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10 June 2005

Mr Andy Lau
Clerk to Subcommittee
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways
Panel on Transport
Legislative Council Secretariat
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Dear

Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways
Special meeting on 13 June 2005

Please refer to your letter of 26 May 2005 relaying Hon Wong Kwok-hing's request for information concerning the retrofitting of platform screen doors (PSDs) at MTR stations. This Bureau has followed up with MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) on this matter and our response is as follows.

System changes and expenditures after the retrofitting of PSDs

According to MTRCL, before the installation of PSDs, piston effect generated by the running of trains brought fresh air into tunnel for ventilation. While the retrofitting of PSDs can reduce the loss of cool air

from platform and help maintaining the platform temperature to provide a comfortable traveling environment for passengers, the tunnels and stations are separated after the retrofitting of PSDs. Installation of additional air ducts and ventilation systems at tunnels is therefore required. Major alterations to the station ventilation, air conditioning and smoke extract systems are also necessary. All these new systems and the operation of PSDs incur additional power consumption.

The Corporation indicated that, generally speaking, expenditures on the overall electricity consumption, cleansing and maintenance of the stations before and after the retrofitting of PSDs are comparable.

Accidents involving passengers falling onto rail tracks

The number of accidents involving passengers falling onto rail tracks at MTR stations in each of the past ten years is as follows:

Year	Number of accidents involving passengers falling onto rail tracks
1995	74
1996	80
1997	83
1998	113
1999	119
2000	82
2001	52
2002	61
2003	44
2004	32
Total	740

According to MTRCL's statistics, a total of 13 cases involving visually impaired persons are recorded in the past ten years. Among these 13 cases, ten were injured while the other three were unhurt. The five stations with the highest number of accidents involving passengers falling onto rail tracks recorded in the past ten years are Choi Hung, Prince Edward, Tsuen Wan, Admiralty and Wanchai. According to MTRCL, most of the cases involved passengers trespassing onto track.

Feasibility of retrofitting PSDs at at-grade or aboveground stations

For existing at-grade or aboveground stations, which are provided with natural ventilation only, the retrofitting of PSDs is subject to more complex technical constraints. The scale of work required to install the necessary ventilation and air-conditioning systems is highly akin to rebuilding those stations given the limits of the stations structure.

The current focus of the Corporation is to get the PSD retrofitting project at underground stations completed on time. Upon its completion in 2006, the Corporation will conduct a study to review and consider the feasibility of retrofitting PSDs, platform gates or other alternatives at at-grade and aboveground stations, using the automatic platform gates of the Disneyland Resort Line as a reference.

Project cost

The PSD retrofit programme, which involves 74 platforms at 30 underground stations of the Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line and Island Line is expected to be completed by early 2006. According to MTRCL, the project cost of programme is over \$2 billion, that is about \$2.7 million for the retrofitting works at each platform.

Compared with underground stations, retrofitting works in at-grade/aboveground stations would involve grater technical constraints. The Corporation will draw up possible proposals for retrofitting PSDs at at-grade/aboveground stations subject to the outcome of its feasibility study.

The requisite cost as well the construction programme cannot be estimated at this stage.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Belinda Wong)
for Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works

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