



CB(1)1550/08-09(10)

HKSAR Government Civil Engineers Association

P.O. Box 28515, Gloucester Road Post Office, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

By fax & post

Clerk to the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways,
Legislative Council Secretariat,
3/F, Citibank Tower,
3 Garden Road,
Central,
Hong Kong.

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Hong Kong Section of
Guangzhou – Shenzhen – Hong Kong Express Rail Link
(XRL)**

I refer to your web announcement inviting members of the public to give views on the Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link project for the special meeting scheduled for Thursday, 14 May 2009. Being the largest professional civil engineer staff association, we feel obliged to express our views as follows -:

Strategic importance of XRL to Hong Kong

- The rail link will connect HK to the rapidly growing national express rail network of the Mainland, thus greatly enhancing the accessibility between HK and Mainland's main cities. The project bears significant strategic importance, as it would help strengthen Hong Kong's position as the southern gateway to the Mainland.
- We are given to understand that the Mainland is actively pursuing its express rail network for completion in around 2015. The Mainland section of the XRL between Guangzhou and Shenzhen will be operational in phases by 2012. HK is now planning to start works by the end of this year for completion in or before 2015. Any further delay of the project will undermine HK's strategic position, leading to marginization.

Hon. Adviser : Ir Dr. the Hon. Raymond HO Chung-tai, Ir Prof. LAU Ching-kwong, Ir Prof. William KO Chan-goek
Hon. President : Ir CHING Kam-cheong, Ir Peter CHAN Pak-fong, Ir CHEUNG Kin-keung Immediate Past Chairman : Ir BOK Kwok-ming
Chairman : Ir IP Shing-tim Vice Chairman : Ir CHOI Chun-ming, Ir Jerry LIU Tso-wing Hon. Secretary : Ir Fiona LIU Tze-kwan
Hon. Treasurer : Ir LAM Kin-chung



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- The project will create 5,500 jobs during construction and another 10,000 during its operation. Many of these posts are engineers or related professionals. Early implementation of the project would do good to the employment market especially the construction industry which is suffering from the highest unemployment rate in view of the present economic downturn.
- It is one of the ten Major Infrastructure Projects proposed in the Chief Executive's 2007-08 policy address. The early implementation of the project would safeguard the Hong Kong's long term interest.

Project Features

- The Hong Kong section measures 26km in length only. Upon completion, it will take only 14 minutes to travel between West Kowloon and the nearby Futian station of Shenzhen and then to Guangzhou. High speed and short journey time is the beauty of the XRL. Addition of intermediate station within HK boundary for a regional rail link will offset the purpose of constructing a dedicated corridor allowing trains to operate at a maximum speed of 200kph.
- Trains will be running inside tunnels for the entire HK section (26km long). From safety perspective, provision of an emergency rescue station near the middle of the alignment is necessary and in line with the current practice adopted in overseas long tunnel examples (for example, the Gotthard Base Tunnel (56km long) and Lotschberg Base Tunnel (37km long) in the Switzerland and Channel Tunnel Rail Link (over 10km) in the UK).

To conclude, the Association supports the early implementation of the XRL project.

By Order of the Council

(Ir IP Shing Tim)

Chairman

HKSARGCEA

5.5.2009

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