

\$20 toll 'inevitable'

BY DENISE WONG

A HIGH-POWERED advisory committee yesterday agreed that the Cross Harbour Tunnel passenger tax would have to be doubled to \$20 if the congestion problem is to be solved.

But the Transport Advisory Committee had yet to finalise details.

Professor Leung Che-keung, advisory committee chairman, called the toll rise "inevitable" as various traffic management measures had failed to address the problem.

In January, an average of

123,000 vehicles used the tunnel daily. The Cross Harbour Tunnel has a maximum capacity of 100,000 vehicles.

"We have not reached a crisis that must be solved tomorrow. But at 4 per cent per year growth in tunnel traffic, we certainly will see a very chaotic situation, even a dangerous one," Prof Leung said.

The proposed tax increase means that private cars, which account for 70 per cent of tunnel traffic, would have to pay a \$20 toll - \$15 being Government tax and \$5 the tunnel company's revenue. The present toll is \$10.