

**For information
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**Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways**

**Latest Progress on Enhancing MTR Facilities and
Passenger Experience**

This paper reports to Members the work of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) in continuously enhancing station facilities and passenger experience.

Background

2. The MTRCL is based in Hong Kong and has been committed to keeping cities moving. It has always provided passengers with safe, reliable, and convenient railway services. Currently, the MTR Heavy Rail, Airport Express and High Speed Rail networks consist of 99 stations. Together with 68 Light Rail stops, they serve an average of over five million passenger journeys per day. To further enhance the travelling experience of passengers, the MTRCL continues to put in resources in enhancing station facilities and promoting smart mobility, with the aim of creating a hassle-free travel experience, and allowing passengers to enjoy smooth and caring services when taking trains and using station facilities.

Continuous Enhancement of Station Facilities

3. The MTRCL network covers all 18 districts of Hong Kong. Through detailed planning and deployments, the MTRCL continuously adjusts and enhances various facilities and services with a view to meeting the different travel modes and needs of passengers of various districts and providing passengers with a more personalised and caring travelling experience. The efforts include reviewing hardware facilities, such as

station exits/entrances, entry/exit gates, concourses, platforms, walkways, escalators, etc., as well as the channels and modes of passenger information dissemination, so as to maintain smooth railway operations while catering to the needs of different stakeholders.

Station Accessibility

4. The MTRCL has always been committed to enhancing station accessibility, with the foremost priority of ensuring that station exits/entrances are equipped with sufficient ancillary facilities to facilitate passenger access. The MTRCL has been monitoring the usage of station exits/entrances and enhancing station accessibility facilities based on actual needs. In 2024, several new or enhanced exits/entrances facilities were put into service, including the new exits/entrances connecting to nearby shopping malls and communities at Yuen Long Station and Wong Chuk Hang Station; the addition of escalators and lighting improvement works at Shau Kei Wan Station Exit/Entrance A3; the construction of a lift connecting the ground level and concourse at Mei Foo Station Exit/Entrance A; the reconstruction of a ramp at Sunny Bay Station Exit/Entrance A, etc., facilitating passenger access between the station and surrounding community facilities. The MTRCL will continue to take forward the works at various exits/entrances, including the addition of two exits/entrances respectively connecting to newly completed communities nearby at Ho Man Tin Station. The project is expected to be completed within this year. The construction of Tai Wo Hau Station Exit/Entrance C has commenced and is expected to be completed in 2028. As for the Light Rail, to further ensure passengers could wait for trains in a safe and orderly manner at the platform, the platform widening project at Lam Tei Stop was also completed last year.

Lifts and Escalators

5. To facilitate passengers' access to and from stations and between station concourses and platforms, the MTRCL has been introducing faster traction lifts in phases since 2014, replacing the original hydraulic lifts to enhance safety and efficiency of lifts. Between 2021 and 2024, the MTRCL has replaced a total of 30 new lifts.

6. To ensure the safe and reliable operation of escalators and provide passengers with more efficient services, the MTRCL is continuously carrying out mid-term refurbishment or replacement projects for escalators. As of the end of 2024, over 520 escalators in the MTRCL network have been refurbished, accounting for about 40% of the total number of escalators. Replacement of eight escalators have been completed, while replacement works of another nine escalators are underway. In addition, the MTRCL will gradually adjust the speed of over 200 escalators in the network, covering multiple interchange stations, with a view to reducing the occurrence of escalator accidents and providing passengers with more comfortable, safe, and reliable services.

Barrier-Free Facilities

7. The MTRCL has been enhancing barrier-free facilities at stations continuously. Currently, Fortress Hill Station is the only remaining heavy rail station without a barrier-free facility / passenger lift connecting the station concourse and the street level. The Highways Department is currently constructing the Braemar Hill Pedestrian Link, which includes a pedestrian tunnel and passenger lift connecting Fortress Hill Station. The project is expected to be completed by 2027.

8. To provide a more caring travelling experience for passengers with hearing-impairment, the MTRCL has introduced “Door Pre-closing Alert Indicators” at 27 interchange stations, including North Point, Tsim Sha Tsui, Yau Ma Tei, Mong Kok, and Prince Edward stations, to remind passengers in need through flashing lights that the platform screen doors and train doors are about to close.

Enhancing Environment and Facilities for Passengers Waiting for Trains and Platform Information Dissemination

9. The MTRCL cares about passengers’ experience while waiting at the platforms, and is committed to enhancing the environment and facilities for passengers waiting for trains. Currently, all station platforms are equipped with seats for passengers in need. Passengers can also obtain

information about the next arriving train through the platform information display screens and the “Train Car Loading Indicator” (covering the Tuen Ma Line, East Rail Line, South Island Line, Kwun Tong Line, Tseung Kwan O Line, and Tung Chung Line), which is also available via the MTR Mobile app, and choose a train car with more space. For the Light Rail, the installation of train arrival display screens at all platforms is expected to be completed in the first half of this year. A new “Immigration Clearance Status” display system has been installed at the waiting hall at West Kowloon Station of the High Speed Rail to help passengers obtain the latest border clearance situation and estimate the time required for immigration clearance procedures.

10. Every year as summer approaches, the MTRCL gets prepared by cleaning and maintaining the ventilation and air conditioning equipment at stations and trains in advance to ensure they function properly. The air conditioning cooling devices are used to regulate the temperature of enclosed and underground stations to maintain a comfortable temperature for passengers. The MTRCL completed the first phase of the major chiller replacement plan in 2022, which covered 35 stations and four depots, and has started the second phase of the project, which covers 12 stations with a total of 31 air conditioning chillers. As of February 2025, 26 chillers in the second phase of the project have been replaced, with the entire project expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of this year. The MTRCL has also installed over 250 portable fans and electric fans to enhance air circulation.

11. The installation of Automatic Platform Gates (APGs) on the East Rail Line is progressing as planned, with installation at ten stations completed and the installed APGs in operation. The engineering team will continue to install APGs at the remaining three stations, namely Lo Wu, Mong Kok East, and University stations. The project is expected to be completed within this year.

Meeting the Diverse Needs of Passengers

12. The MTRCL provides a wide range of caring services at stations to cater to the different needs of stakeholders. All MTR stations provide

free Wi-Fi services; 29 stations offer mobile device charging facilities; various stations offer a total of 26 free drinking water dispensers, etc.. Additionally, over 60% of stations are equipped with baby care rooms and toilets for passengers, covering all interchange stations. Some of the station toilets have been upgraded to smart toilets, which display the number of available cubicles and air quality in real-time.

Diverse Payment Options

13. With \$1.3 billion put in to upgrade the automatic fare collection system and progressively replace 2 400 entry/exit gates in the heavy rail network, the MTRCL network now accepts new payment options, including QR codes and contactless bank cards, etc., providing passengers with more flexible choices. Since August last year, passengers or travellers using single journey tickets can purchase up to three electronic single journey tickets (including a maximum of one adult ticket) per transaction through the MTR Mobile app. This allows passengers to buy tickets for accompanying family and friends, and save time for purchasing physical tickets. For the Airport Express, following Airport Station, other Airport Express stations (except for AsiaWorld-Expo Station) will be provided with self-service ticket machines for purchasing ticket QR codes, making it convenient for the public and travellers to purchase tickets through electronic payment means, and saving time for buying tickets at the Customer Service Centres.

14. In addition, the MTRCL will launch new ticketing services. Passengers using the “City Saver” will be able to purchase an “e-City Saver” through the enhanced MTR Mobile app. Once launched, passengers only need to scan the “e-City Saver” QR Code at the gates. The new service also allows passengers to check the remaining trips in the app, offering passengers with a smooth travelling experience, while enabling them to obtain information easily and save time for purchasing tickets at the Customer Service Centre. MTR Mobile app members who purchase the new “e-City Saver” can also directly register for the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme in the app, without the need to register at the self-service registration station at stations. Together with the previously

digitised monthly passes, all frequent traveller passes can be purchased through the MTR Mobile app. Since 22 March 2025, the “China T-Union Card” has been added to the MTR ticket gates as a fare payment method for the heavy rail network.

Leveraging Technology to Promote Smart Mobility

15. To further enhance passengers’ travelling experience, in addition to station hardware facilities, the MTRCL is also keeping up with the times and is actively leveraging technology to promote smart mobility. These include the introduction of Virtual Service Ambassador Tracy at Quarry Bay Station, Kai Tak Station, Airport Station, Austin Station, and Lo Wu Station on a trial basis. Tracy, equipped with Artificial Intelligence technology and voice control functions, could handle passenger enquiries on journey guides, fares, station shops, etc., in an instant and interactive manner, providing passengers with more convenient customer services.

16. In addition, the MTRCL has launched version 3.0 of the MTR Mobile app with enhanced “Trip Planner” and “Service Status” functions. Users can view more personalised information on the homepage, including suggested routes to frequently visited destinations, real-time train arrival times, fares and ticket offers, the latest status of nearby station facilities, and alternative route information when train services are affected. With a clear homepage interface, users can plan their journeys more effectively. The “Next Train” function in the MTR Mobile app now covers all ten heavy rail lines (including the newly added Disneyland Resort Line), making it easier for passengers or travellers to plan their journeys between various stations. The updated “Trip Planner” provides more information, including station service hours, facilities, exit information, and estimated waiting times at designated interchange stations.

“MTR · Care” app

17. To further cater to the travel needs of different passenger groups, the MTRCL actively leverages technology to enhance barrier-free facilities within the network. In particular, the two practical functions, namely a

simplified version of the Trip Planner and Barrier-free Facilities Information, of the “MTR · Care” app provides the elderly and passengers in need with greater convenience in journey planning. The elderly can easily search for station information through the clear and user-friendly interface, large icons, and voice input function of the Trip Planner. Passengers with mobility impairments, visual impairments, hearing impairments or other needs can plan their journeys effectively with the information on barrier-free facilities at stations, including real-time lift maintenance information, provided by the app as well.

18. The “MTR · Care” app also features a “Wheelchair Portable Ramp Booking” function, allowing wheelchair users and their caretakers to book a portable ramp before their journey, thus facilitating advance travel planning. The MTRCL has enhanced the existing “In-Station Navigation” function of the app, and introduced the “Non-Emergency In-Station Assistance” function on trial basis. Visually impaired passengers can obtain information including those on station facilities through audio announcements provided by the “In-Station Navigation” function, which now covers Exhibition Centre Station, as well as stations at the Tsuen Wan Line, Kwun Tong Line, Island Line, and South Island Line. The “Non-Emergency In-Station Assistance” function is currently being piloted at Shek Kip Mei Station and Quarry Bay Station. It mainly assists hearing-impaired passengers to seek assistance from staff in non-emergency situations, such as objects fallen onto tracks, or minor physical discomfort, etc..

Exploring New Travelling Experiences on the Railway

19. To support the government’s “Tourism is Everywhere” and “Panda Economy” promotion campaigns, the MTRCL is committed to attracting tourists to travel to different communities in Hong Kong through the MTR network. In particular, the MTRCL has decorated some of its stations, train compartments, and high-speed rail trains with panda theme, and launched in March this year the “Tuen Mun Voyager” sightseeing Light Rail route on weekends and public holidays, taking the public and tourists to explore popular tourist attractions in Tuen Mun. Furthermore, the

MTRCL has set up a dedicated webpage “Discover Local Flavours and Hidden Gems in Hong Kong” and displayed QR codes at stations. Tourists may instantly browse various unique travel routes and information, making it easy to explore Hong Kong along the MTR lines.

20. The MTRCL understands the public’s need to use public transport services when carrying pets. After considering and balancing various factors, as well as continuous communication with different stakeholders, the MTRCL will pilot a “Cat/Dog Carrying Trial Scheme” on the Light Rail, allowing passengers to bring one pet cat or pet dog on board during weekends and public holidays, subject to compliance of relevant requirements. The MTRCL will announce more details separately.

Conclusion

21. With a deeply rooted foundation in Hong Kong for years, the MTRCL is an important member of the community. The MTRCL has been growing with Hong Kong over the years, and actively utilising the railway network and resources to serve the community. To understand passengers’ needs, the MTRCL regularly listens to passengers’ opinions and suggestions through various channels. Passengers may call the MTR Hotline or fill out an online form to offer feedback. Additionally, the MTRCL management team visited over ten stations in 2024 to actively engage with passengers and listen to their feedback on station facilities and services. The feedback received will be of help for the MTRCL to continuously enhance its station facilities. The MTRCL will continue to pay attention to the situation and needs of passengers usage on station facilities, and actively utilise innovative technology to provide passengers with higher quality and more caring services and experiences.

MTRCL
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