

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
Subcommittee on Improving Barrier Free Access and Facilities
for Persons with Disabilities

Gist of Discussions on the Provision of barrier-free access and facilities by the
Mass Transit Railway Corporation (MTRC) in Transport Department's
Working Group Meeting on Access to Public Transport by People with
Disabilities From 2008 to 2010

At the meeting of the above Subcommittee held on 21 June 2011, Members requested the Administration to provide a gist of discussion on the issues relating to provision of barrier-free access and facilities by MTRC in the "Working Group Meeting on Access to Public Transport by People with Disabilities" in Transport Department. The gist of discussed items and responses from MTRC in the Working Group meetings from 2008 to 2010 is provided hereinafter for Members' reference:

Discussed Items	Reponses from MTRC
Meeting on 24.4.2008	
1. Barrier-free transport and traffic arrangement for 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Events.	MTRC briefly introduced the rail service arrangement for the Events and listened to the views of the disabled organizations.
2. Request for installation of a lift at Exit D of Kwun Tong Station.	MTRC suggested people with disabilities (PwDs) making use of the lifts at Exit A and APM Shopping Mall to/from Kwun Tong Station.
3. Progress of the tactile guide path installation in MTRC stations.	MTRC planned to install tactile guide paths at all the platforms of the Light Rail stops and the East Rail Line stations. The works for the Light Rail platform had commenced. Due to the narrow platforms of the East Rail Line stations, the design works would take more time to complete.

Discussed Items	Reponses from MTRC
Meeting on 29.7.2008	
4. Enquiry on whether the tactile guide path installation on the platforms of the Light Rail stops and the East Rail Line stations could be completed within the same time frame.	MTRC planned to complete the tactile guide path installation at all the platforms of the Light Rail stops in March 2009 and then proceed to commence the design works for the East Rail Line stations.
5. Enquiry on the special arrangement of the lift operation at Tai Koo Station during the retrofitting works.	MTRC introduced the arrangement in details.
Meeting on 17.11.2008	
6. Request for installation of bus stop announcement system on MTRC feeder buses.	As most of the feeder services were short journey routes, MTRC had no plan to install bus stop announcement system on the fleet. MTRC expressed that their bus captains were glad to offer assistance to the passengers in need.
7. Request for removal of the vertical steel poles for restricting the passengers with bulky luggage to use escalators so as to ensure the safety of passengers with visual impairment.	In the light of serious problem of passengers with bulky luggage using escalators, MTRC erected steel poles as an improvement measure taking account of various factors. MTRC would continue to explore other effective measures to resolve the problem. Passengers with visual impairment were recommended to use vertical lifts to travel between concourses and platforms.
8. Request for enhancement of the colour contrast of the tactile guide paths with floor tiles at Light Rail platforms; and by using black and grey colour.	MTRC's standard colour contrast was 30% and field tests would be conducted. Dark grey colour would be used. However, for some floor tiles with darker colour, MTRC would install tactile guide paths in light grey colour.

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9. Request for speeding up the lift installation programme in view of frequent breakdown of stair lifts.	MTRC was critically exploring the feasibility of lift installation at rail stations, including Jordan Station, Yau Ma Tei Station, Sham Shui Po Station and Wong Tin Sin Station.
10. Lack of tactile warning strips at platforms of Lo Wu Station.	MTRC would follow up the issue.
11. Request for offering half fare concession to PwDs and setting up a special working group to follow up the issue.	MTRC started offering fare concessions to PwDs who are recipients of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme aged between 12 and 64 with 100% disability and recipients of Disability Allowance in the same age group with effect from 22 December 2009.
Meeting on 23.2.2009	
12. Barrier-free facilities for the Kowloon Southern Link	MTRC briefly introduced the barrier-free facilities for the Kowloon Southern Link (including Austin Station) and listened to the views of the disabled organizations.
13. Request for installation of external stop announcement systems at Light Rail trains or at platforms to facilitate waiting passengers with visual impairment.	MTRC was studying the feasibility of installation of external announcement systems on light rail trains.
14. Progress of the trial on the mechanical gap filter system at Lo Wu Station.	MTRC reported that the trial would be conducted within a few months.
15. Request for improvement of the lighting system and other directional systems at Hung Hom Station.	MTRC reported that improvement on the lighting system at Hung Hom station had commenced and other improvement works would be conducted progressively.

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16. Enquiry on whether MTRC would remove the Y-shape pole; and the progress on audible warning signals installation at all escalators.	MTRC reported that the measures to resolve the problem of the Y-shape pole had been identified and would be implemented shortly. All the escalators had been installed with the audible warning signals.
17. Request for installation of a lift at Lam Tin Station to facilitate wheehchair users.	MTRC had already studied the feasibility of installation of a lift at Lam Tin Station and revealed that construction of a tunnel passing through Sceneway Garden would be required. As Sceneway Garden was outside the purview of MTRC, complicated technical issues and legal procedures would be arisen.
18. Request for extension of the operating hours of the escalator audible warning signals from 10.00 pm to 12.00 pm.	MTRC reported that the operating hours of the escalator audible warning signal had been extended from the original 7.00 pm to the current 10.00 pm and this arrangement had been agreed by all the concerned parties. MTRC also indicated that the “beeping” sound of the warning signals did create noise nuisance to the residents of Telford Garden nearby Kowloon Bay Station.
19. Enquiry on whether MTRC would strengthen enforcement actions against passengers with bulky luggage using escalators, apart from erection of vertical steel poles.	MTRC would advise or warn the offenders and also take legal action against them if required.
20. Request for replacement of the stair lift at Shek Kip Mei Station with a vertical lift due to its frequent breakdown. Enquiry on the progress of the lift installation at Kowloon Tong Station.	As the Shek Kip Mei Estate Redevelopment Project had commenced, MTRC was liaising with the Housing Department to install a vertical lift at Shek Kip Mei Station. In addition, MTRC was

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	conducting a survey to assess the passenger flow at Kowloon Tong station for further study.
Meeting on 2.6.2009	
21. Follow-up on the problem of the Y-shape poles in rail stations.	MTRC would conduct improvement works.
22. Follow-up actions on the frequent breakdown of stair lift at Shek Kip Mei Station.	MTRC had examined the stair lift to ensure its service reliability. In addition, a study on identifying location for lift installation at Shek Kip Mei Station was being conducted.
23. Request for extension of the operating hours of the escalator audible warning signals so as to facilitate visually impaired passengers.	<p>MTRC should consider the noise nuisance to the residents in the vicinity of the rail stations arising from the escalator audible warning signals so as to minimize the disturbance to the residents at night times. The arrangement of the existing operating hours of the escalator audible warning signals had been agreed by all concerned parties.</p> <p>MTRC would re-study the operating hours of the escalator audible warning signal after completion of the automatic platform gate installation.</p>
24. Enquiry on the arrangement of rail service interchange and barrier-free facilities at Hung Hom Station upon commissioning of the Kowloon Southern Link.	MTRC explained the arrangement and listened to the views of the disabled organizations.
25. Progress of the trial on the mechanical gap filler system at Lo Wu Station.	After the first stage of the trial, the system would require minor refinement. The second stage of the trial would be

Discussed Items	Reponses from MTRC
	conducted afterwards.
26. Complaint against about failure of a light rail train to observe its stop. Request for installation of external announcement systems on Light Rail trains and bus stop announcement systems on feeder buses.	MTRC would follow up the complaint. A study on improvement of the external announcement system on Light Rail trains and the coordination between the external announcement system and the signaling system was being conducted. As the feeder routes were supplementary services with short journey and a small number of en-route stops, there was no bus stop announcement systems on feeder buses.
27. Unstable performance of broadcasting system at rail stations.	MTRC would follow up the issue.
Meeting on 14.9.2009	
28. Progress and timetable of the automatic platform gate installation, and the external stop announcement system installation on Light Rail trains.	Automatic platform gate installation was under detailed design stage. The installation works would commence at Heng Fa Chuen Station in mid 2010 and the works was scheduled for completion by end 2011. On the other hand, MTRC was now conducting a technical feasibility study on the external stop announcement system on Light Rail trains. Subject to the result of the study, a prototype test would be conducted in 2010.
29. Progress of the barrier-free facilities improvement works at Austin Station and the tactile guide path installation at Kowloon Tong Station.	MTRC introduced the progress of the barrier-free facilities improvement works at Austin Station. The tactile guide paths at Kowloon Tong Station were being designed and the installation works would commence within 2009 and be completed in early 2010.

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30. Progress of lift installation at Sai Wan Ho Station.	MTRC had entrusted consultants to conduct technical feasibility studies on lift installation at few stations without provision of lift to roadside level. There was recent plan to provide lifts at Jordan, Yau Ma Tei Station, Sham Shui Po and Wong Tai Sin Stations.
Meeting on 14.12.2009	
31. Progress of provision of external stop announcement system on Light Rail train and bus stop announcement system on feeder buses.	MTRC was looking into the feasibility of installing external speakers at the doors of light rail trains. Various technical factors including auto sound level control in day and night times should be considered.
32. The toilet facilities in East Rail Line were currently located in fare-paying zones, it was proposed that MTRC should provide toilet facilities in non fare-paying zones.	The provision of toilet facilities in fare-paying zone was to make MTRC's passengers convenient. Should the toilets be provided in non fare paying zone, it would not be dedicated to MTRC's passengers only and would become a public toilet.
33. Progress of toilet maintenance works at Kowloon Tong Station	The works were planned to be completed in January 2010.
34. Enquiry on stations with stair lifts cum foldable seat which could serve passengers using walking canes/frames	The stair lifts were provided specifically for wheelchair users. EMSD's guideline did not recommend non-wheelchair users using the stair lifts for safety reasons.
35. Proposed provision of "Octopus-card remaining value announcement readers" and "priority seat" in the West Rail Line.	MTRC planned to install "Octopus-card remaining value announcement readers" at the West Rail Line stations and the project was in the design stage. Separately, MTRC kicked off a "priority seats" trial scheme on 30.10.2009 with designated seats on trains to encourage passengers to offer

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	seats to those people in need.
36. Proposed improvement on the location of caller bells at Exit A and the tactile guide path at Exit C of Lai King Station.	MTRC stated that there were walkie-talkies for staff only, but not caller bells at Exit A. MTRC had checked and confirmed that the tactile guide path at Exit C of Lai King Station were provided at appropriate location.
37. Proposed strengthening of passengers' attention to the rules in using escalators, and restriction of passengers carrying bulky luggage in using the escalators.	MTRC had advised passengers to grip the handrails and stand in the middle of the escalators. MTRC's staff had also advised the passengers carrying bulky luggage to use vertical lifts.
38. Progress of the installation of automatic Mechanical Gap Fillers at platforms of Lo Wu Station.	MTRC was collating and analysing the system trial data to assess the impact of the system's performance on train service.
39. Enquiry on availability of facilities to communication between audio-impaired passengers and MTRC station staff	MTRC would follow up the issue.
40. Proposed replacement of the braille texts, which became blurred, in the vertical lift of Kowloon Tong Station.	MTRC followed up and had the concerned braille texts repaired.
Meeting on 7.4.2010	
41. Progress of the installation of automatic Mechanical Gap Fillers (MGFs) at platforms of Lo Wu Station.	The MGFs system at Lo Wu Station was highly complicated, it had to verify with the status of the MGFs and had a sophisticated interface with the signalling system, before the train opened the train doors or about to leave the platform. MTRC was collating and analysing the data of the trial.
42. Proposed removal of the poles for	MTRC agreed to consider installing

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restricting the passengers with bulky luggage to use escalators to protect the safety of the visual-impaired passengers, and installation of anti-collision materials, e.g. leather covers or soft cushions for the poles.	anti-collision materials for the poles.
Meeting on 6.7.2010	
43. Proposed removal of the poles for restricting the passengers with bulky luggage to use escalators to protect the safety of the visual-impaired passengers.	MTRC had duly considered the locations and stations with poles installed and reviewed its effectiveness, there was no plan to increase the number of poles. Separately, MTRC had removed the poles at Wong Tai Sin Station for trial. MTRC had also studied how best to improve the design of the poles, e.g. coated with soft cushions, and would conduct a trial.
44. Proposed installation of tactile guide paths to help visually-impaired passengers to access to exits A and D of Lam Tin Station.	Tactile guide paths had already been provided in the concourse of Lam Tin Station leading passengers to Exit B.
45. Proposed improvement of the connection points of tactile guide paths at Lok Fu and Quarry Bay Stations.	MTRC would follow up the issues.
46. Request for early advice on maintenance works of vertical lifts via the existing available information dissemination channels so as to make wheelchair users more convenient.	MTRC had provided the information on maintenance works of vertical lifts at various stations in the “Monthly Update of MTR facilities for PwDs”, which was uploaded to MTRC’s website. Moreover, disabled passengers might enquire the latest situation of the facilities in stations beforehand so as to better plan their journeys.
47. Request for improvement of the	MTRC was looking into the measures to

Discussed Items	Reponses from MTRC
ventilation system and air quality of Hung Hom Station.	improve the ventilation of Hung Hom Station
48. Progress of automatic platform gate installation works at Heng Fa Chuen Station	The project would be completed in the 4 th quarter of 2010.
49. Enquiry on the timetable of the lift installation works in Shek Kip Mei Station.	The lift installation works in Shek Kip Mei Station was in the detailed design stage. The project would commence in early 2011 and be completed in late 2011/early 2012.
50. Progress of installation works of barrier-free facilities in the East Rail Line and external announcement system in Light Rail trains.	MTRC reported the progress of installation works of barrier-free facilities in the East Rail Line. The trial result on installing external announcement system in Light Rail trains was unsatisfactory; MTRC was examining the feasibility of installing announcement system in the Light Rail platforms.
51. Proposed utilisation of broadcasting system in train compartment to advise passengers to offer seats to passengers in need.	There were already designated “priority seats” in train compartments for passengers in need. MTRC noted the members’ views.
52. Request for retaining the demolished disabled toilet in Nam Cheong Station, enabling disabled persons to have 2 disabled toilets.	According to MTRC’s standard, each station should have only one disabled toilet. After consideration of members’ views and their need, MTRC had resumed provision of two disabled toilets in Nam Cheong Station.
53. Progress of improvement of transit directional sign in Nam Cheong Station and enquiry on the arrangement on reminding the audio-impaired passengers of the last departure of the Light Rail	The improvement work of transit directional sign in Nam Cheong Station was completed in late October 2010. Moreover, the message on the last departure of the Light Rail service had been displayed in the

Discussed Items	Reponses from MTRC
service.	electronic screen in the station concourse.
Meeting on 10.11.2010	
54.Enquiry on the new train compartment design, facilities for PwDs and other associated facilities after the commissioning of Shatin-Central Link.	MTRC briefed the members with details of the Shatin-Central Link, and listened to members' views.
55.Illegal use of the stair lift in Sham Shui Po Station for goods transport affecting the wheelchair users	MTRC agreed to step up monitoring the use of the stair lift thereat, so as to avoid occurrence of abuse.
56.Follow-up on Y-shape poles in Wan Chai Station	Upon completion of the design work, MTRC had commenced the improvement works, and the works would be completed within 2011.
57.Level difference and wide gaps between Light Rail platforms and train compartments imposing danger to wheelchair users.	MTRC completed the first phase platform improvement works for Light Rail stops two years ago. Plastic gap fillers were installed at Light Rail platforms with wider gap to improve the traveling environment. MTRC decided to extend the scheme and install plastic gap fillers at all Light Rail platforms.
58.Proposed improvement of the location of the tactile guide path to Exit A of Quarry Bay Station	MTRC would follow up the issue.
59.Progress of installation of audible devices at escalators in Kowloon Bay, Ngau Tau Kok and Chai Wan Stations	MTRC was examining how best to improve the sound level of the audible devices at escalators in those stations.

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60. Alleged mal-functioning of audible devices at escalators in Admiralty, Yau Ma Tei and Chai Wan Stations during night times.	MTRC would follow up the issue.
61. The high sound level of Cable TV news broadcast in train compartments of the East Rail Line posed difficulties for passengers to attend to the messages of stop announcement system clearly.	The sound of Cable TV programme should automatically be turned off when the stop announcement system was in operation in the East Rail Line. MTRC would look into it and take follow up actions.
62. Proposed extension of “staff-assisted portable ramp service” to two wheelchair users to board at the compartment of front train carriage.	The arrangement of providing “assisted portable ramp service” by MTRC staff to one wheelchair user to board the compartment of the first train carriage was important. The train captain and the platform staff could easily communicate and work together in the front train carriage, enabling them to take care of not only the safety of the wheelchair passengers and offer assistance more effectively, but also the occupational safety of the platform staff. Should wheelchair passengers require no staff assistance, they were welcome to board any compartments of the train carriage.
63. Progress of the automatic platform gate installation works	The installation works of the automatic platform gate at ground stations in Island, Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan Lines would be completed by end 2011.

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