

Shatin to Central Link

The Shatin to Central Link (“SCL”) is one of the 5 rail projects under the Corporation’s “Rail Gen 2.0”, which is our vision for the next generation of rail travel in Hong Kong. By connecting West Rail Line and Ma On Shan Line through new stations and extending the East Rail Line across the harbour to connect to Admiralty via a new station at Exhibition Centre, SCL will significantly improve the connectivity, coverage and convenience of the rail network to serve the New Territories, Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. The project is funded by Government and the construction is entrusted to MTR. The construction of SCL commenced in 2012. The first section of SCL, the Tuen Ma Line Phase 1, commenced services on 14 February 2020, connecting Kowloon East to the Ma On Shan Line. Construction of the project continues to make progress.



Project Profile:

1. SCL project comprises two parts:

- i. Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section – extend the existing Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai to the West Rail Line via East Kowloon to form the “Tuen Ma Line”
- ii. Hung Hom to Admiralty Section – extend the existing East Rail Line across the harbour to Wan Chai North and Admiralty

2. Route Length: 17 km in total

- i. Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section: 11 km
- ii. Hung Hom to Admiralty Section: 6 km

3. Phased Opening: Tuen Ma Line Phase 1

- i. Alignment – From Wu Kai Sha to Kai Tak
- ii. New Stations – Hin Keng Station, the expanded part of Diamond Hill Station and Kai Tak Station

Please refer to the [SCL project website](#) for further details.

Issues Surrounding SCL Construction

In May 2018, there were allegations concerning workmanship and timely reporting of construction issues relating to Hung Hom Station extension of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project, in particular regarding diaphragm walls and platform slabs at the Hung Hom Station extension works. This has subsequently led to the HKSAR Government decision in June 2018 to set up a Commission of Inquiry (“Commission”) to investigate the integrity of the works at Hung Hom Station extension. The Corporation has given its full cooperation to the Commission and the Government. (Note: see below for further information on the Commission).

The Corporation has taken the matter seriously and has taken immediate steps to investigate the issues, reported our findings to the Government and reserved the Corporation’s position against relevant contractors. Throughout the process, the Corporation has maintained a high level of transparency to keep our stakeholders informed.

[SCL project website, press release](#)

Our Actions Taken

In response to the construction matters relating to Hung Hom Station extension, we have taken a number of measures to assume our managerial responsibility, address public concerns, minimise potential consequences, and prevent future occurrences.

Board-level Involvement

Since June 2018, our Board of Directors (“the Board”) have held regular Board and Capital Works Committee (“CWC”) meetings, as well as a number of special Board meetings to discern, follow-up and review the SCL incidents, as well as to ensure that appropriate actions have been taken. The Board at its special meeting of 21 June 2018 tasked the CWC to conduct a review of the processes and control procedures for SCL within the Corporation’s Project Integrated Management System (“PIMS”). CWC subsequently engaged an external consultant on 12 July 2018 to assist in reviewing the Corporation’s project management procedures. The Corporation has established a Special Task Force to take forward the recommendations made by the external consultant and monitor the progress on improving our management processes.

As an immediate action, the Board directed the Corporation’s management to strengthen its monitoring and supervision over all SCL contracts. Furthermore, we updated the Terms of Reference of the Corporation’s CWC to enhance its oversight of the quality of all major capital works projects.

The Corporation has already taken actions on the recommendations provided by the external consultant, including six aspects:

1. Strengthening project management through reviewing the Project Integrated Management System and digitising the central database of “Non-Conformance” Reports;
2. Establishing an Assurance, Monitoring & Verification team under the Engineering Division to enhance governance;
3. Considering the other recommendations for future contracts in terms of commercial & contract strategy;
4. Enhancing quality management training on site supervision and inspection by the project team;
5. Reviewing and enhancing the planning for “inspection hold point” arrangements; and
6. Digitising site supervision and inspection to provide more robust traceability and governance.

Managerial Accountability

On 15 June 2018, the Corporation submitted to the Government a report on the construction of the reinforcement fixing works for the East West Line (“EWL”) platform slabs at the Hung Hom Station extension under the SCL project. Subsequently on 13 July 2018, the Corporation notified the Government regarding the errors discovered in the report submitted on 15 June 2018 in particular regarding the numbers of couplers potentially in question. On the grounds of taking managerial accountability on this erroneous report, several members of senior management left the Corporation, including the then Projects Director and three General Managers involved in the SCL project. The then CEO also took early retirement.

Verification and Assurance of Hung Hom Station Extension and Its Adjacent Structures

To address public concerns regarding the platform slab at the Hung Hom Station extension, as well as the as-constructed conditions of the North Approach Tunnels (NAT), South Approach Tunnels (SAT) and Hung Hom Stabling Sidings (HHS), the Corporation has submitted to Government in July 2019 the final report on the holistic assessment study for Hung Hom Station Extension, and the report on the final verification study on as-constructed conditions of the NAT, SAT and HHS, after completing a detailed verification of the Hung Hom Station Extension and related works based on methodologies agreed with Government. The reports conclude that the structures are safe for the purpose of the ongoing construction activities, but suitable measures should be implemented to address deficiencies and achieve code compliance. Given the conclusions therein have been accepted by Government, implementation of the suitable measures commenced in October 2019 and is scheduled to be completed in mid-2020.

[HKSAR Government website for verification works measurement results](#)

Transparency

Since the onset of the SCL issues, we have maintained a high degree of transparency and have communicated openly to different parties and the public through various means including press releases, updates on the SCL project website, media conferences, public speeches at results announcements, as well as our Annual Report, Sustainability Website and Sustainability Report. We will continue to issue timely communication using existing platforms to make known the progress and results to specific stakeholders as well as to the general public.

The full list of the relevant press releases can be found on the [SCL project website](#).

Commission of Inquiry

In June 2018, the HKSAR Government announced the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry (“Commission”) to investigate the integrity of reinforcement works for the diaphragm walls and platform slabs at Hung Hom Station extension under the SCL project. The Commission was asked to also review the project management regime of the Corporation, and the way that the Government regulates and monitors railway projects.

In February 2019, the HKSAR Government expanded the terms of reference of the Commission to cover issues relating to the North Approach Tunnels (“NAT”), the South Approach Tunnels (“SAT”) and the Hung Hom Stabling Sidings (“HHS”), as some of the required works-related documentation was found incomplete and some of the construction works deviated from the designs, plans or drawings accepted by the relevant authorities. In view of the expanded scope of the Commission, the Chief Executive-in-Council approved a further extension of time for the Commission to submit its final report by 31 March 2020, or such time as the Chief Executive-in-Council may allow. The Commission submitted its interim report and final report, which the HKSAR Government published on 26 March 2019 and 12 May 2020 respectively.

Results of Interim and Final Reports of the Commission of Inquiry

In the 26 March 2019 Interim Report released by the HKSAR Government, the Commission made a clear determination that the diaphragm walls and platform slabs construction works are safe and finds no rebuilding or strengthening of the works to be necessary. The Commission has also made valuable recommendations on how the Corporation can improve our project management. These are in line with the findings of the review conducted by the CWC of the MTR Board in 2018. The Corporation has since been implementing these recommendations, to improve and update our project management and enhance quality assurance of construction projects, many of these have already been incorporated into the Corporation’s standard practices.

The Final Report released on 12 May 2020 concluded that the relevant structures at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension are safe and fit for purpose with the completion of the suitable measures. The Commission has identified a number of inadequacies in respect of the construction process and made recommendations on the Corporation’s project management practices. These recommendations are in line with those of the review conducted by the CWC of the MTR Board and the Commission’s interim report. The Corporation will review the findings and recommendations of the Final Report and implement further follow-up actions as necessary.

The Corporation notes that the Commission also finds that elements of the construction works were not executed in accordance with the contract. These issues will be resolved in accordance with the terms of the relevant contracts.

[The Commission’s interim report](#)

[The Commission’s final report](#)

Going Forward

The Corporation welcomed the Commission’s conclusion that the relevant structures at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension are safe. With that, we are now very focused on completing the SCL. Upon completion, the project will significantly enhance the connectivity of the 300,000 residents living along the SCL lines and, giving the many more passengers travelling across the harbour a new option. The Corporation will continue to develop the work that we have already started on improving our project management practices to address further recommendations provided in the Commission’s final report. Implementation of the suitable measures at Hung Hom Station Extension is progressing with targeted completion in mid-2020. Following completion of the suitable measures and subsequent reinstatement activities, testing and commissioning of the railway systems can proceed. Full TML opening is anticipated to be in 2021. As for the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section, the targeted opening is scheduled for Q1 2022. The Corporation is making every effort to meet the programme.

Quality and safety of our railway projects has always been the Corporation’s top priority. We will ensure that all necessary precautionary measures are taken and that the safety of the structures and the workers is maintained at all times.

References

References mentioned above can be accessed through the following links.

[Shatin to Central Link Project Website](#)

[Shatin to Central Link Press Release](#)

[Results Announcements](#)

[Commission of Inquiry](#)

[Annual Report](#)

[Interim Report of the Commission of Inquiry](#)

[Sustainability Report](#)

[Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry](#)

[HKSAR Government website for verification works measurement results](#)