

For Information

Legislative Council Panel on Transport Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

Track Re-configuration at Sheung Wan Station for West Island Line Project

Introduction

This paper briefs Members on the arrangements for track re-configuration at Sheung Wan Station for the West Island Line (WIL) project.

Need for Track Re-configuration

2. The construction of the WIL, which commenced in July 2009, has been making good progress and the project is expected to complete as scheduled in 2014.

3. The WIL is an extension of the Island Line (ISL). Upon commissioning of the WIL, Sheung Wan Station will be transformed from being the ISL terminus into an intermediate station, through which trains on the ISL will travel to and fro Kennedy Town Station.

4. At present, a section of tracks at the end of Sheung Wan Station serves as a turnaround for trains on the ISL. To tie in with the alignment and depth of the WIL, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has to move the turnaround eastward for approximately 15m so that tracks of the ISL and WIL can be connected (see figures 1 and 2). When the alignment of the WIL Sai Ying Pun section was designed, the MTRCL has thoroughly studied to see whether the tracks of the WIL can suit to avoid re-configuring the tracks at Sheung Wan Station which are in use. In view of the geological condition and the rock level, the present alignment between Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan stations is considered to be the most viable option, but the existing tracks at the end of Sheung Wan Station have to be re-configured.

5. The track re-configuration will involve the ISL, which is in operation. To minimise the time for which train service will be affected, the MTRCL commenced in late 2010 a series of advance works which were carried out at night time after the close of train service. The works include track survey, re-installation of trackside signalling system and cables for the power system, and modification of support structures for the tracks, etc. As the advance works have shown good progress and are almost completed, the MTRCL is preparing to conduct the essential works of track re-configuration.

6. Upon completion of the track re-configuration, the MTRCL will proceed to connect the tracks of the ISL and WIL.

Track Re-configuration Process

7. As the track re-configuration will be conducted at the turnaround at the end of the tracks at Sheung Wan Station, trains on the ISL can only turn around at Admiralty Station and will not be able to call at Sheung Wan Station and Central Station during the re-configuration.

8. The MTRCL has conducted track connection works for other rail lines, such as connecting the Tung Chung Line and the Tsuen Wan Line at Lai King Station, connecting the Tseung Kwan O Line and the Kwun Tong Line at Yau Tong Station and connecting the Tseung Kwan O Line and the ISL at Quarry Bay Station, etc. However, those works involved only track connection but not re-configuration and the areas affected were smaller, and so the track connection could be completed within the non-operational hours of the rail lines. Compared with those works, the works concerned will not only affect an area larger in size and longer in length but also involve track re-configuration, a complex engineering exercise in which most of the major tasks have to be conducted in a specified sequence. The MTRCL expects that the works will take 54 hours to complete.

9. Major tasks of the process are as follows:

- (a) de-commissioning trackside signalling system devices that are

related to the existing turnout¹ (4 hours required);

- (b) conducting track works, including de-commissioning and removing the existing turnout, installing new turnout as well as installing related tracks and support structures (45 hours required and to be conducted in tandem with item (a) above);
- (c) installing and renewing trackside signalling system devices (14 hours required and to be conducted in tandem with item (b) above);
- (d) adjusting the overhead lines (2 hours required); and
- (e) conducting running tests for the signalling system and train service (7 hours required).

Scope of Impact and Duration

10. The MTRCL has conducted a detailed study in an attempt to minimise the time required for the track re-configuration. To reduce the impact on the public, the MTRCL has arranged for the works to be conducted at a weekend during the summer vacation. Under the existing plan, the works will start at night on 5 August (Friday) and the train service of the ISL between Admiralty and Sheung Wan stations will end at 11:30 p.m., i.e. about 90 minutes earlier than usual. It is expected that the works will be completed by 5:30 a.m. on 8 August (Monday) before train service starts.

11. It is essential to suspend the train service between Admiralty and Sheung Wan stations to conduct the said track re-configuration for the construction of the WIL. The MTRCL has made prudent and detailed planning for the works concerned, and has conducted a lot of advance works to minimise the time required for track re-configuration and hence the suspension of train service.

¹ Turnout is an installation enabling trains to turn around.

Transport Arrangements

12. During the track re-configuration, train service of the ISL between Chai Wan Station and Admiralty Station will remain normal, but that between Admiralty Station and Sheung Wan Station will be suspended.

13. The MTRCL has formulated temporary traffic arrangements with a view to minimizing the impact on the passengers due to the suspension of train service. The MTRCL will arrange for free shuttle buses to ply between Admiralty and Sheung Wan stations during that period. Furthermore, train service of the Tsuen Wan Line (between Tsuen Wan and Central) will remain normal, and passengers of the ISL may take the Tsuen Wan Line to travel between Admiralty Station and Central Station.

14. The MTRCL has liaised with the Citybus Limited, New World First Bus Services Limited, Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and Hong Kong Tramways Limited so that necessary arrangements will be made to cope with the transport demand during the track re-configuration. Passengers may also opt to travel to and fro Central and Sheung Wan on foot, which will take about 15 minutes.

Contingency Plan

15. The MTRCL has formulated contingency measures. In the event of an emergency such as inclement weather, the works will be postponed for one week (i.e. to be conducted between 11:30 p.m. on 12 August 2011 and 5:30 a.m. on 15 August 2011).

16. In addition, the MTRCL has drawn up a set of contingency transport arrangements in case the track re-configuration cannot be completed within 54 hours as scheduled. Under such circumstances, service of the ISL between Chai Wan Station and Admiralty Station will remain normal, while service of the Tsuen Wan Line between Admiralty Station and Central Station will be enhanced, with free shuttle buses plying between Admiralty Station and Sheung Wan Station. The MTRCL will update the relevant notices and make public announcements at stations and on trains to inform passengers of the transport arrangements. The MTRCL will also closely monitor the situation

at the platforms of stations along the ISL. In the event of overcrowding, relevant established contingency measures will be activated.

Train Service after Completion of Track Re-configuration

17. Apart from the section of tracks for trains to turn around, Sheung Wan Station currently has a section of tracks at the end for stabling an additional train. In case a train breaks down, it can be temporarily stabled there to avoid disrupting normal train service (see figure 1).

18. As mentioned in paragraph 4 above, to tie in with the alignment of the WIL between Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan stations, the existing turnaround at Sheung Wan station has to be re-configured (see figure 2), and the section of stabling tracks for defective trains will be also de-commissioned. In the 18 months after the completion of the track re-configuration (i.e. from September 2011 to February 2013), the MTRCL will conduct tunnelling and track connection works at the same location. During this period, if any train of the ISL breaks down between Admiralty and Sheung Wan stations, the defective train will have to be moved to the nearest turnaround at Admiralty Station to vacate the line. The handling time will thus be longer and train service between Sheung Wan and Admiralty stations will be disrupted for a longer period of time. Therefore, the MTRCL will take practicable measures, such as strengthening the inspection, to minimise the chance of train breakdown along this section as well as the delay so caused.

Consultation and Liaison with the Public

19. We consulted the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) on the track re-configuration in May and June 2011, with a site visit arranged for C&WDC members. At an informal C&WDC meeting held on 27 June 2011, Members were of the view that the works might cause inconvenience to the public, but in general supported the carrying out of the works as soon as possible to ensure the commissioning of the WIL in 2014 as scheduled.

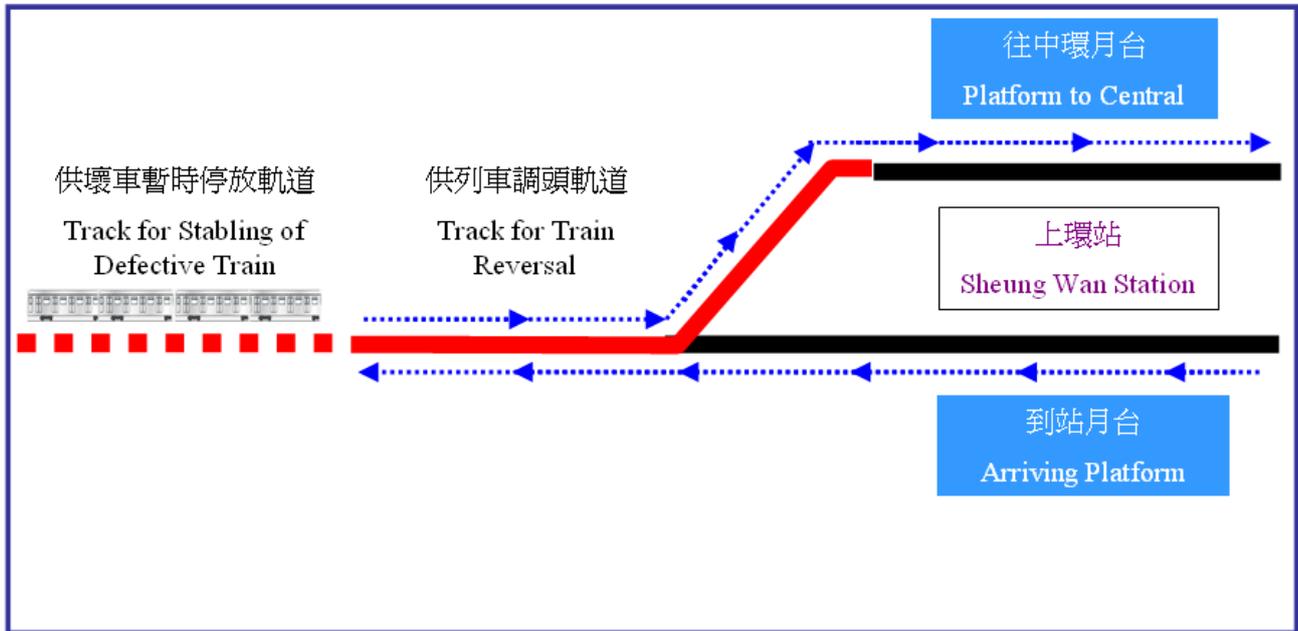
20. Prior to commencement of the works, the MTRCL will display information on the works and related transport arrangements at the stations, or

distribute leaflets or make public announcements to inform passengers. The MTRCL will also disseminate relevant information in advance via various channels, including the District Councils, WIL Community Liaison Groups, local organisations and the media. During the disruption of train service, additional staff will be deployed at Admiralty, Central and Sheung Wan stations to direct passengers to train services or other means of public transport. Moreover, relevant information and assistance for tourists will be provided at the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal and the airport.

21. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

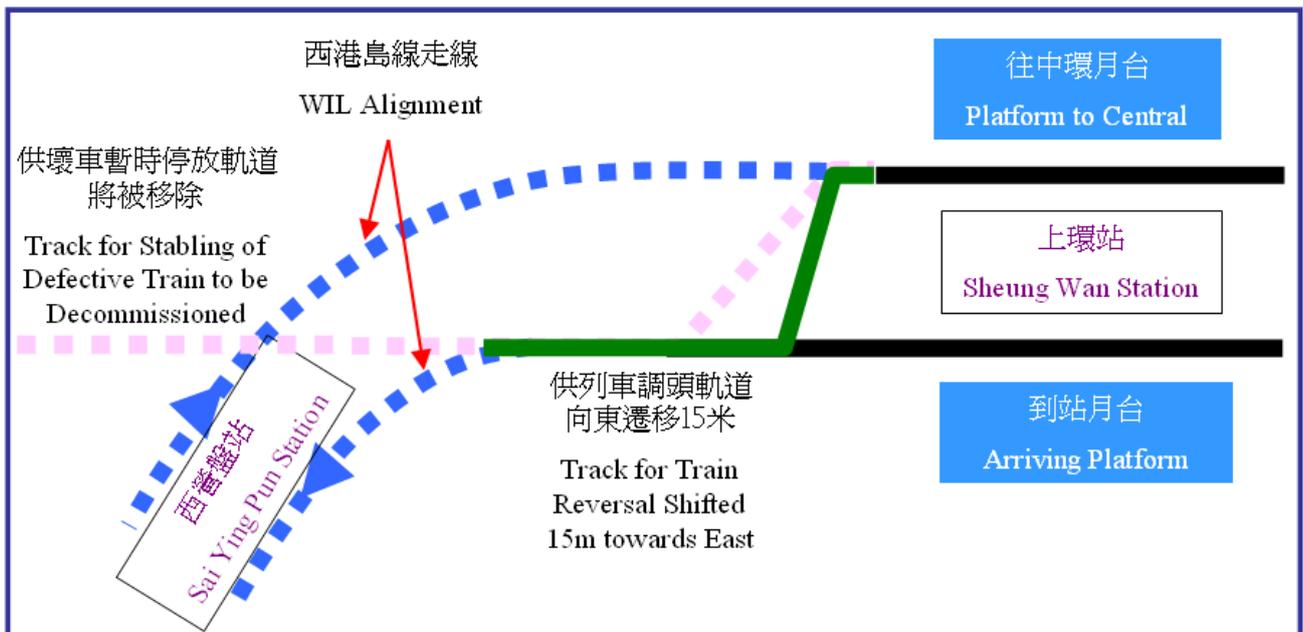
**Transport and Housing Bureau
MTR Corporation Limited
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西港島線上環站遷移軌道工程 Track Re-configuration at Sheung Wan Station for West Island Line Project



圖一 現有軌道佈局

Figure 1 Layout of Existing Tracks



圖二 遷移軌道工程

Figure 2 Track Re-configuration Works