

LCQ22: Impacts of abolition of manual toll payment on tunnel staff

Following is a question by the Hon Luk Chung-hung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (May 26):

Question:

The Government plans to adopt, starting from the end of next year, a free-flow tolling system at the various government tolled tunnels and the Tsing Sha Control Area (tunnels), under which the manual toll payment will be replaced by remote toll payment. Some trade unions' representatives have pointed out that by then, the various tunnels' toll collectors and supporting staff (affected staff) may lose their jobs; as such, the Government and the operators responsible for the management, operation and maintenance of the tunnels (the operators) should make appropriate arrangements for the affected staff as soon as possible, so as to protect their rights and interests. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the total number of staff affected, as well as their highest, lowest and average service years, with a tabulated breakdown of the number of such staff by name of tunnel and grade of staff;

(2) as the Government has indicated that it will require the operators to provide re-training and job transfer arrangements for the affected staff, of the details and progress of such work; whether the Government will (i) provide subsidies on re-training expenses and (ii) offer ex-gratia compensation payments to the affected staff on accounts of their livelihood having been affected by the Government's policy; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether the Government will specify in the tunnel management contracts to be signed in the future that the operators are required to set aside funds for providing ex-gratia compensation payments to those affected staff who are unable to have successful job transfer; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My consolidated reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Luk Chung-hung is as follows:

The Government plans to gradually implement a free-flow tolling system (FFTS) at government tolled tunnels and the Tsing Sha Control Area (TSCA) from late 2022 onwards. Following the implementation of FFTS, toll collectors will no longer be required to collect tolls at government tolled tunnels and

the control area. In this connection, the Transport Department (TD) will continue to review in detail the operating arrangements with the contractors responsible for the management, operation and maintenance of the tunnels and the TSCA (hereinafter referred to as the Contractors) in order to work out the manpower requirements after the implementation of FFTS.

The number of affected staff of various government tunnels and the TSCA will be subject to change depending on staff redeployment (e.g. internal transfer) and the operating condition in the coming two to three years (i.e. before the full implementation of FFTS). On this premise, the preliminary estimation is that about 260 toll collectors will be affected, the breakdown of which by tunnel and control area is as follows:

Tunnel/Control area	Number of toll collectors (preliminary estimate)
TSCA	28
Aberdeen Tunnel	32
Cross-Harbour Tunnel	52
Eastern Harbour Crossing	36
Lion Rock Tunnel	48
Shing Mun Tunnels	30
Tate's Cairn Tunnel	36
Total	262

The manpower arrangements in various tunnels and the TSCA may change before the implementation of FFTS; and hence the information of the toll collectors concerned (including their length of service) cannot be provided at this stage.

Apart from toll collectors, some posts such as assistant operations controllers, operations supervisors, administrative and supporting staff as well as technicians will no longer be required to perform tolling-related tasks as part of their duties with the implementation of FFTS. The TD will continue to maintain close liaison with the Contractors to review the manpower arrangements for the posts concerned upon the implementation of FFTS.

The TD has all along been encouraging the Contractors to assist their toll collectors and other affected staff in taking up other suitable positions, for instance by continuing to provide subsidies/training (e.g. driving test fees/training) to toll collectors for facilitating their transfer to become traffic officers employed by the Contractors. With a view to enabling more staff to stay in employment, if a toll collector has met the TD's requirements by completing a 24-day training programme and fulfilling other entry qualifications of traffic officer, the TD, having considered the operation and staff establishment of the various government tunnels and the

TSCA, will consider suitably exempting him/her from the entry requirement, as specified in the Contractors' management contracts, of having one year of working experience relevant to the post of traffic officer.

Taking into account the experience in implementing the toll waiver of the Lantau Link, the TD also encourages the Contractors to, apart from redeploying suitable staff to other posts in the respective tunnels/control area, arrange their staff to work in other businesses of the Contractors or their parent companies (e.g. as fee collectors at car parks). The Contractors will provide support and training to the staff, and encourage as well as make arrangements for them to seek job transfers.

In addition, the new service provider of FFTS will also require experienced personnel to assist in operating the tolling system and handling relevant tasks. The Government will actively consider to include, in the tender for toll service provider, requirements for the tenderers to submit proposals on the recruitment of existing tunnel staff and related manpower arrangement.

As for the existing Contractors, the TD will continue to monitor their related work. In case the employment contract of an employee needs to be terminated, the TD will ensure that the Contractor concerned will pay all the termination payments, e.g. outstanding wages, annual leave and severance payments, to the employee in accordance with the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) and the management contract.

[LCQ15: Illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward by motor vehicles](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (May 26):

Question:

Some transport trade organisations have indicated that the activities of using motor vehicles for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward (illegal carriage of passengers) have become rampant in recent months. The third party risks insurance for the vehicles concerned may be invalidated due to the vehicles having been used for illegal carriage of passengers, and this may result in a loss of protection for their passengers and other road users. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that in last year, among the cases in which fines were imposed for the offence of illegal carriage of passengers, as many as 70 per cent were cases in which the convicted persons were only fined \$2,000 or below, whether

it has assessed if this level of penalty is on the low side and lacks deterrent effect; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether it has lodged appeals against the cases in which the penalties were on the low side; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that while there were 221, 226 and 172 convictions for the offence of illegal carriage of passengers in 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively, only 39, 78 and 44 vehicles were detained with vehicle licences suspended by the Transport Department in the corresponding years, whether it has assessed if the figures for the latter are on the low side;

(3) given that the Government has planned to amend the legislation to increase the penalties for illegal carriage of passengers, of the latest progress of such work and the legislative timetable; and

(4) of the Government's measures, before the raised penalties are implemented, to step up efforts in combating the activities of illegal carriage of passengers, with a view to enhancing the protection for road users?

Reply:

President,

Pursuant to section 52 of the Road Traffic Ordinance (the Ordinance) (Cap. 374), no person shall drive or use a motor vehicle, or suffer or permit a motor vehicle to be driven or used, for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward unless the vehicle complies with certain conditions stipulated in the Ordinance (e.g. a hire car permit (HCP) is in force for the vehicle). Otherwise, it is an offence. The Government has been closely monitoring the use of motor vehicles for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward, and taking stern enforcement actions against illicit acts.

My reply to the Hon Frankie Yick's question is as follows:

(1) According to the Ordinance, any person who uses a motor vehicle for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward is liable to a maximum fine of \$5,000 and imprisonment of three months, plus suspension of vehicle licence and impoundment of vehicle for three months on the first conviction. For subsequent convictions, a maximum fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment of six months may be imposed along with the suspension of vehicle licence and impoundment of vehicles for six months.

In passing sentence, the court will consider the facts and all relevant factors of each case. As to whether an appeal against a sentence is warranted, the Government will deliberate on a host of considerations, including relevant precedent cases, the gravity of the offences committed by offenders and the trends of the offences concerned.

(2) After receiving the notification from the Police about a motor vehicle having been ruled by the court as being involved in illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward, the Transport Department (TD) will arrange to impound the vehicle concerned in accordance with established procedures. As

stipulated in the Ordinance, the TD will serve a notice to the registered owner within 14 days after the date of conviction about the intended arrangement of suspending the licence of the vehicle concerned and delivering the vehicle into the custody of the TD. The numbers of vehicles involved in convictions in relation to the offence of driving for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward in 2018, 2019 and 2020 were 89, 102 and 116 respectively. Each case of illegal passenger carriage and the vehicle concerned may involve in more than one conviction at the same time.

The arrangement of suspending the vehicle licence and delivering vehicles into the custody of the TD will be affected by various operational factors, such as the number of spaces and the waiting time in the vehicle pounds. Besides, if a party lodges appeals against a conviction, or makes representations in writing within the specified period of time showing cause why the vehicle licence should not be suspended, or applies for a hearing before a Transport Tribunal, the TD will hold over the arrangement of vehicle licence suspension and vehicle impoundment until the determination of the case by the court or the Transport Tribunal.

(3) To strengthen the deterrent effect of the penalties for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward, and to enhance the safety protection for passengers and road users, the TD has conducted a review on the penalties for related offences, and undertaken consultation regarding proposals of raising the fine as well as lengthening the period for suspension of vehicle licence and impoundment of vehicles. The drafting of legislative amendments is underway. They will be submitted by the Government to the Legislative Council for consideration in due course.

(4) The Government takes a multi-pronged approach comprising enforcement, education and publicity in combating the illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward by motor vehicles.

On law enforcement, the Police has been keeping an eye on the situation by collecting intelligence as well as conducting investigation and follow-up actions on complaint cases. The Police will continue to closely monitor any illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward and follow up on related complaints. Suitable enforcement actions will be taken should there be sufficient evidence.

On education and publicity, the TD has put in place a number of measures to prevent members of the public from inadvertently riding on private cars that carry passengers for hire or reward without valid HCPs. Such measures include publicity through online promotional video, broadcasting announcements on the radio, displaying samples of HCPs on the TD's website, and putting up posters in public places. These efforts serve to further enhance the public's awareness of legal hire car service and promote the identification of a valid hire car by checking if it has a valid HCP. Members of the public are encouraged to enquire with the service operator or make use of the TD's Online Checking System to ascertain whether an HCP has been issued in respect of the private car concerned before the journey starts. The TD will continue with the publicity efforts and work with the Police on

information exchange in order to combat illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward.

LCQ15: Illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward by motor vehicles

Following is a question by the Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (May 26):

Question:

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(1) given that in last year, among the cases in which fines were imposed for the offence of illegal carriage of passengers, as many as 70 per cent were cases in which the convicted persons were only fined \$2,000 or below, whether it has assessed if this level of penalty is on the low side and lacks deterrent effect; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether it has lodged appeals against the cases in which the penalties were on the low side; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that while there were 221, 226 and 172 convictions for the offence of illegal carriage of passengers in 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively, only 39, 78 and 44 vehicles were detained with vehicle licences suspended by the Transport Department in the corresponding years, whether it has assessed if the figures for the latter are on the low side;

(3) given that the Government has planned to amend the legislation to increase the penalties for illegal carriage of passengers, of the latest progress of such work and the legislative timetable; and

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Reply:

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My reply to the Hon Frankie Yick's question is as follows:

(1) According to the Ordinance, any person who uses a motor vehicle for illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward is liable to a maximum fine of \$5,000 and imprisonment of three months, plus suspension of vehicle licence and impoundment of vehicle for three months on the first conviction. For subsequent convictions, a maximum fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment of six months may be imposed along with the suspension of vehicle licence and impoundment of vehicles for six months.

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[LCQ12: Cyber security risks amid the epidemic](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Liao and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, in the Legislative Council today (May 26):

Question:

It has been reported that amid the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic which rages across the globe, the computer systems of hospitals in quite a number of places and even the World Health Organization have been subjected to intensified attacks by hackers. The number of cyberattacks such as phishing emails that the Hospital Authority (HA) of Hong Kong was subjected

to surged from about 20 million in 2015 to over 50 million last year. Besides, the HA was also subjected to five ransomware email attacks last year. An international cyber security analysis report pointed out that last year amid the epidemic, the industries most targeted by cyberattacks, apart from health care industry, were business and professional services industries, retail and hospitality industries, financial industry and high technology industry. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the number of cyberattacks that Hong Kong's health care industry was subjected to in each of the past three years, and the annual rates of change of such numbers, with a breakdown of such cases by type of institutions/organisations and type of attacks, as well as the losses involved (if any);

(2) whether it knows the number of cyberattacks that other industries in Hong Kong were subjected to in each of the past three years, and the annual rates of change of such numbers, with a breakdown of such cases by industry and type of attacks, as well as the losses involved (if any);

(3) whether it has assessed the cyber security risks faced by the various industries in Hong Kong amid the epidemic; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether it knows the new trends and major concerns in respect of cyber security risks across the globe amid the epidemic; if so, of the details and their impacts on Hong Kong?

Reply:

President,

Regarding the various parts of the question, our consolidated reply is as follows:

In the past year or so, COVID-19 has been rampant across the globe, and has significantly changed enterprises' mode of operation and people's way of living. Remote business, work from home, remote learning and online shopping etc. have become the new normal. Under this new normal, various sectors have to undergo digital transformation on the one hand, and on the other hand, actively respond to the new cyber security risks brought about by the transformation.

The breakdown of statistics on information security incidents handled by the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre (HKCERT) over the past three years is at Annex I. According to the statistics, a total of 8 346 information security incidents were handled in 2020, representing a decrease of 17 per cent and 12 per cent as compared with 2018 and 2019 respectively. Although there was a downward trend in the overall number of incidents, the phishing cases increased to 3 483, representing an increase of 66 per cent and 35 per cent as compared with 2018 and 2019 respectively. We

note that many hackers took advantage of the public concern over the epidemic by disseminating false information through phishing methods or pretending to be health organisations seeking donations, so as to lure the victims into visiting malicious websites, disclosing sensitive information or even defrauding money. In addition, the number of malicious software cases (mainly targeting individuals) in 2020 fell sharply by 85 per cent to 181 cases as compared with that in 2019. There were signs indicating that hackers have switched their main targets to enterprises or organisations. On the other hand, despite the small number of distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks at 53 cases only, the increase was over 43 per cent when compared with that in 2019. Such increase was believed to be due to the increase in the "attack surfaces" resulting from the provision of more online services by various sectors during the epidemic.

Besides, the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) recorded a total of 12 916 technology crime cases in 2020, representing an increase of 55 per cent as compared with 8 322 cases in 2019. The average monetary loss per case decreased from about \$350,000 in 2019 to about \$230,000, and the total amount of monetary loss was about \$2.96 billion, similar to that in 2019. The rise in the number of technology crime cases was mainly due to the increase in online fraud (such as e-shopping fraud or romance scam). Fraudsters commit offences with technologies such as the Internet, social media and e-mail as the medium. The breakdown of technology crimes and related loss over the past three years is at Annex II. The HKCERT and the HKPF do not have information on the breakdown by enterprise, organisation and industry (including the healthcare sector).

The Government has all along been maintaining close collaboration with the HKCERT to closely monitor the impact of the epidemic on global and local cyber security risks. Under the epidemic, the HKCERT expects a proliferation of targeted and organised cyberattacks on a global scale, which aligns with the local cyber security trend. Enterprises must be well-prepared to cope with the related challenges.

We will continue to tackle information security issues through a multi-pronged strategy. For example, by providing financial subsidy (such as Technology Voucher Programme), we support enterprises to enhance systems and cyber security measures, so as to strengthen the level of information security of various sectors. We also work closely with the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited and the HKCERT to disseminate information and advice on cyber security matters to the public. In addition, we encourage more public and private organisations' exchange of cyber security information through the Partnership Programme for Cyber Security Information Sharing and the cross-sector Cyber Security Information Sharing and Collaborative Platform (Cybersechub.hk). Moreover, the HKCERT has been implementing the Healthcare Cyber Security Watch Programme since 2019 to notify Hong Kong healthcare sector of cyber security vulnerabilities and threats in order to reduce cyber security risks. We will continue to collaborate with relevant organisations and departments (such as the HKPF and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data) to enhance Hong Kong's overall defense capability and resilience against cyberattacks, and strive to build Hong Kong

as a safe and secure smart city.

LCQ12: Cyber security risks amid the epidemic

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Liao and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, in the Legislative Council today (May 26):

Question:

It has been reported that amid the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic which rages across the globe, the computer systems of hospitals in quite a number of places and even the World Health Organization have been subjected to intensified attacks by hackers. The number of cyberattacks such as phishing emails that the Hospital Authority (HA) of Hong Kong was subjected to surged from about 20 million in 2015 to over 50 million last year. Besides, the HA was also subjected to five ransomware email attacks last year. An international cyber security analysis report pointed out that last year amid the epidemic, the industries most targeted by cyberattacks, apart from health care industry, were business and professional services industries, retail and hospitality industries, financial industry and high technology industry. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

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(2) whether it knows the number of cyberattacks that other industries in Hong Kong were subjected to in each of the past three years, and the annual rates of change of such numbers, with a breakdown of such cases by industry and type of attacks, as well as the losses involved (if any);

(3) whether it has assessed the cyber security risks faced by the various industries in Hong Kong amid the epidemic; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether it knows the new trends and major concerns in respect of cyber security risks across the globe amid the epidemic; if so, of the details and their impacts on Hong Kong?

Reply:

President,

Regarding the various parts of the question, our consolidated reply is as follows:

In the past year or so, COVID-19 has been rampant across the globe, and has significantly changed enterprises' mode of operation and people's way of living. Remote business, work from home, remote learning and online shopping etc. have become the new normal. Under this new normal, various sectors have to undergo digital transformation on the one hand, and on the other hand, actively respond to the new cyber security risks brought about by the transformation.

The breakdown of statistics on information security incidents handled by the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre (HKCERT) over the past three years is at Annex I. According to the statistics, a total of 8 346 information security incidents were handled in 2020, representing a decrease of 17 per cent and 12 per cent as compared with 2018 and 2019 respectively. Although there was a downward trend in the overall number of incidents, the phishing cases increased to 3 483, representing an increase of 66 per cent and 35 per cent as compared with 2018 and 2019 respectively. We note that many hackers took advantage of the public concern over the epidemic by disseminating false information through phishing methods or pretending to be health organisations seeking donations, so as to lure the victims into visiting malicious websites, disclosing sensitive information or even defrauding money. In addition, the number of malicious software cases (mainly targeting individuals) in 2020 fell sharply by 85 per cent to 181 cases as compared with that in 2019. There were signs indicating that hackers have switched their main targets to enterprises or organisations. On the other hand, despite the small number of distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks at 53 cases only, the increase was over 43 per cent when compared with that in 2019. Such increase was believed to be due to the increase in the "attack surfaces" resulting from the provision of more online services by various sectors during the epidemic.

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cyber security risks. Under the epidemic, the HKCERT expects a proliferation of targeted and organised cyberattacks on a global scale, which aligns with the local cyber security trend. Enterprises must be well-prepared to cope with the related challenges.

We will continue to tackle information security issues through a multi-pronged strategy. For example, by providing financial subsidy (such as Technology Voucher Programme), we support enterprises to enhance systems and cyber security measures, so as to strengthen the level of information security of various sectors. We also work closely with the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited and the HKCERT to disseminate information and advice on cyber security matters to the public. In addition, we encourage more public and private organisations' exchange of cyber security information through the Partnership Programme for Cyber Security Information Sharing and the cross-sector Cyber Security Information Sharing and Collaborative Platform (Cybersechub.hk). Moreover, the HKCERT has been implementing the Healthcare Cyber Security Watch Programme since 2019 to notify Hong Kong healthcare sector of cyber security vulnerabilities and threats in order to reduce cyber security risks. We will continue to collaborate with relevant organisations and departments (such as the HKPF and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data) to enhance Hong Kong's overall defense capability and resilience against cyberattacks, and strive to build Hong Kong as a safe and secure smart city.