

**International Business Committee**

**Information Note on  
Foreign Nationals Driving in Hong Kong and Guangdong**

**Overseas driving licence holders driving in Hong Kong**

At present, overseas full driving licence holders who wish to drive in Hong Kong may do so through one of the following means -

- (I) drive on strength of their valid international driving permit or domestic driving licence if they are visitors to Hong Kong;
- (II) apply for direct issue of a Hong Kong full driving licence without test; or
- (III) apply for a temporary driving licence.

- (I) Drive on strength of a valid international driving permit or domestic driving licence

2. Regulation 37 of the Road Traffic (Driving Licences) Regulations (Cap. 374B) provides that a visitor who holds a valid international driving permit<sup>1</sup> or a domestic driving licence issued in a place outside Hong Kong may drive in Hong Kong, during the period of 12 months following the date of his last entry into Hong Kong, a motor vehicle of any class which he is authorized by that permit or licence to drive, so long as he/she has attained the specified age<sup>2</sup> and is not disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving licence.

3. According to regulation 2 of Cap. 374B and making reference to regulation 2 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374E), “visitor” means any person who arrives in Hong Kong other than to take up residence for a period exceeding 12 months.

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<sup>1</sup> International driving permit is issued in accordance with the International Convention relative to the international circulation of motor traffic concluded at Geneva on 19 September 1949 (1949 Convention).

<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to regulation 7 of Cap. 374B, a person driving a private car, light goods vehicle, motor cycle, motor tricycle or invalid carriage shall be aged 18 or above, while a person driving any other classes shall be aged 21 or above.

(II) Direct issue of a Hong Kong full driving licence without test

4. In accordance with regulation 11(3) of Cap. 374B, a holder of a driving licence issued in a country/place specified in the Fourth Schedule (see Annex) may apply for direct issue of a Hong Kong full driving licence to drive private car, light goods vehicle, motor cycle and/or motor tricycle, provided that he/she satisfy the following criteria -

- (a) the full licence concerned is valid or has expired for not more than 3 years; and
- (b) the licence was originally issued to the applicant after successful completion of a test of competence to drive motor vehicles of the class or description concerned conducted by or on behalf of the competent authority which issued the certificate or licence; and
- (c) he/she satisfies one of the following requirements -
  - (i) the licence was originally issued to the applicant during a period of residence of not less than 6 months in the country or place of issue; or
  - (ii) the licence was originally issued to the applicant not less than 5 years immediately prior to the application; or
  - (iii) the applicant is holding a passport or equivalent travel document issued in the country or place in which the licence was issued.

(III) Temporary driving licence

5. For a holder of a valid overseas driving licence issued in a country or place other than those specified in the Fourth Schedule of Cap. 374B, he/she may, in accordance with regulation 13 of Cap. 374B, apply for a temporary driving licence<sup>3</sup> to drive private car and light goods vehicle if he/she satisfies the following stipulated requirements -

- (a) he/she has applied for a driving test at the Transport Department within 3 months after the date of his/her arrival in Hong Kong to take up residence; and

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<sup>3</sup> Temporary driving licence will be valid until the expiry of his/her overseas driving licence or the expiry of 12 months from the date of his/her arrival in Hong Kong to take up residence, whichever occurs first. If the applicant passed in the driving test, a full driving licence will be issued to him/her; if he/she fail in any part of the driving tests, the temporary driving licence will be revoked immediately.

- (b) he/she satisfies one of the following requirements -
- (i) the licence was originally issued to the applicant during a period of residence of not less than 6 months in the country or place of issue; or
  - (ii) the licence was originally issued to the applicant not less than 5 years immediately prior to the application; or
  - (iii) the applicant is holding a passport or equivalent travel document issued in the country or place in which the licence was issued.

### **“Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles”**

6. “Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles” (the Scheme) has been implemented since 1 July 2023 which allows eligible Hong Kong private cars to travel between Hong Kong and Guangdong via the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) without the need to obtain regular quotas. It facilitates Hong Kong residents’ self-driving to Guangdong for business, visiting families or sightseeing on a short-term basis, further making good use of the HZMB and promoting the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

7. The Scheme is jointly administered by the Guangdong and Hong Kong governments. Applicants and drivers under the Scheme are subject to the eligibility requirements set by the two governments as stated in the “Guangdong Province Administrative Measures for Hong Kong Private Cars Travelling to the Mainland via the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge”<sup>4</sup> issued by the People’s Government of Guangdong Province.

8. According to the existing arrangement, an applicant must be a Hong Kong resident who possesses a valid Hong Kong Identity Card and a valid Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents (“Home Return Permit”); while a driver must be a Hong Kong resident who possesses a valid Hong Kong Identity Card, as well as a valid “Home Return Permit” or a foreign passport with a valid visa/endorsement or other international travel documents with a valid visa/endorsement. Following the announcement by the National Immigration Administration on 1 July 2024 that non-Chinese permanent residents of Hong Kong can submit applications for “Home Return Permits (Non-Chinese)” starting from 10 July 2024, the Scheme has started to accept applications from holders of

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.gd.gov.cn/zwgk/wjk/qbwj/yfb/content/post\\_4173613.html](http://www.gd.gov.cn/zwgk/wjk/qbwj/yfb/content/post_4173613.html)

“Home Return Permits (Non-Chinese)” starting from 1 September 2024. For those who do not possess “Home Return Permits”, they may still take part as designated drivers under the Scheme if they possess valid driving licences in the Mainland and Hong Kong, and valid travelling documents for entry into the Mainland (e.g. foreign passport with valid visa/endorsement). For persons who do not satisfy the above requirements for being an applicant or a driver of the Scheme, they may still benefit by travelling on eligible vehicles under the Scheme.

## **Way forward**

9. We will continue to work closely with the governments of Guangdong and Macao to enhance various cross-boundary transport measures and arrangements which included exploring means to facilitate driving between Hong Kong and other GBA cities, with a view to providing better and more convenient travel experience for cross-boundary travellers, thereby promoting the integrated development of the GBA.

**Transport and Logistics Bureau**  
**November 2024**

**Fourth Schedule of Cap. 374B**

**List of countries or places for purposes of regulation 11(3)**

Australia	Malaysia
Austria	Netherlands
Bangladesh, People's Republic of	New Zealand
Belgium	Nigeria, Federal Republic of
Canada	Norway
China, People's Republic of	Pakistan
Denmark	Portugal
Finland	Republic of South Africa together with S.W. Africa
France	Singapore
Germany, Federal Republic of	Spain
Iceland, Republic of	Sweden
India	Switzerland
Ireland, Republic of	United Kingdom together with Alderney (with Channel Islands), Bermuda, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey
Israel	United States of America
Italy	
Japan	
Korea, Republic of	
Luxembourg	