

PR131/14
28 December 2014**First Train Departs Kennedy Town Station at 6 am
Opening a New Chapter in MTR Island Line Service**

The new MTR Island Line extension to Western District officially began passenger service at 6:00am today (28 December 2014).

Acting Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Mr Lincoln Leong was among the first to arrive at Kennedy Town Station this morning to personally open up the station for passengers. He then invited members of the Western District community to join him in a simple ribbon-cutting ceremony on the station platform before boarding the train with more than 1,000 passengers for the journey from Western District.

Operations Director of MTR Corporation Dr Jacob Kam was on hand to make the first announcement from the driving cab to welcome passengers before the train departed at 6:00am sharp for Chai Wan.

"It was really exciting to be on the first train with so many Western District residents and railway fans. The Island Line extension was built as a community railway, and we are really pleased that in addition to a high-quality train service, this project also brings added conveniences to the Western community such as the integrated all-weather pedestrian network that makes navigating the area's hilly terrain so much easier. I take this opportunity to thank again the residents of the Western District for their immense support during construction of the rail extension.," Mr Leong said.

To prepare for this morning's start of service, more than 500 MTR and contractor staff had worked overnight to change over more than 23,000 signs and information boards throughout the MTR network as well as replace other digital information and the fare collection software to incorporate the two new stations.

Additional staff and service assistants were deployed to the new stations and along the Island Line to help familiarise passengers with the new service and facilities.

"I would like to thank MTR staff and our contractors for their immense hard work overnight to ensure we had a smooth opening this morning," said Dr Kam.

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"For the first few weeks, we will deploy additional staff at the two new stations to assist passengers in finding their way around the station and using the new facilities. While service has overall been good so far, I would like to thank passengers in advance for their patience and understanding should teething problems occur to cause them any inconvenience."

Construction of the 3-kilometre extension to the MTR Island Line began in 2009 and comprises three new stations. HKU and Kennedy Town were opened today while Sai Ying Pun will follow at the end of first quarter 2015.

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Photo Caption:

1. Acting Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Mr Lincoln Leong (4th from right), Chairman of Central and Western District Council Mr Yip Wing-shing (5th from right), District Officer (Central and Western) Miss Cheryl Chow (6th from right) join members of the Western District Community and students from the University of Hong Kong in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the start of railway service in the area.



2. Acting Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Mr Lincoln Leong shares residents' excitement in taking the first train from Kennedy Town Station.



3 & 4. There was a carnival atmosphere during the first day of service for the extended Island Line as the MTR Corporation arrange for staff to take instant pictures for passengers while Head of Operating Mr Francis Li to give out souvenirs.



5. Additional staff and station assistants are deployed to HKU and Kennedy Town stations to help passengers find their way around the station and use the new facilities.

