

Departmental Research Seminar Series 2014-2015

Title: A Review in Hong Kong's Franchised Bus Services under the Current Transport Policies

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Date & Time: Friday, 08 May 2015, 2:00 pm

Venue: Room 10.25, 10/F, Department of Geography, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus

Abstract:

Mobility is a concerned topic in transport geography. Hong Kong is an international city with huge reliance on public transport. Although there are a number of transport modes available, the city faces problems and challenges in achieving a high mobility by its public transport services. With the emphasis on using the railway as the backbone of the transport system, the railway itself faces a high pressure during peak hours. Still, franchised buses as the greatest road-based public transport are being encouraged to feed more passengers to railway while direct point-to-point services are being discouraged. At the same time, traffic congestion induced by an increase in private vehicles has caused a number of issues to the franchised bus services. In particular, the low flexibility of franchised bus also lowers its attractiveness and competitiveness. The general mobility performance is unsatisfactory.

Specific case studies have shown that some services have unnecessarily long routing and unreasonably long journey time. This has been affecting both the passengers and operators in journey time estimation and resource allocation respectively. The situation is unhealthy and certain reform is necessary to enhance the service quality of franchised bus as a public transport mode. Some overseas cases are good references for Hong Kong to review its franchised bus services and future development. Instead of solely emphasizing railway as the backbone, franchised bus and railway services should act more as a complement of each other, to fill in the gaps that either side could not achieve such as coverage, convenience, reliability and comfort. The ultimate goal is to attain a win-win situation between different stakeholders. Passengers could eventually enjoy an improved mobility with an efficient and reliable choice of public transport service.