

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

TLB007

(Question Serial No. 3191)

Head: (60) Highways Department

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

Programme: (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (YAU Kwok-ting)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

Regarding the latest developments of implementing the railway projects in Hong Kong, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

1. What are the respective (i) commencement dates; (ii) anticipated completion dates; (iii) estimated construction costs; (iv) approved project estimates; (v) length of the railway; (vi) cost per kilometre; (vii) estimated Economic Internal Rate of Return; (viii) studies on investigation, design and construction (if applicable); and (ix) departments responsible for implementing the railway projects?

Railway Projects	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)	(vii)	(ix)
Tung Chung Line Extension								
Tuen Mun South Extension								
Northern Link Phase 1 Kwu Tung Station								
Northern Link Main Line (Phase 2)								
Northern Link Spur Line								
Northern Link Eastern Extension								
Hung Shui Kiu Station								
South Island Line (West)								
East Kowloon Smart and Green Mass Transit System								
Kai Tak Smart and Green Mass Transit System								

Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen Smart and Green Mass Transit System (Phase 1)								
Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen Smart and Green Mass Transit System in (Remaining Phase)								
Hong Kong – Shenzhen Western Rail Link (Hung Shui Kiu – Qianhai)								
Automated people mover system from Tsim Bei Tsui to Pak Nai								
Central Rail Link								
Lo Wu South Station of East Rail Line								
Tseung Kwan O Line Southern Extension								
Science Park/Pak Shek Kok Station								
Oyster Bay Station								
Hong Kong Island West-Hung Shui Kiu Rail Link								
Northeast New Territories Line								
Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands Green Mass Transit System								

2. What are the manpower, establishments and expenditures involved in the implementation and monitoring of the aforesaid railway projects by relevant government departments? How can the Government ensure that the works are implemented and completed on time, and that there are sufficient manpower and resources to implement various railway projects?
3. Did the Government develop performance indicators in respect of safety, quality, project duration and cost control for new railway projects and railways in operation? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1. The detailed information on the railway projects mentioned in question is listed in Annex.

2. The establishments involved in the implementation and monitoring of railway projects by the Highways Department (HyD) (as at 1 March 2025) are as follows:

Rank	No. of permanent posts	No. of time-limited posts
Directorate	7	4*
Professional Grade	85	43
Technical Grade	31	-
General Grade	32	3

*Time-limited supernumerary directorate posts ^{Note}

The salary expenditure of the aforesaid posts in 2025-26 (in terms of notional annual mid-point salary value) is approximately \$210 million.

For those railway projects not currently implemented by the HyD, we do not have the breakdown figures of staff members and salaries involved because the subject staff members also undertake other responsibilities.

Based on the latest planning information and the implementation progress of all the major transport infrastructure projects being constructed and planned, the Government will holistically review the delivery programme of the transport infrastructure projects with a view to implementing the various projects progressively to meet the transport and logistic demands in Hong Kong. The Government, taking into account the planning and implementation work for each railway project, will review the manpower requirements of relevant departments as necessary and redeploy resources through established mechanisms. The Government would also monitor the performance of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) during the project implementation and remind MTRCL to deploy adequate manpower resources to implement the projects as scheduled while ensuring safety and quality.

3. When implementing new railway projects, the Government will implement enhanced monitoring and control strategies in the projects, including (a) enhanced project supervision and communication platforms; (b) strengthened monitoring and checking levels; (c) incorporate the new “project safety review” process; (d) establish the proactive reporting and early warning mechanism; (e) oversee the project delivery performance monitoring of MTRCL; and (f) building-up collaborative culture, to ensure the new railway projects can fulfil requirements on the quality construction and on-time completion. The HyD has formulated a set of performance indicators to review the performance of the MTRCL regularly on various aspects of safety, quality, environmental protection, project duration, design management and review as well as communication with stakeholders.

Moreover, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) is responsible for the regulation of the safety of railway operations and adopts the “risk-based” method with reference to past records to more strictly monitor, vet, inspect and check, and assess those areas (such as the components and equipment of individual railway system) that

^{Note} The civil service establishment includes posts on the permanent establishment and those on the non-permanent establishment (i.e. time-limited posts). Time-limited directorate posts are referred to as “supernumerary directorate posts”, which are time-limited posts on the non-permanent establishment. It does not mean they are not counted towards the establishment.

pose a higher risk to the safe operation of the railway. Among these, inspecting and checking the railway facilities and systems is the major performance indicator for regulating the safe operation of the railway.

Detailed Information of the Railway Projects

Railway Projects	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)	(vii)	(viii)	(ix)
	Commencement date	Anticipated completion date	Estimated construction cost	Approved project estimate	Length of the railway	Cost per kilometre (Note 1)	Estimated Economic Internal Rate of Return	Studies on investigation, design and construction (if applicable)	Department responsible for implementing the railway project
Tung Chung Line Extension	Commenced in 2023	2029	\$19.5 billion (in December 2020 prices)	See Note 2	About 2.5 km	N.A.	3.9%	Undertaken by MTRCL	HyD
Tuen Mun South Extension	Commenced in 2023	2030	\$15.8 billion (in July 2023 prices)	See Note 2	About 2.4 km	N.A.	0.6%	Undertaken by MTRCL	HyD
Oyster Bay Station	Commenced in 2023	2030	\$3.8 billion (in June 2022 prices)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Undertaken by MTRCL	HyD
Hung Shui Kiu Station	Commenced in 2024	2030	\$6.639 billion (in September 2024 prices)	See Note 2	N.A.	N.A.	5.7%	Undertaken by MTRCL	HyD
Northern Link Phase 1 Kwu Tung Station	Commenced in 2023	2027	\$5.9 billion (in July 2023 prices)	See Note 2	N.A.	N.A.	6.5%	Undertaken by MTRCL	HyD
Northern Link Main Line	Advance works commenced; Main works anticipated to commence in 2025	2034	See Note 3	See Note 2	About 10.7 km	N.A.	See Note 3	Undertaken by MTRCL	HyD

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Northern Link Spur Line	The proposed Northern Link (NOL) Spur Line is about 6 km in length. The governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen are taking forward the project jointly through the “Task Force for Hong Kong-Shenzhen Co-operation on Cross-Boundary Railway Infrastructure” (Task Force). The detailed planning and design of the project are anticipated to commence in 2025. We will strive to implement simultaneously the NOL Main Line and the NOL Spur Line, enabling both projects to benefit from synergistic effects. The target is to advance the NOL Spur Line for commissioning with the NOL Main Line concurrently by 2034. The details of the project (project cost, timetable, etc.) will be confirmed in the detailed planning and design stage.								HyD
Hong Kong – Shenzhen Western Rail Link (Hung Shui Kiu – Qianhai) (HSWRL)	The proposed HSWRL is about 18.1 km in length, with the length of about 7.3 km for the Hong Kong section. The governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen are implementing the project jointly through the Task Force. The relevant first stage and second stage studies were completed in end 2022 and mid-2024 respectively. The investigation and design study of the project is anticipated to commence in 2025 and the target is to commission the Hong Kong section and Shenzhen section concurrently in 2035. The details of the project (project cost, timetable, etc.) will be confirmed in the investigation and design stage.								HyD
East Kowloon Smart and Green Mass Transit System	The project alignment is about 7 km in length. The relevant investigation, design and construction consultancy agreement commenced in July last year. The Government received a total of 35 expression of interest submissions from local, Mainland and overseas suppliers and operators of the relevant systems in November last year, and is conducting detailed analyses to ascertain the specific requirements and design of the system and its infrastructures. The Government, with reference to the established procedures and arrangements, plans to consult relevant District Councils on the alignment of the project in the middle of this year, as well as carry out gazettal of the project and make relevant land use planning application within this year. We strive to invite tenders for the project in 2026. The construction cost of the project is yet to be confirmed.								HyD

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South Island Line (West)	The preliminary alignment is about 7.5 km in total. It will facilitate the public to go to the MTRCL South Island Line Wong Chuk Hang Station and Island Line HKU Station, passing through the areas around Aberdeen, Wah Fu, Cyberport and Pok Fu Lam. The project will be taken forward by adopting smart and green mass transit system to strive to tally with the timetable for the new population of the Wah Fu Estate Redevelopment. The cost of works and implementation timetable of the project will be confirmed in the detailed planning and design stage.								HyD
Pak Shek Kok Station	The MTRCL is currently carrying out the planning of Pak Shek Kok Station. The MTRCL will complete the detailed planning, relevant design and statutory procedures as soon as possible for early commencement of the construction works.								HyD
Tseung Kwan O Line Southern Extension	The project comprises the construction of railway of about 4 km in length to connect the Lohas Park Station to Area 137. The Government has already invited the MTRCL to submit proposals for the project. The details of the project are yet to be confirmed.								HyD
Central Rail Link	This project comprises the construction of railway of about 17 km in length to connect Kam Tin to Kowloon Tong. The details of the project are yet to be confirmed.								HyD
Northern Link Eastern Extension	This project comprises the construction of railway of about 9.5 km in length to connect Kwu Tung Station (under construction) to Ping Che. The actual alignment and implementation timetable of the project will depend on the land use planning and works timetable of the development projects such as the New Territories North New Town, etc. Therefore, the details of the project are yet to be confirmed.								HyD
Northeast New Territories Line	The project comprises the construction of railway which is about 8.5 km in length to connect Fanling Station to Heung Yuen Wai through Ping Che. The actual alignment and implementation timetable of the project will depend on the land use planning and works timetable of the development projects such as the New Territories North New Town, etc. Therefore, the details of the project are yet to be confirmed.								HyD

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Lo Wu South Station of East Rail Line	The planning and engineering study for the New Territories North New Town and Man Kam To currently being carried out by the Government covers the Lo Wu South area. The Government will formulate relevant transport infrastructure subject to the planning of the proposed land use and its transport needs in order to cope with future development needs. The relevant study is still underway and further information of the project is hence not available at this stage.								
Kai Tak Smart and Green Mass Transit System	The alignment of the system is about 3.5 km in total. The Government is taking forward the relevant planning and investigation, etc. in full swing. It also invited suppliers and operators to submit expressions of interest for the project from August to October 2024, with a view to ascertaining the technical details, delivery mode and financial arrangement of the system. The Government targets to invite tenders for the project in 2025. The project's cost of works is yet to be confirmed.								Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Smart and Green Mass Transit System in Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area	<p>The preliminary alignment of the system is about 16 km in total through the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen and Yuen Long South New Development Areas. The Government commenced the investigation and design works of the system in the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area for stage 1 road works (about 4.5 km in length) in May 2024. The Government is currently reviewing the alignment and arrangement of stations as well as formulating design schemes to carry out relevant impact assessment etc. It is anticipated that the relevant consultation and statutory procedures of stage 1 road works will be commenced within this year.</p> <p>The Government invited relevant suppliers and operators to submit expressions of interest for the system from December 2024 to February 2025. The Government is currently analysing the received comments, with a view to ascertaining the technical details, delivery mode and financial arrangement of the system. The Government targets to strive for inviting tenders for the project in 2026. The project's cost of works is yet to be confirmed.</p>								CEDD

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Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands Green Mass Transit System	The detailed alignment and implementation timetable of the project need to tie in with the planning of the proposed Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands. The details of the project are yet to be confirmed.								CEDD
Hong Kong Island West-Hung Shui Kiu Rail Link	The detailed alignment and implementation timetable of the project need to tie in with the planning of the proposed Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands. The details of the project are yet to be confirmed.								CEDD
Automated people mover system from Tsim Bei Tsui to Pak Nai	The Government is currently exploring the transport demands and feasibility of connecting Tsim Bei Tsui to Pak Nai by green transport corridor.								

Note 1: The works involved in various projects are not the same. Apart from the constructions works of railway facilities, some projects may also involve re-provisioning of affected facilities, improvement works and enabling works etc. Therefore, it is not suitable to compare by unit cost per kilometre.

Note 2: The Tung Chung Line Extension, Tuen Mun South Extension, Northern Link Phase 1 Kwu Tung Station and Hung Shui Kiu Station are implemented by the MTRCL through the "Rail-plus-Property" model. No approved project estimate of the Government is

involved. The detailed planning and design of the Northern Link Main Line are underway. The Government would formulate the most suitable financing scheme for the project.

Note 3: The Government and its independent consultants are currently accessing the detailed planning and design of the MTRCL to update the estimated costs and Economic Internal Rate of Return of the Northern Link Main Line.

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