

政府總部  
運輸及房屋局  
運輸科  
香港添馬添美道2號  
政府總部東翼



Transport and  
Housing Bureau  
Government Secretariat  
Transport Branch  
East Wing, Central Government Offices,  
2 Tim Mei Avenue,  
Tamar, Hong Kong

本局檔號 Our Ref. THB(T)CR 1/1016/2018  
來函檔號 Your Ref. CB4/PS/1/16

電話 Tel. No.: 3509 8173  
傳真 Fax No.: 2509 8856

7 November 2019

Secretary General  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Attn: Ms Sophie LAU)

Dear Ms LAU,

**Patronage for the Hong Kong Section of the  
Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link**

I refer to the letter dated 18 September 2019 from Hon Jeremy TAM to the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways of the Legislative Council, which was forwarded to us on 19 September 2019 by the Legislative Council Secretariat.

The Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) has been operating smoothly since its commencement of operation on 23 September 2018. According to the figures provided by the Immigration Department to the Census and Statistics Department, since its commissioning and up to 30 September 2019, the XRL has had a total patronage of 18,788,854. The average daily patronage was about 50,372.

The patronage of the XRL has been increasing progressively since its commencement of operation, bringing in stable fare revenues to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL). As explained in detail when the operating arrangements for the XRL was announced on 23 August 2018, since XRL is a brand new cross-boundary transport mode, for the purpose of ensuring the

financial stability of the operation of the XRL, the Government, the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) and the MTRCL have adopted a more prudent daily patronage forecast for the XRL in the business case (including the Patronage Cap-and-Collar Mechanism) for the Supplemental Service Concession Agreement (SSCA) than the Government's earlier forecast (i.e. an average daily patronage of 80,100 during the initial commissioning stage). As frequent violent protests happened in Hong Kong in recent months, there were significant decline in visitors to Hong Kong. The patronage for the XRL also reduced in September 2019, with an average daily patronage of about 30,592. However, since the commissioning of the XRL and up to 30 September 2019, the overall average patronage has never touched the lower limit under the Patronage Cap-and-Collar Mechanism as set out in the SSCA, and neither the Government nor the KCRC has to make any payment the MTRCL. As the KCRC and the MTRCL operate on commercial principles, we are unable to release the patronage forecast.

With effect from 10 July 2019, there are 14 additional Mainland destinations with direct train services connected by the XRL. The total number of all destinations has increased from 44 (i.e. 6 short-haul and 38 long-haul destinations) during initial commissioning to 58 (i.e. 6 short-haul and 52 long-haul destinations). The additional long-haul destinations, including Chongqing, Nanning, Tianjin, Zhaoqing, Shantou, Foshan, etc., are tourist hotspots welcomed by Hong Kong people. As the passenger demand is relatively high during weekends, 12 additional pairs of trains are arranged to run between the West Kowloon Station and Futian from Fridays to Sundays since 10 July 2019 until end-December 2019.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CWG', written in a cursive style.

( Chris NG )  
for Secretary for Transport and Housing