

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****THB(T)044****(Question Serial No. 2314)**Head: (60) Highways DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (3) Railway DevelopmentControlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and HousingQuestion:

This Programme pointed out that the Highways Department (HyD) would “continue to take forward the proposed railway schemes recommended under the Railway Development Strategy 2014 (RDS-2014)” in 2017-18. In this regard, would the Government please advise this Committee of the following –

- (a) the current progress of the construction works, the most updated completion dates and estimated expenditures for the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) and the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) projects respectively;
- (b) progress of the studies relating to other railway projects; and
- (c) the expenditures and staff establishment involved, as well as their duties.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 2)Reply:

(a)

According to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the progress of construction works, the target commissioning dates and the updated cost estimates of the XRL and SCL projects as at end of 2016 are tabulated below -

<b>Projects</b>	<b>Actual Progress of Construction Works* (% completed)</b>	<b>Target Commissioning Date</b>	<b>Updated Cost Estimate (\$ billion) (in money-of-the-day prices)</b>
XRL	87	Third quarter of 2018	86.4
SCL	68	Tai Wai to Hung Hom section: mid-2019	79.8 (under review)
		Hung Hom to Admiralty section: 2021	

Note:\* The progress of the railway projects is expressed in terms of percentage of work done.

(b)

In accordance with the indicative implementation window recommended in the RDS-2014, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) has invited the MTRCL to submit proposals for the implementation of the first batch of railway schemes viz the Northern Link (and Kwu Tung Station), the East Kowloon Line and the Tuen Mun South Extension. The MTRCL has submitted the proposals for the Tuen Mun South Extension in end December 2016, and will submit the proposals for the Northern Link (and Kwu Tung Station) and the East Kowloon Line later this year. The THB, the HyD and other departments concerned are currently assessing the contents of the proposal for the Tuen Mun South Extension. The MTRCL is required to provide further details and give supplementary information in respect of the proposal to ensure that the proposal is feasible and most beneficial to the community.

The THB has also invited the MTRCL to submit proposals for the implementation of the Tung Chung West Extension (and Tung Chung East Station) in early January 2017.

Regarding the other 3 railway schemes viz the Hung Shui Kiu Station, the South Island Line (West) and the North Island Line, we will pursue these schemes in accordance with the indicative implementation window recommended in the RDS-2014. The taking forward of various railway projects is subject to the outcome of the detailed engineering, environmental and financial studies relating to the project at the time, as well as updated assessment of passenger transport demand and availability of resources.

In line with established procedures, prior to the finalisation of any new railway schemes, we will consult the public on the detailed alignment, locations of stations, mode of implementation, cost estimate, mode of financing and actual implementation timetable of the scheme.

(c)

Various divisions of the Railway Development Office (RDO) of the HyD deploy in-house staff resources, with the assistance of consultants on some specialised tasks, to monitor the works of the XRL and SCL projects, as well as take forward the new railway projects recommended in the RDS-2014. The major duties and responsibilities of these divisions include handling issues related to the planning, design, implementation and commissioning of the XRL and SCL projects entrusted to the MTRCL, and assisting the THB in the implementation of new railway projects, including vetting the proposals of the railway projects submitted by the MTRCL. As at March 2017, there are 4 Chief Engineers, 16 Senior Engineers and 26 Engineers in the HyD tasked with the above duties, with a total estimated staff cost of \$47.8 million in 2017-18. A number of staff also provide support to these divisions.

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