

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)1155/11-12

Ref. : CB1/PS/1/08

**Panel on Transport**

**Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways**  
**Meeting on 2 March 2012**

**Updated background brief on Shatin to Central Link**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project and summarizes the major concerns expressed by the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways (the Subcommittee) at its previous discussions on the project.

**Shatin to Central Link**

2 SCL consists of two parts –

- (a) Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section: this is the extension of Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai to Hung Hom, via Southeast Kowloon and connects to the West Rail Line. It will increase the Shatin-Kowloon rail capacity and provide railway service to the new developments in Southeast Kowloon; and
- (b) Hung Hom to Admiralty Section: this is an extension of the existing East Rail Line from Hung Hom across the Harbour to Hong Kong Island. It can interchange with the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section at Hung Hom. It will increase the cross-harbour rail capacity and enhance the connectivity

between the New Territories and Hong Kong Island.

The proposed alignment plan is at **Appendix I**.

3. In March 2008, the Executive Council decided to proceed with the implementation of the SCL project using the “concession approach”. While the Government is responsible for the construction costs of SCL, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) is entrusted with the planning and design of the project. Upon completion of the construction, MTRCL will be granted a service concession for the operation of the railway line while the Government will receive a service concession payment annually.

4. The Finance Committee (FC) approved the funding for the design and site investigation works of SCL in July 2008. The Administration has carried out the preliminary design in parallel with public consultation for SCL since late 2008. The SCL scheme was subsequently gazetted on 26 November 2010 and has started the statutory consultation process which is expected to be completed by early 2012. With a view to commencing the SCL construction works in 2012, the Administration submitted the following funding applications to the FC for approval -

- (a) the construction of the advance railway works of SCL at the Admiralty Station and Ho Man Tin Station (at an estimated cost of \$6,254.9 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices); and
- (b) the construction of the advance non-railway works of SCL (at an estimated cost of \$1,448.2 million in MOD prices).

The funding applications were approved by FC at its meeting on 18 February 2011. The construction works for the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section are expected to be completed in 2018, whereas the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section is expected to be completed by 2020.

## **Major views and concerns expressed by the Subcommittee**

5. The Subcommittee discussed the SCL project at its meetings on 16 July 2007, 27 March 2008 and 31 March 2009, including meeting with deputations on the project. A summary of the views expressed by the deputations at the meeting held on 31 March 2009 and the Administration's response was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2045/08-09(01) for members' reference.

6. When the Administration briefed the Subcommittee on the progress of the SCL project on 16 July 2007, members expressed the following views and concerns -

(a) Funding arrangement

Members were concerned that the Government would be required to provide funding support, either in the form of capital grant or granting property development rights, to the railway corporation for taking forward the SCL project. Some members considered that as the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation had previously undertaken to finance the whole project itself, there was no need for the Government to provide financial support to MTRCL for the SCL project.

(b) Implementation of SCL

SCL should be implemented expeditiously in one go rather than in phases in order to satisfy the transport needs of the public.

(c) Alignment of SCL

The Administration should give justifications for removing the proposed underground station at Tsz Wan Shan and provide a concrete proposal for provision of railway services for residents in Whampoa and Tsz Wan Shan areas.

(d) Proposed Diamond Hill Depot

The Administration should review the need for building a SCL depot at Diamond Hill in view of the availability of two

depots at Kowloon Bay and Tai Wai, and the resultant impact on the environment of the surrounding area and on the heritage in the vicinity.

(e) Causeway Bay North Station

The Causeway Bay North Station should be retained so as to cater for the growing transport needs of passengers.

(f) Central South Station

The Central South Station should be built in one go under the project.

(g) Kai Tak Station

There should be pedestrian's links between the Kai Tak Station and the old Kowloon City area.

7. The Administration was requested to provide information regarding the existing capacity and usage of the depots in Kowloon Bay and Tai Wai, and the justifications for building an additional depot at Diamond Hill. The Administration was also requested to consult the relevant district councils and local communities in planning and implementing the SCL project. Furthermore, MTRCL was requested to provide a time-table for the construction of the Kwun Tong Line Extension connecting the Whampoa area, and to reconsider the need for providing a railway link to Tsz Wan Shan.

8. The Subcommittee also noted that other public transport trades had concerns about the impact of the implementation of SCL on their business.

9. The Subcommittee was consulted on the funding proposal to cover the design and site investigation of the proposed SCL project at its meeting on 27 March 2008. Members expressed the following views and concerns -

(a) Funding arrangement

Some members considered that as the Government would bear the costs for the implementation of SCL, it should have

a say in determining the fare level of SCL. They expressed concern about the determination of payment for the service concession and the sharing ratio of actual revenue generated from SCL between the Government and MTRCL.

(b) Policy on funding support for railway projects

Some members were concerned about the Government's inconsistency in its policy for funding railway projects, e.g. the Government adopted the "concession approach" in building SCL, whereas it provided financial support, in the form of property development rights, to MTRCL to fill the funding gap for the construction of South Island Line.

(c) SCL depot at Diamond Hill

Some members were concerned that the property development above the SCL depot at Diamond Hill would create a wall effect to the nearby residents, and the depot might cause noise nuisance to the residents and damage to the heritage structures in the vicinity. Hon CHAN Yuen-han queried why the SCL depot had to be built on such a large area of about 7.2 hectares, affecting the three heritage items in the area.

(d) Provision of stations

The Subcommittee was gravely concerned about the deferral of the construction of Central South Station, and the deletion of Tsz Wan Shan Station and Causeway Bay North Station under the SCL project. The Subcommittee urged the Administration to enhance the pedestrian facilities and public transport services to improve the traffic condition in Tsz Wan Shan and to provide adequate transport connections between Tsz Wan Shan and the rail corridors.

(e) Implementation schedule of the project

Some members urged the Government to speed up the planning and delivery of SCL for completion of the two sections of SCL before 2015 and 2019 respectively. It was also suggested that the two sections (i.e. Tai Wai to Hung

Hom section and the cross harbour section) should be built in one go.

10. When the SCL project was further discussed at the Subcommittee meeting on 31 March 2009, members expressed the following major concerns on the SCL project -

(a) Phased approach for implementation of SCL

Some members considered that the construction of SCL should not be undertaken in two phases, resulting in a gap of four years and which might cause a bottleneck to be formed at Hung Hom Station. The Administration explained that the different timing of completion, i.e. Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section scheduled to be completed in 2015 while the remaining section in 2019, would be unavoidable as the latter part which involved a cross-harbour section was more complicated in construction.

(b) Enhancing pedestrian connectivity

Some members considered that the pedestrian facilities in Tsz Wan Shan should be improved to facilitate residents' access to Diamond Hill Station, since the provision of a Tsz Wan Shan Station had been confirmed to be not feasible. The Administration advised that it had worked out some detailed proposals regarding the footbridge system in the Tsz Wan Shan area and undertook that the local communities would be consulted on the proposals.

(c) Preservation of three graded heritage items at the former Tai Hom Village site

The Subcommittee noted that one major issue of concern to the public was the planned development above the SCL depot at the former Tai Hom Village site and how the three graded heritage items<sup>1</sup> there would be preserved. The Administration advised that it was conducting a detailed study to see how these built heritages might integrate with

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<sup>1</sup> The three graded heritage items are, namely the Old Pillbox, the Former Royal Airforce Hangar and the Stone House.

the future development above the SCL depot and nearby. The Administration undertook to further consult Wong Tai Sin District Council on the matter.

(d) Location of To Kwa Wan Station

Some members enquired about the Administration's consideration of residents' request for provision of To Kwa Wan Station in the vicinity of Sung Wong Toi Garden. The Administration advised that MTRCL was still studying and planning the alignment and station locations of SCL, and it would consider the request. MTRCL agreed that locations of the station entrances should be user-oriented as far as possible with a view to providing convenient pedestrian connection with residential areas nearby.

11. The Administration and MTRCL briefed the Subcommittee on the progress of the SCL project at its meeting on 4 November 2010, and consulted the Subcommittee at its meetings on 6 December 2010 and 7 January 2011 on a funding application for the advance railway works and non-railway works of SCL. The Administration proposed to expand the Admiralty Station into an integrated station by constructing the SCL and South Island Line (East) (SIL(E)) works concurrently, and to build the new Ho Man Tin Station as an integrated station for passengers of SCL and Kwun Tong Line Extension (KTE) to interchange. In order to tie in with the implementation programme of SIL(E), which was scheduled to commence works in 2011 for completion in 2015, the SCL portion of Admiralty Station had to be constructed in advance of other SCL works. Similarly, the Ho Man Tin Station also had to be constructed in advance of other SCL works to tie in with the implementation programme of KTE, which was scheduled to commence in 2011 for completion in 2015. The advance non-railway works of the project included reprovisioning of the International Mail Centre at Hung Hom and reprovisioning works at Harcourt Garden and Hong Kong Park. Subcommittee members expressed the following major concerns –

(a) On-cost payment by the Government to MTRCL

Subcommittee members noted that the rate of the on-cost payment was proposed to be 16.5% of the actual expenditure of the works undertaken. Some members were concerned about the substantial amount of money involved for the

on-cost payment, which was estimated to be \$10 billion. The Administration explained that the percentage was adopted with reference to an agreement made in 2003 between the Government and MTRCL, which provided that if MTRCL was entrusted with civil engineering projects, an amount at 16.5% of the works undertaken would be payable to MTRCL as the on-cost for the design, construction supervision, contract administration and the relevant insurance premium of the project. The Administration would further seek independent consultancy advice in assessing the reasonableness of the on-cost rate for the SCL project. Since the audit conducted by the independent consultant would only be completed in 2012, the Administration had adopted the 16.5% on-cost rate for calculating the on-cost on a provisional basis. The Administration advised that it would adjust the on-cost rate when it sought funding approval from FC for the SCL remaining railway and non-railway works in 2012 in the light of the final on-cost rate for the project.

(b) Location of the To Kwa Wan Station

Subcommittee members expressed concern about the changed location of the To Kwa Wan Station. The Administration explained that the railway catchment under the amended railway alignment would cover the more densely populated areas in To Kwa Wan and Kowloon City, thereby offering advantages for renewal of these areas.

### **Council questions**

12. Hon CHAN Hak-kan asked a question on the programme for the SCL project at the Council meeting on 6 July 2011. Hon Starry LEE asked a question on the impact on various railway projects due to recent court judgement on environmental impact assessment at the Council meeting on 18 May 2011. These questions and the Administration's replies are attached at **Appendix II** for members' reference.

### **Latest developments**

13. The Administration has proposed to report on the latest progress of the SCL project at the meeting of the Subcommittee on 2 March 2012.

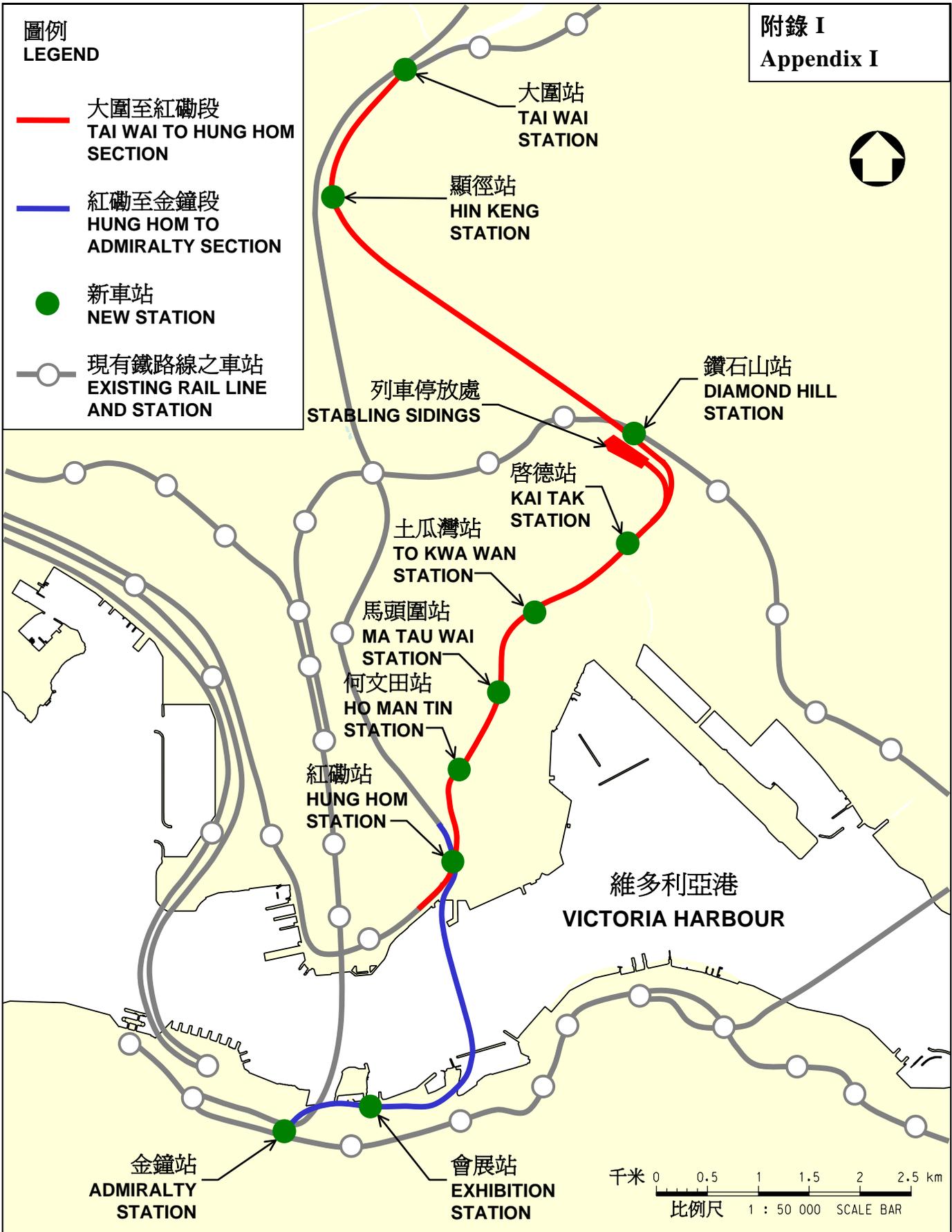
### **Relevant papers**

14. A list of relevant papers is at **Appendix III**.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
28 February 2012

圖例  
LEGEND

- 大圍至紅磡段  
TAI WAI TO HUNG HOM SECTION
- 紅磡至金鐘段  
HUNG HOM TO ADMIRALTY SECTION
- 新車站  
NEW STATION
- 現有鐵路線之車站  
EXISTING RAIL LINE AND STATION



圖則名稱 drawing title

擬建之沙田至中環線的走線  
**PROPOSED ALIGNMENT OF  
THE SHATIN TO CENTRAL LINK**

HRWSCL003-SK0192

圖號 drawing no.

**HRWSCL003-SK0192**

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LCQ16: Programme for the Shatin to Central Link project

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Following is a question by the Hon Chan Hak-kan and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Yau Shing-mu, at the Legislative Council meeting today (July 6):

Question:

According to the original plan of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section and the Hung Hom to Admiralty section of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) are scheduled for commissioning in 2018 and 2020 respectively. However, as affected by the litigation relating to the environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) local projects, MTRCL has earlier on withdrawn three EIA reports on SCL. Previously, in reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council, the Secretary for Transport and Housing said that there were still considerable uncertainties as to whether the programme for the SCL project might be affected. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) as it has been reported that the East Rail Line (ERL), the Ma On Shan Line and the two major interchange stations, namely Tai Wai Station and Kowloon Tong Station, are at present already very crowded, whether the authorities know if MTRCL has assessed the respective increases in the numbers of passengers using the two extensions and the two interchange stations from now on until the commissioning of SCL as originally planned; whether it has assessed the impact of each year of delay in the commissioning of SCL on the crowdedness of the two extensions and the two major interchange stations;

(b) whether a task force will be formed by the relevant government departments, MTRCL and other public transport operators to study how to coordinate and deploy different transport modes to meet the transport demand of members of the public before the commissioning of SCL in case it is delayed; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(c) as MTRCL once indicated that the installation of platform screen doors for SCL and ERL would be implemented in parallel, whether the authorities know if MTRCL will pursue the two projects separately by according priority to the planning and installation of platform screen doors for ERL in view of the possible delay of the commissioning of SCL; if MTRCL will do so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Shatin to Central Link (SCL) has a total length of 17 kilometres. In the light of the design and construction method used in different regions along the SCL, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has set out the environment impact assessment (EIA) together with the adopted environmental mitigation measures for different sections of the SCL project in three EIA reports. However, in view of the court's judgement of the EIA reports of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) local projects, the MTRCL, for the sake of prudence, decided on April 21 this year to withdraw the three EIA reports so as to review the contents of the report.

Our original plan is to complete the statutory consultation process and statutory EIA process in 2012, and then submitted the case to the Executive Council for consideration of authorisation to take forward the project. We aim to commence construction

works in 2012, and complete the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section in 2018 and the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section in 2020. However, as we need to review the three EIA reports of the SCL project in accordance with the court's judgement regarding the EIA reports of the HZMB local projects, and if this work takes time and we cannot complete within this year, the original programme for the SCL project may be affected.

At this stage, it is difficult to estimate the time required for the review of the three EIA reports of the SCL. We and the MTRCL are carefully examining the new EIA requirements laid down by the court's judgement regarding the HZMB local projects and how to meet such requirements in the EIA process. We need to discuss with the Environmental Protection Department the views in this regard. It is only after having a clear understanding of how to handle the requirements of the judgement that we can assess how to deal with the three affected EIA reports of the SCL, and the complexity of and time required for the work. We would then be in a better position to assess whether there will be any delay in the SCL programme.

The following is our reply to question by items:

(a) Currently, the busiest sections of the East Rail Line and Ma On Shan Line are the Tai Wai to Kowloon Tong section and the Che Kung Temple to Tai Wai section respectively. During the morning peak hours, the patronage figures in 2010 at these two lines are 56 400 and 14 400. We estimate that there will be a cumulative increase of about 7% in the patronage figures for these two sections during peak hours before the SCL Tai Wai to Hung Hom section comes into operation in 2018. We estimate that there will be a further increase of about 2% up to 2020 for the Tai Wai to Kowloon Tong section and virtually no change for the Che Kung Temple to Tai Wai section before the Hung Hom to Admiralty section comes into operation. Regarding the number of passengers using the Kowloon Tong Station and the Tai Wai Station, currently the peak hours usage are 48 600 and 33 600 respectively. These include passengers entering and leaving the stations, as well as those interchanging between railway lines inside the station. We estimate that there will be a cumulative increase of about 17% and about 6% in the station usage for these two stations respectively in the morning peak hours before the SCL Tai Wai to Hung Hom section comes into operation in 2018. The station usage of these two stations will remain more or less the same before the SCL Hung Hom to Admiralty section is commissioned in 2020.

(b) The planned capacity of the East Rail Line and the Ma On Shan Line is able to cope with the above estimated patronage increase before the full commissioning of the SCL in 2020. At this stage, it is still our goal to strive for commencement of construction works in 2012 and commissioning the SCL project in 2020. Whether the programme of the SCL project will be affected is not yet known as at this stage there are still many uncertainties. We will closely monitor the patronage of the East Rail Line and Ma On Shan Line. Depending on the actual situation, we will study the need to introduce mitigation measures in case that the SCL is opened to traffic later than 2020. In fact, in drawing up the service timetable for each railway line, MTRCL has already taken into consideration the travelling patterns of passengers and patronage of different areas and stations. The Transport Department (TD) will examine the reports submitted by MTRCL regularly on its service performance. TD will also conduct on-site investigations and inspections to ensure that railway service meets passenger demand. If necessary, TD will urge MTRCL to adjust its service arrangements based on changes in passenger demand within the constraints of the operational system (such as the signalling system and number of available tracks).

(c) To implement the installation of platform screen doors along the East Rail Line in conjunction with the implementation of the SCL project is a reasonable solution to resolve the problem of platform screen doors. Under the current progress of the SCL project, our goal is still to start construction works in 2012. But whether this schedule will be affected is not yet known as at

this stage there are many uncertainties. We will closely monitor the progress of the project, and if necessary, to review the schedule of the project and the related issues in due course.

Ends/Wednesday, July 6, 2011  
Issued at HKT 17:13

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LCQ2: Impact on various railway projects due to recent court judgement on environmental impact assessment

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Following is a question by the Hon Starry Lee and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Ms Eva Cheng, in the Legislative Council today (May 18):

Although works of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Main Bridge have already commenced, the High Court ruled last month that the environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports on the works of that project to be undertaken within Hong Kong did not comply with statutory requirements, and requested that the environmental permit for such works be withdrawn by the Director of Environmental Protection. It has been reported that the judgement which has recommended new EIA criteria, including the requirements that a baseline study be carried out and corresponding mitigation measures be implemented, has far-reaching implications. It has also been reported that the incident has caused a knock-on effect as the MTR Corporation Limited has already taken the initiative to withdraw three EIA reports on the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project, and a number of infrastructure projects the EIA reports of which have been approved but the projects have not yet commenced (including the South Island Line (East) (SIL(E)) and the Kwun Tong Line Extension (KTE) might also be affected. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether the Government will refer to the aforesaid court judgement and carry out baseline studies on those infrastructure projects and implement corresponding mitigation measures in order to prevent the relevant EIA reports on SCL, SIL(E) and KTE from being challenged; if it will, of the details and the estimated extent of the delay caused to various projects; whether the dates of commissioning have to be postponed and whether the costs of the projects will increase; if it will not carry out such studies and implement such measures, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

On April 18 this year, the High Court handed down its judgement on the judicial review (JR) case regarding the environmental impact assessment reports (the EIA Reports) of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Link Road and Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities projects (the HZMB local projects). We noted that of the seven contentions raised in the JR application, the Court rejected six of them. However, the judgement pointed out that after interpreting the purpose of the "Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance" ("Ordinance"), it was considered that the EIA Reports of the HZMB local projects had only assessed the cumulative environmental impacts caused by the projects with the projects in place, and had failed to assess the direct impact of the projects on the environment ("stand alone analysis"), as well as the relevant mitigation measures, in order to enable the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to consider whether the impact has been minimised. The Court therefore ruled in favour of the JR applicant, and the EIA reports and environmental permits of the Hong Kong Link Road and the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities projects were also quashed.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to point out that we have always conducted environmental impact assessments (EIAs) in a careful and serious manner, and the EIAs of the HZMB local projects are no exception. Since the implementation of the "Ordinance", our understanding regarding the requirements and standards of the "Ordinance" has been that whether the estimated cumulative effects of the projects concerned on the environment as a whole after their completion would comply with the statutory

environmental standards should be the basis of approval. We have all along carried out the EIA studies concerned in accordance with the "Ordinance", the Technical Memorandum on Environmental Impact Assessment Process (Technical Memorandum) as well as the Study Briefs issued for the projects concerned that were finalised after public consultation. We have also been submitting the relevant EIA reports to the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) in accordance with the "Ordinance". As a matter of fact, as a project proponent, our understanding is that there is no explicit requirement under the "Ordinance" or the Technical Memorandum for the provision of such "stand alone analysis" as required in the court's judgement in EIA reports. Hence, we have not included such analysis in the EIA reports submitted. As regards the requirement for the project proponents to introduce mitigation measures as far as possible, it has always been the Government's objective in overall planning and environmental protection. Although we have not provided such "stand alone analysis" as required in court's judgement in the EIA reports of the HZMB local projects, appropriate and feasible mitigation measures have all along been proposed in respect of the impacts of the projects on the environment so as to address the public's concern as far as possible. In addition, every step of the process in respect of all applications under the "Ordinance" is displayed on the EPD website publicly, so as to facilitate the involvement of the public and the Advisory Council on the Environment in different stages. The EIAs of the HZMB local projects were also carried out under such open and transparent process.

The judgement in respect of the JR on the EIA reports of the HZMB local projects may affect other projects for which EIA is under way. As far as railway projects are concerned, the most affected one is the Shatin to Central Link (SCL). The MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), erring on the side of caution, decided on April 21 this year to withdraw three EIA reports of the SCL that have already been submitted to the EPD for consideration, so as to review the contents of the reports.

Since the High Court's judgement involves important legal viewpoints of the "Ordinance" and poses significant implications on the execution of the "Ordinance", after seeking legal advice and considering and examining relevant factors thoroughly, EPD decided to lodge an appeal against the judgement. However, as the appeal process takes time, in order to continue to take forward the SCL project, in parallel with the appeal lodged by DEP, we will review the project's EIA reports and EIA work, and prepare and submit the reports in line with the court's judgement and the procedures, with a view to commencing the construction works of the project as soon as possible. The review and preparation of the EIA reports of the SCL will bring uncertainties to the implementation timetable for the project.

The SCL is a strategic railway project in Hong Kong. The completion of the railway can significantly save passengers' travel time between Kowloon East, New Territories East and Hong Kong Island, relieve the crowded situation of the existing railway lines in urban Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island, reduce traffic congestion and environmental problems of the existing road network, and promote redevelopment of some old districts such as To Kwa Wan and Kowloon City. As the 17 kilometres long SCL runs across a number of densely populated areas in the territory, including Sha Tin, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon City, Wan Chai and Central, its construction and operation will bring about a change of environment in these areas, and the associated environmental impact must be carefully evaluated. The MTRCL has completed the three EIA reports of SCL, and submitted them to EPD as early as February 21. But in view of the court's judgement on the EIA reports of the HZMB local projects, the MTRCL, erring on the side of caution, decided to withdraw the three EIA reports on April 21 this year so as to review the contents of the reports.

Since the Executive Council agreed to proceed with the implementation of the SCL in 2008, we started to conduct comprehensive and detailed public consultation. The different

level of councils, organisations and residents consulted generally supported and welcomed the SCL project, and urged the Government to expedite its implementation. In end November 2010, the SCL project was gazetted under the Railways Ordinance. We are currently in the statutory consultation stage. We have sought funding from the Legislative Council for a number of advance works and protection works of the SCL project in 2010 and 2011. These advance works and protection works have commenced.

The detailed design work of the SCL railway project has originally been making good progress. The relevant EIA reports had in fact been completed and submitted to EPD. The 17 kilometres long SCL runs from Tai Wai to Kowloon via some densely populated areas, and then from Hung Hom Station via Victoria Harbour to terminate at Admiralty. The MTRCL will make appropriate environmental mitigation measures for the design and construction sequences of the SCL taking into account the environment of the areas along different parts of the SCL. As such, the EIA and the mitigation measures of different sections of the project are contained in three different EIA reports. The first report covers the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section, the second report covers the section from Mong Kok East to Hung Hom, the third report covers the Hung Hom to Admiralty section. As the environmental issues involved are complex and affect a number of areas, each of the three EIA reports took a year to prepare and compile.

Our original plan was to complete the statutory consultation process and statutory EIA process in early 2012, and then to submit the case to the Executive Council for consideration of authorisation to take forward the project. We aim to commence construction works in 2012, and complete the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section in 2018 and the Hung Hom to Admiralty section in 2020. However, as we need to review the three EIA reports of the SCL project in accordance with the court's judgement regarding the EIA reports of the HZMB local projects, there are still considerable uncertainties at this stage as to whether the programme for the SCL project may be affected.

At this stage, it is difficult to estimate the time required for the review of the three EIA reports of the SCL. We and the MTRCL are carefully examining the new EIA requirements laid down in the court's judgement regarding the HZMB local projects and how to meet such requirements in the EIA process. We need to discuss with the EPD the views in this regard. It is only after having a clear understanding of how to handle the requirements of the judgement could we assess how to deal with the three affected EIA reports of the SCL, and the complexity of and time required for the work. We would then be in a better position to assess whether there will be any delay in the SCL programme.

We expect that the more complex is the EIA work for the affected projects, the longer will be the time required for the review of the EIA report. The more mature is the project preparation work, the closer is the originally scheduled time for commencement of construction, and the time available for review of the EIA report will be shorter and the risk of delay in construction is higher. As far as the SCL is concerned, despite complexity of the EIA work, the EIA work as well as other preparatory work have been making good progress. Our original plan is to complete the statutory consultation process and statutory EIA process in early next year, and then submit the railway scheme to the Executive Council for consideration of authorisation with a view to commencing construction works in 2012. If the review and preparation of the EIA reports are timing consuming and we cannot complete the work within this year, then the original programme may also be affected.

If the programme of the SCL is delayed, it is expected that construction cost will likely increase, but it is difficult to assess the magnitude of the increase in construction cost at this stage.

As regards the environmental permit for the Kwun Tong Line

Extension and South Island Line (East) projects, the DEP issued the permits for these two projects in September 2010 and December 2010 respectively. In the JR case in respect of the HZMB local projects, the court's judgement was only in respect of the EIA reports and environmental permits of the HZMB local projects, and did not touch on these two railway projects. We consider that the EIA reports and environmental permits of the two railway projects are still valid and effective. The current design of the South Island Line (East) and the Kwun Tong Line Extension railway already includes various mitigation measures which were made in response to the public's demand to further reduce the impact on the environment. The residents in Kowloon City, Hung Hom and Southern District has longed for the early implementation of the Kwun Tong Line Extension and the South Island Line (East) projects. The relevant District Councils have also been urging the Administration for the early implementation of these two railway projects.

We have sought the Executive Council's authorisation of the Kwun Tong Line Extension and South Island Line (East) railway scheme in November last year. Furthermore, on April 15 this year, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the funding applications for the Essential Project Infrastructure Works of the two railway projects. The Executive Council has also approved the financial arrangements concerned. As the EIA reports and environmental permits of the two projects are valid and effective, and we have already completed the necessary statutory, administrative and funding application procedures for these two railway projects, the MTRCL will commence construction works as scheduled, in response to the aspirations of society.

The Administration has always conducted EIAs in a careful and serious manner, and also strives to start construction of railway projects as soon as possible to meet the needs of the community. Although the EIA work for the SCL project faces many uncertainties at this stage, we will try our best to handle the EIA of the SCL project in line with the court's judgement and the procedures, striving to reduce the possible impacts on the cost and programme of the project.

Ends/Wednesday, May 18, 2011  
Issued at HKT 15:27

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## Appendix III

### Shatin to Central Link

#### List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
16 July 2007	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of Shatin to Central Link Project	CB(1)2058/06-07(01)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0716cb1-2058-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0716cb1-2058-1-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2454/06-07  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd070716.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd070716.pdf</a>
27 March 2008	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Legislative Council Brief on Shatin to Central Link and MTR Kwun Tong Line Extension	THB(T)CR 10/1016/99  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp-thbtcr10101699-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp-thbtcr10101699-e.pdf</a>
		Administration's paper on funding application for the design of the Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)1036/07-08(03)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0327cb1-1036-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0327cb1-1036-3-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1374/07-08  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd080327.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd080327.pdf</a>
11 March 2009	Council meeting	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on the impact of infrastructural	<a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0311-translate-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0311-translate-e.pdf</a>

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		projects in To Kwa Wan and Ma Tau Kok districts	
31 March 2009	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of Shatin to Central Link Project	CB(1)1137/08-09(05) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0331cb1-1137-5-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0331cb1-1137-5-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1544/08-09 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20090331.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20090331.pdf</a>
28 October 2009	Council meeting	Hon James TO raised a question on the construction of Shatin to Central Link railway in the Kai Tak Development Area	<a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1028-translate-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1028-translate-e.pdf</a>
18 November 2009	Council meeting	Hon Mrs Regina IP raised a question on the temporary supporting facilities of Shatin to Central Link	<a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1118-translate-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1118-translate-e.pdf</a>
20 January 2010	Council meeting	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on the temporary works area of Shatin to Central Link	<a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0120-translate-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0120-translate-e.pdf</a>

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
4 June 2010	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on funding application - protection works for Shatin to Central Link in Wan Chai Development Phase II	CB(1)2088/09-10(02)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0604cb1-2088-2-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0604cb1-2088-2-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2844/09-10  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20100604.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20100604.pdf</a>
4 November 2010	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of Shatin to Central Link Project	CB(1)277/10-11(01)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1104cb1-277-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1104cb1-277-1-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1068/10-11  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20101104.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20101104.pdf</a>
6 December 2010	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on funding application – advance works for Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)603/10-11(01)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1206cb1-603-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1206cb1-603-1-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1161/10-11  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20101206.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20101206.pdf</a>

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
7 January 2011	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's supplementary information paper on funding application – advance works for Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)987/10-11(01)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0107cb1-987-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0107cb1-987-1-e.pdf</a>
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1547/10-11  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20110107.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20110107.pdf</a>
18 May 2011	Council meeting	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on the impact on various railway projects due to recent court judgement on environmental impact assessment	<a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201105/18/P201105180192.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201105/18/P201105180192.htm</a>
6 July 2011	Council meeting	Hon CHAN Hak-kan raised a question on the programme for Shatin to Central Link project	<a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201107/06/P201107060194.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201107/06/P201107060194.htm</a>