

**Legislative Council Panel on Transport  
Subcommittee on matters relating to railways**

**Acceptance Procedures and Criteria for Rails for  
Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation and  
MTR Corporation Limited**

In response to Members' request at the meeting of the Subcommittee on 6 May 2006, this paper provides a comparison of the acceptance procedures and the criteria adopted by Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) and MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) for rails.

**KCRC's Acceptance Procedures and Criteria**

2. The specifications adopted by KCRC for the purchase of rails over the past years are based on international standard UIC860, which sets out specifications on rail dimension, material properties, etc. In addition, since 1998, KCRC has specified a requirement on rail top flatness of not exceeding 0.4mm over a length of rail of 3m based on the emerging European standard at the time. This rail top flatness requirement has subsequently been adopted as European standard EN13674 since 2004.

3. Regarding the acceptance arrangement for rails, KCRC's established practice is to appoint a competent inspection agent in the area of steel and rail production to undertake inspection to ensure that the rails meet the specifications set by the Corporation. The testing and measuring activities for the inspection are carried out by the appointed agent based on the prevailing industry practice. KCRC also keeps in close liaison with the appointed agent in monitoring the inspection work.

## **MTRCL's Acceptance Procedures and Criteria**

4. Similar to KCRC, MTRCL has adopted the standard of UIC860 for rail procurement. Since the introduction of European standard EN13674 in 2004, MTRCL has also adopted that standard and specified the vertical flatness requirement of the rail body.

5. For rail inspection, MTRCL requires the rail manufacturer to conduct quality control to ensure that the specifications are met. MTRCL staff also inspect the quality control documents of the manufacturer and carry out random witness of tests in the factory. Release certificates will only be issued by the Corporation when it is satisfied that the rails have met all the technical requirements. When the rails are delivered to the depots in Hong Kong, MTRCL staff will inspect the rails and check for damages/defects during the delivery.

## **Conclusion**

6. KCRC and MTRCL have adopted the same international standard in setting specifications for the purchase of rails, and put in place arrangements for inspecting the rails during the acceptance stage. For such inspection of rails, KCRC appoints a third party specialist to carry out the inspection while MTRCL's staff carry out the task. Both are common practices in the industry. The important point is that the railway corporations have set stringent specifications for the procurement and ensure that there are competent persons to inspect the rails in a robust and professional manner.

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