

## Saturday ERP keeps Orchard Rd traffic going

I REFER to Mr Paul Wee Kian Nghee's letter, "Time to do away with ERP on Saturday" (ST, Aug 13). Mr Wee feels that it may be unnecessary to implement ERP on Saturday as most offices opt for a five-day work week.

We would like to clarify that Saturday ERP operates between noon and 8pm, and applies only to the Orchard Road area, not the Central Business District (CBD). This has been the case since Octo-

ber 2005, when we demarcated the Orchard area from the CBD, and set separate ERP rates and operational times to address different traffic patterns within the respective cordons.

While the CBD sees heavy traffic in the morning when people go to work between 8am and 10am, traffic build-up in the Orchard Road area generally occurs after noon, when retail outlets commence business.

Thus far, the ERP for the Orchard Road cordon has helped to keep traffic flowing smoothly in Orchard Road. This in turn has enhanced the shopping experience for all, including tourists who visit Singapore's premier shopping belt.

Traffic congestion, regardless of the time it occurs, leads to sub-optimal utilisation of the road network. Besides undermining the economy, traffic congestion has a negative impact on the environment as well as the quality of life. Therefore, traffic congestion needs to be managed and kept in check at all times.

We thank Mr Wee for sharing his views.

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