

香港特別行政區政府
保安局



The Government of the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Security Bureau

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9 April 2020

Ms Betty MA
Chief Council Secretary
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms MA,

Panel on Security
Incident of an individual walking in the XRL tunnel

We refer to your letter dated 3 March 2020 to the Secretary for Security, requesting for a written reply to a letter from five Members of the Legislative Council dated 28 February 2020. Having consulted the Transport and Housing Bureau, our reply is as follows :

The Government has always attached great importance to the operation safety and security of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL). In respect of the subject incident, the Government had immediately made enquiries to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL). And within a month after the incident, the MTRCL reported to the Government its corresponding improvement measures.

The incident occurred at night in early December 2019. A Mainland passenger boarded a southbound train at Changsha South Station for Shenzhen North Station. Enquiry suggested that the passenger missed the stop at Shenzhen North. When the train eventually arrived at West Kowloon Station (WKS), the passenger did not go through clearance procedures, but entered the railway track and walked along the track. He later left the railway premises via the emergency exit of a XRL ventilation building and surrendered himself to the Police. The passenger was subsequently repatriated to the Mainland in accordance with the established mechanism. Drawing from the information provided by the MTRCL, the causes leading to this incident involved two aspects : (1) the handling of trespassing and (2) the safe operation of the railway. The MTRCL has immediately implemented targeted improvement measures.

Management of Trespassing

With regard to the control of passenger flow on platforms, the MTRCL is required to adopt passenger flow management measures based on the operation design of WKS of the XRL, and deploy staff for maintaining order and assisting passengers, so as to prevent passengers from staying at platforms or trespassing onto tracks. Passengers, be they departing or arriving, are not allowed to stay on the platform. Departing passengers will first wait at the departure hall upon completion of clearance procedures, and will be directed by the MTRCL to the platform for boarding after the trains arrive and the compartments are cleared. Arriving passengers will be directed to leave the compartment immediately upon arrival and leave the platform as promptly as possible. The MTRCL will ensure that all passengers are cleared from the platform before the train departs.

In view of this incident, the Government considers that it is necessary for the MTRCL to strengthen its manpower and arrange more staff to manage platform passenger flow, so as to prevent recurrence of similar incidents. In this regard, the MTRCL has already implemented immediate measures for improving its manpower deployment for managing platform passenger flow, including : (i) stationing staff at the relevant areas linked to the platforms to regulate passenger flow, and setting up temporary barriers during non-operating hours to prevent inadvertent access to platform areas; and (ii) strengthening deployment of security staff along the area from platform areas to the arrival hall to prevent unauthorised person from staying, so as to ensure that the railway track and tunnel area are protected from trespassers.


Safe Operation of the Railway

In the aspect of railway operation safety controls at the track areas, it is the responsibility of the MTRCL, as the operator of the XRL to implement railway safety measures at the XRL (which include ensuring the normal and effective functioning of facilities as well as operation of the relevant systems) so as to provide safe train services to passengers. Before the commencement of operation of the XRL, the MTRCL had already implemented relevant railway safety measures at the XRL, including installation of CCTVs, alarm monitoring systems, fences as well as arrangement of security patrols etc..

In this incident, the MTRCL's monitoring system had detected the inadvertent entry into the railway track area, but the control room staff did not notice the situation and hence failed to handle it timely. In light of this, the MTRCL is strengthening its staff training to enhance their response capabilities, and has stepped up regular security tests, so as to ensure that the safety and security measures at the WKS and the facilities along the XRL can serve their functions effectively.

This case was an isolated incident. In fact, since the commencement of operation of XRL, the WKS has been in good order and operation is generally smooth. The Government will maintain its monitoring on the MTRCL's continuous review of its implementation of the security and operation measures at the XRL, thereby enhancing its regulatory control. The MTRCL should also report regularly to the Government, to ensure the safe operation and service quality of the XRL.

Yours sincerely,


(TSUI Sheung-yee, Sally)
for Secretary for Security

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