

Legislative Panel on Transport

Excessive Railway Noise Inside MTR Tseung Kwan O Line Trains

Purpose

In response to a press report on 11 November 2002 about the noise levels inside train compartments of the MTR Tseung Kwan O (TKO) Line, the Chairman of the Panel on Transport has asked the Administration to provide a paper to set out any existing relevant legislation, the complaints received and follow up actions taken. This paper sets out the relevant information.

Existing Requirement

2. There is at present no legislation that governs noise levels inside train compartments in Hong Kong. However, the Operating Agreement (OA) which is signed between the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) and the Government sets out the required service performance and safety standards for the operation of MTR rail service. Under the OA, the Corporation is required to ensure that the noise emitted due to the operation of the railway is at all times kept to a minimum consistent with proper maintenance and safe operational practices.

Complaints Lodged by Passengers

3. The Administration has received three complaints concerning noise disturbance inside train compartments since the opening of the TKO Line and a total of eight complaints have been received by MTRCL in this respect. We have requested the Corporation to investigate into each of the complaints and to report on the remedial measures that have been implemented to alleviate the problem. We have also sought the advice of the Hong Kong Railway Inspectorate (HKRI).

Remedial and Prevention Measures

4. According to HKRI, the noise levels inside train compartments may be higher when a train is negotiating a curve. The routine monitoring of train performance conducted by the MTRCL indicated that the noise levels experienced on certain curved sections of the TKO Line had been higher than those on other parts of the Railway. The duration is about a few seconds.

5. To address this problem, MTRCL has carried out additional rail grinding over the sections concerned as well as applying rail lubricant to the curved sections of the track. In addition, MTRCL has adjusted the computerised train run profile on the relevant sections of the railway so as to further lower the noise levels that may arise. The noise levels inside train cars have now been reduced to similar levels experienced on other MTR railway lines.

6. We have requested MTRCL to continue to monitor the situation. The Transport Department will also include noise levels inside train compartments as an item for review with the MTRCL at their regular meetings.

7. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
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