

**Subcommittee to Study the Transport Needs of
and Provision of Concessionary Public
Transport Fares
for Persons with Disabilities**

Information Paper for Meeting on 22 May 2008

Purpose

This paper provides information as a follow up to the motion moved in the meeting of the Subcommittee to Study the Transport Needs of and Provision of Concessionary Public Transport Fares for Persons with Disabilities held on 11 March 2008 urging the Government to immediately start discussions with MTR Corporation on the relevant arrangements for the provision of half fare concessions for persons with disabilities (PwDs).

Background

2. The government announced earlier this year that under its welfare policy portfolio, there would be an additional supplement of \$200 each month starting from 2008-09 to PwDs meeting specified criteria to alleviate their transport expense. This provision involves an annual Government expenditure of \$230 million and it is estimated that about 96,000 PwDs would benefit from the arrangement. That notwithstanding, the Subcommittee was of the view that the Government should continue to discuss with public transport operators on the provision of half fare concessions for PwDs in the spirit of corporate social responsibility.

**Improving the Accessibility in MTR System to Facilitate PwDs
and Enhancing Social Integration**

3. It is the Government's rehabilitation policy to promote integration of PwDs into the society. The Corporation

understands the transport needs of the PwDs and is dedicated to improving facilities of the railway system to enhance the accessibility of the travelling environment for PwDs so as to facilitate their greater social integration.

4. Over the past 10 years, the Corporation has spent \$635 million in improving the facilities of railway stations and trains and has committed another \$200 million in the next 5 years for such purpose. At present, all MTR stations and Light Rail stops are equipped with barrier free access. Facilities to enable PwDs to access railway services are also provided in all the trains and Light Rail vehicles. Information on the improvements made by the Corporation in this respect can be found in the Annex. Besides, all new railway projects have taken into account the transport needs of PwDs at design stage to ensure that there are facilities in railway stations and trains for PwDs to use railway services conveniently.

5. Subsequent to the Rail Merger on 2 December 2007, the Corporation has offered a fare reduction. There is a minimum of 10% fare reduction for passengers traveling on long distance journeys with Adult Octopus fares at or above \$12, and a minimum of 5% fare reduction for passengers traveling on medium distance journeys with Adult Octopus fares from \$8.50 to \$11.9. There is also an extra reduction of \$1 for long distance journeys with Adult Octopus fares at or above \$12, and a global fare reduction of at least \$0.2 for all Adult Octopus fares. The Corporation has undertaken not to increase fares until the end of June 2009. The fare reduction has benefited over 2.8 million passengers a day, including PwDs.

6. To fulfill our corporate social responsibility, the Corporation will continue its efforts to improve its facilities in stations and train compartments to enhance the accessibility for PwDs, thereby promoting their social integration. Meanwhile, the Corporation will continue to take into account its operational situation, market circumstances and passenger needs in considering, from time

to time, the need to provide various promotional offers to the public, including PwDs.

MTR Corporation

May 2008

**Improvement of Railway Facilities by
MTR Corporation**

1. All MTR stations and Light Rail stops are equipped with barrier-free access.
2. All MTR stations are equipped with tactile guide path, except Racecourse station.
3. Portable ramps are provided at all MTR stations (except West Rail Line stations of which the platform gaps are small) for easy boarding and alighting by wheelchair users.
4. Audible devices, which announce the fare charged and remaining values of the Octopus cards, have been installed in the exit gates led by tactile guide paths at all stations of Tsuen Wan Line, Island Line, Kwun Tong Line, Tseung Kwan O Line, Tung Chung Line, Airport Express Line and most East Rail Line stations to benefit visually impaired passengers.
5. Flashing neon lights have been installed at East Rail Line stations with wider platform gaps to caution passengers.
6. Ticket vending machines with an interactive voice message function are provided at all stations of East Rail Line, Ma On Shan Line and West Rail Line to benefit visually impaired passengers.
7. In 2007, MTR Corporation installed passenger lifts connecting concourse and platform at Lai Chi Kok and Tai Wo Hau stations as well as provided stairlifts at Wong Tai Sin, Cheung Sha Wan, Sham Shui Po and Yau Ma Tei stations. In 2008, stairlifts at Diamond Hill, Jordan and Admiralty stations were put into service. In March 2008, a staff lift linking the concourse and platform levels in Admiralty station was converted to passenger lift for public use.

8. Ramp access is available at all Light Rail stops. Lifts are provided at all Light Rail interchanges with West Rail Line. In addition, low-height Octopus entry / exit processors are installed at Light Rail stops to facilitate the use by wheelchair users. All Octopus entry/exit/enquiry processors are equipped with brailles to facilitate the use by visually impaired passengers.
9. Multi-use spaces are provided in all trains.
10. Info-panels which display information on the next station and other operational messages have been installed in all Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line, Island Line and Tseung Kwan O Line trains whilst Newslite Express screens displaying similar information have been installed in trains on East Rail Line, West Rail Line and Ma On Shan Line.
11. Audio Induction loops to assist hearing aid users have been installed at all Customer Service Centres and Ticket Offices.
12. Information cards to facilitate communication between staff and passenger are available at the Customer Service Centres of all stations (except West Rail Line stations and Light Rail stops).
13. Tactile station layout maps have been installed at all stations along the East Rail Line, West Rail Line and Ma On Shan Line, as well as some stations along Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line and Island Line.

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