

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Y2K Rectification and Contingency Planning in the Transport Sector (Supplementary Information)

Purpose

At the Panel meeting on 26 October 1999, Members considered an information paper on the progress of Y2K rectification and contingency planning in the transport sector, and requested further information on the following -

- (a) contingency arrangement for railway operators in case of power failure, and the implications and effectiveness of using backup generators for railway operation; and
- (b) whether MTRC would consider suspending the service for a short while during the rollover to the millennium.

The response of the two railway corporations is set out in the following paragraphs.

Power Supply

2. For the MTR, the railway system has several independent feeder stations with power provided by both power companies. In the unlikely event that one electricity supply source not being available, the other will be switched over to enable continuous train operation. Furthermore, in the unlikely event of one feeder station not being available, the power supply will be taken from the adjacent feeder station to enable train operation to continue, though at reduced level of services e.g. less frequent trains. In the unlikely event of a complete loss of both supply sources, the battery backup supply in the MTR system will provide emergency lighting and ventilation to allow immediate, safe evacuation of all passengers out of the trains and railway premises.

3. For the KCRC East Rail, there are two independent power feeder stations, fed by the China Light & Power Company. In the unlikely event of failure in one power supply station, East Rail can still continue to operate at reduced level of services. If both power stations were to fail, East Rail would then have to cease operation. Backup generators installed at East Rail stations would provide the essential service (e.g. lighting) in case of power failure, and there are established emergency procedures to evacuate passengers from the trains and the stations.

4. The two power companies have reported to be Y2K compliant as well as having drawn up contingency plans. The East Rail and MTR have been identified as critical venues for maintaining power supply and other essential services during the Y2K rollover.

Suspension of MTR services during the Y2K rollover

5. Given the design of the MTR system, in particular the robustness of its power supply, and having regard to the plans of the railways in other countries with similar dual-power supply, the MTR Corporation currently does not believe that there is a need to consider suspension of service during the rollover to the millennium.

Transport Bureau
8 November 1999