

## **Press Release**

### **The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers' response to new toll plans for road harbour crossings**

(Hong Kong, 23 March 2023) The Administration has recommended adjusting the toll levels of the three road harbour crossings (RHCs) so as to change motorists' commuting patterns with a view to rationalising cross-harbour traffic and alleviating the congestion at RHCs. Time-varying tolls at the three RHCs will also be instituted. The HKIE welcomes these recommendations, which are scientifically based, founded on data models, and have drawn on new technologies to enhance traffic management. This is precisely one of the long-recurring important motifs in the HKIE's recommendations for the development of Hong Kong as a Smart City.

In a city as small and densely populated as Hong Kong, where economic activities are dense, transport infrastructure projects should be pursued with the judicious use of resources and the optimised use of road network as their guiding principles. The HKIE endorses the toll adjustment plans currently being proposed by the Administration, holding that they exemplify those principles by contributing to the suppression and diversion of cross-harbour vehicular flow during peak periods and making the most of RHCs' capacities.

The HKIE believes that the new toll plans will be of benefit to various sectors of society: they will effectively alleviate the traffic congestions as exist in RHCs during peak periods, reduce the time spent by commuters in traffic, imperceptibly raise society's productivity, and enhance air and environmental quality.

The alleviation of traffic congestions at RHCs will result in a corresponding alleviation of traffic problems at previously affected key non-cross-harbour roads. When other projects are launched in the future, more flexible transportation options will be at disposal, which would be conducive to societal development.

With the extensive use of HKeToll in the future, the technology of time-varying tolls can be more advantageously applied to some of the non-tunnel busy road sections. The HKIE suggests that the Administration carry out timely reviews of the use of Electronic Toll Collection System in Hong Kong for the purpose of further relieving road traffic congestion during peak periods. The HKIE is much obliged to share its professional opinions with the Administration.

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