

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**THB(T)238****(Question Serial No. 6282)**

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The Department states that it will continue to oversee the progress of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL Hong Kong section), the Kwun Tong Line Extension (KTE) and the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) to ensure their timely completion. In this regard, please advise -

- (a) what is the current progress for these projects?
- (b) what are the current anticipated dates of completion for these projects?
- (c) has the Government received any claims for compensation concerning these projects so far? Please provide information regarding the details, amount involved and vetting of these cases; and
- (d) what is the estimated patronage after the commissioning of these projects and when was this projection made?

Asked by: Hon MO Claudia (Member Question No. 54)

Reply:

(a) & (b)

According to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the actual progress of construction works and the target commissioning dates of the railway projects as at the end of 2016 are tabulated below:

Project	Actual progress of construction works* (% completed)	Target commissioning date
XRL Hong Kong section	87%	Third quarter of 2018
KTE	100%	Commissioned on 23 October 2016
SCL	68%	Tai Wai to Hung Hom section: mid-2019
		Hung Hom to Admiralty section: 2021

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

(c)

The information on contractors' claims and the amount paid for settled claims for the railway projects as at end December 2016 is tabulated below –

Project	No. of settled claims	No. of unsettled claims	Amount paid for settled claims (\$ million)	Amount involved in unsettled claims (\$ million)
XRL Hong Kong section	246	745	5,579	15,395
SCL	62	492	466.5	2,216.1

For the XRL Hong Kong section, the progress of works was delayed due to the unfavourable ground conditions encountered, changes in design to suit actual site conditions and various unforeseen circumstances, etc. The foundation works at the West Kowloon Terminus was hindered by the presence of large boulders and uncharted utilities, resulting in a knock-on effect on the progress of the subsequent and adjacent works implemented under tightly interfaced contracts. Under the contract terms, if the contractors submit claims in respect of additional expenditure, sufficient justifications and information have to be provided to support their claims. The MTRCL will process and assess each claim in a prudent manner.

For the SCL, there were also unforeseeable situations in the course of works. For instance, the foundation or excavation works came across a larger amount of or more complicated obstructions than expected, which added difficulties to the works. The contractors had to use more machines or switch to other machines that were more suitable, and employ more staff to cope with the situations. Under the contract terms, if the contractors submit claims in respect of additional expenditure, sufficient justifications and information have to be provided to support their claims. The MTRCL will process and assess each claim in a prudent manner.

As the KTE is an ownership project, the MTRCL has to bear the additional costs arising from the delay and variation of the railway works. The Government does not have information on claims from contractors on related contracts.

(d)

The forecast daily patronage in the commissioning year of the railway projects is tabulated below –

Project	Forecast daily patronage in the commissioning year	Year of forecast
XRL Hong Kong section	99 000 in 2016 (original) 109 200 in 2018 (revised)	Original forecast made in 2008 and updated in 2015
KTE	180 000 in 2016	2007
SCL	1.1 million in 2021	2010

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