

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

Meeting on 4 November 2011

Information note on railway incidents

Railway incidents have been discussed by the Subcommittee at meetings in the last two legislative sessions. Apart from discussing the causes and handling of each of the incidents at the meetings, the Subcommittee has requested the Administration and the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) to provide information on the following issues for Subcommittee members' reference -

- (a) Notification of railway incidents when there is service disruption (**Appendix I**);
- (b) List of outsourced maintenance work of the MTR Corporation (**Appendix II**); and
- (c) New measures for better handling of future incidents adopted by MTRCL after the Tsuen Wan Line train fault incident on 20 October 2010 (**Appendix III**).

2. To facilitate Subcommittee members' discussion on railway incidents, the above relevant information papers are attached again for members' easy reference.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
27 October 2011

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

**Notification of Railway Incidents
when there is service disruption**

At the meeting of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways (Subcommittee) on 16 January 2009 during which the item on the MTR Kwun Tong Line service disruption was discussed, Members requested the Administration to provide a paper on the notification of railway incidents when there is service disruption. This paper provides the relevant information.

2. We have all along put in place an alert system for incidents which applies to all public transport operators including the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL). Under this system, MTRCL (as well as other public transport operators) issues an “Amber Alert” as an early warning in respect of an incident which could lead to a serious disruption of service; and a “Red Alert” is issued as a signal to indicate that a serious disruption has continued or is expected to continue for over 20 minutes, and emergency transport support services from other operators are required.

3. To facilitate relevant operators and agencies to gear up resources to assist affected passengers, MTRCL is required since 2004, to notify the Transport Department (TD) within 8 minutes on any service disruption incident that has occurred for 8 minutes or is expected to last for 8 minutes or more. Train service disruption incidents refer to those incidents that lead to a stoppage of service at a railway station or a stop (in respect of Light Rail), or on a section of a railway line, or an extension in end-to-end journey time on a railway line of 8 minutes or more.

4. Upon receiving notification, TD would liaise closely with MTRCL and provide assistance as necessary. The early notification has enabled preparatory work for emergency/support services to start at the earliest available opportunity. Apart from notifying TD, MTRCL is also required to disseminate at the same time the service disruption messages to passengers on the affected train and in the stations within 8 minutes.

5. The notification system has been working well. During the discussion of the MTR Kwun Tong Line incident at the meeting of the Subcommittee on 16 December 2008, Members expressed that MTRCL should further enhance the existing system with regard to notifying the media. We have followed up with MTRCL. MTRCL has agreed that in addition to the existing circumstances for notification to the media, it will also notify the media of those incidents that are related to train operation and are of public concern and which has resulted in or could potentially result in injuries or deaths. This has already been reported to the Subcommittee in January 2009.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
June 2009**

Extract

LC Paper No. CB(1)557/08-09(06)

Legislative Council Panel on Transport Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

Follow-up action on MTR Kwun Tong Line Overhead Power System Failure on 8 December 2008

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Notification of railway incidents

9. At the Subcommittee meeting on 16 December 2008, Members asked about the mechanism to deal with incidents involving delays of less than 8 minutes which had aroused public concern because of involvement of safety issues. The existing notification system and our discussion with MTRCL to address Members' concerns are set out below.

The existing notification system

10. MTRCL is required to notify EMSD of railway incidents. Under Mass Transit Railway Regulations (the Regulations), railway incidents are classified into "accidents" and "occurrences", as follows-

- (a) for accidents² that occurred on the railway, railway corporations should immediately after the occurrence of the accident make a verbal report to Government; and
- (b) apart from accidents, the Schedule to the regulations sets out notifiable occurrences, which cover seven types of occurrences "directly affecting persons" and 12 types of

² Under Regulation 2 of the Mass Transit Railway Regulations (Cap. 556A), an accident is notifiable if it occurs on a part of the railway which has commenced operation for public use and-

- (a) as a result thereof any person dies or suffers serious injury; or
- (b) it involves a train (i) colliding with, or striking against, another train or any other object; or (ii) leaving the rails,

and doing so either on a line used for the carriage of passengers or goods or in circumstances where the normal operation of such a line is affected.

MTRCL should as soon as practicable after the occurrence complete and deliver a written report on the occurrence to Government.

11. Apart from the above requirement under the legislation, MTRCL also notifies Government of incidents which are of “public concern and media interest”. This is to facilitate explanations to address public concerns about the safety-related incidents and to initiate follow-up actions where necessary.

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**Transport and Housing Bureau
January 2009**

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

**List of Outsourced Maintenance Work of
MTR Corporation**

Purpose

This paper provides supplementary information on outsourced maintenance work, all of which are subject to regular inspections and checks by staff of the MTR Corporation (the Corporation).

Outsourced Maintenance Work

2. Since MTR commenced service in 1979, the Corporation has put in place a detailed monitoring system to ensure that its maintenance work, including outsourced maintenance work, meets the standards it adopts. It should be emphasised that the Corporation applies the same standards and requirements to maintenance tasks carried out both by MTR in-house staff and contractor staff. These standards are in line with good international practices and MTR engineers are responsible for monitoring and supervising work quality to ensure they comply with standards. Outsourced maintenance work is also subject to the same regular checks as MTR in-house maintenance work. There are daily/weekly and monthly performance reviews and annual asset surveys and three-yearly asset condition assessments. On top of the above, outsourced maintenance work is subject to additional scheduled and random inspections and checks by MTR dedicated staff at supervisory level. In fact, in respect of infrastructure equipment, there is a team of dedicated engineering staff whose work is mainly to ensure that the outsourced maintenance work meets the performance levels set out in the contracts with the contractors. These MTR in-house staff would make daily visits to various sites where system maintenance are in process and inspect the work being done.

3. In maintaining MTR train operations, contractor staff are required to possess the proper qualifications and must be certified to ensure they are equipped with the adequate skills and techniques similar to MTR staff doing the same jobs, and these requirements are specified in the relevant outsourcing contracts. In respect of specialized work such as the maintenance of fire services equipment, escalators and lifts, registration of contractors is also stipulated in the relevant legislation. The Corporation also follows up on the training of contractor staff through working meetings. While work-related skill and safety training are provided by the contractors themselves, the Corporation also helps brief contractor staff on the Corporation's operation and safety procedures.

4. The outsourced maintenance work of the Corporation's train operations includes:

- Infrastructure equipment (track, signaling, power distribution and overhead line) and trains of the Tseung Kwan O Line
- Automatic Fare Collection equipment of the following lines -
 - West Rail Line;
 - Tseung Kwan O Line;
 - Tung Chung Line;
 - Disneyland Resort Line; and
 - Airport Express
- Passenger information display equipment
- Closed circuit television equipment
- Station lifts and escalators
- Platform screen doors and automatic platform gates
- Fire services equipment
- Telecommunications equipment
- Gondola and gantries
- Baggage handling equipment for Airport Express
- Building services equipment
- Waste water treatment, plumbing and drainage
- Backup power supply equipment
- General station lighting
- Centralised control equipment for power supply switching for West Rail Line and East Rail Line

Extract

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

**Follow up actions on
MTR Tsuen Wan Line Service Disruption on 21 October 2010**

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Introduction of new measures for better handling of future incidents

4. When a train service suspension occurs, the Corporation will in the first instance need to ascertain the situation and make assessment on the impact to train service. It will then deploy extra manpower and arrange for shuttle buses as necessary. The Corporation hopes members of the public will understand that the arrangement for the contingency services could take some time to put in place after the occurrence of the incident. But the Corporation will keep passengers informed of the situation and developments through public announcements which will advise them to first consider taking alternative MTR routes or other public transport.

5. Improvements have also been made to ensure passengers are provided with immediate information. Details are as follows:

Communication with Passengers

Improvement actions	Status
<u>System-wide Review of Public Announcements</u> Enhanced public announcements with details of service suspension and advice on alternative transport choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed and implemented
<u>Giant Information Displays</u> Giant pull-down maps showing alternative transport information such as franchised bus routes, bus stop locations and Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points. Signs displayed from concourse ceilings and at street level to mark routes to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installations at 20 interchange stations completed in January 2011 Installation at all 84 stations to be completed by 2nd Quarter, 2011

<p>Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points</p>	
<p><u>New Customer Communication System</u> LCD screens to be gradually installed at station entry gates to provide train service information and other important notices during service suspensions or major disruptions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed at Yau Ma Tei and Jordan Stations • Installation at 20 interchange stations to be completed by 2nd Quarter, 2011 • All stations to have LCD screens by end 2013 
<p><u>Station-specific Response</u> Station-specific Rail Service Suspension Passenger Guides available at each station and on the MTR website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 
<p><u>Enhanced training for staff</u> Enhanced training for staff in both the Operations Control Centre and at stations on preparing more customer-oriented public announcements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing with first round completed in November 2010

6. While the deployment for extra staff and arrangement of Free MTR Shuttle Bus may take time, improvements have also been made in these areas-

Free MTR Shuttle Bus Arrangement during Train Service Suspension

Improvement actions	Status
<p><u>Improved Shuttle Bus Plan</u> A review of the current shuttle bus deployment plan including the location of pick-up and drop-off points conducted in conjunction with the relevant Government departments to discuss the problems encountered and identify solutions for improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. As a result, shuttle bus stops at some stations have moved to more appropriate locations. For example, the Free MTR Shuttle Bus Stop at Yau Ma Tei Station is now located at Waterloo Road rather than Nathan Road.
<p><u>Enhanced Drills with External Parties</u> Incorporation of the deployment of shuttle buses into regular drills and exercises with the Police and other emergency services to test the effectiveness and coordination between the MTR and relevant external parties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First joint exercise with Hong Kong Police, Fire Services Department and Transport Department was held in the early morning of 25 February 2011 when the effectiveness of new communication initiatives was tested. Regular drills will continue to be conducted.
<p><u>Deployment of More Resources</u> Assigning more staff with enhanced training, mainly from the Customer Service Rapid Response Unit to man Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points to assist in crowd management and offer help to passengers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment of Customer Service Rapid Response Unit members in progress. Unit in full operation from 2nd Quarter, 2011.
<p><u>Improved Signage</u> The signage system in stations and at street level directing passengers to Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points to be enhanced to make them more visible and provide clearer information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colour-coded signage in hot pink marking the route to Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points introduced at 20 interchange stations in January 2011. Installation in all stations by mid-2011. 



Crowd Management In and Outside MTR Stations

Improvement actions	Status
<p><u>Customer Service Rapid Response Unit</u> Establishment of a 60-member dedicated Customer Service Rapid Response Unit to provide assistance to passengers and maintain order at stations and Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points when required. Based at strategic locations around the MTR network, individual teams will be deployed to affected stations during a train service suspension or major train service disruption. Members will be easily identifiable in hot pink vests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment in progress. Unit in full operation from 2nd Quarter, 2011 
<p><u>Improved On-street Crowd Management</u> Staff to be assigned to monitor and report the street-level situation to Operations Control Centre and/or Station Control Rooms to facilitate more effective coordination with relevant parties such as the Police for better crowd management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed
<p><u>Customised Cue-cards</u> As a useful tool for back-up staff deployed to stations affected by major train service disruptions, customised cue-cards containing necessary information such as the location of Free MTR Shuttle Bus pick-up points and designated exits leading to the Bus pick-up points to be produced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed

7. The use of customised cue-cards and the deployment of the dedicated Customer Service Rapid Response Unit will enhance assistance to passengers during major service disruptions or train service suspensions, ensuring better handling of passenger enquiries on-site and achieving more effective crowd control.

8. The improved shuttle bus plan, laid down after a comprehensive review on different aspects of practical execution, can facilitate better coordination between the MTR and relevant Government departments. With regular drills, the MTR and relevant Government departments can ensure the smooth execution of the plan, efficiently directing the affected passengers to the designated pick-up points, and maintaining good order at shuttle buses pick-up points.

9. In the meantime, communication with the Transport Department has also been strengthened while more effective communication for MTR staff will be introduced.

Improvement actions	Status
Full manning of the Communication Control Centre throughout the traffic day.	Effective from late October 2010
Specific staff assigned the duty of ensuring timely communication with relevant Government departments during train service disruptions as required.	Effective from late October 2010
<p><u>Digital Radio System</u> A new digital radio system to enhance communication between the Operations Control Centre and staff at stations to ensure staff are kept up-to-date on changes in train service arrangements for communication to passengers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System installation has commenced on Tung Chung Line/ Airport Express and is expected to complete in 4th quarter, 2011. Gradual roll-out thereafter.

10. Members of the public can familiarise themselves in advance with arrangements during a train service suspension by obtaining a Rail Service Suspension Passenger Guide at a nearby station or downloading it from the MTR website. The new communication measures are also promoted via three segments broadcast on TVB from 3 March 2011, as well as a 5-minute video being shown at 20 MTR stations.

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MTR Corporation
March 2011