

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

Enhancement of MTR Station Facilities

Purpose

This paper briefs the Subcommittee on the latest progress of the enhancement of station facilities by the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”).

Background

2. The MTR network carries more than 5 million passenger trips per day. The MTRCL is committed to providing safe, reliable and smooth railway service for passengers. For this, the MTRCL invests a few billion dollars¹ annually in enhancing, revitalising and maintaining its railway assets and infrastructure, including station facilities.

3. The MTRCL always attends to passengers’ views and regularly conducts surveys, with a view to understanding passengers’ needs, so as to enhance railway service and facilities from time to time. Survey results show that 90% of the interviewed passengers agree with the continuous investment by the MTRCL in railway development and enhancement of existing railway service and facilities. After studying passengers’ views and reviewing railway operational needs, the MTRCL has been continuously upgrading various station facilities in the past four years (from 2012 to 2015). The initiatives related to enhancement of station facilities by the MTRCL from 2012 to 2015 are set out in Annex I, with the major ones being highlighted in the ensuing paragraphs.

Installation of new lifts

4. At present, all MTR stations are equipped with at least one barrier-free access to facilitate the physically challenged persons to enter or leave stations. These accesses are equipped with passenger lifts, wheelchair aids, stair lifts or ramps. The MTRCL aims, as far as

¹ The MTRCL invested over 6 billion dollars in 2014 in enhancing, revitalising and maintaining its railway assets and infrastructure, and increased the investment to over 7 billion dollars in 2015.

practicable, to provide one passenger lift connecting the street level with station concourse in every station. Nevertheless, as installation of passenger lifts was not included in the design of some of the existing stations (in particular those constructed in the 1970s or 1980s in the urban areas), it is technically challenging to install lifts in these stations.

5. Since 2012, eight new passenger lifts have been installed at Sai Wan Ho, Lai Chi Kok, Cheung Sha Wan, Sham Shui Po, Prince Edward, Jordan, Sheung Wan and Shek Kip Mei stations. Currently, among 87 MTR stations, 47 are equipped with passenger lifts, whilst installation of lifts is not necessary for the other 34 stations because they are either at-grade, equipped with ramps for wheelchair access, or passengers can get access to the MTR stations through nearby facilities (e.g. shopping malls). They, in total, represent over 90% of all MTR stations.

6. MTRCL is now actively engaging in the study, planning or implementation of lift installation works at the remaining 6 stations which are not equipped with lifts connecting station concourse with the street level. They are Yau Ma Tei, Shau Kei Wan, Fortress Hill, Admiralty, Diamond Hill and Tin Hau stations. The latest progress of the planning and implementation works is set out in Annex II.

Replacement of existing lifts

7. Apart from installing new passenger lifts at stations where it is technically feasible, the MTRCL is also replacing 24 hydraulic lifts at various stations with traction lifts by phases to facilitate more efficient and comfortable movement of passengers entering and leaving stations, and between station concourses and platforms. Replacement of eight of these lifts at Mong Kok, Kowloon Tong, Heng Fa Chuen, Quarry Bay, Ngau Tau Kok and Olympic stations has been completed and reopened for service. The replacement of the remaining 16 hydraulic lifts at 14 stations will continue to be carried out by the MTRCL and is targeted for completion in 2018.

Enhancement of other station facilities

8. Some MTR stations (such as Fo Tan and Mong Kok stations) have two independent paid areas in their concourses. Passengers cannot fully make use of each entrance/exit to enter or leave the stations or utilise the station facilities. To facilitate passenger flow and their use of

station facilities, the MTRCL has carried out enhancement works at Fo Tan and Mong Kok stations to connect the two separate paid areas. The works were completed in 2015.

9. Apart from the above-mentioned station enhancement works, installation of new lifts and escalators will be carried out in Kowloon Tong and Mong Kok stations respectively to connect the station concourses and platforms. This will strengthen the connectivity of different storeys within stations to facilitate passenger flow. The works are targeted for completion in 2018.

Installation of new toilets

10. The MTRCL understands the passengers' demands for new toilets in stations. When designing and planning new railway lines, the MTRCL will provide toilets for passengers in or near the new stations. For the three new stations along the Island Line extension to Western District (including Sai Ying Pun, HKU and Kennedy Town stations), toilets are provided in the stations. Similar arrangement will be applied to new stations along the other three local new railway lines (including the Shatin-to-Central Link, Kwun Tong Line Extension and South Island Line (East)). Detailed design will be subject to factors such as statutory requirements, geographical conditions and the nearby community's views.

11. Besides, the MTRCL has committed to providing toilets for passengers in 10 interchange stations (including Mong Kok, Prince Edward, Admiralty, Tsim Sha Tsui, Yau Ma Tei, Lai King, Central, North Point, Yau Tong and Tiu Keng Leng stations) alongside major station enhancement works, so as to bring convenience to passengers. Amongst them, the new toilets in Mong Kok and Prince Edward stations have been opened for use since January 2015. The toilet installation works in the remaining eight stations will be carried out alongside major enhancement works. When planning and implementing toilet installation works, statutory requirements and technical feasibility (including the availability of suitable locations for placing ventilation shafts, septic tanks and other auxiliary facilities) need to be fully taken in account, hence it is technically challenging. The MTRCL will actively overcome these issues and strive for completing the installation of toilets in these 8 stations by 2020. Besides, the refurbishment of toilets in stations along the Ma On Shan Line was completed in 2015.

Replacement of chillers

12. Since most of the MTR stations are built underground, the stations are equipped with chillers and ventilation systems to ensure comfortable journeys for passengers. The function of chillers is to adjust station temperature, while that of ventilation systems is to introduce fresh air from outside of the stations and facilitate good ventilation within stations. In the MTR network, some chillers have been in use without replacement since the station commissioned operation. After assessing the asset conditions of the chillers which are currently in use in the MTR network, the MTRCL will implement a massive programme to replace 160 chillers (around 50% of the total). The MTRCL will use new and environmentally friendly devices, with a view to increasing energy efficiency.

13. Apart from 36 MTR stations along 7 MTR lines, the replacement programme will also cover 4 MTR Depots and the Tsing Yi Operations Control Centre. The replacement works will be conducted between 2017 and 2023 by phases and in an orderly manner, with about 27 chillers being replaced every year.

14. Currently, during winter time, it is only necessary to maintain good ventilation in stations and there is no need to lower the in-station temperature. Therefore, it is only necessary to activate the ventilation systems, not the chillers, to introduce fresh air into stations. In this regard, the replacement works for chillers will be implemented in winter months. Having said that, the MTRCL will closely monitor the situation during the replacement works and adopt appropriate contingency measures (such as using temporary fans) to maintain a comfortable environment.

Enhancement of information services

15. The MTRCL plans to strengthen communication with passengers and provide more timely information to them. Measures include installing new LCD passenger information display system on station platforms along the Tung Chung Line and Airport Express to provide real-time information on train operation in a timely and flexible manner. This will be extended to stations along Island Line, Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line and Tseung Kwan O Line gradually.

16. The MTRCL understands passengers' high demand for Internet access. Free Wi-Fi hotspots have been provided at all MTR heavy rail stations since 2013 so that passengers can access the Internet in the MTR network.

Introduction of elements of art

17. The MTRCL is mindful about the need of providing a friendly and pleasant in-station environment for passengers. Since 1998, the MTRCL has been allocating space in some stations to implement the "art in station architecture" programme, subject to no disruption to railway operation.

18. Since the introduction of the "art in station architecture" programme in 1998, art pieces such as sculptures, roof hangings and mosaics have been incorporated by the MTRCL into the design and structure of stations. Since then, this programme has been extended to the whole MTR network. Currently, 60 works created by local and international artists have become a part of various MTR stations.

Way forward

19. The MTRCL will continue to invest more resources in enhancing the station facilities and to provide passengers with more convenient and comfortable services. The MTRCL will also continue to collate views from passengers on station facilities through various channels (such as station surveys and online feedback forms) for further enhancements.

20. Members are invited to note the above details on the enhancement of MTR station facilities.

MTR Corporation Limited
April 2016

**Summary of enhancement of station facilities
from 2012 to 2015**

	Items	Details
1.	Passenger lifts connecting the street level with station concourses	After the opening of new passenger lifts in Lai Chi Kok, Prince Edward and Sai Wan Ho stations in 2015, 47 of the 87 MTR stations are equipped with passenger lifts, whilst installation of lifts is not necessary for the other 34 stations due to reasons mentioned in paragraph 5 of the paper, representing over 90% of all MTR stations in total.
2.	Existing passenger lifts	24 hydraulic lifts at various stations are being replaced by phases with new traction lifts to facilitate more comfortable and efficient movement of passengers entering and leaving stations, and between station concourses and platforms.
3.	Wide gates	54 additional wide gates were installed in 30 stations in 2013, and 30 additional wide gates have been installed by early 2016 for easier access by wheelchair users.
4.	New customer service centres	The refurbishment of customer service centres at 15 busy stations has been completed. The newly designed centres are equipped with lower counters for wheelchair users and they are also better lit.
5.	Toilets	New toilets will be provided in 10 interchange stations alongside major station enhancement works. New toilets in Mong Kok and Prince Edward stations have commenced service since January 2015. Installation works at

	Items	Details
		Admiralty, Central, Lai King, North Point, Yau Ma Tei, Tsim Sha Tsui, Yau Tong and Tiu Keng Leng stations will be carried out alongside major improvement works. The refurbishment of toilets in stations along the Ma On Shan Line was completed in 2015.
6.	Station refurbishment/enhancement	The station enhancement projects at Kwun Tong, Sheung Shui and Fanling stations were completed in 2014. Station enhancement works at Fo Tan and Mong Kok stations were also completed, connecting two separate paid areas in the concourses. New lifts and escalators will be installed at Kowloon Tong and Mong Kok stations respectively to strengthen connectivity between the station concourses and platforms.
7.	Free Wi-Fi hotspots	15-minute Wi-Fi hotspots service is available for free in all MTR stations.
8.	LCD passenger information display system	LCD passenger information display system has been installed in station platforms along the Tung Chung Line and Airport Express. The installation works will gradually be extended to stations along the Island Line, Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line and Tseung Kwan O Line.
9.	Enhanced signage	Large way-finding signboards have been installed in 15 stations to facilitate passengers to find their ways to destinations.
10.	Chillers	160 sets of chillers at 36 MTR stations along 7 MTR lines, 4 Depots and the Tsing Yi Operations Control Centre will

	Items	Details
		be replaced by phases in 6 winters from 2017 to 2023.
11.	Seats	A total of 326 seats were added at platforms and long stations adits in 2014.
12.	Art in station architecture	60 art pieces, such as sculptures, roof hangings and mosaics, were incorporated into the design of the station architecture in all MTR railway lines.

Latest progress of lift installation by the MTRCL

- (1) 6 stations not yet installed with lifts connecting station concourses with the street level:**

Station	Progress (anticipated completion date)
Yau Ma Tei	Construction works in progress (first half of 2016)
Shau Kei Wan	Construction works in progress (first half of 2016)
Fortress Hill	The MTRCL plans to extend the two existing lifts adjacent to entrance/exit A of Fortress Hill Station connecting street level with mid-level downwards to the underground concourse of Fortress Hill Station. It is estimated that the works will be completed in the second half of 2019.
Admiralty	Installation works to be carried out alongside the construction works of the South Island Line (East).
Diamond Hill	Installation works to be carried out alongside the construction works of the Shatin-to-Central Link.
Tin Hau	The MTRCL has studied many different options. Due to geographical, land ownership and technical constraints, a suitable location for the lift has yet to be identified. The MTRCL will strive to work out a feasible option.

(2) Additional lifts being installed in 2 stations:

Station	Progress (anticipated completion date)
Tsim Sha Tsui	Construction works in progress (first half of 2016)
Lai King	Construction works in progress (first half of 2016)