

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1821/05-06
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref: CB1/PS/1/04/1

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

**Minutes of meeting on
Friday, 21 April 2006, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
- Public Officers attending** : **Agenda item IV**
- Mr Thomas CHOW
Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
- Mr Henry CHAN
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
- Mr WAN Man-lung
Principal Government Engineer/Railway Development Highways Department

- Attendance by invitation** : **Agenda item IV**
Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation
Mr Stephen CHIK
General Manager – Capital Works Planning
Mrs Grace LAM
General Manager – Corporate Affairs
- Clerk in attendance** : Mr Andy LAU
Chief Council Secretary (1)2
- Staff in attendance** : Mrs Mary TANG
Senior Council Secretary (1)2
Miss Winnie CHENG
Legislative Assistant (1)5

Action

I Confirmation of minutes of meeting and matters arising

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)943/05-06 - Minutes of special meeting held on 18 January 2006
LC Paper No. CB(1)1265/05-06 - Minutes of meeting held on 17 February 2006)

The minutes of the special meeting held on 18 January 2006 and the regular meeting held on 17 February 2006 were confirmed.

II Information papers issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that the following information paper was issued since last meeting -

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)937/05-06(01) - Referral from Legislative Council Members with Southern District Council on 12 January 2006 on request for expediting the construction of the MTR South Island Line)

III Items for discussion at the next meeting scheduled for 2 June 2006

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1260/05-06(01) - List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)1260/05-06(02) - List of follow-up actions)

3. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that it had been reported in the press that the Independent Review Panel appointed by the Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) had completed its investigation on the East Rail (ER) underframe equipment mounting problem but it had decided to withhold its findings pending the completion of the on-going investigation carried out by the Administration. He said that as it had been months since the cracking problems were identified, there was a need for the Administration and KCRC to speed up their investigative work so as to address public concerns about rail safety. Therefore, he would request KCRC to report its findings if the investigation had been completed. Besides, there was also a need to discuss the accountability issues arising from the cracking problems as well as the notification mechanism. He supported that a meeting be convened for such purposes as soon as the findings were available.

4. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had been pursuing the Administration on the findings of their investigation into the cracking incident. She said that, subject to members' agreement, she would write to the Administration requesting it to expedite the investigation into the incident. She would also arrange to hold a special meeting to discuss the findings of KCRC. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that the letter to the Administration should be a strongly-worded one which would convey members' grave concern over the unacceptably long time it took for the investigation to complete. Opportunity should be taken to remind the Administration and KCRC of the importance of briefing Legislative Council (LegCo) members on major decisions and announcements before the media.

5. Mr Albert CHAN said that he was aware that KCRC had been conducting a strategic review on Light Rail Transit Service Area and he would like to raise the subject of rationalization of Light Rail service for discussion at the next meeting in June if the review was completed by then.

6. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that it might be an opportune time to discuss the Shatin to Central Link at the next regular meeting. The Chairman said that the agenda for the next regular meeting on 2 June 2006 would be worked out in consultation with the Administration.

(Post meeting note: As the Administration had advised that the Shatin to Central Link and the rationalization of LRT would not be ready for discussion at the next regular meeting on 2 June 2006, it was agreed that the meeting should be deferred.)

Action

IV Northern Link and Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link

- (File ref: ETWB(T)CR 1/16/581/99 - Legislative Council Brief on Northern Link and Hong Kong section of Guangzhou - Shenzhen - Hong Kong Express Rail Link provided by Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1260/05-06(03) - Presentation materials provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)562/05-06(01) - Supplementary information note provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)380/05-06(03) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

7. With reference to the LegCo Brief on the Northern Link (NOL) and the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (ERL), the Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (DSETW) reported on the progress of planning for NOL and ERL since the projects were last discussed at the Subcommittee meeting on 12 December 2005. He advised that as agreed by the Executive Council, NOL and Hong Kong section of the ERL should be implemented as one combined project. The Hong Kong section of the ERL should share tracks with the existing West Rail (WR), the proposed NOL, and the Kowloon Southern Link now under construction, with a terminus at West Kowloon (the Shared Corridor Option). KCRC would be asked to proceed with further planning of the combined project and negotiation with KCRC on the scope, costs and implementation programme of the combined project should commence.

8. With the use of PowerPoint, DSETW explained the ERL alignment plan connecting Shibi-Longhua-West Kowloon, the Mainland's planned network of dedicated passenger lines, the alignment of NOL and the Hong Kong section of the ERL and the proposed ERL Terminus at West Kowloon by highlighting the salient points of the LegCo Brief. He also provided a comparison on the Shared Corridor Option and the Dedicated Corridor Option, the latter of which would involve building a dedicated rail track running from West Kowloon Terminus to the boundary. The Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works explained the impact of ERL on WR service.

Financial considerations

9. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that according to KCRC's assessment, the Hong Kong section of the ERL would not be financially viable based on fare revenue alone and would require Government's financial support. He enquired if Government's financial support would still be needed after the proposed merger of Kowloon-Canton Railway and MTR systems and if so, the justifications for such. DSETW explained that discussions were held by KCRC and MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) on the compatibility of the Hong Kong section of ERL with the rail network in Hong Kong.

Action

Both had agreed that while the Shared Corridor Option was feasible, consideration could be given to pursuing for the Dedicated Corridor Option as and when WR approached its capacity in the longer term. Under the rail merger proposal, Government would have the right in future to determine whether the “ownership approach” (under which the post-merger corporation (MergeCo) would fund, construct and operate the new railway) or the “concession approach” (under which Government would fund the construction of the new railway and MergeCo would be granted a service concession to operate the new railway based on financial terms to be determined according to a pre-agreed mechanism) should be adopted for individual new railway projects which were not natural MTR-extension projects. For the combined project of NOL and ERL, Government would further discuss with MTRCL on the funding and implementation details. It would consider under which approach the project should be taken forward. However, if the merger would not take place, the status quo would apply, i.e. Government would discuss the financial arrangement for the combined project with KCRC on the basis of the ownership approach.

10. Mr Andrew CHENG enquired about the amount of financial support which KCRC would request from Government in the provision for ERL and whether KCRC would be allowed to use the proceeds from property sales to finance its rail development. DSETW said that the Administration would require KCRC to provide justifications for Government’s financial support. As a decision had to be made on whether the ownership approach or the concession approach would apply in the event of the merger, the Administration had yet to decide on the means of financing for the construction of ERL.

11. Mr LEE Wing-tat questioned the high economic internal rate of return (EIRR) of 17% per annum in real terms under the Shared Corridor Option. He doubted whether ERL would attract a high patronage given the keen competition from cross-boundary coach service which covered a wide catchment of passengers in the urban areas as well as in the New Territories. As the EIRR of 17% per annum was derived taking into account time savings to cross-boundary passengers and road users, cost savings for other vehicle operators and safety benefits, he enquired about how this would compare with the internal rate of return commonly used in the calculation of investment returns, which was only 1% for KCRC based on a profit of \$0.6 billion.

12. DSETW explained that there were two kinds of rates of return to be taken into account in rail development, namely the financial internal rate of return (FIRR) which was based on the return on financial investments, and EIRR which was based on the economic return, taking into account mainly saving in time. Unlike EIRR, FIRR could not be confirmed in the planning stage as it had to take account of the level of fares which had yet to be worked out with the Mainland authorities. Mr LEE Wing-tat remained of the view that the Hong Kong section of ERL would unlikely be a profitable investment given its large capital investment, infrequent services and keen competition with existing transport services. He said that members would not be in a position to support the combined project when information such as construction cost, passenger demand, financing arrangements had yet to be provided.

Action

13. DSETW said that there were estimates on the construction cost but since the project was still under negotiation, it would not be appropriate to disclose such information at this stage. Besides, the amount of Government funding as well as FIRR would differ depending on whether the ownership approach or concession approach was adopted.

Environmental considerations

14. Given the controversy over the impact of the construction of Lok Ma Chau Spur Line on the ecology of Long Valley, Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed concern about the ecological impact associated the construction of the Hong Kong section of the ERL and enquired whether an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) would be conducted on the project. His concern was shared by Mr Andrew CHENG and Mr LEE Wing-tat. DSETW said that Government had learnt from the experience of the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line and the alignment for the combined project would be carefully drawn out to avoid ecologically sensitive areas and irreversible environmental impact. The project would have to undergo the EIA process in accordance with statutory requirements and mitigating measures would be introduced where necessary.

Passenger demands

15. Referring to the comparison between the Mainland and the Hong Kong section of ERL, Mr LAU Kong-wah noted that while the approximate length of the Mainland section was much longer than the Hong Kong section, the journey time of the Mainland section was not much longer than the Hong Kong section. Citing the overcrowdedness situation at the existing control point at Lok Ma Chau due to improper planning in the past, he was concerned that Hong Kong was lagging behind others in its rail development and that it had underestimated the growth of demand for cross-boundary service. He also noted that the Administration had failed to provide the passenger demand for cross-boundary rail services in its previous papers to the Subcommittee.

16. DSETW said that according to current forecast, the number of intercity passenger trips for ERL and ER in 2016 would be 50 000 and 10 000 respectively. He further explained that in planning for the ERL with the State Ministry of Railways, a number of assumptions on passenger demands were made. According to the agreed assumptions, the following planned ERL services would be adequate to meet passenger demands up to 2016 –

- (a) four trains each direction per hour from West Kowloon to Longhua;
- (b) one non-stop train each direction per hour from West Kowloon to Shibi;

Action

- (c) one train each direction per hour from West Kowloon to Shibi with an intermediate stop at Humen; and
- (d) seven pairs of long-haul trains daily between West Kowloon and cities outside Guangdong Province including Beijing and Shanghai.

17. In response to Mr LAU Kong-wah, DSETW confirmed that ERL, which would link Hong Kong to Shibi (New Guangzhou Station) through Longhua (New Shenzhen Station), would form part of the national high-speed rail network comprising the Beijing-Guangzhou Passenger Line and the Hangzhou-Fuzhou-Shenzhen Passenger Line.

The Shared Corridor Option versus the Dedicated Corridor Option

18. Mr LAU Kong-wah noted that the Administration would not give up the Dedicated Corridor Option altogether but would consider its adoption as and when WR approached its capacity in the longer term. He opined that, in addition to focusing on WR capacity, a longer term planning taking into account the demand for ERL services by cross-boundary passengers should be taken into account in the development of express rail links.

19. DSETW explained that according to current forecast, the planned ERL services under the Shared Corridor Option would not expect to have a serious impact on WR services. As and when the WR approached its capacity in the longer term, which according to current forecast would be beyond 2030, consideration would then be given to constructing a dedicated track between the West Kowloon Terminus and the boundary for the exclusive use by ERL trains. Pursuing the Shared Corridor Option now would provide an optimal flexibility. He further explained that in planning for ERL services, factors such as economical growth and development of economic ties with the Mainland would be taken into consideration.

20. Mr Andrew CHENG noted that the Administration had stated in the LegCo Brief that the difference in construction cost between the Shared Corridor Option and the Dedicated Corridor Option would be several billion dollars but it had failed to provide an exact figure. Given the anticipated growth in economic development in the Pearl River Delta region, the several billion dollars difference in construction cost might be worth spending if it could meet the increase in passenger demands arising from economic growth. The provision of Dedicated Corridor Option from the beginning would obviate the need for investments in the Shared Corridor Option and would also allow for a shorter journey time. DSETW explained that the current forecast on passenger demand revealed that the Dedicated Corridor Option would not be required until after 2030. As compared to the Dedicated Corridor Option, the Shared Corridor Option would have lesser environmental impact as it would be making use of shared facilities which had already been built. Moreover, the Dedicated Corridor Option would involve construction of a long tunnel of about 30 km, which would be among the longest railway tunnels in the world. The risks associated

Action

with such tunnelling works and with rail operation within such a tunnel were very high, necessitating the imposition of very stringent fire prevention and ventilation requirements.

21. Ir Dr Raymond HO was pleased to note the provision of ERL which was long overdue. Despite the Administration's efforts to convince members about the cost effectiveness of the Shared Corridor Option, he was of the view that it would be more worthwhile to spend a few billion dollars more under the Dedicated Corridor Option and be able to have a dedicated rail track which could be of a much longer term usage and which would not affect WR which had cost \$29 billion to build. It would not be proper planning to invest in the Shared Corridor Option now and to revert to the Dedicated Corridor Option years later to cope with the increase in cross-boundary passenger demand arising from the growth in economic development in the Mainland. He enquired whether, apart from the tunnelling option as proposed, other alignment options had been taken into account in respect of the Dedicated Corridor Option, since the construction cost would vary significantly with the length of the tunnel. He considered it necessary that more information on the different alignments of the Dedicated Corridor Option together with their cost comparisons should be made available to members. He added that such information should have been given by the Administration in the first place before deciding on the adoption of the Shared Corridor Option. The Chairman also said that since the provision cost of East Tsimshatsui Extension was already close to \$4 billion, it might be worthwhile to invest a similar amount to pursue the Dedicated Corridor Option if such would provide a dedicated rail track for use in the long run.

Admin 22. DSETW said that the provision of ERL would provide an alternative to the existing transport mode using KCRC's Guangzhou-Hong Kong Through Train service on ER. By way of this intercity rail corridor, the journey time between Guangzhou and Hong Kong would be reduced from 100 minutes to within one hour. The Administration would keep abreast of latest cross-boundary passenger demands in assessing the need for the Dedicated Corridor Option and preparations would be made in advance to cope with the increased demand. The Shared Corridor Option was more preferable at the present stage because apart from being less costly, it would also make use of the under-utilized WR. In response to Ir Dr Raymond HO, he agreed to provide information on the alignment options which had been considered in respect of Dedicated Corridor Option together with a comparison on the different alignments.

23. The Principal Government Engineer/Railway Development, Highways Department said that a number of alignment options for ERL had been taken into account in the Railway Development Strategy 2000. Since the general topography between West Kowloon and Lok Ma Chau consisted of mountainous areas, a tunnelling option would have to be adopted if a dedicated rail track was to be provided for ERL. To reduce construction cost and journey time, a more direct alignment was chosen for the Dedicated Corridor Option. In view of the high tunnelling cost and the requirements for fire prevention and ventilation, the construction cost for the Dedicated Corridor Option would be about one and a half times that of the combined project under the Shared Corridor Option. He further said that the decision to adopt

Action

the Shared Corridor Option as a start would not preclude the adoption of Dedicated Corridor Option at a later stage. As the West Kowloon Terminus and the NOL would be needed for both options, there would not be much abortive costs arising from the Shared Corridor Option. The several billion dollars savings arising from the adoption of the Shared Corridor Option could be used decades later to build a dedicated rail track if necessitated by growth in passenger demand.

24. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that given that the difference between the EIRR for the Shared Corridor Option (17%) and the Dedicated Corridor Option (15%) was only 2% and that such would be further narrowed in time in view of the shorter journey times, he was of the view that the Dedicated Corridor Option might be worthy of reconsideration. He said that with the increased capital investment of a few billion dollars under the Dedicated Corridor Option, a permanent high-speed rail link could be developed. As compared to the through train service on the ER which could only bring passengers up to Guangzhou, the ERL would be able to attract a much wider patronage as it would connect to the national rail network. He pointed out that the use of WR under the Shared Corridor Option and hence the speed limitations might impact on the development of the national rail network. There were also concerns about the compatibility of the signalling systems associated with the shared use of rail tracks. He hoped that the Administration would review the adoption of the Shared Corridor Option taking into account members' concerns. DSETW said that the adoption of the Shared Corridor Option would maximize the usage of the under-utilized WR and would save a lot of public resources. The use of shared facilities was common in the Mainland rail network and in fact the Mainland section of ERL was also making use of shared rail tracks.

25. Mr Andrew CHENG was of the view that there should be more vision in rail development, taking into account the latest advances in rail technology and the increase in passenger demands. The adoption of the Shared Corridor Option was not far-sighted in that the demand for WR rail services would expect to reach capacity in 2030 and that planning for expansion would have to start six or seven years in advance. The provision of a long term rail link which would provide a speedier service would be much preferred. DSETW said that the main difference between the Shared Corridor Option and the Dedicated Corridor Option was the provision of the tunnel to Huanggang. There would not be much abortive works associated with the Shared Corridor Option as the NOL and West Kowloon Terminus would be needed for both options. The present forecast was that WR would be operating within its designed capacity up through 2030 but it would be too early to project meaningfully on future demands beyond 2030. As for the adoption of more advanced rail technology such as the magnetic levitation (Maglev) for ERL, DSETW said that the rail systems in the Mainland to which the Hong Kong section of the ERL would be connected would use wheel-on track technology and therefore a Maglev Hong Kong section would be impracticable.

Admin

26. As to Mr Andrew CHENG's request for more information about passenger demands and construction costs, DSETW said that the said information could not be made available at the present stage when KCRC and the Administration were still in

Action

the process of negotiation on the financing for ERL. The information on costs would be made available to members at the next LegCo session upon completion of further planning and negotiation. Besides, in the event of a merger, the Administration would need to decide on whether the ownership approach or the concession approach should be applied.

27. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that the Administration had been underestimating incoming passenger demands judging from the overcrowdedness at Lok Ma Chau. It was hoped that more visitors from the Mainland would be visiting Hong Kong under the Individual Visit Scheme. While he supported the optimization of the under-utilized WR services, he was of the view this should not be the only consideration in the choice of option for ERL. The people-oriented approach should also be taken into account in the design for ERL which would become part of the national high speed rail network. He did not wish to see that the national high speed rail network would have to be slowed down in an attempt to facilitate the optimization of WR services under the Shared Corridor Option. Moreover, the use of the shared facilities might also impact on WR services. He would therefore need to be convinced through an objective and scientific analysis that the option to be adopted for ERL would be the best choice. DSETW said that the decision to proceed with the Shared Corridor Option had been made with reference to passenger demands arising from the latest development in national rail network. Apart from being able to reduce the journey time from Guangzhou to Hong Kong to within an hour, the Shared Corridor Option would also be more cost effective and as such, a responsible Government should adopt that option.

Impact of ERL on WR services

28. Mr TAM Yiu-chung was concerned about the impact of ERL on WR services and the possible confusion in the train signalling systems which might arise under the Shared Corridor Option. Given that there were a number of competing transport alternatives such as cross-boundary bus service and through train service which provided convenient access to the Mainland, he enquired if the Administration had taken into account the competitiveness of ERL in its provision, which would include, in particular, the pricing of train fares. DSETW said that ERL would provide an additional choice for cross-boundary passengers. The estimated number of 50 000 passenger trips for ERL had taken into account competition from the varying modes of transport. The construction of the Hong Kong section of ERL would be coordinated with its Mainland section and problems associated with signalling would not arise. In view of the keen competition between different modes of transport to the Mainland, the train fares for ERL would have to be set at a competitive level. The exact level of fares would have to be worked out in consultation with the Mainland authorities since the ERL would be jointly operated.

29. Mr Stephen CHIK, General Manager-Capital Works Planning, KCRC added that KCRC had been discussing with the State Ministry of Railways on the type of the signalling system for ERL. A possible arrangement was that dual signalling systems would be installed in the ERL trains so that it would be compatible with that of WR.

Action

This would be similar to what was adopted by ER for provision of Through Train Service to Guangzhou.

30. Mr Albert CHAN was concerned that the Shared Corridor Option would adversely affect WR services and would give rise to technical difficulties. Its operation might also be incompatible with the high speed of the Mainland section of ERL. Ir Dr Raymond HO also said that while the national rail network would operate at maximum train speeds in the range of 250 to 350 km per hour, the trains in Hong Kong would operate at maximum train speeds in the range of 80 to 120 km per hour. Sharing similar concern, the Chairman said that the reduced speed of the Hong Kong section of ERL would tend to give the unwanted impression that Hong Kong's connection was the weakest link in the national high speed rail network. The difference in train speeds between the Mainland and the Hong Kong section of ERL would be a major consideration in the choice of option for the project. DSETW did not agree that the provision of ERL would seriously impact on WR services. He added that although the maximum train speed of 250 km per hour for the Mainland section of ERL could be achieved for certain straighter stretches, its average speed was much lower than 250 km per hour. Besides, upgrading the design of the dedicated tunnel to allow ERL to run at a maximum speed of 200 km per hour would only be able to reduce the journey time for the Hong Kong section by two minutes.

Admin 31. Mr Albert CHAN further pointed out that the reason for the under-utilization of WR was the absence of rail links to connect it with ER. WR's patronage would be enhanced once the necessary rail links were established via the provision of NOL and Kowloon Southern Link. The increased patronage of WR would pose difficulties for the shared use of rail facilities under the Shared Corridor Option. Therefore, he would request that a projected passenger demand for WR services following the provision of rail links with ER be provided for members' reference. He indicated that he would object to the design and planning for the Hong Kong section of ERL as presently proposed.

West Kowloon Terminus

32. Responding to Mr TAM Yiu-chung's question on citing the terminus at West Kowloon instead of Hung Hom, DSETW said that there were limits in the development scale and level of services at the Hung Hom Station given its saturated services. Meanwhile, the West Kowloon terminus would be in the heart of Kowloon's business and tourist areas. It would serve as Hong Kong's second Mass Transportation Centre for cross-boundary passengers in addition to the Hung Hom Station. It would also have convenient interchanges with the domestic railway network and the existing MTR Tung Chung Line. As for the location of the Guangzhou terminus at Shibi, DSETW advised that Shibi would be developed as a main transport interchange for the high-speed rail network in the Mainland and plans were underway for its development into a central landmark.

Action

Admin

33. Mr Albert CHAN criticized the Administration for failing to take into account passenger needs in its planning and design for ERL. He said that rail terminus was seldom located in the town centre nowadays and the location of new Guangzhou Station at Shibi which was at the outskirts of the city was a typical example. As almost half of the Hong Kong population resided in the New Territories (NT), it would not be practical to locate the terminus at West Kowloon as this would mean that NT residents would need to make their way to the town centre in order to travel on ERL. Besides, the location of the terminus at West Kowloon would involve the use of precious land resources which could otherwise be developed for other commercial purposes. He failed to see why the rail terminus could not be located at Chau Tau because with the commissioning of the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, the Chau Tau Station would be the main interchange for all the main rail systems in Hong Kong. Apart from reducing investment costs as well as traveling time on the part of NT residents, the proposed location at Chau Tau would also reduce the total journey time of the Hong Kong section of ERL. Besides, it would not impact on WR services. He requested the Administration to provide a passenger profile for ERL, the types of transport modes used by these passengers to access ERL and a comparison on the pros and cons of the provision of terminus at Chau Tau and West Kowloon.

34. DSETW said that the public would find it hard to accept Chau Tau as the ERL terminus. This was because passengers at the West Kowloon Terminus could interchange with the Kowloon Southern Link as part of WR, and MTR's Airport Express Line/Tung Chung Line, but such would not be possible if the rail terminus was located at Chau Tau. Furthermore, the location of terminus at Chau Tau would not be able to meet the intended objective of shortening the intercity journey time from Guangzhou to the Hong Kong urban area to within an hour, which was the targeted journey time set out in the Railway Development Strategy 2000.

Other considerations

35. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the number of jobs which would be created through the NOL project and whether screen doors would be provided at NOL. DSETW confirmed that screen doors would be the standard installation for NOL, in line with WR. He agreed to provide the number of jobs which would be created by the NOL project for members' reference.

Conclusion

36. In concluding, the Chairman said that members of the Subcommittee did not fully embrace the proposed Shared Corridor Option for NOL and the Hong Kong section of ERL and had requested for more information about the alignment options under the Dedicated Corridor Option, the cost comparisons of the different options and their cost-effectiveness. As such, the Subcommittee had not decided on the acceptability of the option for the combined project. It was hoped that the requisite information could be provided in the next LegCo session for discussion by the Subcommittee.

Action

V Any other business

37. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:35 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
21 June 2006