Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2012-13

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

THB(T)042

Question Serial No.

2533

<u>Head</u>: 60 – Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title):

<u>Programme</u>: (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Please provide the expenditure, manpower, work details and progress of the following projects of the Highways Department:

a) review and update the Railway Development Strategy 2000;

b) co-ordinate with the Mainland authorities on cross-boundary infrastructure developments; and

c) facilitate the detailed design of the Shatin to Central Link.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply:

(a) The consultancy study for reviewing and updating the Railway Development Strategy 2000 started in March 2011. It aims at updating Hong Kong's long-term railway development blueprint in view of the latest development of the society and the updates in the planning parameters. The study will review the railway proposals identified in the Railway Development Strategy 2000, and other railway proposals raised by the Government or the public.

The consultant is currently reviewing the latest planning information of various development proposals and at the mean time assessing the needs for future traffic. It is also conducting the initial analysis on the possible restrictions in respect of technology and environment, and the way to tie in with the overall railway network in order to attain optimal efficiency and satisfy the society's transport demand after 2031.

Funding approval of \$43 million was obtained from the Finance Committee (FC) for the whole study, which will take approximately 24 months. The Highways Department (HyD) deploys in-house staff to monitor the consultancy study.

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(b) Regarding the cross-boundary infrastructure, our work mainly involves coordinating with the Mainland on the plan to implement the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL). For XRL, we have established different co-ordinating groups with the Mainland departments concerned to handle the related works of cross-boundary facilities according to needs.

The HyD deploys in-house staff for the above communication and coordination of the cross-boundary infrastructure.

The Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project is managed and co-ordinated by a (c) dedicated team under the Railway Development Office (RDO) of HyD. The comprises two Chief Engineers, five Senior Engineers and eight team Engineers. The MTR Corporation Limited has been entrusted with the design of SCL. During the detailed design stage, RDO of HyD is mainly responsible for liaising with the related government bureaux and departments (such as the Transport and Housing Bureau, the Transport Department, etc.), so as to assist in the conduct of SCL detailed design. The works mentioned above are carried out with the internal resources of the government and there is no corresponding expenditure under this project's account.

SCL project plan was gazetted under the Railways Ordinance (Cap.519) on 26 November 2010. After thorough consideration of public concerns and comments, two amended railway plans were gazetted on 15 July and 11 November 2011. The planning and detailed design of SCL are now at the final stage. We will strive to complete the remaining statutory procedures within a short period of time. We aim at seeking funding approval from the FC before the summer recess of the Legislative Council, so that both the remaining railway and the non-railway works of the SCL can be commenced in mid-2012.

Signature:	
Name in block letters:	K K LAU
Post Title:	Director of Highways
Date:	1.3.2012

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