

政府總部
運輸及房屋局
運輸科



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

By fax and email

(Fax no.: 2840 0716)

7 November 2018

Dear Ms LAU,

**Request for Holding a Panel on Transport Special Meeting
as Early as Possible and Inviting the Government and
the MTR Corporation Limited to Give an Account of
the Passenger Clearance Arrangements and
Issues relating to “B5 Level” at the Terminus of
the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong
Express Rail Link**

Thank you for your letter of 4 September 2018 enclosing a joint letter of the same day from Hon Tanya CHAN, Hon Jeremy TAM, Hon KWOK Ka-ki and Hon Alvin YEUNG addressed to Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, the Chairman of the Legislative Council Panel on Transport. Our reply is as follows.

Personnel of the Mainland authorities staying overnight at the Station

The Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Co-location) Ordinance (“the Ordinance”) has come into effect since 4 September 2018.

Personnel from the Mainland Authorities Stationed at the Mainland Port Area (“MPA”) will work in the West Kowloon Station (“WKS”) MPA. These personnel will not leave the MPA at any time during their duty hours (including meal breaks). They must leave the MPA after their duty shifts, and will not reside overnight there.

The Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (“XRL”) operates between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. while the Port Areas are open from 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Having said that, some station staff (including cleaners and maintenance staff) still have to go in and out of the Port Areas outside operation hours. Besides, the Mainland Authorities Stationed at the MPA are responsible for maintaining round-the-clock security of the area. Hence, there is a need for the Mainland Authorities Stationed at the MPA to continue to deploy a small number of personnel to provide clearance service and maintain security overnight. Such arrangement does not contradict the statement made by the Government earlier that the Mainland personnel would not reside in the MPA overnight and does not imply that the Mainland personnel on overnight shift have jurisdiction outside the MPA.

“B5 Level” at the WKS

This Bureau issued two press releases respectively on 4 September and 6 September 2018 to provide detailed responses with regard to the back of house areas of the WKS (see [Annexes 1 and 2](#)). We would like to reiterate that the so-called “B5 Level” is actually a back of house service corridor underneath the B4 Platform Level of the WKS. In addition to “B5 Level”, there are also back of house areas on “B1M Level”, “B2H Level”, “B3M/B3H Level” and “B4M Level”. These levels are not within the MPA. Back of house areas are not for passenger use. Other than personnel who enter these areas to perform duties with authorisation from the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”), or during rescue and escape in case of emergency and fire, no person shall enter back of house areas. Security systems such as closed-circuit televisions and alarm systems have been installed in the back of house areas together with clear warning signs displayed to prevent any unauthorised persons from entering the areas.

Ticketing arrangement

Passengers may purchase tickets for the Hong Kong Section of the XRL through the ticketing office and ticketing machines at the WKS, the ticketing website (www.mtr.com.hk/highspeed), the ticketing hotline (Tel. no.: 2120 0888)

and designated ticket agents. Each passenger may purchase a maximum of 30 single tickets each time from the WKS ticketing office and designated ticket agents, as well as a maximum of eight single tickets from the WKS ticketing machines, the ticketing website and the ticketing hotline. Depending on the channel of ticket purchase, passengers may choose to pay by cash, electronic payment means (including credit card, China UnionPay card, Octopus card and Electronic Payment Services) or mobile payment means. When purchasing, collecting, altering and refunding the tickets, passengers are required to produce valid proof of identity as specified and have their identity authenticated before boarding the train.

Restrictions on baggage and baggage storage arrangement

Regarding regulations on the carriage of baggage, as the Hong Kong Section of the XRL connects with the Mainland high-speed rail network, the relevant regulations should be in line with those of the Mainland high-speed rail system. According to the existing regulations of the Mainland high-speed rail, each passenger may carry baggage weighing up to 20 kg in total (excluding folding wheelchairs for the disabled). The sum of the length, width and height of each item shall not exceed 130 cm. There is no specific limit on the number of pieces of baggage that a passenger may carry. Passengers may carry baggage that complies with the regulations according to their own needs. High-speed rail has edge for destinations that can be reached within three to four hours. Most passengers to these destinations would stay for two to three nights only, so the weight and number of pieces of their baggage should be in compliance with the regulations. If necessary, passengers may contact the service provider for parcel consignment and delivery services at the WKS. Baggage storage service is also available at the WKS.

Implementation of “List of Dishonest Persons”

The Mainland has formulated a notice on restricting seriously dishonest persons from taking trains and civil aircraft (“the Notice”) in accordance with the relevant policy and regulations and has made public the list of dishonest persons on the internet. If a person’s action severely affects the safe railway operation (such as disrupting the order of railway transport and jeopardising railway safety, smoking on the XRL trains, etc.), the person may be put on the list in the Notice. That person will then be restricted from taking trains (including the XRL trains) within a certain period of time.

Being a cross-boundary railway, the Hong Kong Section of the XRL is jointly operated by the Mainland operator and Hong Kong operator (i.e. the MTRCL). In operating the XRL, the MTRCL has to comply with the relevant policy and regulations of the Mainland, so the aforesaid ticketing restriction imposed on dishonest persons is also applicable to the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. Nevertheless, the dishonest persons may still enter the unpaid areas of the WKS.

No matter XRL tickets are purchased in Hong Kong or the Mainland, the action of passengers inside WKS and train compartments are subject to regulation of the Rules for Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong High Speed Rail Cross-Boundary Passenger Transport (“the Rules”) jointly formulated by the Hong Kong operator and the Mainland, as well as the Mass Transit Railway By-laws (depending on the jurisdiction where the passenger is located and whether such act is regarded as a reserved matter stipulated under the Ordinance).

The Rules, which set out the ticketing arrangement as agreed between the operators of both sides, have no relation with the boundary of the MPA and the co-location arrangement. The MTRCL has uploaded the Rules to its ticketing webpage and passengers are required to comply with these Rules. When passengers purchase tickets, the MTRCL’s Personal information Collection Statement will be displayed to enable passengers to have a clear understanding of the purposes of collecting the personal information.

We explained the operating details of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL at the special meeting of the Panel on Transport on 31 August 2018 and the Hong Kong Section of the XRL has already commenced operation starting from 23 September.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leo LI', written in a cursive style.

(Leo LI)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

Press Releases

Transport and Housing Bureau responds to media enquiries

In response to media enquiries today (September 4) on the media reporting arrangements for the handover of the Mainland Port Area and the "B5 level" of the West Kowloon Station (WKS), a spokesman for the Transport and Housing Bureau gave the following reply:

In the press release issued by the Government as well as the paper submitted to the Legislative Council Panel on Transport on August 30, 2018, it was stated that the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Co-location) Ordinance (Cap 632) would come into operation on September 4, 2018, in order to dovetail with the preparatory works for the implementation of the co-location arrangement at the WKS of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL).

As agreed between the Governments of both sides, the HKSAR Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government handed over the Mainland Port Area last evening (September 3) at the working level in a modest and simple manner, which signified that the HKSAR Government made available the completed Mainland Port Area to the Mainland Authorities Stationed at the Mainland Port Area for their exercising of jurisdiction, so as to make final preparations for the joint implementation of the co-location arrangement. Press releases were respectively issued by both sides so that citizens of both places could be aware of the arrangements in the first instance. The official opening ceremony of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL will be held in the morning of September 22. It will be jointly hosted by the Chief Executive and Mr Ma Xingrui, the Governor of the Guangdong Province, and media will definitely be invited to cover the ceremony.

As regards media reports on the existence of a so-called "B5 level" in the WKS, it is actually a back of house service corridor underneath the B4 Platform Level of the WKS managed by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) as the operator of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL, with plant rooms for air conditioning, drainage and sewage systems alongside and will be used during rescue and evacuation. This is not an area for passenger use and is not within the Mainland Port Area. A typical level has a floor area of about 110 000 square metres, but the aforesaid back of house service corridor only has an area of about 3 100 square metres, representing less than three per cent of the floor area of a typical level. As such, this back of house service corridor is not a "floor" as such. Rather, since the corridor is underneath the B4 Level, it was marked as "B5 level" for easy identification. In fact, in the quarterly reported submitted by the Transport and Housing Bureau and the Highways Department to the Legislative Council Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways in September 2016, it was mentioned that works were ongoing at the "B5 level". There is therefore no question of covering up the matter.

The aforesaid corridor forms part of the XRL WKS fire rescue and evacuation system and was designed based on the fire safety risk assessment by MTRCL to satisfy the relevant buildings legislation and fire safety guidelines. The design has been approved by the Safety and Security Coordination Committee that

oversees relevant matters. This arrangement is in line with the other railway stations. The Committee is chaired by the representative of the Railways Branch of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, with members comprising representatives of the Fire Services Department, Buildings Department, Highways Department, the Police Force and MTRCL. The aforesaid corridor, together with the entire WKS, was constructed by the contractor of contract 810A - West Kowloon Terminus Station (North), and statutory inspections by the Fire Services Department and the Buildings Department have been completed.

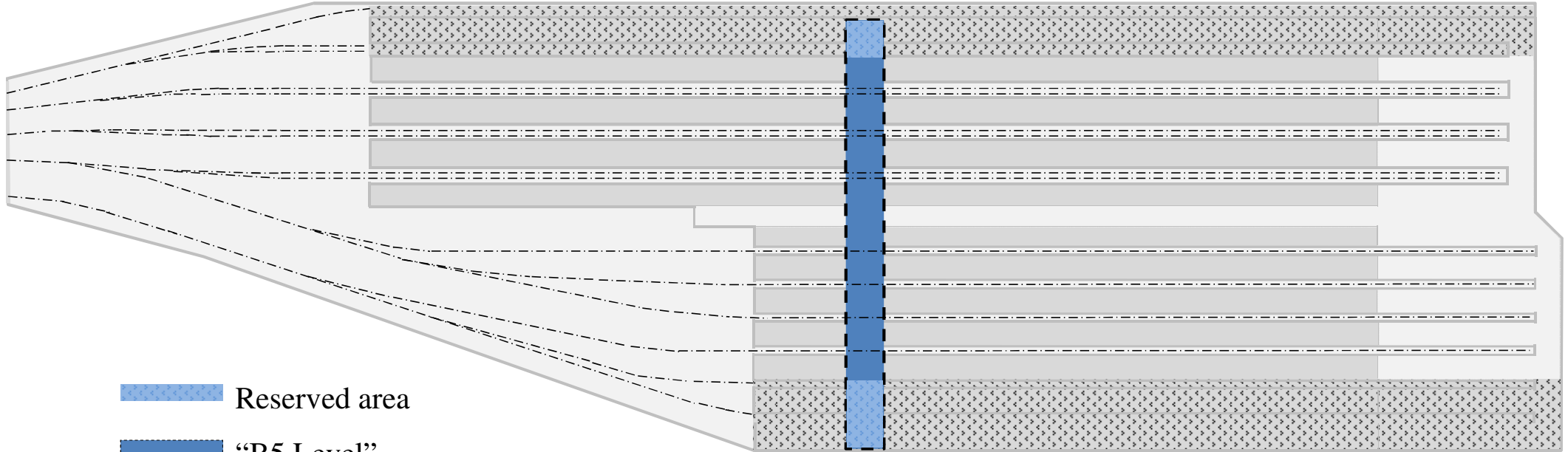
Further, when relevant personnel need to enter the aforesaid corridor for performance of duties, they must enter through the cross-boundary restricted area. Such relevant personnel must first be issued a valid cross-boundary restricted area permit by MTRCL, and have authorisation from MTRCL before they enter the corridor for performance of duties.




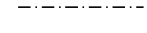
Other than in the above circumstances, no person will be entitled to use the corridor. All exits and entrances to the corridor, including relevant passageways, doors and lifts that connect with the Mainland Port Area in the WKS, are locked by security systems. MTRCL has a stringent control mechanism and have assigned patrols to prevent unauthorised entry. In addition, security systems such as closed-circuit television and alarm systems have been installed together with clear warning signs so as to prevent unauthorised persons from using the corridor.

Ends/Tuesday, September 4, 2018
Issued at HKT 21:27

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Schematic Diagram of “B5 Level” in the WKS



-  Reserved area
-  “B5 Level”
-  B4 Platform level
-  B4 Tracks

Press Releases

Transport and Housing Bureau provides further information on West Kowloon Station

Having regard to the community's interest on the various levels of the West Kowloon Station (WKS), the Transport and Housing Bureau today (September 6) further provided the following information:

The WKS is a large scale railway station. To support station operation, there are back of house areas between levels in the station for use by staff of the operator of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL), and for rescue and escape in case of emergency and fire.

Apart from "B5 level", "B1M level" above the B1 Ticketing Hall, "B2H level" above the B2 Arrival Level, "B3M/B3H level" above the B3 Departure Level, and "B4M level" above the B4 Platform Level also have back of house areas designated for housing station facilities and for use as office by staff of the operator of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. These back of house areas are managed by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) as the operator of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. The Mainland Port Area comprises the designated areas on B2 and B3 Levels, the platform areas on B4 Level as well as the relevant connecting passageways, these back of house areas are not within the Mainland Port Area.

A typical level of the WKS has a floor area of around 110 000 square metres, and the floor areas of "B1M level", "B2H level", "B3M/B3H level" and "B4M level" are only around 5 600 square metres, around 10 300 square metres, around 7 200 square metres and around 4 200 square metres respectively. Such floor areas have been included in the construction floor area of 430 000 square metres announced before. In particular:

On "B1M level", there are ventilation shafts, offices of the railway operator, as well as plant rooms for air conditioning system. A section is used as restaurant open to the public;

On "B2H level", there are ventilation shafts and a refuse collection room;

On "B3M/B3H level", a section (known as "B3M level") is used as passageways to the subway that connects to the Lin Cheung Road for public use. The other sections known as "B3H level" are all back of house areas in the station with ventilation shafts installed;

On "B4M level", there are offices of the railway operator, switch rooms and plant rooms for air conditioning system, as well as refuse collection and equipment maintenance rooms.

Back of house areas are not for passenger use. Other than personnel who enters back of house areas for performance of duties with authorisation from MTRCL, or during rescue and escape in case of emergency and fire, no person shall enter back of house areas. All exits and entrances to back of house areas, including relevant passageways, doors and lifts that connect with the public areas or the Mainland Port Area in the WKS, are locked by security

systems. MTRCL has a stringent control mechanism and has assigned patrols to prevent unauthorised entry into back of house areas. In addition, security systems such as closed-circuit television and alarm systems have been installed together with clear warning signs so as to prevent unauthorised persons from entering.

Ends/Thursday, September 6, 2018

Issued at HKT 23:24

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