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[English Translation]

Council Business Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road, Central
Hong Kong
(Attn.: Ms Doris LO)
(Fax: 2978 7569)

12 April 2017

Dear Ms LO,

Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

**Contingency Arrangements for Railway Incidents and
Quality of Railway Works**

I refer to the letter of 20 February 2017 from the Council Business Division of the Legislative Council (LegCo) to this Bureau relaying the views expressed by Hon Tanya CHAN on the captioned matter in her letter of 15 February 2017 to the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways (RSC). Our response is as follows.

At the LegCo meeting on 1 March 2017, the Bureau responded to Members' queries on the flooding incident at South Horizons Station of the South Island Line (SIL) on 14 February 2017 and the arson incident on a MTR train on 10 February 2017, as well as the contingency measures for such incidents. Please refer to **Annex 1** and **Annex 2** for the texts of our responses.

With respect to the incident at South Horizons Station, the MTR

Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has conducted a comprehensive review on the structural design of stations and the alignments of nearby underground pipes along the SIL, the West Island Line (WIL), the Kwun Tong Line Extension, as well as the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Shatin to Central Link which are under construction. It is confirmed that stations of the above railway lines are reinforced concrete structures and their designs are different from that of the Entrance/Exit B of South Horizons Station. Hence, similar incidents will probably not happen again.

As regards the power outage of the SIL on the second day after commissioning, the MTRCL reported the incident to the RSC in detail on 17 January 2017. Please refer to LC Paper No. CB(4)416/16-17(01) for details. According to the MTRCL, an internal panel has been set up and it is conducting a review in collaboration with an independent expert on how to avoid recurrence of the incident. Upon completion of the review, the MTRCL will submit a report to the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and announce the outcome. The MTRCL will strive to complete the review in April as far as practicable.

With respect to the water seepage found at the three stations of the WIL in April and May 2015, in-depth inspections were carried out and immediate rectification measures, including injection of grout and diverting the seepage water into a drainage system, were taken. The situation has improved and overall the three stations have been operating normally so far. The Bureau and the MTRCL submitted documents to the RSC in May and August 2015 to report the causes of the incident in detail (please refer to LC Paper Nos. CB(4)954/14-15(05) and CB(4)1412/14-15(01)). Since the WIL stations are located tens of metres underground, the water seepage was caused by underground water seeping through construction joints of concrete walls of the stations. It was different from the incident occurred at South Horizons Station in February this year. The MTRCL will continue to keep in view the situation of the stations and take follow-up actions promptly when necessary.

We have all along attached great importance to the quality of railway projects. All projects have to comply with the relevant safety and operational standards and the MTRCL has to allow ample time for the relevant government departments to carry out inspections of the stations and various equipment. They will only be put into service after approvals have been obtained. Nevertheless, according to the experience of the MTRCL, the station facilities and services of all new railway lines will inevitably have teething problems during the initial stage of commissioning. The MTRCL will closely monitor the situation and make improvement, with a view to minimising the impact on passengers and train services.

Agenda item IV “Progress update on enhancement of MTR station facilities” of the RSC meeting to be held on 28 April 2017 will cover the latest development after the flooding incident at South Horizons Station on 14 February 2017. This Bureau, together with representatives of the Highways

Department and the MTRCL, will attend the meeting and respond to Members' questions.

Yours sincerely,

[Chinese version signed]

(Cyrus YAN)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c.:

Highways Department (Attn.: Mr Jimmy CHAN) (Fax: 2714 5291)

MTR Corporation Limited (Attn.: Ms Prudence CHAN) (Fax: 2795 9991)

LCQ2: MTR South Island Line

Following is a question by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung and a reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Yau Shing-mu, in the Legislative Council today (March 1):

Question:

The MTR South Island Line (SIL) was commissioned on December 28 last year. However, a power remote control device at the Wong Chuk Hang Depot malfunctioned right on the following day, affecting the power supply of five railway stations along SIL. On the 14th of last month, South Horizons Station of SIL was closed for four hours due to serious flooding. Some members of the public have relayed to me that the aforesaid incidents have caused inconvenience to them and aroused concerns over the ability of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) in handling unexpected incidents inside railway stations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as the Water Supplies Department has indicated that the aforesaid flooding incident was caused by leakage of water from a cracked fresh water main near South Horizons Station following its dislocation due to loosened support, and that the water main had been relocated during the time when the works of SIL were carried out, whether the authorities know the outcome of the investigation of the incident carried out by MTRCL, including whether the structure of the railway station has been affected;

(2) whether the authorities know if MTRCL has, in the light of the aforesaid flooding incident, examined the structural conditions of the water mains near the various railway stations along SIL, and re-examined the water main alignments near the various railway stations under construction, so as to prevent the reoccurrence of flooding incidents in railway stations; given that flooding inside railway stations can cause electricity leakages, thereby endangering the safety of railway staff and passengers, whether the authorities know if MTRCL has formulated safety guidelines for handling flooding incidents inside railway stations; and

(3) given that as SIL is plied by unmanned trains and covers the Nam Fung Tunnel which is as long as 3.2 km, MTR staff can only provide support at the next station should an unexpected incident occur in a train passing through the tunnel, whether the authorities know if MTRCL has formulated contingency plans for handling unexpected incidents that occur in trains passing through tunnels along the various railway lines, and whether MTRCL will conduct the relevant drills?

Reply:

President,

After the commissioning of the South Island Line (SIL) on December 28, 2016, it on the whole operates smoothly. The MTRCL already reported in detail the power outage incident on December 29, 2016 to the Subcommittee on Matters relating to Railways on January 17, 2017, and it would not be covered here.

For the question raised by Hon Kwok, I reply as follows:

(1) After the flooding incident at South Horizons Station at the night of February 14 this year, the MTRCL carried out inspection immediately and found that the connection of a fresh water pipe, of about 250mm (about 10 inches) in diameter and outside the station, was loosened. Fresh water was ejected and damaged part of the roof of Entrance/Exit B constructed by fire resistance board. Water then flowed into the concourse from the damaged roof. The MTRCL sought assistance from the Water Supplies Department (WSD) immediately and the Department fixed and strengthened the supports of the pipe shortly that night. After confirming the structural safety of the station was not affected, the MTRCL resumed the services of the Station at around 12.25am the next day. It is confirmed that the water pipe concerned was reprovisioned when constructing the SIL (East).

(2) In general, MTR underground stations buried in soil or rock are constructed using concrete structure and with waterproof layer to prevent ingress of water into stations. Nevertheless, as Entrance/Exit B is protected by the structure of the existing underground void and restricted by the space of that void, its design is rather special, and fire resistance boards are used for constructing its roof (the design of Entrance/Exit B is at Annex). After the incident, the MTRCL has reviewed the station design and alignments of nearby underground pipes of the SIL and other stations under construction, and confirmed that their designs are different from that of the Entrance/Exit B of South Horizons Station. The MTRCL has been investigating this flooding incident in depth with the Highways Department and reviewing the other utilities within the void that is accommodating the Entrance/Exit B, in order to ensure these utilities would not impose risks to Entrance/Exit B. Before completing the review, the MTRCL already installed additional supports for stabilisation such that the risk of loosening at the connection of the pipe was lowered, and temporarily mended the damaged part of the roof. In order to prevent similar occurrence in future, the installation of steel plates at the location concerned is being studied for further separating the structure of the station and the other underground utilities.

According to the MTRCL, the possibility of flooding in stations has been taken into account when designing all MTR stations. Arrangements have also been made to minimise the impact on the important electrical and mechanical equipment of stations in the event of flooding. As mentioned above, there are various measures in stations to prevent water seeping from the roof, wall and floor. Kerbs of 20 centimetres in height are installed on the floor at the entrances of station rooms containing electrical and mechanical facilities, to reduce the chance of water influx. Individual important electrical and mechanical facilities are installed slightly elevated to avoid being flooded. The stations are also equipped with drainage systems, which can drain the water in a rapid manner.

The MTRCL has all along put in place operational and safety manuals, covering the contingency arrangements for various incidents (including flooding). In the case of flooding, the MTRCL will fence off the affected areas as necessary and deploy additional manpower to assist passengers, while finding out the causes of flooding as soon as possible. If the affected areas cover electrical and mechanical facilities such as escalators and lifts, operation of these facilities will be suspended to ensure passengers' safety. If the incident is serious, the MTRCL will consider closing individual entrances/exits, or even the whole station. If train service is affected, the MTRCL will follow the established mechanism to disseminate information to the public through various means. When the water is drained, the MTRCL will

examine the affected facilities in detail and will only reopen them after confirming that they are safe for use.

(3) The MTRCL has to consult Government departments when preparing safety manuals and contingency arrangements. These safety manuals are applicable to all railway lines, including fully automatic operation (FAO) trains. On FAO trains, passengers may get in touch with the Operations Control Centre (OCC) directly by activating the emergency call systems in trains. The OCC can obtain real-time information on train operation and situation in trains, and communicate with passengers on board directly. Generally speaking, if an incident occurs in an operating train, the train will continue its journey to the next station, because there is more space in a station to facilitate smoother evacuation, and more staff will be available to offer assistance. If the situation does not allow the train to continue its journey to the next station, emergency evacuation in the tunnel will be arranged. There are sufficient instructions, emergency lighting and ventilation in tunnels to allow passengers to evacuate orderly to a place of safety under the instruction of the MTRCL staff. During its early stage of commissioning, a MTRCL staff is currently deployed to assume duty in the FAO trains of the SIL.

The MTRCL conducts 12 to 15 drills with the Hong Kong Police Force and Fire Services Department jointly every year to simulate emergency situation and major incidents (including the situation when passengers need to evacuate in tunnels). The Government and MTRCL jointly conducted a drill in a tunnel in November last year (i.e. one month before the commissioning of SIL).

Ends/Wednesday, March 1, 2017
Issued at HKT 13:00

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Design of Entrance/Exit B of South Horizons Station

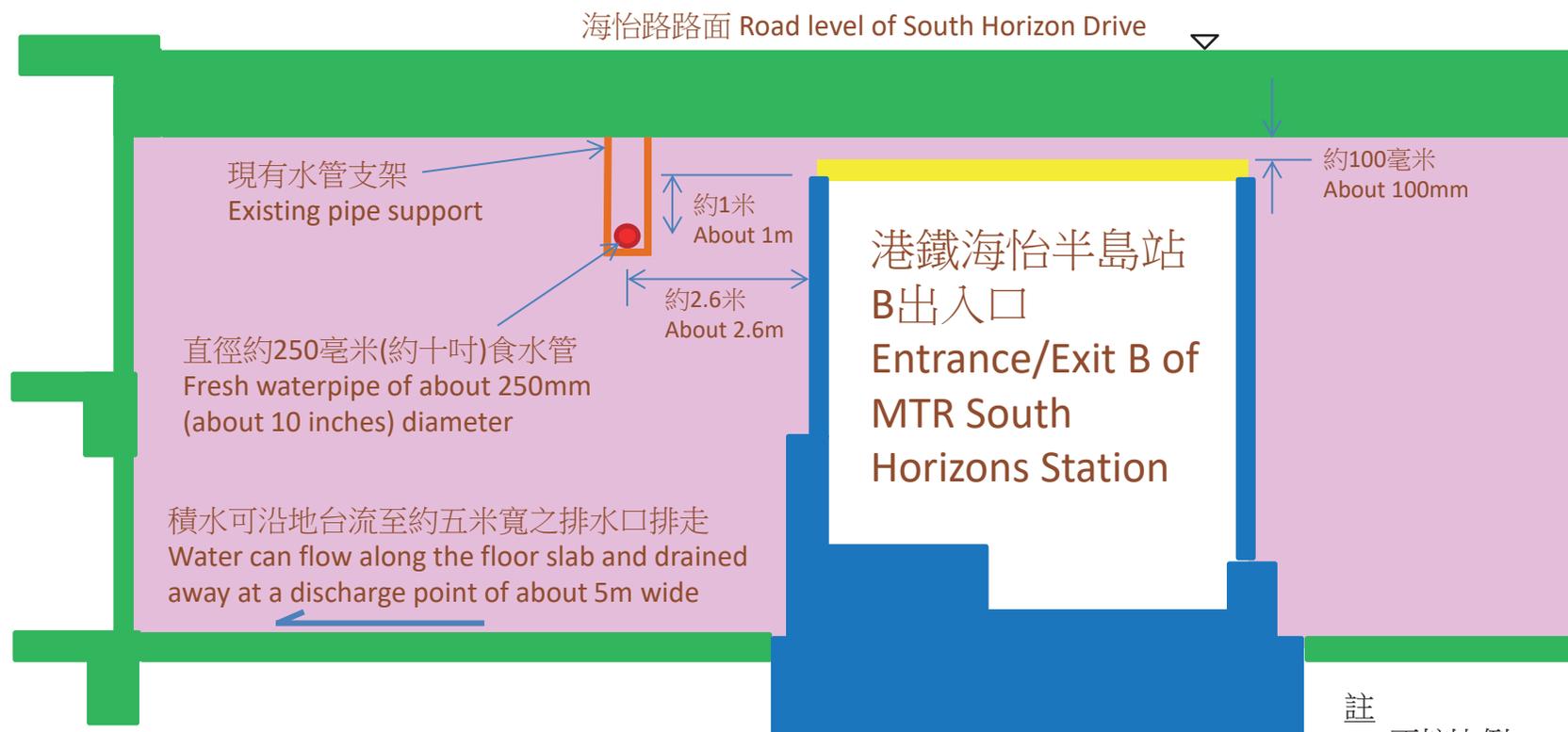
In general, MTR underground stations buried in soil or rock are constructed using concrete structure and with waterproof layer to prevent ingress of water into stations. Nevertheless, as Entrance/Exit B is protected by the structure of the existing underground void and restricted by the space of that void, its design is rather special, and fire resistance boards are used for constructing its roof. According to the clarification by the MTRCL, the portion of the Entrance/Exit B of South Horizons Station, which is adjacent to the concourse, was located within a void surrounded by concrete structure for placing underground utilities underneath the road level of South Horizon Drive. (Indicative diagram showing the positions of Entrance/Exit B of South Horizons Station and the fresh waterpipe concerned at **Appendix**) That concrete structure (coloured in green at **Appendix**) is owned by the South Horizon. As that void (coloured in pink at **Appendix**) is completely isolated, it would not be affected by underground water or rain. Hence, the roof of Entrance/Exit B (coloured in yellow at **Appendix**) could be constructed using thinner fire resistance board.

In the incident, part of the fire resistance board of the roof was damaged by the fresh water ejected from the water pipe. The fresh water then flowed into the concourse from the damaged part.

海怡半島站B出入口與涉事食水管位置的示意圖

Indicative diagram showing the positions of Entrance/Exit B of South Horizons Station and the concerned fresh waterpipe

(以切面圖展示 Shown in Sectional View)



圖例 Legend

- B出入口的混凝土結構 Concrete Structure of Entrance/Exit B
- 海怡半島現有的混凝土結構 Existing Concrete Structure of South Horizons
- 以防火板建成的B出入口頂部 The roof of Entrance/Exit B constructed by fire resistance board
- 海怡路以下的現有空間 Existing void underneath South Horizon Drive

註

1. 不按比例
2. 為清晰示意，只展示涉事的事物

Remarks

1. Not to scale
2. For clarity, only concerned subjects are shown

LCQ19: Fire incident at MTR train and public transport safety

Following is a question by the Hon Wu Chi-wai and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Yau Shing-mu, in the Legislative Council today (March 1):

Question:

On the 10th of last month, the MTR Tsuen Wan Line experienced the most serious alleged arson incident in 38 years since its commissioning. That incident caused injuries to 10-odd persons, with several of them in serious or critical conditions. That incident has aroused public concern about whether proper contingency plans for handling unexpected incidents in large-scale transport systems have been put in place, and whether passengers can obtain sufficient information in a timely manner. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the MTR South Island Line is plied by unmanned trains and some MTR stations (including some stations on the South Island Line and the Kwun Tong Line Extension) have no MTR staff on duty on the platforms, of the current contingency plans formulated by the relevant government departments for handling unexpected incidents which occur on such kind of trains and in such kind of stations;
- (2) whether it has assessed if the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) had disseminated sufficient information to passengers in a timely manner during the aforesaid incident;
- (3) whether it knows if MTRCL has, in the light of the aforesaid incident, formulated additional contingency measures for handling unexpected incidents; if MTRCL has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) how far MTRCL staff participated in large-scale emergency drills conducted by government departments in the past two years; whether duty officers of MTR stations and train captains participated in such emergency drills; if not, whether drills involving such MTR staff members will be arranged in the near future; and
- (5) whether it has considered setting up an independent committee to review the contingency plans (including the arrangement for the timely dissemination of information to passengers) for handling unexpected incidents in large-scale transport systems; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

On the night of February 10, 2017, a passenger was alleged to have started a fire on a Tsuen Wan Line train running from Admiralty Station to Tsim Sha Tsui (TST) Station. A total of 19 passengers were injured or felt unwell.

The train captain, having received the alert of the emergency button pulled by passengers at 7.11pm and felt smoke, made a report to the Operation Control Centre (OCC) right away. The staff of the OCC instantly requested the staff of TST Station to make preparation at the platform and inform the Police and the Fire Services Department (FSD). Within five minutes after the train concerned arrived at the TST Station at 7.14pm, the MTR staff evacuated more than 1 000 passengers on the train and the platform, called for ambulance assistance for injured passengers and put out the fire together with the passengers. The Police and FSD

personnel arrived at the scene within two minutes and four minutes respectively after the train had arrived at the platform. At that time, the situation at the scene had basically stabilised. Within a brief several minutes, Police and rescue personnel, and MTR staff arrived at the scene to provide emergency services and put things under control, meeting the design and requirements of contingency plans.

Railway is the backbone of the public transport network of Hong Kong. Over 5 million passenger trips are made on the MTR every day. Railway safety should be of prime importance. Although unexpected incidents or improper behaviour of individual person is difficult to prevent, there are adequate facilities and emergency arrangements in the MTR system to handle various types of incidents.

My reply to the various parts of the Hon Wu Chi-wai's question is as follows.

(1) and (3) The MTRCL has all along put in place operational and safety manuals, covering the contingency arrangements for various incidents (including fire and flooding). The MTRCL has to consult Government departments in formulation of these manuals. These manuals are applicable to all railway lines, including fully automatic operation (FAO) trains. All MTR staff should be conversant with these safety manuals and contingency procedures. In the unfortunate event of an incident, the MTR staff will activate the relevant contingency procedures in the manuals depending on the nature and severity of the incident. The train captain and station staff will maintain close communication with the OCC while the staff of the OCC will coordinate response actions. Where warranted, train service will be adjusted and additional staff deployed to affected stations to assist passengers. The MTRCL will inform the relevant Government departments as soon as possible, including the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) and the Transport Department (TD). If railway services are disrupted, the Corporation will handle the properly in accordance with established contingency plan (see Annex). For the alleged arson incident in question, the MTR staff have acted in accordance with safety manuals and contingency procedures.

The FAO trains have emergency communication system installed inside the train cars which connect directly to the OCC. In the event of an emergency, passengers can contact the OCC directly so that MTR staff may provide assistance as soon as possible. During its early stage of commissioning, a MTRCL staff is currently deployed to assume duty in the FAO trains of the South Island Line.

(2) The MTRCL has been making use of various channels, including broadcasts at stations and in trains, passenger information display panels, MTR website and smartphone application "Traffic News", to disseminate train service information, including the occurrence of any emergency incidents. When fire broke out on train on the night of February 10, 2017, the train captain made broadcasts before arriving at the TST station, advising passengers to leave the train immediately upon arrival at the station. There were also broadcasts at the TST Station immediately upon the arrival of the train, that the train would not take on passengers. Within minutes after the arrival of the train, the station staff released information to passengers through broadcasts and passenger information display panels about the occurrence of an emergency. Staff on duty in the concourse and platform also instructed passengers to evacuate from the station. At the same time, the MTRCL released train service message through smartphone application, advising passengers that an emergency occurred in TST Station and that the trains would not stop at that station.

(4) At present, the MTRCL arranges regular training for staff and conducts 12-15 drills with the Police and the FSD jointly every year. Emergencies and major incidents were simulated to test evacuation and emergency response procedures. Practices and training are conducted repeatedly so that staff become conversant with the details of response procedures and how to implement them. The last major drill was conducted in November 2016 (about three months ago) and participated by about 2 000 persons, including MTR station staff, train captains and members of the public (simulating

as passengers). The Government and the MTRCL will both enhance and increase the frequency of drills, in the light of the alleged arson case in question.

(5) As evidenced by the speed and results of the response action for the alleged arson case, the above-mentioned established emergency procedures was successfully activated and achieved its effectiveness. In view of the seriousness of the incident, the MTRCL has set up a high-level committee (with participation of external consultants) to conduct a full investigation and review of the incident. The areas to be covered include safety equipment and response procedures of the station and train car, whether the staff have effectively carried out the established procedures, the timeliness and effectiveness of service recovery, whether the information to passengers was disseminated properly, as well as further improvement measures. The MTRCL will submit a report to EMSD upon the completion of the investigation. EMSD, in conjunction with other departments such as FSD and the Police, will examine the report and follow up on the implementation of improvement measures proposed by the MTRCL. The finalised report will be made public.

The franchised bus is the major road-based public transport mode. Currently, all fire-fighting equipment and escape facilities on franchised bus compartment shall comply with the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374). The bus compartment is constructed of fire-retardant materials, and there is fire barrier between the bus compartment and engine bay. The bus compartment is equipped with fire extinguisher, emergency exits, and break-glass hammers. Signs are also put up in the bus compartment to direct passengers how to open the emergency exits or use the break-glass hammer to break the glass to escape in case of incidents. TD and the franchised bus companies will regularly inspect the equipment to ensure they are maintained in proper working order and condition. On the other hand, all franchised bus companies have issued guidelines to bus captains on ways to handle fire incidents and evacuate passengers. Drills will be carried out for new recruits and during on-the-job-training of bus captains. The bus companies will timely review the guidelines and training programme.

After the alleged MTR arson case, TD and EMSD will also review, in conjunction with relevant departments, safety measures undertaken by other public transport operators. The review will examine existing fire-fighting and escape equipment provided by operators, contingency plans, staff training and drills, so as to evaluate the need for improvements.

Ends/Wednesday, March 1, 2017
Issued at HKT 16:30

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MTRCL's contingency plans for railway service disruptions

Purpose

The MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has drawn up contingency plans for various service disruption situations specific to the needs of individual stations. They are made available to the staff assigned to contingency duties. For information that is of use to passengers, it is made available to them in stations and in the Internet. This note gives an account of the MTRCL's contingency plans for railway service disruptions.

Handling of railway service disruptions

2. When a serious incident happens and is expected to lead to a prolonged suspension of railway services for 20 minutes or more, the MTRCL will issue a "Red Alert" message to inform Government departments including the Transport Department (TD), other public transport operators and media organisations of the incident. Upon notification by the MTRCL, other public transport operators will provide appropriate supportive services as best as they can under the co-ordination of the TD. On its part, the MTRCL will suitably adjust its railway service to minimise impact and arrange free MTR shuttle buses to carry passengers from the affected stations to convenient locations, such as the nearest MTR station with railway service still in operation.

Alert System

3. "Red Alert" is defined as a signal which denotes that serious railway service disruption will continue or is expected to continue for 20 minutes or more, and emergency transport support services from other public transport operators are required. Upon being alerted, public transport operators will urgently mobilise their resources to provide appropriate supporting services as quickly as possible.

4. Prior to the issuance of a Red Alert message, the MTRCL may issue an “Amber Alert” message. “Amber Alert” is defined as an early warning in respect of an incident which may lead to a serious disruption of service. After receiving this Alert, other public transport operators will alert their emergency unit, get prepared for possible emergency actions which may be demanded for at short notice and keep close contact with the MTRCL.

5. The MTRCL is also required to notify TD within 8 minutes on any service disruption incident which has lasted 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 suspension or delay of service at a railway station or a Light Rail stop, or on a section of a railway line.

6. Besides, according to the Mass Transit Railway Regulations (Cap. 556A), the MTRCL shall report to the EMSD any incident that occurs at any part of the entire railway premises and which has a direct bearing on the safe operation of the railway.

Dissemination of information during incident

7. Regarding dissemination of information to passengers, the MTRCL has formulated measures to ensure effective communication with passengers during service disruption, with a view to assisting them to make appropriate alternative travel arrangements. These measures include:

- (a) broadcasting details of the service situation at stations and in trains;
- (b) providing information of alternative public transport service such as franchised bus routes, bus stop locations and free MTR shuttle bus boarding/alighting points on large information displays installed at stations;
- (c) displaying signs from concourse ceilings and at street level to mark routes to free MTR shuttle bus boarding/alighting points when free shuttle bus service is ready;

- (d) during service disruption, using LCD screens installed at visible locations near station entry gates of to provide train service information and other important notices;
- (e) posting railway service disruption message and information on free MTR shuttle bus services on the MTR website and MTR Mobile App “Traffic News”;
- (f) displaying alternative public transport information on maps in the concourse of affected stations; and
- (g) distributing “Rail Service Suspension – Passenger Guide” to passengers.

Operation of train and free MTR shuttle bus during serious railway service disruptions

8. In the event of serious service disruption, the MTRCL will endeavour to minimise the area being affected and provide train service to the farthest extent by:

- (a) reversing trains at designated track sections to maintain train service in unaffected sections;
- (b) diverting trains through supplementary track sections to bypass the affected section;
- (c) diverting trains across lines through designated track sections to reduce the impact of service disruption; and
- (d) diverting trains through spare track sections to reduce the impact of service disruption (for example, when the cross-harbour section of Tseung Kwan O Line is suspended, depending on which section is affected, cross-harbour train service can be maintained via the Service Connection Tunnel of Kwun Tong Line to provide linkage between Lam Tin Station and Quarry Bay Station).

9. The MTRCL has formulated free shuttle bus deployment plans for railway incidents and agreements have been entered into with bus operators for the provision of such services during railway incidents to take affected passengers to the nearest MTR station still under normal operation to continue their journeys.

Operation of free MTR shuttle buses

10. Free MTR shuttle bus service is a supplementary measure to assist passengers to travel to convenient locations. Given the limited carrying capacity of shuttle buses, it is not intended to be a substitute for normal train service. It brings passengers to the nearest station outside the affected section of a railway line where service is disrupted, to enable them to continue with their journeys. Shuttle buses would also stop at stations in the affected section to provide services to passengers.

Activation of free MTR shuttle bus services

11. The number of free MTR shuttle buses and the level of shuttle bus service to be deployed during a railway incident will depend on which section of the railway line is involved and the seriousness of the situation. Generally speaking, according to the agreement between the MTRCL and the Public Omnibus Operators Association (POOA)¹, when free MTR shuttle bus service is needed, the POOA will arrange about 7 buses to provide service within 30 to 45 minutes after receiving the MTRCL's notification; an additional 40 buses, if required, will be deployed within 1 to 1.5 hour; and about 100 buses in total after 2 to 2.5 hours. The actual number of buses to be deployed will depend on the extent of impact to train service and road traffic condition. Depending on the actual situation, the MTRCL may operate additional shuttle buses or modify the operating details of shuttle bus services to suit the need of the affected passengers.

¹ POOA is the confederation of non-franchised public bus operators in Hong Kong. At present, more than 200 non-franchised operators are members of the POOA, and together having a fleet of about 4 000 buses which accounts for about 60% of the total non-franchised buses operating in Hong Kong.

12. Information on the estimated arrival time, locations of and routes to boarding and alighting points of free MTR shuttle buses is included in MTRCL's "Rail Service Suspension – Passenger Guide" which is tailor-made for each station for distribution in the station. The Guide is also uploaded to MTRCL's website (http://www.mtr.com.hk/en/customer/services/needs_index.html).

13. Since the carrying capacity of shuttle buses is far below that of the railway, they can only serve as a support service to assist affected passengers to continue with their journeys. It is not possible for shuttle buses to serve as replacement for the entire railway service. Therefore, lines queuing for such bus service are expected and most passengers may have to change to other unaffected MTR lines or take alternative public transport services to travel to their destinations.

Manpower Deployment

14. In response to a service disruption incident, the MTRCL staff would be on duty at each MTR station to carry out crowd management duties, make public announcements, issue station notices and help passengers on fare matters according to the established procedures in times of incidents. The number of station staff will be increased as needed.

15. The MTRCL has also established a dedicated Customer Service Rapid Response Unit (CSRRU) with around 90 members to provide additional support focusing on customer service on top of the manpower stationed at individual stations. The MTRCL will from time to time review the number of team members of the CSRRU as necessary.

16. Upon calling out the free MTR shuttle bus services during serious service disruption, the Operations Control Centre (OCC) of the MTRCL will mobilise team members of CSRRU to affected stations to provide extra support on:

- setting up facilities for the implementation of free MTR shuttle bus services;
- maintaining order at affected stations and free MTR shuttle bus boarding/alighting points;
- making timely reports to the OCC during incidents to facilitate more effective co-ordination with relevant Government departments such as the Police for better crowd management;
- handling enquiries and advising passengers on alternative routes and transport choices; and
- providing guidance and assistance to passengers.

17. Upon notification of deployment, CSRRU team members will proceed to the affected stations by the best available means of transport, including taxi. The first team would likely arrive within 20 minutes in most cases according to past experience. CSRRU team members are easily identifiable in their pink vests.

Regular review and updating

18. The MTRCL will continue to regularly review and update its contingency plans for railway service disruption in consultation with relevant Government departments, in the light of operational experience gained.