

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)019

(Question Serial No. 0287)

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (3) Railway Development
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Jimmy P M CHAN)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2021-22, the Highways Department (HyD) has mentioned about the implementation of the recommendations of the consultancy study on monitoring and control strategies for new railway projects. Please advise how much resources will the Department allocate, and in what ways will the Department implement and execute the monitoring and control strategies so as to restore public confidence in the Department with respect to monitoring of new railway projects and prevention of scandals like those related to the Shatin to Central Link project (e.g. the cutting-short of steel bars) from happening again.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 48)

Reply:

After reviewing experience and practice of major overseas railway projects and previous railway projects in Hong Kong, the consultancy study on the monitoring and control strategies for new railway projects recommended a series of enhanced monitoring and control strategies for adoption during the design, construction, and testing and commissioning stages of new projects, including (a) enhanced project supervision and communication platforms; (b) strengthened monitoring and checking levels; (c) a new Project Safety Review process; (d) proactive reporting and early warning mechanisms; (e) project delivery performance monitoring of MTR Corporation Limited; and (f) building-up of collaborative culture. The enhanced monitoring and control strategies aim to improve the performance of new railway projects regarding safety, quality, programme and cost control.

To implement the enhanced monitoring and control strategies, the Government proposes to establish the Railways Department (RD) under the Transport and Housing Bureau by amalgamating the Railway Development Office of HyD and Railways Branch of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to strengthen its supervision of railway planning and project delivery as well as regulation of railway safety. Having regard to the

current financial situation of the Government and the Chief Executive's general directive in her 2020 Policy Address, the Government proposes to seek the approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the 2021-22 legislative session to establish the proposed RD in the 2022-23 financial year. Before the establishment of the proposed RD, HyD will deploy its existing resources to implement the enhanced monitoring and control measures as far as practicable.

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