

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)779/19-20

Ref : CB4/PL/TP

Report of the Panel on Transport for submission to the Legislative Council

Purpose

This report which is made in accordance with Rule 77(14) of the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") gives an account of the work of the Panel on Transport ("the Panel") during the 2019-2020 legislative session.

The Panel

2. The Panel was formed by a resolution passed by the LegCo on 8 July 1998 and as amended on 20 December 2000, 9 October 2002, 11 July 2007 and 2 July 2008 for the purpose of monitoring and examining government policies and issues of public concern relating to transport matters. The terms of reference of the Panel are at **Appendix I**.

3. For the 2019-2020 session, the Panel comprises 32 members, with Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming and Hon CHAN Han-pan elected as the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Panel respectively. The membership list of the Panel is at **Appendix II**.

Major Work

Public transport services

MTR fare adjustment for 2020

4. In April 2020, the Panel was briefed on the details of the MTR fare adjustment for 2020 under the Fare Adjustment Mechanism ("FAM"). Members noted that according to the prevailing FAM arrangement, the fare adjustment rate for MTR fares in 2020/21 should originally be +2.55%. However, the year-on-year change in Median Monthly

Household Income value in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018 is -2.48%, which should be deemed as 0% according to the mechanism. Since the overall fare adjustment rate calculated this year (+2.55%) is greater than 0%, the "Affordability Cap" has been triggered. As a result, there will be no adjustment for MTR fares in 2020/21. The Administration and the MTRCL agreed after discussion, generally like that of last year, to simplify the arrangement by recouping the overall fare adjustment rate (+2.55%) in the subsequent two years (i.e. +1.28% in 2021/22 and +1.27% in 2022/23).

5. Most members called on MTRCL not to recoup the overall fare adjustment rate (+2.55%) in the subsequent two years to support the community during difficult times and shoulder its corporate social responsibility. In view of the huge profits earned amidst the weakening economy, MTRCL was also urged to freeze or even lower the fare to relieve the financial burden of commuters.

6. MTRCL appealed for members' understanding that the MTRCL's transport operations suffered from heavy losses in revenue, with a significant drop in patronage for railway lines under the coronavirus 2019 ("COVID-19") pandemic. Moreover, the High Speed Rail (Hong Kong Section) service was suspended since the end of January 2020, and Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau stations at the border were closed since early February 2020, inevitably affecting MTRCL's revenue from cross-boundary railway services. After striking a balance among various considerations, MTRCL had made its best endeavour to roll out various relief measures like fare concession and rental abatement with a view to riding out the economic difficulties together with the general public.

7. Members noted that despite the present gloomy economic conditions, the overall fare adjustment rate calculated according to FAM still stood at +2.55% for 2020/2021. Members were of the view that the existing FAM was ineffective in reflecting the prevailing socio-economic situation and urged the Administration to advance the review on FAM. The Administration took note of members' views and stressed that the FAM formula had taken into account objective figures which reflected the local economic conditions. Taking the fare adjustment in 2020 as an example, calculation based on the relevant figures had arrived at a result that led to no actual fare increase.

8. Considering the unprecedented challenges facing the community amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Panel noted that MTRCL planned to launch one-off special relief measures, including "20% Rebate for Every

Octopus Trip" for six months from 1 July 2020 to 1 January 2021, which was an enhancement over the current 3.3% rebate. The Government agreed to bear half of the total actual revenue forgone with a cap of \$0.8 billion, whereas MTRCL would shoulder the remainder.

9. While welcoming MTRCL's initiatives, some members considered that it was important to balance the fares among various public transport services, or else other public transport services playing a supplementary role would suffer. They were also concerned that the Administration had been using the public funds to subsidize MTRCL in rolling out the "20% Rebate for Every Octopus Trip" concession, and that might aggravate the operating environment of other public transport operators, including franchised bus and the public light bus operators. Some members also expressed concern that the skewed government policy towards MTRCL might affect the travel pattern of the general public.

10. The Administration explained that MTRCL businesses were hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from bearing half of the actual revenue forgone of MTRCL, the Administration had at the same time temporarily lowered the threshold of the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme ("PTFSS") from \$400 to \$200, so that passengers who travelled on public transport services other than railway would also benefit. The Administration would closely monitor the impact on other public transport services after the 20% fare discount for MTR passengers had been rolled out. Furthermore, the Administration advised that it had committed about \$6.3 billion to support the transport trades (except railway) under the two rounds of Anti-epidemic Fund."

Relaxation of vehicle length restriction of light bus and other relevant technical amendments

11. To further promote the policy objective of green and barrier-free transport, the Administration briefed the Panel in March 2020 on the proposed legislative amendments to relax the vehicle length and weight restrictions of a light bus, i.e. from 7 metres to 7.5 metres in length and from 5.5 tonnes to 8.5 tonnes in weight, so as to allow light buses with more environmental benefits and/or barrier-free facilities to be introduced into Hong Kong. The Panel noted that the overall length and maximum gross weight of a light bus were stipulated under the Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374A) at present, but the Commissioner for Transport ("C for T") might exercise her discretion to grant exemption on the overall length restriction of a light bus with public interest in mind. An example would be the launch

of "low-floor wheelchair-accessible light bus trial scheme" ("the trial scheme") under which C for T has granted exemptions to two low-floor wheelchair accessible light buses plying two hospital routes in early 2018.

12. Members raised no objection to the Administration's legislative proposals. A member has sought reasons for specifying the length and weight restrictions of 7.5 metres and 8.5 tonnes respectively, as the two light bus models deployed under the trial scheme mentioned above had already exceeded the proposed restrictions, and queried whether the Administration had kept a preferred list of light bus models for introduction into the market. In addition, some members were concerned whether longer light bus would pose difficulties in parking and manoeuvring at light bus termini or public transport interchanges in busy districts.

13. The Administration explained that it would maintain an open mind on the types of light bus to be introduced as long as they could bring environmental benefits to the community or could serve persons with disabilities. Also, TD had examined public transport interchanges, light bus termini and relevant road sections where light bus operated and had commenced suitable modification works to ensure that longer light bus could park and manoeuvre.

14. To provide for abovementioned legislative amendments and other technical amendments, the Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles)(Amendment) Regulation 2020 and Road Traffic (Public Service Vehicles)(Amendment)(No. 2) Regulation 2020 ("the two Amendment Regulations") were gazetted on 17 April 2020 and tabled before LegCo at its meeting of 22 April 2020 for negative vetting. A subcommittee formed to examine the two Amendment Regulations held a meeting with the Administration on 26 May 2020. The two Amendment Regulations have come into operation on 5 July 2020.

Outlying island ferry services

15. As announced in the 2019 Policy Address, the Administration would continue to provide Special Helping Measures ("SHM") to the six major outlying island ferry routes and extend the measures to eight other outlying island ferry routes. In addition, a new Vessel Subsidy Scheme ("VSS") would be launched to replace the fleets of 11 ferry routes for introducing greener vessels. The Panel was briefed on the details of the above proposals at the meeting on 15 November 2019.

16. Some members expressed concern that the Administration was using public money to subsidize outlying island ferry services run by private operators. They opined that if there was a continued need for providing SHM to maintain the ferry services, the Administration should explore options such as operating the services as part of public service or procuring government fleets and outsourcing the services to private operators. Other members however supported the proposals as ferry was the only means of public transport for residents living on outlying islands. The measures would alleviate fare increase burden on passengers.

17. The Administration explained that it was appropriate for public transport services to be run by the private sector according to commercial principles. As the options proposed by members above would entail a much larger public spending, and having considered factors such as efficiency, cost-effectiveness and service improvements, the Administration saw the merits of continuing to provide SHM to ferry operators and launching the new VSS as an additional measures to enhance ferry services. On members' enquiry about extending the provision of VSS to "kaito" routes, the Administration expressed that it maintained an open mind on the suggestion provided that the "kaito" ferry services were indispensable with keen passenger demand. Also, it would be necessary for the Administration to regulate their services and monitor their financial performance regularly.

18. Some members were alarmed at the blockage of major roads and trunks by radical protestors during the staging of public order events in the second half of 2019 and suggested reviewing the role of waterborne transport in providing an alternative transport means to passengers. The Administration took note of members' suggestions and informed the Panel that it was preparing for the introduction of the "Hung Hom-Central" ferry and water taxi services plying different tourist destinations and hotspots.

Introducing the "Central - Hung Hom" ferry and "water taxi" services

19. On 15 May 2020, the Panel was briefed by the Administration on the introduction of the "Central – Hung Hom" ferry and "water taxi" services. The Panel noted that the Administration had granted ferry service licences of five years to an operator in March 2020 for operating the two services. The "Central – Hung Hom" ferry route would commence operation in June 2020. For the "water taxi" service, there would be five calling points located at major tourist attractions. Passengers could freely hop on and hop off at any calling point. This

ferry route would commence operation by the end of 2020.

20. Members in general welcomed the introduction of the two ferry services and called on the Administration to provide more in-harbour ferry routes, in particular routes plying between the New Territories and Hong Kong Island to serve the working population. In addition, members commented that the ferry schedule for "Central – Hung Hom" route, which was fixed at 20 minutes during peak hours would be insufficient to cater for the passenger demand. For "water taxi", some members commented that the section fare for one calling point at \$10 to \$24 and full fare of the whole route at \$136 would be too high. Also, some of the calling points, such as the ferry piers at Kai Tak and the West Kowloon Cultural District were too remote for public access, and there were few public transport feeder services located near the piers to facilitate passengers access.

21. The Administration took note of members' suggestions and advised that it would closely monitor the operation of the new ferry services and would call upon operators to suitably adjust service frequency having regard to passengers demand. Also, it would review the merits of introducing additional in-harbour ferry routes to serve more districts when necessary. For "water taxi", as its positioning was mainly serving tourists, the Administration considered the proposed fare acceptable. In addition, ancillary tourist services such as catering, on-board photographing and guided tours would be provided to passengers to enrich the ferry experience. As regard public access to the piers, the Administration would explore strengthening public transport connections to ensure that adequate public transport services would be provided at the calling points of "water taxi" for the convenience of passengers.

Transport infrastructure

"Universal Accessibility" Programme

22. The Panel has been closely monitoring measures to improve the pedestrian environment. Members were briefed on 15 November 2019 on the progress of the "Universal Accessibility" Programme ("UA Programme") and the Administration's proposal to seek funding for an allocation of \$610 million to take forward the UA programme in the 2020-2021 financial year.

23. Some members expressed deep concern over the slow implementation progress of the UA Programme and urged the Administration to expedite the construction of the items which were found to be technically feasible and supported by the District Councils.

24. The Administration explained that they were taking forward all lift retrofitting items under the UA Programme according to the established procedures of the Public Works Programme. The required steps, including conducting feasibility study and site investigation, consultation with District Councils, gazettal under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance, and detailed design and tendering, would need to be completed before the commencement of construction works. To expedite the construction process, the Administration explained that that HyD was considering adopting the Modular Integrated Construction method under which the design of the lift towers and lifts would be standardized to reduce the time for construction. Furthermore, HyD would award contracts in batches for items which were ready for implementation, such that the implementation programme of those items would not be affected by hiccups in individual items.

25. A few members expressed appreciation that the Administration had decided to expand the ambit of the UA Programme and to launch a "Special Scheme" for retrofitting lifts at walkways in or connecting to the common areas of three types of housing estates, i.e. estates under Tenants Purchase Scheme, the Buy or Rent Option Scheme and public rental estates with non-residential properties divested. Pointing out that the implementation of certain items under the UA Programme were delayed due to land ownership issues, a member urged the Administration to consider invoking the Lands Resumption Ordinance (Cap. 124) to resume land on the presumption of public interests in order to resolve the issue of complicated property rights and expedite the implementation of lift retrofitting projects. A motion was passed in this connection. The Administration responded that given that the ambit of Subhead 6101TX – "Universal Accessibility Programme" under Head 706 – "Highways" covered projects costing up to \$75 million each, one of the criteria for the selection of walkways for inclusion in the UA Programme was that no land resumption would be involved in order to ensure the proper use of public funds.

26. Another member urged the Administration to further expand the ambit of the UA Programme to cover estates under Home Ownership Scheme and private estates to meet the genuine needs of the community

for barrier-free access facilities. The Administration however considered that to ensure the proper use of public funds, the responsibility of providing barrier-free access facilities in private premises should be borne by the owners concerned.

Widening of Castle Peak Road – Castle Peak Bay

27. During the discussion on the funding proposal for upgrading the public works project of "Widening of Castle Peak Road – Castle Peak Bay ("CPR-CPB")" to Category A at the meeting on 20 March 2020, the Panel expressed concern about the impact of future population growth in the New Territories West on the traffic flow of CPR-CPB, as a number of housing development projects were now under planning in the region. In particular, some members were concerned about the possible traffic diversion from Tuen Mun Road ("TMR") to CPR, and whether the volume/capacity ratio ("v/c ratio") of CPR-CPB projected in the traffic impact assessment had fully taken into account this factor.

28. The Administration explained that according to the latest traffic impact assessment, the traffic situation of adjacent roads including TMR had been taken into account. The Administration also anticipated that the traffic demand of CPR-CPB would increase significantly with the housing developments in Tuen Mun areas. It would therefore be necessary to widen CPR-CPB to relieve the anticipated traffic congestion. The Panel urged the Administration to closely monitor the traffic situation of CPR-CPB upon completion of the widening project, and be ready to undertake further improvement works should the v/c ratios did not improve as expected.

29. Concerning the adoption of noise-barriers at nearby residential estates, some members enquired about the adoption criteria as it was noted that in some occasions, noise barriers had been provided for small private residential estates but not for densely populated public housing estates. Other members noted that residents of the Hong Kong Gold Coast ("HKGC") had raised strong objection to the adoption of noise barrier outside HKGC and requested other mitigation measures instead. They enquired about the follow-up actions taken by the Administration in this regard.

30. The Administration advised that there had been an established mechanism for determining the provision of noise barriers or enclosures for new works projects and existing roads. Factors including size of the affected area, height of relevant buildings and level of noise impact

would be taken into account in the assessment. As regard the views of HKGC residents on the proposed erection of noise barrier outside HKGC, the Administration advised that the scheme of the project had already been authorized in accordance with the Road (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance. Notwithstanding that, the Highways Department would maintain close dialogue with residents of HKGC with a view to reaching a consensus.

Other consultations

Comprehensive review of Private Driving Instructors' licences

31. The Administration conducted a comprehensive review on matters related to the issuance of private driving instructor ("PDI") licences in 2018 ("the Review"), inter alia, the issuing mechanism and benchmark for the three groups of PDIs, adequacy and training quality of PDIs and so forth. The Panel was briefed on the outcome of the Review at the meeting on 24 April 2020.

32. The Panel noted the Administration's proposal to raise the benchmark of Group 1 PDI from the existing level of 1 050 to 1 170, and to keep the benchmark for Groups 2 and 3 PDI. In addition, 25% of the new Group 1 PDI licences would be allocated as the "Driving Instructor Quota" ("DI Quota") for application by valid licence holders of PDIs in Groups 2 and 3 and serving or ex-restricted driving instructors ("RDIs") teaching in designated driving school ("DDS") and franchised bus companies. The remaining 75% quota would be opened for public applications.

33. Members held diverse views on the Administration's proposal. Members in support of the proposal expressed that the DI Quota could better utilize the driving competency and training experience of Groups 2 and 3 PDIs to enhance the general quality of driver training for Group 1 vehicles. By introducing more competition and offering more choices to learner drivers, it would also help to promote a healthy development of the PDI trade. Other members, on the other hand, considered that the arrangement was unfair to members of the public applying for PDI licences since fewer quotas would be allocated for open applications. It would make open application even more difficult.

34. There have been long-standing criticisms that RDIs were poorly remunerated. Some members welcomed the proposal of DI Quota which

would offer RDIs a good chance to switch to PDIs for better pay. Other members however were against the proposal. They opined that in view of the fact that the RDIs' chances of attaining a Group 1 PDI licence through DI Quota would become higher, the RDIs will be willing to join and accept the less favourable pay given by the DDS in the hope that they can obtain Group 1 PDI licences more easily. As such, the DDS would have no or less incentive to improve RDIs' remuneration.

35. In response to the comments above, the Administration explained that the proposed revision in the issuing mechanism for new PDI licences aimed to enhance the training quality of Group 1 vehicles. In formulating the proposal, the Administration had balanced different considerations and canvassed the views of different stakeholders, trade associations and unions. The Administration would keep in view of the market situation and consider the need for issuing new PDI licences once every two years in future.

Others

36. The Panel received a briefing by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on 25 October 2019 on the transport policy initiatives featured in the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address. In November 2019, the Panel was briefed by the Administration on the transport arrangement upon the commissioning of Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point.

37. The Panel was also consulted on the fuel subsidy and one-off subsidy to transport and logistics trades, review of the use of electric mobility devices in Hong Kong, progress of implementation of the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme, improvement works of cycle track network in new towns and latest situation of automated dockless bicycle rental services; Star Ferry's application for fare increases and fare increase applications from Citybus Limited (Franchise for Hong Kong Island and Cross-Harbour Bus Network) and New World First Bus Services Limited. Besides, the Panel also considered the following funding proposals in the session:

- (a) Noise enclosures at Gascoigne Road Flyover;
- (b) New Wang Tong River Bridge and Retrofitting of escalators for footbridge across Castle Peak Road - Kwai Chung near MTR Tai Wo Hau Station Exit B; and

- (c) Enhancement of Safety of Franchised Buses and Creation of Directorate Posts in the Transport Department.

Railway matters

38. Railway plays a key role in Hong Kong's transport system. A subcommittee was formed under the Panel to continue to follow up on matters relating to railway planning, implementation and operation.¹ During the period from October 2019 to July 2020, the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways held six meetings. The work of the Subcommittee is summarized in its report at **Appendix III**.

Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems

39. The Subcommittee under the Panel completed its work in March 2020. The work of the Subcommittee is summarized in its report at **Appendix IV**.

Meetings

40. During the period between October 2019 and July 2020, the Panel held a total of nine meetings.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
7 July 2020

¹ According to the terms of reference of the subcommittee, matters relating to corporate governance of the post-merger corporation and fares, including review of the fare adjustment mechanism, should be dealt with by the Panel.

Legislative Council

Panel on Transport

Terms of Reference

1. To monitor and examine Government policies and issues of public concern relating to transport.
2. To provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of views on the above policy matters.
3. To receive briefings and to formulate views on any major legislative or financial proposals in respect of the above policy area prior to their formal introduction to the Council or Finance Committee.
4. To monitor and examine, to the extent it considers necessary, the above policy matters referred to it by a member of the Panel or by the House Committee.
5. To make reports to the Council or to the House Committee as required by the Rules of Procedure.

**Legislative Council
Panel on Transport**

Membership list for 2019-2020 session*

Chairman	Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Deputy Chairman	Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Members	Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP Hon Claudia MO Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP Hon CHAN Chi-chuen Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP Hon Alvin YEUNG Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin Hon CHU Hoi-dick Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP Hon LAM Cheuk-ting Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH Hon Tanya CHAN Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP

Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

(Total: 32 members)

Clerk Ms Sophie LAU

Legal Adviser Mr Alvin CHUI

* Changes in membership are set out in Annex to Appendix II

Annex to Appendix II

Changes in membership

(Year 2019-2020)

Member	Relevant date
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP	Up to 18 October 2019
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP	Up to 28 October 2019
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP	Up to 28 October 2019
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP	Up to 28 October 2019
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP	Up to 30 October 2019
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP	Up to 1 November 2019
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan	Up to 4 November 2019
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai	Up to 16 December 2019
Hon AU Nok-hin	Up to 16 December 2019
Hon HO Kai-ming	Up to 31 May 2020

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)753/19-20

Ref : CB4/PS/1/16

**Report of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways
for submission to the Panel on Transport**

Purpose

This report gives an account of the work of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways during the 2019-2020 legislative session.

The Subcommittee

2. The Panel on Transport ("the Panel") agreed at its meeting on 28 October 2016 to set up a Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways ("the Subcommittee"). The terms of reference and membership list of the Subcommittee are set out in **Appendices I and II** respectively.

3. Under the chairmanship of Hon LUK Chung-hung, the Subcommittee has discharged its functions according to its terms of reference and held six meetings (up to July 2020) with the Administration and the MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRCL").

Major work

4. In the current session, the Subcommittee continued to follow up on various issues relating to the operation of existing railways and the implementation of new railway project. The discussion of the Subcommittee with the Administration and MTRCL are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Operation of existing railways

Measures and train service arrangements implemented by the MTR Corporation to cope with extensive public order events

5. Since June 2019, protests broke out and rallies held across Hong Kong in response to the Government's proposed legislative amendments concerning the surrender of fugitive offenders. Members were very concerned about the disruption of the railway services during public order events ("POEs") as well as damages to station facilities caused by radical demonstrators. At the Subcommittee meeting held on 6 December 2019, the Administration together with representatives of MTRCL briefed members on the measures and train service arrangements implemented by MTRCL to cope with extensive POEs.

6. Some members asked about the justifications to close MTR stations during normal train service hours when the railway facilities including tracks were not affected by POEs. They questioned if such decisions involved directives from the Government or not. They also queried if MTRCL had tried to deter members of the public from participating in the demonstration held during the period. Enquiry was raised as to whether there was any record of police officers entering and exiting the MTR stations for discharging duties during the closure of the MTR stations due to POEs. The Subcommittee passed two motions urging MTRCL to, amongst others, thoroughly clean up those MTR stations in which tear gas had been fired in order to protect public health, and to make public all the closed-circuit television footage related to the "August 31 incident" so as to allay public concern.

7. Some other members held the view that vandalism which took place in various MTR stations should be condemned. While acknowledging the professionalism demonstrated by MTR staff when maintaining railway services during riots and the efficiency in repairing the damaged facilities by the maintenance staff, these members considered that the MTR system was too vulnerable to withstand any attack, and questioned why MTRCL did not work with the Police's Railway District in a timely manner to make corresponding deployment plans so as to better protect the station facilities. They also enquired about the measures to be taken to strengthen the security for both the existing stations and the new stations to be commissioned under Tuen Ma Line Phase 1.

8. MTRCL advised that the safety of passengers, staff and railway facilities was of utmost importance when providing railway service to the community. In response to sudden and emergency situations, MTRCL had no choice but to temporarily close certain stations for the sake of passengers and staff safety. Further, the Administration pointed out that the MTR staff had not undergone related training and did not have the

necessary safety equipment as well as statutory power to cope with violent incidents occurred at stations. MTRCL therefore had to call the Police for assistance with a view to ensuring the safety of passengers and staff. The Police had the power to take enforcement actions in a public place in the event that public order and public safety were threatened. MTRCL, as a major public transport operator, was duty-bound to fully cooperate with the Police in taking enforcement actions and case investigation. The Administration thus considered that MTRCL had taken appropriate actions to strengthen the safety of passengers and staff during large-scale POEs.

9. In response to members' concern over the security in MTR stations, MTRCL advised that a series of short-, medium- and long-term measures for enhancing station security were devised. As regards short-term measures, MTRCL had strengthened its manpower at stations during POEs and deployed more professional security staff to provide additional support, with about 1,500 additional staff deployed at stations during the peak of POEs, to ensure the safety of passengers and MTR staff. As for the medium-term measures, MTRCL would strengthen the station facilities and step up station security so that protestors could not break into the stations concerned after they were closed. In the long run, MTRCL would review comprehensively its railway system such that impact on passengers would be minimized in case violent incidents occurred again in the future.

Upgrading of signalling system for railway lines

10. The signalling system upgrade has been a matter of great concern to the Subcommittee. At the special meeting on 19 June 2020, the Subcommittee was briefed on the latest progress of upgrading signalling system of seven railway lines by MTRCL. Members were advised that due to the incident of the new signalling system testing on Tsuen Wan Line ("TWL") happened on 18 March 2019 and the associated follow-up actions, the overall signalling system upgrade programme would be postponed. The signalling upgrade for TWL would be completed by around 2023. Members expressed strong dissatisfaction over the delay, and were gravely concerned about the measures to be taken by MTRCL in the interim to relieve the crowdedness of railway services during peak hours. Members were also worried that the ageing problem of the existing signalling system would be intensified and asked about the measures to be put in place to enhance the existing signalling system.

11. MTRCL advised that the Corporation had put in place a stringent asset management system to set out appropriate procedures for the

maintenance of various components of the railway system, including signalling system equipment. Timely renewal of these components would be arranged with a view to ensuring smooth operation of the signalling system. The Corporation would continue to closely monitor the train capacity, and implement relevant measures, including provision of fare promotions, increase in train frequency and enhance crowd management etc., to ease crowdedness during peak hours.

Enhancement of MTR facilities and customer experience

12. The Subcommittee received an update from MTRCL on its efforts in enhancing station facilities and customer experience at the special meeting on 19 June 2020. While appreciating MTRCL's initiatives in this respect, some members called on MTRCL to enhance the accessibility of stations, such as liaising with the Hospital Authority to enhance the connectivity between public hospitals and MTR stations and retrofitting an external lift connecting the concourse of Lam Tin station and the street level. Noting that about 90% of the MTR stations had been vandalized during the public order events since June 2019, some members were concerned about the recovery of vandalized station facilities, in particular the Light Rail facilities.

13. MTRCL advised that Light Rail was an open system and the relevant facilities were more vulnerable to vandalism. MTRCL had been making its best endeavour to repair damaged facilities to minimize the impact on passengers, and appealed for passengers' understanding that spare parts had been in shortage due to their sharp increase in demand arising from repeated damage of the railway facilities. MTRCL would also strengthen the protective facilities at stations when carrying out the repair works. In response to some members' enquiry, MTRCL advised that it would ask for compensation of the damaged property from the parties concerned by means of civil claims.

Major railway incidents

14. The Subcommittee followed up with the Administration and MTRCL on two railway incidents happened respectively in September and October 2019, i.e. the derailment incident happened near Hung Hom Station on East Rail Line on 17 September 2019 ("the derailment incident") and the incident happened near Lai King Station on TWL where a train had hit the concrete buffer beside the railway track on 6 October 2019.

15. Members expressed grave concern over the derailment incident.

They were very dissatisfied that the track gauge widening were repetitively identified in regular measurements at the incident location but MTRCL did not strictly follow the established maintenance procedures to rectify the problem. Members asked about the measures to be put in place to enhance the knowledge of the maintenance staff. Some members took the view that not only the maintenance staff had a knowledge gap of the use of synthetic sleepers, but the guidance and supervision from the managerial staff responsible for track maintenance were also inadequate. They considered that the management of MTRCL who was not aware of the track gauge widening situation should also be held responsible for the derailment incident.

16. MTRCL admitted that the full team of MTRCL would be held responsible for the derailment incident. MTRCL would carefully implement the recommendations made by the Investigation Panel with a view to ensuring smooth and safe operation of the railway system. In particular, the Corporation would enhance change management for introducing new track technology, including staff competence enhancement to bridge any knowledge gap based on the lessons learnt.

17. In response to members' call for MTRCL to enhance its risk management system, the Administration responded that as the overseer of railway operation and the majority shareholder of MTRCL, it had requested MTRCL to improve its maintenance regime and system in addition to investigating the cause of the incident. Amongst others, the Administration had requested the Board of MTRCL, with the assistance of its Risk Committee, to enhance the Corporation's risk management in the light of the experience gained from the incident.

18. Noting that the incident near Lai King Station on TWL in October 2019 happened during the staging of POEs, a member opined that MTRCL should step up its publicity efforts to appeal to members of the public not to damage the railway facilities and endanger the safety of passengers.

Staffing proposal to enhance monitoring of railway safety

19. Members were briefed on the Administration's staffing proposal to create two permanent Chief Electrical and Mechanical / Electronics Engineer (D1) posts in the Railway Branch of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department ("EMSD") to strengthen the regulation on the safety of railway services. Some members expressed reservation about the staffing proposal and questioned in what ways the creation of the two proposed directorate posts would enhance the monitoring of

railway safety.

20. The Administration explained that to address the expanding railway network, rising number of patronage, aging legacy infrastructure and the public's concern about a few relatively more serious railway incidents recently, the Government considered that it was necessary to put in much resources to carry out more comprehensive and direct audits on MTRCL's asset and safety management systems and to ensure that such monitoring work was on a par with international standards. Additional manpower for Railway Branch of EMSD was thus required in order to adopt a more proactive approach to enhance the inspection and monitoring on railway safety.

21. The staffing proposal was endorsed by the Establishment Subcommittee at its meeting held on 17 June 2020.

Implementation of new railway project

22. During this session, the Subcommittee continued to closely monitor the Administration and MTRCL's work in implementing the Shatin to Central Link ("SCL") project, which is funded by the Administration under the concession approach.¹

Shatin to Central Link

23. SCL is a territory-wide strategic railway project. With a total length of 17 kilometres, it consists of (a) the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section, and (b) the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section.²

24. The approved project estimate ("APE") for the entire SCL project is \$79,800 million in money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices. In February 2011, the Finance Committee ("FC") approved the funding applications for the advance railway and non-railway works at \$6,254.9 million and \$1,448.2 million in MOD prices respectively. In May 2012, FC

¹ Under the concession approach, the Administration is responsible for the construction costs of the railway project whilst 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 Administration will receive a service concession payment annually.

² The Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section will extend the existing Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai to the West Rail Line via Southeast Kowloon to form the Tuen Ma Line; the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section will extend the existing East Rail Line across the harbour to Wan Chai North and Admiralty.

approved the funding applications for the remaining railway and non-railway works with a total of about \$71,400 million in MOD prices. Thereafter, the Administration and MTRCL entered into an agreement for entrusting construction, testing and commissioning of SCL to the latter at a cost of \$70,827 million. The Administration informed the Subcommittee in December 2016 that the revised cost of advance railway works of SCL would exceed APE by \$847.7 million, increasing from \$6,254.9 million to \$7,102.6 million in MOD prices. FC approved the additional funding application at its meeting on 17 June 2017. The APE for the entire SCL project was then adjusted upward from the original estimate of \$79,800 million to about \$80,700 million in MOD prices.

25. As advised by the Administration, MTRCL provided the latest cost estimate of the main works of the SCL project on 5 December 2017. MTRCL indicated a need of adjusting upward the entrustment cost of the main works of the SCL project, from \$70,827 million to \$87,328 million, i.e. an increase of about \$16,501 million.

26. The Highways Department ("HyD"), in collaboration with its monitoring and verification ("M&V") consultant, had held numerous meetings with MTRCL. After taking into account the views of HyD, MTRCL confirmed with the Government on 21 February 2020 that the entrustment cost estimate for the main construction works of the SCL should be revised to \$82,999.3 million. However, the Government considered that the justification submitted by MTRCL for the proposed additional project management cost (about \$1,371 million) insufficient³ as there had been no material modifications to the scope of works, the entrustment activities and/or the entrustment programme of the entrustment agreement, and thus disagreed to any additional project management cost. For the above reason, the Government adjusted the revised entrustment cost estimate to \$81,628.3 million, which was an increase of \$10,801.3 million over the original entrustment cost, and in other words a reduction of about \$5,700 million compared with the estimate in 2017. After taking into account the original project reserve, expenses funded by other works projects, as well as the M&V

³ In accordance with the relevant clauses in the entrustment agreement concerning the increase or decrease of project management cost, if there is material modification to the scope of the works, the entrustment activities or the entrustment programme annexed to the entrustment agreement, or if there is any change in law, regulations or directions in respect of the works or the method of construction, and in the reasonable opinion of MTRCL or Government that such modification result in a material increase or decrease in the project management responsibility or costs of MTRCL, MTRCL and the Government shall negotiate in good faith to agree an increase or decrease in the project management cost.

consultancy fee and other Government expenses, it was necessary for the Government to increase the APE for the main works of SCL (i.e. 61TR and 62TR) by about \$10,063.8 million⁴ in order to take forward the remaining works of the SCL project.

27. At the Subcommittee meeting on 3 March 2020, members were briefed on the Administration's proposal to increase the funding for the main works of SCL by about \$10,063.8 million as mentioned above. The Administration was urged to impose a cap on the construction cost of SCL and the Subcommittee passed a motion to that effect. Some members opined that the Administration should provide more explanations on the proposed increase in APE for the main works of SCL to justify the funding application. The Administration noted members' views and advised that based on its latest assessment, it was confident that the SCL project would be completed within the revised cost estimate.

28. Members noted that the Administration disagreed to the proposed additional project management cost of about \$1,371 million as it considered that the justification submitted by MTRCL insufficient. In this connection, members enquired that whether MTRCL would resolve the dispute concerning the funding obligations of the additional project management cost through legal means if both sides failed to reach a settlement over the abovesaid cost. Some members held strong views that MTRCL should not try to recover the cost from the Administration.

29. MTRCL advised that it might be too early to comment on the way forward as it was expected that the Corporation would enter into lengthy discussion with the Administration on how to address this matter in accordance with the Entrustment Agreement. At present, it was of utmost importance for the Corporation to continue to take forward the project with a view to commissioning SCL early. The Administration clarified that so far it had not yet entered into any legal proceedings with MTRCL in respect of the responsibility for funding of the costs associated with the Hung Hom Station Extension incidents.

⁴ Among the \$10,801.3 million increase in entrustment cost, about \$254.7 million was the sum of works entrusted by the other projects, including primarily Civil Engineering and Development Department's entrusted drainage works for the reconstruction and enhancement of the former Kai Tak Airport North Apron area, and the construction of a section of Road P2 and its associated road facilities at Wan Chai North area. As such, the sum to be borne by 61TR and 62TR is about \$10,546.6 million. This amount, plus the additional M&V consultancy fee of about \$44 million and expenses payable to other projects of about \$60 million, and minus the original project contingencies of about \$586.8 million, is the required increase in APE for 61TR and 62TR, totalling about \$10,063.8 million.

30. After consultation with the Subcommittee, the Administration submitted the funding proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee in May 2020, which was subsequently approved by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 12 June 2020. The APE for the construction works of the entire SCL project was now \$90,725.8 million.

31. The Subcommittee was briefed on the progress of the SCL project at the meetings on 6 December 2019, 3 March and 5 June 2020. According to the Administration, due to the series of incidents related to the quality of works of the Hung Hom Station Extension revealed in May 2018, the target commissioning date of Hung Hom to Tai Wai Section was once deferred to the end of 2021. To ensure the public enjoyment of the new railway as soon as possible, three new stations, namely Hin Keng Station, Diamond Hill Station Extension and Kai Tak Station were commissioned on 14 February 2020. The entire railway from Wu Kai Sha Station to Kai Tak Station is named Tuen Ma Line ("TML") Phase 1. After reviewing the latest progress, the Administration advised at the Subcommittee meeting on 5 June 2020 that MTRCL should be able to advance the commissioning of the remaining "Kai Tak to Hung Hom Section" to the third quarter of 2021.

32. Given the impact of site handover arrangement of Wan Chai Development Phase II, the complicated underground condition below Exhibition Centre Station, the settlement issue leading to a suspension of the excavation works at the Exhibition Centre Station, as well as to allow flexibility for the construction of new convention facilities above Exhibition Centre Station, the target commissioning date of the North South Corridor⁵ had previously been revised to 2021. Since the East Rail Line is part of the North South Corridor, its signalling system has to be upgraded under SCL project. The Administration advised in December 2019 that since October 2019, there had been multiple damages to the East Rail Line facilities. The project team was thus unable to carry out the train test of new East Rail Line signalling system as scheduled. As the new signalling system for the East Rail Line was a critical activity under the North South Corridor, MTRCL considered that the commissioning date for Hung Hom to Admiralty Section had to be deferred to the first quarter of 2022.

33. Members expressed concern that the commissioning of TML and

⁵ North South Corridor is composed of the existing East Rail Line and the newly-built Hung Hom to Admiralty Section under SCL project. It will be renamed as the East Rail Line after commissioning.

Hung Hom to Admiralty Section would be further delayed due to the recent outbreak of the novel coronavirus and the vandalism of the railway facilities in case the social unrest persisted in the future. MTRCL advised that it had been exploring the feasibility of accelerating key activities with a view to ensuring that the overall progress of the SCL project would be on schedule.

34. Members were advised that MTRCL had agreed to fund, on an interim basis, the costs associated with the verification and assurance exercises and implementation of the suitable measures at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension and those relating to partial commissioning of TML, which was estimated to be around \$2 billion in total. Members expressed dissatisfaction that the provision of \$2 billion had included additional project management cost payable to MTRCL for carrying out the suitable measures at the Hung Hom Station Extension. Responding to members' enquiry as to whether MTRCL would recover the aforementioned \$2 billion from the Government, the Administration stressed that MTRCL should be responsible for the expenses in relation to the Hung Hom Station Extension incidents, including the expenses in relation to the partial commissioning of TML.

35. Members were also advised that upon the commissioning of TML, MTRCL would pursue the Corporation's rights against its contractor, Leighton Contractors (Asia) Limited ("Leighton"), in accordance with the contracts signed.

36. In addition to cost overrun and project delay, the quality of works of the SCL project was of considerable concern to the Subcommittee. In view that the redacted version of the Final Report of Commission of Inquiry into the Construction Works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link Project ("the Final Report") was released on 12 May 2020, the Administration took the opportunity to brief the Subcommittee on the key findings and recommendations of the Final Report and the Government's response thereto at the Subcommittee meeting on 5 June 2020.

37. According to the Administration, the Commission of Inquiry into the Construction Works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link Project ("COI") fully satisfied with the consensus that with the "suitable measures" proposed in the Final Report on Holistic Assessment Strategy for the Hung Hom Station Extension and the Final Verification Study Report on As-constructed Conditions of the North Approach Tunnels ("NAT"), South Approach Tunnels ("SAT") and Hung Hom Stabling Sidings ("HHS") in place, the station box structure

and NAT, SAT and HHS structures would be safe and also fit for purpose. This notwithstanding, members found it unacceptable that MTRCL failed to implement the project in accordance with the standards and procedures specified in the relevant contracts. Most members were of strong view that the Administration should reduce the project management fees of SCL payable to MTRCL having regard to the serious deficiencies in MTRCL's management and supervision systems. Some members enquired whether the Administration would pursue the liabilities of MTRCL and Leighton through legal means.

38. According to the Administration, it would, based on the conclusions of the Final Report, study the responsibilities of MTRCL, and seriously follow up according to the Entrustment Agreement as and when appropriate. As for legal liability, the Buildings Department prosecuted Leighton under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) in May 2020. Since the case had entered the judicial process, the Administration advised that it was not appropriate to comment at this stage.

39. Noting that the Administration was examining the feasibility of establishing a new department specifically tasked to supervise and monitor the planning and delivery of railway projects following the direction recommended by COI, some members were concerned about the division of responsibilities between the proposed new department and the Railway Branch of EMSD. Some members called on the Administration to streamline the site supervision mechanism with support of technology solutions, and follow up on COI's recommendation regarding the ongoing monitoring of the station structure. The Administration noted members' views and would follow up with MTRCL in this regard.

Tung Chung Line Extension

40. As announced in the 2019 Policy Address, the Government would invite MTRCL to commence the detailed planning and design for three of the seven projects under the Railway Development Strategy 2014 ("RDS-2014"), including Tung Chung Line ("TCL") Extension, Tuen Mun South ("TMS") Extension and Northern Link (and Kwu Tung Station) in the coming year, so that work on these three railway project could commence as early as possible. In this session, the Subcommittee was briefed by the Administration on the proposed way forward of two of the three railway projects mentioned above, namely TCL Extension and TMS Extension, at the meetings on 5 May and 5 June 2020 respectively.

41. The TCL Extension mainly comprised Tung Chung West ("TCW") Extension and Tung Chung East ("TCE") Station. The TCW Extension was a 1.3-kilometre long extension from the existing Tung Chung Station of TCL to a new station at the TCW area; while the TCE Station was a new intermediate station between the existing Sunny Bay Station and Tung Chung Station of TCL.

42. Members in general expressed deep concern about the high estimated capital cost of the TCL Extension, which was about \$18.7 billion (in December 2016 prices) and were of the view that the Administration should provide more information to justify the high project cost. Noting that the TCL Extension project would be taken forward under the ownership approach, members enquired whether the estimated capital cost would be all borne by the Administration and whether funding would be applied from the Legislative Council to implement the TCL Extension project.

43. The Administration explained that the piling cost of the TCL Extension project would be higher than that in normal situation since the project area was located at a reclamation area and close to the seawall. Furthermore, TCE Station and the proposal to construct the remaining section of the Airport Railway Extended Overrun Tunnel were not included in the preliminary cost estimate of about \$6 billion for the TCW Extension stated in RDS-2014. The ratio for sharing the capital cost of the TCL Extension between the Government and MTRCL would depend on the detailed planning and design of the project, the property development rights to be granted to MTRCL and the profits arising therefrom. Members were assured that the Administration would carefully examine the project cost alongside the detailed planning and design process of the project.

44. Members noted with serious concern that the first population intake of TCE would take place in 2024, but TCL Extension project would not be completed until 2029. Expressing dissatisfaction that the provision of transport infrastructure at TCE area would lag behind the completion of housing developments thereat, members urged the Administration to expedite the implementation of the project and to provide adequate road-based public transport services to meet the need of the community prior to the commissioning of the TCL Extension. The Subcommittee passed a motion urging the Administration to construct a new light rail system linking Tung Chung Station, the proposed TCE Station, Cathay Pacific City, airport terminals, SkyCity, AsiaWorld-Expo and the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong

Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, so as to facilitate Tung Chung residents to find employment nearby, without having to commute to the urban areas to work by taking the TCL.

45. The Administration advised that the works programme indicated in the paper was only preliminary. The Administration would strive for early completion of the project. Meanwhile, to satisfy the transport needs of Tung Chung residents, the Administration would provide adequate and proper road-based public services and had proposed to construct a new Road P1 to improve the transport network of North Lantau.

Tuen Mun South Extension

46. According to the Administration, the TMS Extension project would extend the West Rail Line ("WRL") from Tuen Mun Station southwards by about 2.4 kilometres, including the provision of a new station near Tuen Mun Ferry Pier and an intermediate station at Tuen Mun Area 16 ("A16"), to improve railway access to the community south of the Tuen Mun town centre.

47. Noting that there were already a total of 110 000 residents living within the area around the proposed TMS Station and the proposed A16 Station, members were concerned that if the proposed Northern Link and Hung Shui Kiu Station would also be connected to WRL, the crowdedness in train compartments of WRL during peak hours would be further aggravated. The Administration was urged to take specific measures to address the problem, and consider afresh members' proposals on new railway projects, including the Coastal Railway between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan, or the Tuen Mun-Tsuen Wan-Kwai Chung-Sha Tin Railway, to meet the future demand of the growing population in New Territories West. The Subcommittee passed a motion putting forward the relevant suggestions.

48. Members were advised that upon the full commissioning of TML, the signalling system of the WRL would be enhanced. New trains would be purchased to meet the operational need and thus the carrying capacity of WRL would be increased from 21 trains per hour per direction ("tphpd") to about 24 tphpd in 2021 the earliest, representing a cumulative increase of 37% in passenger carrying capacity as compared with that in 2015.

49. While noting members' suggestions on new railway proposals, the

Administration advised that the construction of the Coastal Railway between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan had been put on hold having regard to such factors as cost-effectiveness and catchment population. That said, the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB") was planning to take forward the "Strategic Studies on Railways and Major Roads beyond 2030" ("RMR2030+ Studies"). In the RMR2030+ Studies, THB would take into account the findings of the "Studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters" to be conducted by the Development Bureau, under which the feasibility of a new strategic road and railway network linking the artificial islands, Hong Kong Island, Lantau and the coastal area of Tuen Mun would be studied.

50. Concern was raised about the slow progress of the Administration in taking forward the TMS Extension project. The Administration was urged to compress the works programme, including the time spent on detail planning and design process and negotiation with MTRCL on the funding arrangement. The Administration advised that it would work with MTRCL to expedite the completion of the TMS Extension project. The Administration added that if the existing Tuen Mun Swimming Pool could be demolished before completing the construction of a new swimming pool, the target completion of the project would be advanced by 10 to 11 months.

51. Some members however relayed the concern of the Tuen Mun residents about the reprovisioning of Tuen Mun Swimming Pool. The Subcommittee passed another motion urging the Administration to, inter alia, demolish the existing swimming only after a new swimming pool had been constructed. The Administration advised that it would consult the local community in respect of the potential site for off-site reprovisioning of the Tuen Mun Swimming Pool in accordance with the established procedures. Similar to the existing Tuen Mun Swimming Pool, heated swimming facilities would also be provided in the new swimming pool.

Recommendation

52. The Panel is invited to note the work of the Subcommittee.

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on matters relating to railways

Terms of Reference

To follow up various issues relating to the planning and implementation of new railway projects, and the operation of existing railways as follows:

Planning and implementation of new railway projects

- (a) planning and financing of new railway projects;
- (b) environmental impact assessment of new railway projects;
- (c) resumption of land arising from the implementation of new railway projects under the Railways Ordinance (Cap. 519);
- (d) progress update on the implementation of new railway projects;
- (e) provision of supporting public infrastructure for new railway projects; and
- (f) co-ordination of public transport services arising from the commissioning of new railway lines.

Railway operation

- (a) performance of existing railway lines including train service performance and safety management;
- (b) maintenance programme; and
- (c) train service disruptions and breakdowns, and arrangements for handling emergency situations.

Matters relating to corporate governance of the post-merger corporation and fares, including review of the fare adjustment mechanism, should be dealt with by the Panel on Transport.

**Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways**

Membership list for 2019-2020 session*

Chairman	Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Deputy Chairman	Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Members	Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP Hon Claudia MO Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP Hon Alvin YEUNG Hon CHU Hoi-dick Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP Hon LAM Cheuk-ting Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH Hon Tanya CHAN Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
	(Total: 24 members)
Clerk	Ms Sophie LAU
Legal Adviser	Mr Alvin CHUI

* Changes in membership are set out in Annex to Appendix II

**Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways
Changes in membership**

Member	Relevant date
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai	Up to 16 December 2019
Hon AU Nok-hin	Up to 16 December 2019
Hon HO Kai-ming	Up to 31 May 2020

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Panel on Transport

**Report of the Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links
and Elevator Systems for submission to the Panel on Transport**

Purpose

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems ("the Subcommittee") formed under the Panel on Transport ("the Panel").

Background

2. In view of the growing number of requests from the public for the provision of hillside escalator links and elevator systems ("HEL"), the Administration has taken forward the implementation of 18 HEL projects since 2009.¹ These 18 projects were ranked according to a set of scoring criteria for assessing HEL proposals received at that time to determine their merits and relative priority.² As of May 2019, three out of the 18 HEL proposals have been completed and opened for public use and five of them were under construction. The remaining 10 proposals were still under different stages of planning, investigation and design.

3. The Chief Executive announced in the 2017 Policy Address that the Administration would continue to take forward "Walk in Hong Kong" and develop Hong Kong into a walkable city. In this connection, the Transport Department ("TD") embarked on a consultancy study in December 2017 to review and improve the assessment and scoring mechanism for HEL

¹ The Administration has received a total of 20 HEL proposals by 2009. Two proposals were screened out in the initial screening stage due to the following reasons: similar facility had already been provided in close proximity for one proposal; and the level difference of the other proposal did not exceed six meters.

² The Administration advised the Panel in February 2010 that preliminary technical feasibility studies for the proposals ranked top 10 in the assessment would be conducted first by batches, and that the remaining proposals would be followed up after the smooth implementation of the top 10 proposals.

proposals adopted in 2009 and, on this basis, carried out screening, shortlisting and prioritizing totally 114 HEL proposals that have been received by that time. The said consultancy study would take around 30 months to complete.

The Subcommittee

4. The Panel agreed at its meeting on 19 May 2017 to form a subcommittee to study and follow up issues relating to the provision of HEL. The terms of reference and membership list of the Subcommittee are set out in **Appendices I and II** respectively.

5. Under the chairmanship of Hon CHAN Han-pan, the Subcommittee has held three meetings since its activation in March 2019.³ The Subcommittee has also received views from 33 deputations in total on related issues at one of the meetings. A list of deputations which have given views to the Subcommittee is in **Appendix III**.

Deliberations of the Subcommittee

6. The Subcommittee has focused its deliberation on the following areas:

- (a) provision of HEL to enhance hillside accessibility;
- (b) implementation progress of the 18 HEL projects since 2009;
- (c) the revised assessment mechanism for new HEL proposals;
- (d) the setting up of a dedicated fund for taking forward HEL projects; and
- (e) the inclusion of private estates and estates under Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) and Tenant Purchase Scheme (“TPS”) in the scope of HEL.

³ The Subcommittee has originally scheduled a number of site visits for 18 June 2019 to understand more about the implementation progress of HEL projects and the assessment mechanism for HEL proposals at selected districts. The site visits were subsequently cancelled due to the staging of public order events in June 2019. Efforts were made to reschedule the site visits to 4 February 2020. However, on consideration of the spread of novel coronavirus infection after the Lunar New Year in 2020, the site visits were cancelled.

Provision of HEL to enhance hillside accessibility

7. The Subcommittee holds the views that there are immense needs in the community for provision of additional HEL to improve hillside accessibility and connectivity between hillside areas and major transport facilities. Citing the Central-Mid-Levels Escalator and Walkway System as an example, some members have pointed out that the system serves to link together various uphill locations and major transport hubs in Central and Sheung Wan through an automated pedestrian walkway. It has greatly improved the accessibility of the mid-levels area and reduced commuters' reliance on short-distance transport modes such as minibuses, thereby alleviates the traffic congestion problem in the districts. They strongly urge that similar systems shall be built in hillside areas especially hillside residential areas so as to offer greater convenience to the residents concerned and to ease the pressure on public transport.

8. Taking note of members' suggestion, the Administration has advised that it will continue to take forward the policy initiative of "Walk in Hong Kong" with a view to encouraging people to walk more for the first and the last mile connection between public transport interchanges and their places of work/residence, thereby reducing the use of public transport for short-distance commuting. It will also progressively take forward the 18 ranked HEL projects put forth since 2009 to enhance the accessibility of hillside areas. In addition, TD has commissioned a consultancy study to review the assessment mechanism for improving the assessment criteria and prioritization of the 114 HEL proposals and other new proposals received from the public. The study is due to complete in mid-2020.

Merging the Universal Accessibility ("UA") Programme and the HEL

9. Noting that the Administration has been progressively taking forward the UA Programmes for fostering a pedestrian-friendly environment, a few members opine that as both UA and HEL programmes involve the construction or installation of a mix of pedestrian facilities, they consider that merging the two programmes or standardizing the implementation arrangements of the two programmes can facilitate experience sharing and resources consolidation by relevant works departments to improve operation efficiency.

10. In reply to the members' suggestion above, the Administration has explained that the scope and objective of UA Programme and HEL projects are completely different, and the two programmes involve different policy considerations. While the provision of HEL aims to offer convenience to

the public to travel to and from hillside areas and reduce commuters' reliance on road traffic, UA Programme cover projects relating to the retrofitting of barrier-free facilities at public walkways to facilitate the public, especially the disabled and elderly persons in using the walkways. In addition, since HEL projects are more complex and much larger in scale as compared to the UA Programme, it is not feasible to combine the two programmes. Having said that, the Administration will consider ways to consolidate experiences gained in constructing different types of HEL projects and maintain flexibility in deploying resources when taking forward future HEL proposals. It will also draw relevant experience from UA Programme for appropriate application to HEL projects.

Implementation progress of the 18 HEL projects since 2009

11. The Subcommittee has been closely monitoring the implementation progress of the 18 HEL projects which were put forward by the Administration since 2009, and expresses grave concern and dissatisfaction about their sluggish progress. Members find it totally unacceptable that as of May 2019, ten years after the Administration announced to take forward the 18-ranked proposals, only three projects were completed and opened for public use. In addition, all the three projects were constructed with the assistance of other public organizations including the Hospital Authority, Urban Renewal Authority and the MTR Corporation Limited who took on the HEL proposals while carrying out their own works projects concurrently at the relevant sites. Members have requested the Administration to seriously look into the reasons for the prolonged delay and to implement immediate measures to expedite the completion of the remaining projects.

12. The Subcommittee shares the depositions' views expressed at the meeting on 15 May 2019 on the unreasonably slow progress of HEL projects, and has asked for relevant information in particular on the implementation of the following proposals:

Braemar Hill Pedestrian Link in the Eastern District

13. The Subcommittee is aware that local views have been diverse on the construction of the Braemar Hill Pedestrian Link. Some residents have strong reservation on the alignment of the proposed link running through the Fortress Hill. They are worried that the construction works will have an adverse impact on the foundation of nearby buildings and create nuisance to the residents living there. Other residents express support to the project and call for the construction of the link immediately to solve the

traffic congestion problem and to offer greater convenience to the elderly and persons with disabilities living in uphill areas. Noting that the proposal is ranked the second amongst the 18 HEL proposals and thus has a higher priority for implementation, some members are alarmed to learn that the Administration has yet to obtain a consensus amongst the residents for the project during the past ten years, and question whether the Administration has conducted any thorough public consultation on the alignment and project scheme before putting it forward for residents' deliberations.

14. The Administration has advised that the Highways Department ("HyD") has consulted the Eastern District Council ("EDC") and attended the residents' meetings to explain the design scheme and address residents' concerns regarding the scheme. HyD has also arranged site visits with residents and other stakeholders such as schools to gauge their views on the alignment. Subsequent to the comments received, HyD has presented various design revisions and obtained the majority support from members of the Planning, Works and Housing Committee of EDC. HyD is currently proceeding to various pre-construction preparations, including detailed design and the gazettal of the project scheme under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370).

Lift and pedestrian walkway system between Lai King Hill Road and Lai Cho Road in Kwai Tsing District

15. The Subcommittee notes that the project involves two dangerous slopes on private land requiring further repair works which hinder the construction progress. Members ask whether the Administration will consider acquiring the two slopes for carrying out the necessary repair works so as to expedite the progress. They also enquire about the timetable for completing the project. The Administration has responded that the owners of the two private slopes have already completed the repair works of the two slopes in February 2018. Subsequently, HyD has resumed the preliminary technical feasibility study to ascertain the feasibility of the project, and will proceed to drawing up preliminary alignments and other pre-construction works.

Pedestrian Link near Chuk Yuen North Estate ("CYNE") in the Wong Tai Sin District

16. Noting that CYNE is built on the hillside where a majority of residents in the Estate are elderly, the Subcommittee agrees that there is a genuine need to expedite the construction of HEL in CYNE. The Administration has advised the Subcommittee that HyD submitted the

preliminary design of HEL for consultation with the Wong Tai Sin District Council back in 2016 and 2017, but the proposal has met with opposition from some residents and schools at that time. Taking note of residents' views, HyD subsequently revised the design and consulted relevant stakeholders again and both TD and HyD are now collating and analyzing the views and revising the details of the proposal. Both departments will consult again the stakeholders on the latest development in due course.

17. Regarding members' concern on the implementation progress of other HEL projects, the Administration has explained that HyD has been progressively taking forward the development of different projects. As works for HEL often involve complicated considerations such as slopes, structures, soil properties, diversion of underground utilities etc., technical assessments are often required before proceeding to other pre-construction works such as consultation with District Councils and formulation of detailed design. In addition, projects which involve land ownership issues are more complicated and take a longer time to resolve. On the other hand, local communities very often have diverse views on the alignments and design on the projects. The Administration has advised that in view of the above, it usually takes six to nine years for completing a HEL project and the time required for individual project will vary according to actual circumstances, based on past experience.

The revised assessment mechanism for new HEL proposals

18. The Administration has briefed the Subcommittee on 13 November 2019 on the revised assessment mechanism for screening and prioritizing new HEL proposals received. Under the revised mechanism, more comprehensive technical assessments will be conducted during initial screening to better ascertain the necessity and feasibility of the proposals. Also, proposals with any of the six conditions⁴ will be screened out at the initial screening stage, while proposals passing the initial screening will be further appraised from the social benefits and cost-effectiveness aspects to determine their relative priority for implementation. Details of the revised assessment mechanism for HEL proposals are in **Appendix IV**.

19. Some members are of the view that the revised assessment

⁴The six sets of pre-determined criteria include (i) inadequate land/infeasible land resumption for construction of the proposed HEL; (ii) similar facility/facilities is/are already provided or committed within 300 metres of the proposed HEL; (iii) insurmountable technical difficulties in the construction or operation of the proposed HEL; (iv) the level difference to overcome is less than 6 metres; (v) the proposed HEL will affect heritage site(s) or important tree(s); and (vi) the gradient to overcome is less than 1:8.

mechanism imposes too many restrictions during the initial screening stage such that sound proposals with immense local needs may be easily screened out. For instance, if more than one HEL systems are actually required along hillside topography which is steep and inaccessible, HEL proposals that fall within 300 metres from an existing HEL system will be screened out. Also, members opine that it will be difficult to quantify the social benefits of a proposal.

20. In response to the above concerns, the Administration has advised that initial screening serves the purpose of screening out infeasible proposals at an early stage to streamline the whole assessment process for enhancing efficiency. In considering HEL proposals where similar facility has already been provided in the vicinity, the Administration will also consider factors such as level difference and gradient. Nearby HEL systems within 300 metres but linking to different destinations will also be considered if there is genuine need and keen local demand.

21. As regards the assessment of the social benefits of a proposal, the Administration has explained that the revised assessment mechanism will accord detailed scoring to a HEL proposal along three factors, namely the number of beneficiaries and target, implementation readiness and convenience. Each proposal will be appraised on a comparative basis without any threshold requirement with respect to the social benefits aspects so that all proposals will be assessed according to the same assessment criteria when determining their priority for implementation.

Number of HEL proposals included in the first-batch implementation

22. The Subcommittee notes with grave concern that of the 114 HEL proposals that have been received by the Administration, only around 20 proposals will be shortlisted under the revised assessment mechanism for first-batch implementation by the first quarter of 2020. Members consider that local residents have been waiting far too long for the provision of HEL systems. They strongly urge the Administration to consider and adopt a new approach to streamline the construction process, such as ways to speed up local consultation and technical feasibility study, and to set a target timeframe on different construction processes of a HEL proposal for better project management. They also request the Administration reviewing the procedures involved with regard to time, manpower and other resources required of in taking forward a HEL proposal, involvement and division of labour amongst different works department and difficulties encountered with a view to identifying bottleneck situations, and exploring ways to tackle them.

23. On the issue of implementation timetable, the Administration has advised the Subcommittee that the revised assessment mechanism will accord priority to the implementation readiness of a proposal so that more ready proposals will be selected for earlier implementation. The Administration will shortlist at least 20 projects for first-batch implementation and strive to include more projects as far as possible. In addition, the Subcommittee notes that the Administration will collate local views from stakeholders on the design and alignment of the proposals before formal consultation so that their views will be taken into account in the detailed design to speed up the whole consultation process. The Administration advises the Subcommittee that it is expected to start the implementation of the first batch of HEL projects in 2021.

24. On members' enquiry regarding whether the Administration will consider other HEL proposals apart from the 114 proposals, the Administration has advised that it will select no less than 20 proposals for the first-batch implementation, and will evaluate the remainder of the 114 proposals together with other new proposals received for shortlisting the second batch of proposals for implementation.

The setting up of a dedicated fund for taking forward HEL projects

25. The Subcommittee has all along been urging the Administration to consider setting up a dedicated fund for financing HEL projects so as to minimize the administrative procedures required and expedite the whole funding approval process. Members argue that as there is a huge backlog for the Public Works Committee, and subsequently, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") to discuss and approve public works proposals, there are merits of setting up a dedicated fund in avoiding further delay in the funding process. Some members have cited the arrangement of the Hostel Development Fund which is set up under the University Grants Committee for the development of student hostels, and have requested the Administration to consider making similar arrangement for HEL funding proposals. In this connection, the Subcommittee has passed a motion expressing its views at the meeting on 13 November 2019.

26. The Administration has explained to the Subcommittee that a review on the feasibility of setting up a dedicated fund or a block allocation subhead for HEL projects as suggested by the Subcommittee has been conducted. In general, block allocation arrangement is more commonly used for minor works of smaller scale and lower cost. Yet HEL projects generally are more complex in nature and may involve upgrading works for slopes and building new public walkways. The works are thus of

relatively larger scale and will incur higher expenditure. In addition, as the project scope, nature and complexity of each HEL project vary, so do their estimated project costs. It is therefore difficult to set a financial ceiling of expenditure for the proposed block allocation subhead.

27. Having taken into account the above factors, the Administration considers it more appropriate to take forward HEL projects following the established public works procedure. However, the Administration has pledged to put in place measures on various fronts with a view to expediting the implementation of projects. On staffing resources, in addition to increasing manpower for implementing the projects through internal resource deployment, the HyD has also engaged engineering consultant firms to carry out work such as investigation studies, design, construction and supervision with a view to implementing multiple projects in parallel. On the design and construction of projects, the HyD will obtain records of underground utilities from utilities companies and excavate trial pits to ascertain the actual situations of underground utilities as early as possible and consider early commencement of utilities diversion works. Meanwhile, the HyD will also proactively look into the use of pre-cast components in order to reduce construction time. The HyD will continue to explore ways to further enhance the design and construction of projects by taking into account the experience in implementing HEL and similar projects.

28. Despite the Administration's explanations above, some members still consider that in view of the pressing needs for HEL systems in the community and the general support of LegCo members of the projects, the Administration should review critically and explore new approaches in simplifying funding allocation for HEL proposals, such as setting up fast track funding mechanism and convening special meetings to approve a list of projects in one go in order to expedite the implementation progress. The Administration has advised that it will in the meantime expedite the submission of funding proposals for LegCo's scrutiny as far as practicable and consider the proposals made by members.

Inclusion of private housing estates and housing estates under HOS and TPS in the scope of HEL

29. The Subcommittee is aware that for HEL proposals which entirely fall within or solely connect to private development or land, and estates under HOS and TPS Schemes will not be considered by the Administration. Noting that the Chief Executive has announced in the 2019 Policy Address that the ambit of UA Programme will be expanded to cover estates under TPS and the Buy or Rent Option Scheme ("BROS") and public housing

estates with properties divested under the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("UAP Special Scheme"), some members have enquired whether the scope of HEL can be expanded as well to benefit more users.

30. The Administration reiterates that UA Programmes and HEL are completely different in terms of scope, nature and how projects are to be implemented. Each UA project will cost about \$75 million at most, while the cost for HEL is much higher. Inclusion of housing estates under HOS, TPS and BROS will entail due consideration to ensure prudent use of public funds. Nevertheless, the Administration will draw experience from UAP Special Scheme to consider any appropriate arrangement that can be applied for HEL proposals.

31. Some members point out that for some HEL projects that fall within or connect to private development/land, there may be insurmountable difficulties in taking forward the projects due to complicated land ownership issues. In such cases, the Administration should actively consider land resumption in order to resolve the land issue problems. The Subcommittee passed a motion on 13 November 2019 requesting the Administration to include relevant factors in the assessment mechanism for considering HEL proposals that are connected to private land.

32. Responding to the above suggestions, the Administration has advised that if it is necessary and justified, it will resume land according to Road (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370) in taking forward HEL projects. In addition, it will be stipulated in most land leases of private development that they shall provide 24-hour public access to major road connections that fall within private developments. Hence, the genuine need of land resumption for taking forward HEL proposals will be considered having regard to actual circumstances and on a case-by-case basis. If situation warrants, relevant works department will negotiate with private owners concerned for their agreement to construct HEL systems on the private lots.

Summary

33. In gist, the Subcommittee has reviewed the implementation progress of the HEL proposals, taken note of the Administration's proposed revisions to the assessment mechanism for new HEL proposals, and made suggestions to the Administration on possible ways to expedite the implementation of the HEL proposals.

Advice sought

34. The Panel is invited to note the work of the Subcommittee.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
31 March 2020

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems

Terms of Reference

To study and follow-up issues relating to the provision of hillside escalator links and elevator systems.

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems

Membership list*

Chairman Hon CHAN Han-pan, SBS, JP

Deputy Chairman (Vacant)

Members
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yea, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon HO Kai-ming
Hon LAM Cheuk-ting
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho

(Total: 12 members)

Clerk Ms Sophie LAU

Legal Adviser Mr Alvin CHUI

*Changes in membership are shown in Annex to Appendix II

Annex to Appendix II

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems

Changes in membership

Member	Relevant date
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP	Since 13 November 2019
Hon CHU Hoi-dick	Since 13 November 2019
Hon Au Nok-hing	Up to 16 December 2019

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems

List of deputations/individuals which/who have given oral representation to the Subcommittee

1. Mr LIU Michael
2. Mr CHAN Nok-hang, Sha Tin District Council Member
3. Mr Thomas PANG Cheung-wai, Sha Tin District Council Member (Vice Chairman), SBS, JP
4. Mr CHING Cheung-ying
5. Mr Rayman CHOW Wai-hung
6. 陳壇丹先生
7. Mr Ken CHAN
8. Mr Stanley TAM, Sai Kung District Council (Tsui Lam)
9. Mr Jason CHAN Ka-yau
10. Mr CHEUNG Pak-yuen
11. Miss LEUNG Po-ling, 穗禾苑業主立案法團主席
12. Mr MAK Tsz-kin, 公民黨新界東支部秘書
13. Mr TING Chi-wai, Wong Tai Sin District Council Member
14. Mr CHAN Lee-shing
15. 馮家亮先生, 中西區關注組召集人
16. 阮建中先生, 寶馬山區議員助理

17. 郭銳忠先生
18. Ms PANG Lai-ha, Committee Member of The Incorporated Owners of Fortress Garden
19. 梁志偉先生, 自由黨新界區地區執行委員會主席
20. Mr LAW Kwong-keung
21. 張紹民先生, 海天峰管理處代表
22. Mr Ronald HO
23. Mr Kent LAM Jing-kwok
24. Ms LI Chun-chau, Eastern District Council Member
25. Mr HUI Lam-hing, Eastern District Council Member
26. Mr PAU Ming-hong, Kwai Tsing District Council Member
27. Ms LO Yuk-kuen, 富澤花園「寶馬山行人通道系統」關注組召集人
28. Mr TAM Pui-tak
29. 何偉俊先生
30. Mr Frankie LAM Siu-chung
31. 潘秉康先生
32. Ms YAM Pauline, Southern District Council Member
33. Ms KWOK Fu-yung, Kwai Tsing District Council Member

Details of the revised assessment mechanism for hillside escalator links and elevator systems ("HEL")

If a proposal solely involves crossing a single road or connecting to a single footbridge, it will be evaluated under the criteria for footbridge construction;⁵ and if a proposal forms an integral part of another public works project, it will be considered under that respective project. Furthermore, the proposed revised assessment mechanism will not be applicable to proposals entirely falling within the boundary of hospitals or Public Rental Housing estates. Such proposals will be passed to the Hospital Authority or the Hong Kong Housing Authority for consideration. The proposed assessment mechanism is also not applicable to proposals entirely falling within or solely connecting to private development/land to ensure proper use of public funds.

Initial Screening

2. The Transport Department ("TD") proposes to retain Initial Screening in the revised assessment mechanism in order to screen out proposals which are obviously infeasible or unjustified for implementation. Different from the 2009 assessment mechanism, TD suggests conducting more comprehensive preliminary technical assessments in the Initial Screening Stage to better ascertain the feasibility of proposals. After conducting preliminary technical assessments and drawing up preliminary alignments, HEL proposals with any of the following conditions will be screened out –

- (a) inadequate land/infeasible land resumption (e.g. there is/are existing building(s) on the concerned land area) for construction of the proposed HEL;
- (b) similar facility/facilities is/are already provided or committed within 300m of the proposed HEL;
- (c) insurmountable technical difficulties in the construction or operation of the proposed HEL;

⁵ The footbridge related proposals will be assessed according to the relevant criteria stipulated in the Transport Planning and Design Manual published by TD, including the anticipated pedestrian utilization, traffic speed, road safety, availability of alternative crossing facilities and so on.

- (d) level difference to overcome is less than 6m;
- (e) the proposed HEL will affect heritage site(s) or important tree(s); or
- (f) gradient to overcome is less than 1:8.

Detailed Scoring

3. HEL proposals which pass the Initial Screening will be scored from the "Social Benefits" and "Cost-effectiveness" aspects such that TD may accord priority to HEL proposals with higher scores in both the "Social Benefits" and "Cost-effectiveness" aspects.

4. In terms of "Social Benefits", TD seeks to prioritize proposals which can serve the most residents and provide a more convenient walking route to the public. TD will assess the "Social Benefits" of HEL proposals along three factors: (i) Number of beneficiaries and target; (ii) Implementation Readiness; and (iii) Convenience. As for "Cost-effectiveness", TD will compare the HEL proposals based on their estimated project cost per user, i.e. the estimated project cost divided by the estimated number of users.

5. The assessment criteria for Detailed Scoring include:

Social Benefits

- (a) Number of beneficiaries and target (total score: 60) – with consideration to the following criteria –
 - Expected daily pedestrian flow of the proposed HEL (score: 40);
 - Population of 65 year-old or above and whether there is any hospital/rehabilitation centre/nursing home in the beneficial catchment⁶ (score: 20);
- (b) Implementation Readiness (total score: 30) – with consideration to the following criteria –

⁶ Beneficial catchment is defined as the area within a radius of 300m from entrance/exit points of the proposed HEL.

- Whether land resumption/creation of easement in accordance to the Road (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370) is required (score: 10);
 - Environmental impact of the proposed HEL (score: 10); and
 - Visual impact of the proposed HEL and its distance between adjacent buildings (score: 10);
- (c) Convenience (total score: 10) – with consideration to the following criteria –
- Level difference of the proposed serving area to be overcome by the proposed HEL (score: 3);
 - Anticipated journey saving time (score: 3); and
 - Whether the proposed HEL connects with existing major public transport facilities or those that are to be implemented (score: 4); and

Cost-effectiveness⁷ - estimated project cost per user, i.e. the estimated project cost, including construction cost and recurrent cost, divided by the estimated number of users.

⁷ "Cost-effectiveness" of a HEL proposal is measured by dividing the estimated project cost (including capital cost and recurrent cost) by the number of users. A lower estimated project cost per user indicates that the proposal is more cost-effective. Hence, it will have a higher score. A HEL is expected to undergo major maintenance every 20 years and thus the operating cost is calculated based on a 20-year life cycle.