prevent, suppress and punish acts and activities endangering national security in accordance with the law.

As a cosmopolitan city and an international financial centre, Hong Kong welcomes exchanges between local institutions, organisations and individuals and those from all parts of the world, as well as foreign institutions or organisations to set up offices and establish operations in Hong Kong. On the other hand, given the increasingly complicated geopolitical situation, the HKSAR faces ever-changing risks to national security. External forces, anti-China and destabilising individuals are waiting for opportunities to make malicious attacks and smears. The HKSAR Government will definitely take all necessary countermeasures to safeguard national security if any of them uses improper means to carry out acts of foreign interference in violation of the

principle of non-intervention under international law, in an attempt to undermine the stability and prosperity of the HKSAR, posing national security risks.

My reply to the three parts of the question is as follows:

Various measures have been put in place under the legal system of the HKSAR for safeguarding national security to prevent external forces from interfering in the normal operation of the HKSAR, and to prevent external forces from unlawfully interfering in the affairs of our country or of the HKSAR through agents or agent organisations, thus undermining the sovereignty and political independence of our country, and endangering national security.

In particular, Division 1 of Part 6 of the SNSO provides for offences relating to external interference endangering national security. Under section 52 of the SNSO, a person (including any organisation) who, with intent to bring about an interference effect, collaborates with an external force to do an act and uses improper means when so doing the act commits an offence of "external interference endangering national security". The elements of this offence are clearly defined in sections 53 to 55. "Bringing about interference effect" covers influencing the executive authorities, the legislature and the judiciary in performing functions, interfering with an election, prejudicing the relationship between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR, the relationship between the HKSAR and any foreign country, etc. "Collaborating with external force" covers the circumstance that a person does the act with the financial contributions, or the support by other means, of an external force. "Using improper means" covers the making of a material misrepresentation, the commission of acts of violence or acts constituting criminal offences, etc.

In addition, Division 2 of Part 6 of the SNSO has improved the mechanism originally provided for in the Societies Ordinance for prohibiting organisations endangering national security from operating in the HKSAR. Under section 60, if the Secretary for Security reasonably believes that it is necessary for safeguarding national security to prohibit the operation or continued operation of an organisation, or if a local organisation is a political body and has a connection with a political organisation of an external place (including the acceptance of financial contributions or substantive support by other means from a political organisation of an external place), the Secretary for Security may prohibit the operation or continued operation of the organisation in the HKSAR. In addition, the mechanism for prohibiting organisations endangering national security from operating in the HKSAR also applies to any organisation which is established outside the HKSAR but is related to the HKSAR. For example, a person in the HKSAR conducts activities in the HKSAR under the control, supervision or direction of that organisation; or that organisation provides financial contributions, or aid of other kinds to any person in the HKSAR.

The HKSAR Government has all along been committed to resolutely, fully and faithfully implementing the HKNSL, the SNSO, and other laws of the HKSAR relating to safeguarding national security, with a view to effectively

preventing, suppressing and punishing acts and activities endangering national security in accordance with the law. If any individual or organisation is suspected of committing an offence endangering national security, the law enforcement agencies will take decisive actions to enforce the law and pursue their legal liabilities in accordance with the law, and will not allow them to evade justice. The HKSAR Government's actions to safeguard national security have all along been taken in strict accordance with the statutory procedures and relevant laws.

Safeguarding national security is a top priority for the HKSAR and the most important task of the HKSAR Government. Details of relevant efforts of the HKSAR is information about the work on safeguarding national security and therefore cannot be disclosed.

LCQ7: Improving accessibility of village areas

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Chan Han-pan and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

The Government has provided additional barrier-free access facilities under the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme to enhance the convenience of the elderly, people with disabilities and people in need in using public walkways. However, it is learnt that the complex terrain and the lack of such facilities have made commuting quite difficult for those village residents who moved to the hillsides due to urban development in early years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether the Government has, in formulating policies on transport and barrier-free facilities, conducted accessibility studies targeting hillside villages (such as those in Tsuen Wan), and whether it has collected relevant data on the difficulties faced by village residents in travelling;
- (2) whether the Government will launch a comprehensive survey on barrier-free facilities in village areas, so as to assess the conditions of the existing facilities in villages and identify those villages which are in urgent need of improvement; whether the Government has plans to provide additional public transport nodes to enhance the accessibility of villages; and
- (3) whether the Government will consider extending the UA Programme to villages, so as to ensure that residents in village areas can also enjoy the right to barrier-free access; if so, of the specific timetable?

Reply:

President,

The Government is committed to providing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways. Since the launch of the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme in August 2012, the Government has been actively installing more barrier-free access facilities (i.e. lifts or ramps) at all public walkways (i.e. footbridges, elevated walkways, and subways) in Hong Kong, including those in the vicinity of villages, so as to facilitate access by the public in using public walkways. In order to benefit more people, the scope of the UA Programme, initially covering only public walkways which were not equipped with any barrier-free access facilities, has been expanded to cover existing walkways that are equipped with standard ramps provided that certain criteria are met. In 2019, the Government introduced a special scheme to retrofit lifts at footbridges, subways, and elevated walkways in estates under the Tenants Purchase Scheme, the Buy or Rent Option Scheme and public rental housing estates with properties divested under the Housing Authority, provided that certain criteria are met.

In consultation with the Labour and Welfare Bureau, Transport Department (TD) and Highways Department (HyD), the consolidated reply to the various parts of the question raised by Dr the Hon Chan Han-pan is as follows:

(1) and (2) The Government is committed to enhancing community accessibility by developing a comprehensive transportation network and installing more barrier-free facilities. In formulating relevant policies, the Government will consult various stakeholders in the community to ensure that these policies are user-friendly and socially effective.

Since December 2010, government bureaux and departments have appointed Access Co-ordinators and Access Officers to co-ordinate and manage accessibility issues in the premises under their purview (including premises and facilities in rural areas), with a view to facilitating access to the premises and the use of the services and facilities by people in need. Rural residents, Rural Committees or District Council members, etc, concerned may put forward proposals to the government departments to improve the barrier-free facilities in the rural areas when necessary. The relevant government departments will consider whether these works should be carried out, having regard to factors such as the feasibility of the works, resource allocation and views of local community.

In addition, in planning the public transport service network, the Government will carefully consider various factors such as existing public transport ancillary facilities and service level, completion of transport infrastructure, district development, demographic changes and passenger demand to meet the travel needs of the public. For example, many villages in Tsuen Wan District currently have access to public transport services, such as franchised buses and green minibuses, connecting various locations in the district, including railway stations and major public transport interchanges. The TD will continue to closely monitor the demand of the public for public transport services, including village residents, and will review relevant

arrangements in a timely manner.

(3) The HyD has been pressing ahead with the implementation of a total of 382 items under various phases of the UA Programme. As at end February 2025, 239 items under the UA Programme were completed, while 138 items are under construction. The completed projects include the retrofitting of lifts for pedestrian walkways in the vicinity of villages, such as the subway near Tai Po Lam Tsuen across Fanling Highway near Tai Po Road – Tai Wo (Structure No. NS145) and the footbridge near Tai Po Tong Hang Tung Chuen across the East Rail Line Track near Tai Wo Service Road East and Tong Hang (Structure No. NF82). The Government will continue to press ahead with the remaining projects to bring convenience to more citizens.

LCQ19: Crackdown on black taxis in rural and tourist areas

Following is a question by the Hon Vincent Cheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

It has been reported that there are black taxis in quite a number of rural and tourist areas (e.g. Sai Kung and the Peak), and the unlawful acts of the drivers concerned (including overcharging, cherry-picking passengers, refusing hire and failing to take the most direct route) have seriously affected tourists' experience and Hong Kong's reputation as a "hospitable city". In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of complaints received by the authorities since the implementation of the Taxi-Driver-Offence Points system involving unlawful acts of black-taxi drivers in rural and tourist areas and, among them, the number of taxi drivers with points incurred; the respective offences in which those taxi drivers with points incurred are involved and the penalties imposed on them;

(2) whether the authorities have stepped up law enforcement against black taxis in rural areas over the past three years; if so, of the details (including the number of law enforcement operations, the number of drivers arrested in each of such law enforcement operations, the reasons for their arrests, the number of drivers prosecuted and convicted, as well as the relevant penalties imposed); if not, the reasons for that;

(3) as some tourists have indicated that they are not clear about how to lodge complaints against law-offending taxi drivers, whether the authorities will step up publicity and education, such as by providing tourists with

clear information, including taxi fares and channels for lodging complaints, at the entrances and exits of the airport, various boundary control points and major rural tourist spots; and

(4) as there are views pointing out that the problem of black taxis stems from the inadequacy of ancillary public transport facilities in rural and tourist areas (e.g. in the vicinity of High Island Reservoir in Sai Kung), whether the authorities have considered improving the public transport services in such areas, such as increasing the frequency of green minibus services, thereby combating black taxi operations in the market and tying in with the development of eco-tourism?

Reply:

President,

After consulting the Security Bureau and the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF), our reply to the Hon Vincent Cheng's question is as follows:

The Government has earlier reviewed the overall taxi operation and management, and put forward a series of measures to enhance taxi services. Such measures include introducing a Taxi-Driver-Offence Points (TDOP) system and a two-tier penalty system for certain taxi-driver-related offences, in order to combat taxi drivers' illegal acts and strengthen the deterrent effect against repeat offenders. The relevant legislative provisions were passed by the Legislative Council and are in effect.

In addition, with a view to enhancing taxi services, the Government proposes to mandate the installation of in-vehicle cameras, dash cameras and global navigation satellite systems in all taxi compartments. Installation of such devices can help caution the few black sheep in the taxi industry against violating the law, and facilitate the follow-up actions and investigations on suspected malpractices (e.g. overcharging, driving to a destination other than by the most direct practicable route, etc) by the Police or the Transport Department (TD), thus better protecting the rights of the passengers. We have consulted the Panel on Transport of the Legislative Council and the Transport Advisory Committee in end 2024, and Members have expressed support for the proposal. We are carrying out the law drafting work, and will endeavour to introduce the proposed legislative amendments into the Legislative Council in the second quarter of 2025.

(1) The TDOP system has taken effect on September 22, 2024. It covers 11 taxi-driver related offences (e.g. overcharging, refusing to accept a hire and driving to a destination other than by the most direct practicable route, etc). If a taxi driver becomes liable to a fixed penalty for or is convicted of such taxi-driver-related offence, he or she will incur three, five or 10 points, depending on the offence committed. If a taxi driver incurs 15 or more points under the TDOP system within a two-year period, he or she will be disqualified from driving a taxi for a certain period of time.

In accordance with the records of the TD, until March 9, 2025, 66 taxi drivers incurred points under the TDOP system. The relevant offences

committed include overcharging, refusing to accept a hire or driving to a destination other than by the most direct practicable route. Among all, five taxi drivers incurred three points, 12 taxi drivers incurred five points and 49 taxi drivers incurred 10 points. So far, no taxi driver is liable to disqualification from driving a taxi due to incurrence of 15 or more points.

The TD and the HKPF do not maintain the breakdown of the numbers of complaints about taxi services and the numbers of taxi drivers who incurred points under the TDOP system by countryside and tourism zone.

(2) The numbers of enforcement actions taken as well as the numbers of prosecution and conviction against the offences related to taxi services during the period from 2022 to the third quarter of 2024 are set out at the Annex. The Security Bureau and the HKPF do not maintain the breakdown of the aforementioned figures by countryside and tourism zone.

(3) To help tourists understand the taxi fare arrangements in Hong Kong, the TD has published leaflets showing the taxi fare rates and the reference fares for journeying to and from major tourist areas and attractions in Hong Kong for distribution to tourists at the airport, major border crossings and tourist spots (e.g. Shenzhen Bay Port, Lok Ma Chau Control Point, Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point and Hong Kong Disneyland). The TD has also uploaded the leaflet onto its website for public viewing. The telephone numbers of the 1823 Call Centre, the Transport Complaints Unit (TCU), the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the HKPF are also provided on the leaflet for tourists to seek assistance and lodge complaints when needed. The Government has set up signs of the telephone number of the TCU at major public transport interchange as well. And the TD has also set up taxi information boards at major taxi stands to display information on taxi fares.

If a member of the public suspects that a taxi driver has committed offences such as refusing to accept a hire or overcharging, he or she can record the name of the driver, vehicle registration mark of the taxi, time and location, etc, and report the matter to the HKPF.

(4) The Government attaches importance to the travelling needs of tourists to and from countryside and major tourist areas. Having regard to factors such as tourist traffic and overall operation of attractions, the relevant arrangement of public transport services is timely reviewed. In respect of the area of the High Island Reservoir in Sai Kung, apart from travelling by urban or New Territories taxi, citizens and tourists may make use of New Territories green minibus route no. 9A (Pak Tam Chung – the East Dam, High Island Reservoir) on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays. Green minibus route no. 9A has been in service since July 2018. The TD has been liaising with the minibus operator continuously with regard to passenger needs, in order to coordinate with the operator on service enhancement in the form of extension of service period and service hours, as well as increasing the frequency of the services.

The timetable of green minibus route no. 9A which is temporarily implemented from December 7, 2024 to March 30, 2025 is as follows:

From Pak Tam Chung	From the East Dam, High Island Reservoir	Frequency (minutes)
On Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays		
9.30am to 6.10pm	10am to 6.30pm	20

The TD will maintain close liaison with relevant departments, and adjust the public transport services arrangement with operators to meet the needs of the citizens and tourists when required.

LCQ13: Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Tan Yueheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

To foster career development of young persons and the exchange of talents in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region launched the pilot Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme (the Scheme) in 2021, regularised the Scheme in 2023, and introduced an enhancement measure of relaxing the eligibility criteria for young persons this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total number of applications received since the launch of the Scheme; the number of enterprises participating in the Scheme, and the number of young persons employed who have contributed to these enterprises' success in allowance applications;

(2) of the amount of allowance granted in each year since the launch of the Scheme;

(3) whether the authorities hold information on the employment trends of those young persons participating in the Scheme, both during and after the completion of the 18-month subsidy period under the Scheme, including whether they have worked in Mainland cities for the full period of 18 months, and whether they have continued to work in Mainland cities after the completion of the subsidy period of the Scheme; if the authorities hold such information, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether the authorities have conducted separate surveys and studies on young persons and enterprises participating in the Scheme, so as to gather

data and views for evaluation of the effectiveness of the Scheme; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government launched the pilot Greater Bay Area (GBA) Youth Employment Scheme (the pilot scheme) in 2021 and has regularised the scheme (the regularised scheme) since 2023, encouraging enterprises to employ Hong Kong young people and station them to work in the Mainland cities of the GBA. Under the pilot scheme and the regularised scheme for 2023 and 2024, an allowance of HK\$10,000 per month per young person was disbursed to enterprises for up to 18 months. Starting from January 2025, the allowance limit of the regularised scheme has increased to HK\$12,000 per month per young person, or 60 per cent of the young person's monthly salary, whichever is lower. The eligibility requirements for joining the scheme were also relaxed to include young people aged 29 or below with sub-degree or higher qualifications.

My reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Tan Yueheng is as follows:

(1) As at February 2025, the pilot scheme and the regularised scheme recorded a total of 1 076 enterprises offering job vacancies and 2 262 young people have been employed. The scheme allows enterprises to recruit eligible young people directly through various channels. Hence, the Government does not have information on the number of young people who have applied for the vacancies under the scheme.

(2) As at February 2025, the pilot scheme disbursed HK\$117.91 million of allowance to enterprises. In 2023-24 and 2024-25 (as at February 2025), the regularised scheme respectively disbursed HK\$15.07 million and HK\$49.99 million of allowance to enterprises.

(3) Of the 1 091 young people who were employed under the pilot scheme, 632 completed the 18-month on-the-job training. Amongst those who completed the 18-month on-the-job training, 464 continued to be employed by the enterprises. The reasons for young people not continuing with their employment included the young people leaving employment pre-maturely, employers not offering employment or the young people declining the job offers. Enterprises can flexibly deploy young people who have completed on-the-job training to work in Hong Kong or in the Mainland cities according to their business development and needs.

As some young people employed under the regularised scheme for 2023 and 2024 are still undergoing on-the-job training, the Labour Department (LD) will compile the relevant data in due course.

(4) The LD has commissioned a consultant to conduct a 3-year "longitudinal study" on the regularised scheme. The study conducts follow-up surveys on the participating enterprises and young people with a view to understanding the

employment situation of young people, and collecting opinions from enterprises and young people on the scheme. The study commenced in March 2024. The consultant will submit an interim report of the study to the LD in the second quarter of 2025. The LD will review in detail the effectiveness of the scheme upon completion of the "longitudinal study".