

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)024

(Question Serial No. 2167)

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:

Regarding the railway projects mentioned under the Programme, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

- (1) what is the latest commissioning date of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) and for how long has SCL been delayed from the anticipated completion date as recommended in the Railway Development Strategy (RDS) 2000;
- (2) for how long has the full commissioning of the Tuen Ma Line (TML) been delayed from the original commissioning date;
- (3) when will the construction works for the Tung Chung Line Extension, Tuen Mun South Extension and Northern Link commence and what are the anticipated completion dates;
- (4) what are the construction progress and completion timetable of Hung Shui Kiu Station of the West Rail Line;
- (5) what are the latest construction progress, latest timetable and completion date of the East Kowloon Line;
- (6) what are the latest construction progress, latest timetable and completion date of the South Island Line (West);
- (7) what are the future development and timetable regarding the Strategic Study on Railways beyond 2030;
- (8) the Department has increased the provision for the coming year by 28.6%. How much of it will be allocated to implement the abovementioned development projects and studies? Could the progress of the abovementioned projects be expedited with additional resources? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon MAK Mei-kuen, Alice (LegCo internal reference no.: 92)

Reply:

- (1) SCL comprises TML and North South Line. TML Phase 1 from Tai Wai to Kai Tak was commissioned on 14 February 2020. The target commissioning of the remaining TML from Kai Tak to Hung Hom remains as the third quarter of 2021. For North South Line, as regards the implication of the incident of the suspension of the new East Rail Line signalling system on the commissioning date of “Hung Hom to Admiralty Section”, whether or not the target commissioning date of the first quarter of 2022 could be maintained depends critically on the effectiveness of progress recovery measures. The MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has indicated that they are assessing the implication in this regard and are studying all possible measures to recover delay for reporting to the Highways Department (HyD).
- (2) The full commissioning of TML as stipulated in the Entrustment Agreement of SCL is end 2018. With the current commissioning target of third quarter of 2021, there is a delay of about 33 months. The delay was mainly due to the archaeological discoveries and conservation options for archaeological features at Sung Wong Toi Station from 2012 to 2014 and the series of incidents related to the quality of works of the Hung Hom Station Extension revealed in May 2018. The Government will urge MTRCL to commission TML as soon as possible subject to the assurance of the railway system in safe and sound condition.
- (3) According to the programme of MTRCL, the construction of Tuen Mun South Extension is planned to commence in 2023 for completion by 2030, and the construction of Tung Chung Line Extension is expected to start in 2023 for completion by 2029. As for the Northern Link, the construction of Phase 1 (i.e. Kwu Tung Station on the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line) is planned to commence in 2023 for completion by 2027 while the target commencement of construction of Phase 2 (i.e. the Main Line connecting Kam Sheung Road Station with Kwu Tung Station) is in 2025 for completion by 2034.
- (4) Regarding the planning of Hung Shui Kiu Station, relevant bureaux/departments are evaluating the project proposal submitted by MTRCL in end May 2020 and will consider the way forward taking into account the population intake programme of the Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area.
- (5) Regarding the East Kowloon Line, the Government has offered comments on the proposal submitted by MTRCL and asked MTRCL to improve the technical design of the proposal. MTRCL is considering our comments and exploring feasible options for the design improvement of the project. We will continue to follow up with MTRCL and announce the way forward of the project in due course.
- (6) MTRCL submitted a project proposal of South Island Line (West) to the Government in December 2020. The relevant bureaux/departments are considering the project proposal and will consider the way forward taking into account the redevelopment timetable of Wah Fu Estate and the Invigorating Island South initiative.
- (7) The Railway Development Office of HyD commenced the “Strategic Study on Railways beyond 2030” in end 2020. Based on the latest planning data and the final

development strategy of the “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030” planning study, HyD will explore the layout of railway and conduct preliminary engineering and technical assessments for their alignments and supporting facilities, so as to ensure that the planning of railway infrastructure will complement or even reserve capacity to meet the overall long-term land development needs of Hong Kong. The study will take about 38 months to complete.

- (8) The increase in financial provision in the coming financial year is mainly attributed to the estimated expenditure for “Strategic Study on Railways beyond 2030” and the staff cost provision for the preparation team comprising 13 non-directorate posts in the Railway Development Office of HyD, which will be established in the second half of 2021 to make necessary arrangements for establishing the proposed Railways Department.

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