

Because of more traffic accidents caused by drink driving, drug driving, illegal road racing, speeding, narrow bicycle paths and irresponsible drivers of commercial vehicles, the South China Morning Post (SCMP) is planning to publish a special issue on road safety and would like to hear from young people who will be the next generation of drivers. The paper would like students to write in with suggestions on how Hong Kong's roads could be safer for everyone. Write a letter to the South China Morning Post (SCMP) in which you discuss three aspects of road use you feel need improving most urgently and consider actions to be taken by both the government and road users. Sign your name 'Chris Wong'.

Dear editor,

Keep Hong Kong's Road Safe for All

I am writing to express my view on road safety in Hong Kong. As we all know, the number of traffic accidents in Hong Kong surged, we are prompted to solve the problems. There are a few things that needed to improve urgently.

First of all, a thorough bicycle pathway network should be constructed. Nowadays, more people ride bicycles to work or to school, especially for those who live in the New Territories. However, the bicycle paths built by the government are not linked well. They are even jointed or overlapped with the roads. In addition, most of the roads in the New Territories allow high-speed of vehicles. Therefore, the number of casualties involving cyclists is high. Constructing bicycle pathway network can protect those cyclists, and drivers don't need to pay extra attention on those cyclists on two wheels.

Furthermore, the delivery area of goods should be clear cut. Those delivery drivers always deliver the goods in front of the shops because of convenience. However, they usually occupy half of the roads and even half of the footpath. Some pedestrians are forced to walk on roads and the delivery staff pulling trolleys with goods is perilous. Just like the dropping area for taxi, an area for delivery should be designed. Thus, both pedestrians and delivery staff can be protected.

Lastly, some of the footpaths should be widen. Some footpaths in old district like Sham Shui Po and North Point are very narrow; pedestrians always need to fight for space with vehicles. It is very perilous. Widening the footpath in reconstruction and establishing pedestrianization can minimize the accidents.

Even though the above items have been improved, the government and road users ourselves should take actions so as to make sure our roads are safe.

For our road planner, the Hong Kong government should impose heavy penalties to those who break the law just like lengthening the jail-term or banning driving license. These can deter the drivers from illegal and dangerous driving. Besides, the government should set up laws solving the hawkers and delivery problems and forcing all cyclists to equip well with helmets and other items. She should also reinforce random breath tests and introduce tests for drugs.

While for the potential culprits, the drivers should take public transports after drinking or taking medicine instead of self-driving. They should obey the traffic light and should not speed on roads even at mid-night.

Most importantly, other road users, they should also shoulder their responsibilities. The pedestrians should follow the traffic light and should walk on the footpath. They should utilize the footbridge or pedestrian subways to reduce chances to bump into the vehicles. Those shops on road should not load their goods on the road and occupy spaces on footpath. For the cyclists, they should equip with helmets and other items thus to protect themselves. It is the basic requirement. And they should install lamp both in front of and at the back of the bicycle so that drivers can see them more easily and can dodge the cyclists. Education is very important, the road users themselves and the government should have good attitudes and have the idea of road safety.

To conclude, the bicycle pathway network, delivery area of goods and the width of some footpath should be improved at once. Complexities are no reason for policies to improve the situation. It is definitely that the government and road users should work together to combat dangerous driving. Thus we can have a safe journey.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Wong

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