

BEC's Submission on Electronic Road Pricing Pilot Scheme

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Public Consultation on the ERP Pilot Scheme in Central and Its Adjacent Areas

The HKSAR Government launched a three-month public consultation on the Electronic Road Pricing ("ERP") pilot scheme in Central and its adjacent areas in December 2015. The consultation ended on 18 March 2016. BEC has made a [submission](#) to the Transport Department to express views on the pilot scheme.

Summary of BEC's Submission

BEC welcomes the ERP pilot scheme because it can benefit Central and its adjacent areas in terms of air quality, carbon emissions and addressing congestion, as well as improving the liveability and the resource and economic efficiency of Hong Kong.

BEC's views on the key aspects of the scheme are summarised as below:

1. Charging area

- The boundaries should be broader than the narrow Central District, covering Sheung Wan and Admiralty to create a buffer zone between this central business district and less congested areas.

2. Charging mechanism

- A cordon-based mechanism is preferred because of its inherent flexibility, allowing for charging by road segment, direction of travel, and time-of-use. It is considered fairer as it takes into account the distance travelled within the zone, and will deter unnecessary circulation of vehicles.

3. Charging period

- The charges should apply throughout each working day – around 7am - 8pm - and on Saturday because of the higher levels of vehicular movement over those periods of time.
- It is best not to charge at the moment on Sundays and public holidays, but introducing charging for Sundays should be considered in due course to reduce traffic and gradually extend the part of Central which is already a pedestrianised zone on Sundays.

4. Charging level

- A unified charge for all vehicles, focusing on reducing congestion, is recommended.
- Charges being sufficiently high to change behavior is important.
- A per pass approach is the better approach in terms of congestion and enhancement of our local environment.



5. Exemption

- Emergency vehicles
- Franchised buses and other buses on fixed routes with agreed schedules of service
- Trams

6. Technology

- The criteria used in deciding on the best approach should include:
 - cost of installation;
 - operation and maintenance over its life cycle;
 - flexibility in terms of future changes to zone boundaries;
 - compatibility with smart technologies; and
 - ease of use for the driver to address reluctance by vehicle owners to accept a new system.



7. Privacy concern

- This is not considered to be a significant issue in the light of regulations protecting personal data.

8. Effectiveness

- Indicators to evaluate the effectiveness should include:
 - vehicle travel speeds;
 - volume of traffic; and
 - the use of air quality indicators (NO_x, ozone, particulate matters, and carbon).
- The charging level needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure that the system continues to impact in the longer term on behaviour.



9. Complementary measures

- Adequate alternative transport arrangements:
 - Reviewing bus provision to address changes in need, additional bus priority lanes considered to enhance the passenger experience, and further provision of private block-based shuttle buses.
 - Improved walking and cycling facilities, traveller systems, and cycling provision, possibly along the harbourfront.
- Review parking policy and provision to ensure that this is supportive of policy on reducing congestion.
- Install additional electric vehicle chargers in car parks to enable the switch to lower emission vehicles.
- Introduce measures to discourage loading and unloading of commercial vehicles in the area in peak hours.
- Introduce electronic information regarding parking space availability in the area to reduce unnecessary traffic movement in the area.
- Rigorous enforcement of parking restrictions in Central and neighbouring areas.
- Ring-fence revenue for improvements to transport and ensure transparency in spend.
- A good programme of communications to explain the benefits to people.
- Monitoring of vehicle movements with reference to vehicle type and size, but also specifically in relation to taxis in order to assess impact and inform improvements.

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