Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2010-11

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.
THB(T)072

Head: 60 - Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title):

000 Operational Expenses

Question Serial No.
2308

Programme:

(3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer:

Director of Highways

Director of Bureau:

Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under *Matters Requiring Special Attention* of this programme, it is mentioned that the Highways Department will "facilitate the detailed design work of the Shatin to Central Link, and further planning of the Northern Link". Will the Administration provide information on the progress, alignment and commencement dates of the above two projects? What are the manpower resources and expenditure involved for facilitating these projects in the coming year (i.e. 2010-11)?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

Shatin to Central Link (SCL)

Progress

We have carried out preliminary design of the railway project in parallel with public consultation since late 2008. The relevant District Councils and locals have raised some concerns on the alignment and design of various parts of proposed railway scheme. We shall continue to engage the public for a thorough discussion on ways to address various public concerns. We will review and may modify the design where necessary and then gazette it under the Railways Ordinance.

Alignment

The proposed SCL scheme comprises two railway lines with a total route length of 17 kilometers: the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section, which together with the Ma On Shan Line and West Rail Line, form an east-west strategic railway corridor; and the Cross Harbour Section from Hung Hom to Admiralty which extends the East Rail Line to Hong Kong Island to form a north-south strategic railway corridor. There will be ten stations including Tai Wai Station, Hin Keng Station, Diamond Hill Station, Kai Tak Station, To Kwa Wan Station, Ma Tau Wai Station, Ho Man Tin Station, Hung Hom Station, Exhibition Station and Admiralty Station.

Implementation Programme

The public has raised different views on certain parts of the SCL alignment and also some concerns that will affect the construction programme of the project, such as the availability of temporary works areas and the extent of excavation for the train stabling siding. The implementation programme of the project will only be available when the railway scheme is finalised upon completion of the public engagement exercise.

Expenditure in 2010-11

The SCL project is managed by a dedicated team in the Railway Development Office (RDO) of the department, comprising two chief engineers, eight senior professionals and ten professionals. The design of SCL has been entrusted to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL). RDO will liaise and collaborate with relevant government bureaux and departments, especially the Transport and Housing Bureau, to facilitate proceeding of the SCL design work. We are using the aforesaid government in-house resources for such work and there is no specific project-based account for the corresponding expenditure. For the design work entrusted to MTRCL, the expenditure in 2010-11 is estimated to be about \$611 million.

The Northern Link (NOL)

Progress

The current proposal of the NOL is a railway line connecting the existing Kam Sheung Road Station of the West Rail Line to the Lok Ma Chau Station at the boundary, with a station at Chau Tau for interchanging with the Spur Line.

The planning of the NOL has to take into consideration the findings of the planning and engineering study of the New Territories New Development Areas (NDAs), which is currently being undertaken by the Planning Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department. The study, which will address issues related to the overall planning of the NDAs, the development programme, the planned population and employment in the planning areas, is targeted to be completed in mid 2011. We will then review the NOL project, including the proposed alignment, station locations and implementation timetable.

Alignment

The current proposal of the NOL is a railway line connecting the existing Kam Sheung Road Station of the West Rail Line to the Lok Ma Chau Station at the boundary, with a station at Chau Tau for interchanging with the Spur Line. It will therefore link the West Rail Line and the East Rail Line in the north of the New Territories, and will provide cross boundary rail service for the Northwest New Territories. Implementation Programme

We will revisit the planning parameters and project assumptions for the NOL upon receiving the findings of the planning and engineering study of the NDAs, which is anticipated to be completed in mid 2011. We will continue to review the NOL including the proposed alignment, station locations and the implementation timetable.

Expenditure in 2010-11

Currently, part of the duties of one Senior Engineer and one Engineer in the RDO of the department are responsible for the co-ordination work. No other expenditure is anticipated in 2010-11.

Signature	
Name in block letters	WAI CHI SING
Post Title	Director of Highways
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