

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)273

(Question Serial No. 5083)

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent
Programme: (3) Railway Development
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (K K LAU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question (Member Question No. 151):

Under this Subhead, the balance of Item 838 "Review and update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000" (the study) is \$5.23 million. In view of the recent revision by the Administration to the average space per person per car and the forecast number of visitors to Hong Kong, please advise this Committee whether the balance will be used on the following studies:

- (1) To review the existing loading of various lines on the basis of the maximum capacity taken at a standing density of 4 persons per square metre (ppsm) instead of 6 ppsm;
- (2) To modify the previous discussion direction, especially concerning the lines the loading of which has previously been calculated to have reached 70%, in order to arrive at more realistic proposals; and
- (3) To open up more new lines within Hong Kong to resolve the congestion problem.

Asked by: Hon. WU Chi-wai

Reply:

The Government has commissioned a consultant to conduct a study for the Review and Update of the "Railway Development Strategy 2000", with a view to updating the long-term railway development blueprint for Hong Kong to cater for the latest development needs of the society. Two stages of Public Engagement exercise were conducted to explore the conceptual proposals of ten railway schemes (including those which can serve to divert the passenger flows of the existing lines). The budget of \$43 million is earmarked for the study.

The Government is finalising the blueprint for railway development beyond 2020 having regard to transport demand, cost-effectiveness and development needs of New Development Areas. The Government will announce the way forward for the new railway proposals as soon as possible.

While the 4 ppsm standard applies to the planning for the new railway lines currently under construction and those to be recommended in the new railway development blueprint, the service level of the existing lines is subject to infrastructural constraints. For example, the

maximum train frequency and the number of cars per train of a line are constrained by its signalling system and the shortest platform respectively.