

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)2729/09-10
(These minutes have been seen
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Ref: CB1/PS/1/08/1

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

Minutes of special meeting on Friday, 26 March 2010, at 8:30 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, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
- Members absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
- Public Officers attending** : **Agenda item I**
Mr YAU Shing-mu
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mrs Hedy CHU
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and
Housing (Transport) 4

Mr Albert YUEN Lap-pun
Assistant Commissioner for Transport /
Bus and Railway
Transport Department

Miss Alice AU YEUNG Yuet-wah
Principal Transport Officer / Bus and Railway 2
Transport Department

Mr K M LEUNG
Assistant Director / Railways
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Attendance by invitation : **Agenda item I**

MTR Corporation Limited

Dr Jacob KAM
Chief of Operations Engineering

Mr T T CHOI
Head of Operating

Mr Jeff LEUNG
Senior Manager – External Affairs

Clerk in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Mr Ken WOO
Council Secretary (1)2

Miss Winnie CHENG
Legislative Assistant (1)5

Miss Angela LAM
Legislative Assistant (1)2

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Recent railway incidents

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1140/09-10(01) — Administration's paper on MTR East Rail Line service disruption on 21 January 2010
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1377/09-10(01) — Paper on railway service performance (2005-2009) from MTR Corporation Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1377/09-10(02) — Paper on list of outsourced maintenance work of MTR Corporation from MTR Corporation Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1377/09-10(03) — Paper on an incident relating to the "Last Train All Right" handsignal for the West Rail Line on 29 November 2009 from MTR Corporation Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1377/09-10(04) — Information note on the notification system of MTR Corporation Limited prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1377/09-10(05) — Extract from minutes of meeting on 4 December 2009
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1484/09-10(01) — Powerpoint presentation materials provided by MTR Corporation Limited on "Recent railway incidents")

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. With the aid of Powerpoint, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) briefed members on the MTR East Rail Line (ERL) service disruption on 21 January 2010.

3. MTRCL explained that the ERL incident was attributed to the inadvertent and erroneous execution of a software programme by the supplier's expert while he was conducting a regular audit of the data transmission network system in the ERL Operations Control Centre (OCC). To prevent recurrence of similar incidents, MTRCL advised that a standby workstation in OCC would be installed and procedures would be tightened for all outside experts working within the MTR system. The Administration pointed out that MTRCL would engage independent experts to conduct safety audits at least once every three years in accordance with

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the Operating Agreement. In benchmarking studies of major railways around the world by CoMET, MTRCL's performance was consistently among the best in safety and reliability. The Transport Department (TD) and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) had held a number of meetings with MTRCL concerning the ERL incident with a view to enhancing the reliability and quality of railway operations as a whole in order to prevent occurrence of similar incidents.

4. Mr WONG Kwok-hing requested the Administration to provide information on the appointment and the professional manpower of the Hong Kong Railway Inspectorate (HKRI). He also urged the Administration to make clear the division of work between HKRI and TD over railway safety and incidents.

5. The Administration advised that HKRI was formerly attached to the Transport and Housing Bureau and was integrated into EMSD in 2008. With the integration, the head of HKRI was upgraded from a Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer (at the point of D1 according to the Directorate Pay Scale (DPS)) to a Government Electrical and Mechanical Engineer post (at the point of D2 according to DPS). The head of HKRI was re-designated from the Chief Inspecting Officer/Railways to the Assistant Director/Railways with the upgrade. The Railways Branch of EMSD by which the Assistant Director/Railways headed was currently the regulatory body vested with the authority to oversee the safe operation of the railway lines operated by MTRCL.

6. Members requested for enhancement of quality control and a comprehensive review of all outsourced maintenance work of MTRCL to avoid railway incidents. Mr Andrew CHENG stressed the need for the Administration to tighten its monitoring of the safe operation of railways and consideration should be given to imposing financial penalty on MTRCL in case of substandard performance.

Admin/
MTRCL

7. After discussion, the Administration/MTRCL were requested to provide –
- (a) a paper on the integration of HKRI into EMSD, division of work between HKRI and TD over railway safety and incidents, and the professional manpower of HKRI;
 - (b) the respective numbers of service delays lasting for more than 15 minutes, 30 minutes, 45 minutes and 60 minutes from 2005 to 2009;
 - (c) written response to suggestions made by Mr LAU Kong-wah on strengthening railway safety: to review the propriety of assigning the expert of the supplier of the data transmission network to play the triple role of designing, monitoring and conducting audits for the performance of the work in the system; stepping up the quality

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control of the 15 items of outsourced maintenance work; and increasing the supply of shuttle buses to serve affected passengers by signing up contracts with other transport operators (e.g. coach companies); and

- (d) information on the communication arrangements between MTRCL and its contractors.

Clerk 8. Members agreed to add "Railway incidents" in the "List of outstanding items for discussion" for further discussion.

II Any other business

9. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:00 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
23 August 2010

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

**Proceedings of the meeting
on Friday, 26 March 2010, at 8:30 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item I – Recent railway incidents</i>			
000000 – 000418	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000419 – 001759	Administration MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL)	Powerpoint presentation on MTR East Rail Line (ERL) service disruption on 21 January 2010 by MTRCL (LC Paper No. CB(1)1484/09-10(01)).	
001800 – 002553	Mr WONG Kwok-hing Administration Chairman	<p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing's enquiries on the appointment and the professional manpower of the Hong Kong Railway Inspectorate (HKRI).</p> <p>The Administration's response -</p> <p>(a) upon the integration of HKRI into the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) in 2008, the then Chief Inspecting Officer/Railways (at the point of D1 according to the Directorate Pay Scale (DPS)) was upgraded to become the Assistant Director/Railways (at the point of D2 of DPS) who was now the principal official overseeing the safety of railway operations; and</p> <p>(b) the Railways Branch of EMSD, headed by the Assistant Director/Railways with the assistance of four senior engineers and four engineers, was currently the regulatory body vested with the authority to oversee the safe operation of the railway lines operated by MTRCL.</p> <p>The Chairman's request for the Administration to provide a paper on the integration of HKRI into EMSD, division of work between HKRI and the Transport Department (TD) over railway safety and incidents, and the professional manpower of HKRI.</p>	Administration to provide information. (para. 7 of minutes)
002554 – 003332	Ms LI Fung-ying MTRCL	<p>Ms LI Fung-ying's expression of dissatisfaction on the lack of measures to prevent railway incidents and the long time taken in alighting of passengers during the ERL service disruption on 21 January 2010. Her view that monitoring of outsourced maintenance activities of MTRCL should be tightened.</p> <p>The MTRCL's response -</p> <p>(a) it took about half an hour to allow passengers to alight because the Operations Control Centre (OCC)</p>	

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		<p>had to use hand portable radios to communicate with 27 train captains in service one by one to confirm train locations first before it could arrange for trains to approach stations for alighting of passengers safely;</p> <p>(b) the data transmission network involved in the ERL incident was maintained by MTRCL and was subject to regular audit and upgrade by the supplier's experts. A standby workstation would be installed to allow OCC to continue its central monitoring function even when the data transmission network became unstable; and</p> <p>(c) from 2005 to 2009, the number of delays attributed to railway equipment and human factor showed a drop of around 40% while delays involving passenger action and external event had increased by around 30%. Continuous improvements had been made to its trains and infrastructure with passenger education strengthened to promote railway safety.</p>	
003333 – 004116	Mr LAU Kong-wah Administration MTRCL	<p>Mr LAU Kong-wah's query on the reason for the failure of the standby data transmission network system of ERL, and his request for an across-the-board enhancement of quality control and a comprehensive review of all outsourced maintenance work to minimize the chance of railway incidents.</p> <p>The Administration's response that TD and EMSD had held a number of meetings with MTRCL concerning the ERL incident with a view to enhancing the reliability and quality of railway operations as a whole in order to prevent occurrence of similar incidents.</p> <p>The MTRCL's response -</p> <p>(a) both the operating and the standby system were shut down by the software programme inadvertently and erroneously executed by the supplier's expert; and</p> <p>(b) improvements had always been made with respect to train and infrastructural facilities, maintenance work and asset management with a view to providing better railway services.</p>	
004117 – 005123	Mr Andrew CHENG Administration Chairman MTRCL	<p>Mr Andrew CHENG's concern that service delays of more than 30 minutes between 2005 and 2009 had actually increased, and his request for the Administration to put in place an enhanced mechanism with objective indicators introduced for better monitoring of railway safety.</p> <p>The Administration's response -</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>(a) it had always attached great importance to minimizing railway incidents and concerned about the ways they were handled and the associated improvement measures; and</p> <p>(b) a proper monitoring framework was in place and the corporation could be penalised if it failed to comply with relevant legislation.</p> <p>The MTRCL's explanation on the delays involving passenger action and external event.</p> <p>The Chairman's request for MTRCL to provide the respective numbers of incidents of service being delayed for more than 15 minutes, 30 minutes, 45 minutes and 60 minutes from 2005 to 2009.</p>	<p>MTRCL to provide information. (para. 7 of minutes)</p>
005124 – 010046	Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming MTRCL	<p>Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming's enquiries on the guidelines regulating the timing for carrying out maintenance works to avoid impacts on the operating railways, and the improvements in respect of shuttle bus arrangements in times of railway incidents.</p> <p>The MTRCL's response -</p> <p>(a) the "fail-safe" system could still keep trains at a safe distance apart and hence protected the safety of onboard passengers even with the failure of the data transmission network at OCC;</p> <p>(b) audits to the data transmission network must be carried out by the network supplier's experts during train service hours in order to evaluate its performance during normal train operations; unnecessary audit procedures had now been restricted during train service hours; and</p> <p>(c) it was consulting TD on increasing the supply of shuttle buses by other public transport operators in times of incidents and would work towards the enhancement of information dissemination to affected passengers.</p>	
010047 – 010959	Mr WONG Kwok-hing Chairman Administration	<p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing's request for the Administration to conduct a comprehensive review into the setup within the Government on monitoring railway safety.</p> <p>The Administration's reiteration on the organizational structure of the Railways Branch and its role on overseeing the safe operation of the railway lines operated by MTRCL.</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
011000 – 011636	Mr LAU Kong-wah MTRCL	<p>Mr LAU Kong-wah's suggestions on enhancing rail safety and the MTRCL's response -</p> <p>(a) \$4 billion was invested annually in the maintenance, repair and renewal of its railway assets in order to maintain high quality railway services and enhance service performance;</p> <p>(b) given the sophistication of the data transmission network currently in use, the expert of the supplier, also being one of the designers of the network, was suitably qualified in conducting audit into the network efficiency and upgrading the network;</p> <p>(c) it had put in place a detailed monitoring system on outsourced maintenance work, the quality of which was monitored by MTR engineers and was subject to additional scheduled and random inspections and checks by MTR dedicated staff at supervisory level; and</p> <p>(d) more shuttle bus operators would be approached to expand the base for shuttle service provision.</p>	MTRCL to provide written response to the suggestions. (para. 7 of minutes)
011637– 012109	Mr IP Wai-ming MTRCL	<p>Mr IP Wai-ming's views that MTRCL should step up its monitoring effort in respect of outsourced maintenance work.</p> <p>The MTRCL's reiteration on the cause of the ERL incident and the professionalism of the expert in question in conducting audit to the data transmission network.</p>	
012110– 012736	Mr Andrew CHENG Administration	<p>Mr Andrew CHENG's suggestion for the Subcommittee to discuss pressing the Administration to take a more stringent approach in the monitoring of the safe operation of railways, and for setting up an objective punitive system in connection with delays in railway service.</p> <p>The Administration's response -</p> <p>(a) MTRCL would engage independent experts to conduct safety audits at least once every three years in accordance with the Operating Agreement. In benchmarking studies of major railways around the world by CoMET, MTRCL's performance was consistently among the best in safety and reliability; and</p> <p>(b) the Administration had requested improvement measures to be made to the network in question to avoid similar incident.</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)	Action required
012737 – 012935	Chairman Ms LI Fung-ying	Members agreed to include "Railway incidents" in the "List of outstanding items for discussion". Ms LI Fung-ying's request for information on the communication arrangements between MTRCL and its contractors.	Clerk to include discussion item in the "List of outstanding items for discussion". (para. 8 of minutes) MTRCL to provide information. (para. 7 of minutes)

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
23 August 2010