

TAC discusses Star Ferry's fare increase applications

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The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) today (September 24) discussed applications for fare increases from the Star Ferry Company, Limited (SF) for its two franchised ferry routes, Central-Kowloon Point and Wan Chai-Kowloon Point.

TAC Chairman Ms Teresa Cheng Yeuk-wah said that the TAC, in deliberating the applications, had considered all relevant factors including the financial condition of the ferry operator; forecasts of changes in operating cost, revenue and return; past performance of the operator in the provision of the relevant ferry services; public acceptability of the proposed fares, and measures implemented by the operator to save costs and generate additional revenue.

"The TAC notes the financial situation and forecast performance of Star Ferry. Taking into account all relevant factors, we will make our recommendations to ensure that the provision of quality ferry services can be sustained for the benefits of the community," Ms Cheng said.

"Similar to other fare increase applications from public transport, the TAC will submit its recommendations to the Government for consideration by the Chief Executive-in-Council."

Members of the TAC were also briefed on the performance of the franchised bus operators in 2007 and noted that their performance was generally satisfactory.

"The franchised bus operators have made improvements in a number of service areas, including the continuous enhancement of their fleet with more environmentally friendly, air-conditioned and wheelchair accessible buses, and strengthening passenger information through bus stop announcement systems on buses or information panels at bus stops and termini," Ms Cheng said.

"They have also implemented a number of measures to enhance the safety of bus passengers. These include retrofitting of seat belts on the exposed seats at the front row of the upper deck of post-1997 design buses, strengthening the upper deck windscreens and continuous retrofitting of black boxes on buses.

"To meet future challenges, we urge operators to further enhance their operational efficiency, service quality and competitiveness," Ms Cheng said.

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