

Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on matters relating to railways

Reorganisation of Light Rail Transit Services
Upon the Commissioning of West Rail

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation's plan to consult the public on the proposed Light Rail Transit service reorganization to tie in with the opening of West Rail in 2003.

Background

2. At present, the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) operates the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system comprising seven Light Rail routes and 16 bus services in the Transit Service Area (TSA) in the North West New Territories (NWNT). In 2001, KCR Light Rail and its bus network provided services for about 377,300 passengers daily, of which, 319,500 were Light Rail passengers and 57,800 were bus passengers. These accounted for about 75% of the total internal public transport market in the NWNT in 2001.

3. The existing Light Rail and Bus routes are listed in **Annex**.

4. West Rail has six stations within the NWNT (including Kam Sheung Road Station), when opens towards the end of 2003, it will provide a new, high capacity and fast heavy rail service between the new towns in addition to serving the external traffic between the NWNT and the urban areas.

5. With much enhanced transport capacity in the NWNT and the objective to facilitate passengers to connect from Light Rail and Bus to West Rail efficiently and effectively, the existing Light Rail and Bus routes will be re-structured so that they can feed West Rail on the one hand and on the other

hand, continuing as the primary means of internal transportation in the NWNT.

Objectives of LRT Reorganisation

6. The objectives for reorganising LRT services are as follows:
 - (a) to maintain the role of the LRT system as local commuter service provider;
 - (b) to rationalise the existing routings in view of the opening of West Rail, as well as the completion of the new Light Rail extensions and grade separation works;
 - (c) to provide good feeder service to West Rail stations to encourage the use of West Rail for both internal travel within the NWNT and external travel to the urban area; and
 - (d) to improve the efficiency of the transport network by enhancing the coordination of public transport services to match changing demand and minimize wasteful duplication of resources.

Main Features of West Rail

7. West Rail, with a route length of 30.5 kilometres, is a high capacity railway linking the NWNT with urban Kowloon. During the initial stage of opening, West Rail will operate at 3-minute peak frequency, with a carrying capacity as high as 47,000 passengers per hour per direction.

8. In the NWNT, there will be four West Rail/Light Rail interchanges at Tuen Mun, Siu Hong, Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long. With the high carrying capacity of West Rail, the total service level provided by KCRC in the NWNT will increase significantly and will be more than sufficient to cope with passenger demand. KCRC anticipates that a significant number of passengers commuting between Tuen Mun and Yuen Long will shift to use West Rail.

Features of the Future LRT Network

9. Below are the key features of the LRT route structure upon reorganisation:

- (a) **Direct:** It is estimated that about 30% of the future West Rail passengers would use Light Rail as a feeder service. The new route structure will enable these passengers to travel quickly to and from the nearest West Rail station.
- (b) **Convenient:** The four West Rail/Light Rail interchanges are designed to facilitate easy and convenient transfer. The transfer time between West Rail and Light Rail will only be about 2 to 3 minutes.
- (c) **Frequent:** With the new Light Rail route structure, the frequency of all Light Rail feeder routes will be enhanced. Passengers travelling on shorter intra-town journeys will benefit.
- (d) **Fast:** With the enhancement of frequency, most Light Rail journeys to and from West Rail stations will take less than 15 minutes. Passengers travelling inter-town (between Tuen Mun and Yuen Long/Tin Shui Wai) can also have the option of using West Rail which will shorten their journey times.
- (e) **Efficient:** By focusing resources on the shorter and more direct routes, Light Rail's efficiency can be enhanced, resulting in more frequent train services. Light Rail's operational efficiency will also be improved on completion of the grade separation projects in Tuen Mun and Tin Shui Wai. Nevertheless, those wanting to travel on Light Rail on long journeys will still be able to use Light Rail services.
- (f) **Competitive fares:** An integrated fare structure will be introduced for passengers transferring between West Rail/Light Rail and KCR buses, giving transfer passengers a discount.

Feeder bus route re-structuring

10. KCR buses in the NWNT will similarly be re-organised to become efficient feeders for the rail network. It is estimated that about 3% of West Rail passengers will use KCR feeder buses as feeders.

Managing change

11. When West Rail opens, it is estimated that about 90,000 Light Rail passengers will interchange daily to and from West Rail at the four interchange stations which are built purposely for easy and fast transfer. Passengers interchanging at these stations will need to walk only one to two minutes inside the station with facilities such as lifts and escalators to change from one mode to the other.

12. To enable passengers to be familiarised with the new services, adequate passenger education and publicity programmes will be organised, including:

- School/community talks and briefings
- Media publicity
- Pamphlets and leaflets
- Station open days and public trials of new services
- Passenger information and promotions
- Deployment of service ambassadors to assist the passengers during the first few months of West Rail opening
- Enhanced passenger telephone hotline system
- Drills/exercises on new services and contingency plans

Consultation and implementation

13. KCRC plans to consult the relevant District Councils, Area Committees, and other local parties in early 2003 on the introduction of West Rail and the service changes to Light Rail and KCR Bus services in the NWNT with the opening of West Rail. We aim to finalize the plans by mid 2003.

14. Extensive publicity programmes and trials will be organised before implementation to ensure that the travelling public are adequately informed and familiar with the detailed service arrangements. Changes to the transport network will also be implemented in phases so that the potential impact can be managed by both the Corporation and the commuters. Details will be finalized after consultation with the relevant parties.

15. Members are invited to comment on the proposed reorganization plan.

Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation
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Light Rail and KCR Bus routes in NWNT**Light Rail routes**

| Route | Routing |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 505 | Sam Shing - Siu Hong |
| 507 | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Tin King |
| 610 | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Yuen Long |
| 614 | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Yuen Long |
| 615 | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Yuen Long |
| 720 | Yau Oi - Tin Shui Wai |
| 721 | Tin Shui Wai - Yuen Long |

Light Rail bus routes

| Route | Routing |
|--------------|--|
| 505 | Shan King - Sam Shing (Circular) |
| 506 | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Yau Oi (Circular) |
| 521 | Fu Tai - Tai Lam |
| 521P | Fu Tai - Tuen Mun Town Centre (Circular) |
| 655 | Yuen Long - Lau Fau Shan |
| 656 | Yuen Long Industrial Estate - Tai Tong |
| 657 | Hung Shui Kiu - Ha Tsuen (Circular) |
| 659 | Tin Heng - Tin Shui Wai Town Centre (Circular) |
| 670 | Yuen Long - Long Ping (Circular) |
| A52 | Lung Kwu Tan - Tuen Mun Town Centre |
| A59 | Castle Peak Bay - Po Tin (Circular) |
| A70 | Tin Shui - Yuen Long West (Circular) |
| A73 | Tin Fu - Tuen Mun Ferry Pier |
| A74 | Tin Heng - Yuen Long West (Circular) |
| K1X | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Long Ping |
| K2X | Tuen Mun Ferry Pier - Tin Shui |