

For Discussion
4 November 2010

**Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways**

Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' support for our application to the Finance Committee for funding to review and update the Railway Development Strategy 2000, so as to meet the need for rail transport up to year 2031.

Implementation of Recommendation in Railway Development Strategy 2000

2. Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS 2000) was announced in 2000. The RDS 2000 maps out the railway network expansion plan for Hong Kong up to the year 2016, so as to tie in with the overall development in Hong Kong, to meet the daily traffic need of the public, as well as to echo the sustainable transport policy of making railway as the backbone of our passenger transport system, providing Hong Kong citizens with convenient and safe public transport services at reasonable prices.

3. RDS 2000 recommended six priority railway schemes. They were Kowloon Southern Link (KSL), Northern Link (NOL), West Island Line (WIL), North Island Line (NIL)¹, Shatin to Central Link (SCL) and Regional Express Line [now known as the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL)]. In addition, RDS 2000 also recommended the development of the Port Rail Link (PRL), linking Lo Wu to a rail terminal at Kwai Chung.

4. Upon further studies and public consultation, KSL was commissioned in 2009. WIL and the XRL are now under construction for completion in 2014-15. In view of the public needs and to enhance the overall railway network, we developed the Kwun Tong Line Extension (KTE) scheme which was suggested in the course of SCL study. We also advanced the planning of South Island Line (East)². Detailed design and the statutory process of these

¹ The NIL will provide an additional rail corridor between the Hong Kong Station and the Fortress Hill Station to relieve congestion at the Causeway Bay section of the existing Island Line.

² One of the long term railway developments as recommended in RDS 2000.

two projects are at their final stage, with a view to starting construction in 2011 for completion in 2015. The planning of SCL is also at its final stage, and the railway scheme is expected to be gazetted by the end of this year. Besides, we will further review the implementation of NOL and NIL. As regards PRL, we have decided not to further pursue this project due to the continued decline of rail freight volume. Please refer to **Annex** for implementation of railway projects since 2000.

Need for Review and Update of the RDS 2000

5. Looking ahead, we will continue our policy of making better use of railway as the backbone of our passenger transport system, so as to minimise the pollutions and land requirement arising from transport infrastructure and maintaining a sustainable transport system. It is necessary for us to review and update the blueprint of our railway development strategy in RDS 2000 to take account of the changing needs of the society and latest planning parameters as listed below–

- (I) **Hong Kong 2030 Study** – formulating a broad planning framework to guide the future development of Hong Kong up to year 2030. Hong Kong 2030 suggested our planning strategy should follow three broad directions, namely providing a quality living environment; enhancing economic competitiveness; and strengthening links with the Mainland. Therefore, the railway development strategy should be adjusted to tie in with such long term planning strategy.
- (II) **Satisfying the demand arising from growing population** – in 2010, the Administration announced the latest population projections and made adjustment in various planning parameters for population forecast, population and employment distribution. Therefore, the railway development strategy should also be fine-tuned accordingly.
- (III) **To tie in with the planning of New Development Areas (NDAs)** – the Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address 2007 that NDAs (including Kwu Tung North, Fanling North, Ping Che and Ta Kwu Ling and Hung Shui Kiu) should be planned without delay, so as to ease the pressure on developed areas and to meet the demand for land arising from population growth. In this connection, railway development should be planned accordingly to meet the traffic demand arising from the NDAs.

(IV) **Supporting external traffic** – The traffic between Hong Kong and Mainland and other countries has been increasing. In 2009, land-based cross boundary passengers reached an average of 470,000 per day, whilst the annual passenger throughput of the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) was around 46 million, representing over 70% and 50% growth respectively in 10-year period. Railway development strategy needs to be adjusted accordingly, so as to tie in with the overall planning and development strategy of HKIA, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB), various boundary control facilities, as well as the Pearl River Delta area.

(V) **Public opinions** – Members of the public (including the District Councils and local communities) have from time to time expressed views on railway development, including proposals on extension of existing lines or new lines/stations, improvements to existing rail services, etc. The Administration considers it necessary to study these conceptual proposals in detail to meet public expectations and demands.

6. In view of the above, we need to review and update the RDS 2000 in light of the latest developments. This will include reviewing the priority of the railway network expansion proposals that were recommended previously but not yet implemented, as well as adding new railway proposals. The target is to update the railway development strategy to meet the transport need up to year 2031.

Scope of the Review

7. The Review and Update of RDS 2000 will comprise two main parts, namely:-

(I) Network Development Study (NDS)

The NDS will build on the outcome of RDS 2000 and review the future planning of the railway network, taking into account impact of various factors mentioned above so as to meet the future rail services demand. The NDS will review those proposals identified in the RDS 2000 but not yet implemented (e.g. NIL, NOL, the fifth harbour crossing, etc.), and other new railway proposals and related suggestions made by the Administration or public since the announcement of RDS 2000 (e.g. Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Express Line, extension of Tung Chung line to HZMB Hong Kong Boundary Control Facility, rail connection between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan, new stations along existing rail lines, etc.).

The NDS will assess the railway proposals from various aspects, such as overall transport planning, land use and development, cross-boundary land passenger and air related railway passenger demand, etc. Projects worth further pursue will then be identified, and priority of implementation will be proposed. Preliminary studies will also be carried out on various aspects of these projects, such as engineering planning, geological assessment, strategic environmental assessment, economic and financial appraisals.

(II) Topical Studies

To tie in with the NDS, the Review will also comprise a number of topical studies on issues such as potential bottlenecks and areas of overloading in the existing railway network, rooms for railway service enhancement, cross-boundary passenger demands, funding arrangement for implementing new railway projects, etc.

Study Time-frame

8. The Study will take about 24 months. We will request the consultant to submit interim reports by phases, allowing early public consultation on railway projects that are more urgent or require long planning period to meet timely the public demand and tie-in with the overall development in Hong Kong.

Financial Implications

9. The expenditure for the consultancy study is estimated to be about \$43 million, breakdown of which is as below –

	\$million
(I) Consultants' staff costs	38
(a) Network Development Study	25
- Review of railway proposals identified in the RDS 2000 but not yet implemented	8
- Assessment on other new railway proposals and related suggestions	17
(b) Topical Studies	13
(II) Consultants' out-of-pocket expenses	1
(III) Contingencies (10%)	4
Total	<u>43</u>

Way Forward

10. We intend to seek the approval of the Finance Committee at its meeting on 28 January 2011. Upon approval of the funding, we will commence the Study in the second quarter of 2011.

Advice Sought

11. Members are invited to support the above funding proposal for the Review and Update of the RDS 2000.

Transport and Housing Bureau
November 2010

Implementation Progress of Railway Projects since 2000

The railway development in Hong Kong since 2000 is summarized below (see the map at **Enclosure**) –

Projects put into operation

Railway Projects	Commission Date
Tseung Kwan O Line	2002
West Rail Line	2002
Ma On Shan Line and Tsim Sha Tsui Extension of the East Rail Line	2004
Disneyland Resort Line ³	2005
Lok Ma Chau Spur Line	2007
Kowloon Southern Link	2009

Projects under planning/construction

Railway Projects	Progress
Island Line Extension (i.e. West Island Line)	Construction started in 2009 for completion in 2014
Regional Express Line, now known as the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL)	Construction started in 2009 for completion in 2015
South Island Line (East)	Construction expected to start in 2011 for completion in 2015
Kwun Tong Line Extension ⁴	Construction expected to start in 2011 for completion in 2015
Shatin to Central Link	Public consultation, design and site investigation are being conducted in tandem; the project will be gazetted and enter statutory consultation process tentatively by the end of 2010

³ Not included in Railway Development Strategy.

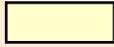
⁴ Not included in Railway Development Strategy 2000.

Others

Railway Projects	Progress
Island Line Extension (i.e., North Island Line)	Implementation programme under review
South Island Line (West)	Implementation programme under review
Northern Link (NOL)	Planning of the NOL is being reviewed in light of the North East New Territories New Development Area Planning and Engineering Study with a view to tying in with the other new developments
Port Rail Line	As announced at the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development held on 16 October 2009, the Administration has decided not to pursue the PRL due to the continued decline of rail freight volume

Enclosure

LEGEND :

-  Railway Projects Recommended in RDS
-  Railway Projects Recommended in RDS 2000
-  Other Railway Projects Committed after 2000
-  Commissioned Railway
-  Railway Projects Under Construction / Planning
-  Railway Projects Under Review
-  Shelved Railway Projects

