

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 6 November 2007)

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

1. South Island Line (SIL)

January 2008

Last discussed by the Panel on Transport on 25 February 2005.

The Council also passed a motion on 11 January 2006, urging the Government to expedite the construction of the MTR SIL for commissioning in or before 2012, and study in parallel how vicious competition of the new line with other public transport such as minibuses or buses can be avoided, thereby protecting the public's right to choose and their interests.

2. Retrofitting of platform screen doors and automatic platform gates at railway stations

January 2008

The item was last discussed on 4 May 2007. As members expressed grave concern about the long time taken by the railway corporations to install platform screen doors (PSDs) or automatic platform gates (APGs) at the at-grade and above-ground railway stations, the Subcommittee passed a motion as follows:

"That the Subcommittee strongly requests the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) and the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) to complete the installation of platform screen doors or platform gates at all of their stations by 2012 and 2013 respectively."

MTRCL advised that further feasibility studies on the technical issues relating to the installation of APGs at the at-grade and above-ground railway stations would be completed by the end of 2007. In view of the safety risk caused by the gap between the train and the platform if PSDs were provided at railway stations, KCRC advised that an automatic mechanical gap filler system would be installed, initially at Lo Wu station, so as to assess passenger acceptance before installing the gap fillers at other stations. Both railway corporations considered the time

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schedules proposed in the motion for installation of PSDs or APGs at railway stations acceptable.

3. Matters arising from the Rail Merger Bill

January 2008

In examining the Rail Merger Bill, the Administration was requested to follow up on the following matters and to report to the Subcommittee in six months' time:

- (a) Measures to enhance in-train dissemination of information to passengers;
- (b) Measures to improve the air flow at platforms of non-enclosed railway stations;
- (c) Provision of public toilets at railway stations (This item was originally scheduled for discussion at the meeting on 16 July 2007 but had been deferred due to time constraint); and
- (d) Review of the role of Light Rail in the overall public transport service market within the North-west Transit Service Area, and introduction of suitable improvement measures to enhance the transport services in the area at reasonable fares. (An information paper was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2330/06-07(01) on 6 September 2007).

4. Shatin to Central Link (SCL)

March 2008

Last discussed at the Subcommittee meeting on 16 July 2007.

The Administration undertook to make a decision on the way forward, including the scheme and timetable for the SCL within six months after the completion of the legislative process for the rail merger. The Administration would report to the Subcommittee in late 2007.

5. Guangzhou – Shenzhen – Hong Kong Express Rail Link (ERL)

To be confirmed

The Government has decided to adopt the Dedicated Corridor Option for the Hong Kong section of the ERL, as it will greatly

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shorten the traveling time between Hong Kong and Guangzhou, and greatly enhance the strategic status of Hong Kong as a regional transportation hub and a southern gateway to the Mainland. The Administration is examining KCRC's proposal for the project, and is exchanging views with the relevant Mainland authorities regarding the connection between the Hong Kong and Mainland sections of the ERL and on other technical issues. The Administration aims to complete the planning and design processes within 2008, and to commence construction in 2009.

6. Northern Link

To be confirmed

The item was last discussed on 15 January 2007.

7. Review of the Mass Transit Railway By-laws and North-west Railway By-laws

To be confirmed

As a consequence of the merging of the operations of the MTR and the KCR systems, a number of amendments to the relevant subsidiary legislation were needed for the purpose of expanding the scope of the relevant regulations and bylaws. In May 2007, the House Committee agreed to form a subcommittee to study the draft subsidiary legislation relating to the rail merger.

In the course of deliberation, some members considered that there was a need to improve the two sets of bylaws (namely, the Mass Transit Railway By-laws and North-west Railway By-laws) as some provisions and offences therein were already outdated, and could not meet the present-day circumstances. On the other hand, some members were concerned about the drafting of some of the existing provisions. In their opinion, these bylaw provisions were not clearly defined, and hence the general public might inadvertently be caught by the provisions. The Subcommittee noted the policy decision of MTRCL that the objective of the then exercise was to amend the relevant bylaws where necessary for implementing the rail merger. MTRCL agreed that a comprehensive review of the bylaws would be conducted taking into account the experience of operating the integrated railway system after the merger as well as suggestions by members to improve individual bylaw provisions, and that the post-merger corporation would report the review result to the Legislative Council within 12 months after the rail merger.

Separately, Mr Albert CHAN had previously suggested that there

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was a need to review the situation of enforcement of certain regulations in the relevant bylaws. He pointed out that the broadcasting of advertisements and programmes carrying sounds by KCRC in its train compartments had been causing disturbance to passengers. He also observed that recently, some commercial entities were allowed to distribute pamphlets and conduct other promotional activities inside MTR stations and these commercial activities had caused nuisances to passengers.

8. Port Rail Link

To be confirmed

Last discussed at the Subcommittee meeting on 29 June 2004.

The proposed Port Rail Link will provide a freight rail corridor from Lo Wu to a new port rail terminal at Kwai Chung, via either East Rail or West Rail. According to the Administration, the timing for this rail line will depend on the build-up of rail freight demand. KCRC is now studying the feasibility of this rail link.

The Administration advised that it was still waiting for KCRC to revert on its proposal on the rail link.