

MTR Executive Review Panel Submits Report on Arson Incident

The MTR Corporation today (25 April 2017) submitted to the Government the Executive Review Panel Report on the arson incident which occurred on 10 February 2017. After a thorough examination of the incident handling and safety procedures, the Panel considered that the incident handling by MTR staff and emergency services was robust, orderly, speedy and effective which successfully contained the number of injured passengers. The Panel also made recommendations in the report to further enhance the Corporation's response in emergency situations.

The Panel concluded that the train and station equipment functioned properly as designed during the incident. The fire retardant train saloon design, drive through strategy and fire provisions in station and tunnels all worked as per design to provide a safe environment for the passengers to evacuate. The existing safety procedures and contingency plans were executed correctly to enable smooth and speedy detrainment and evacuation of passengers. The Panel also considered that the dissemination of information to passengers and the public was adequate and effective throughout and after the incident.

In addition to reviewing the incident handling, the Panel put forward a number of initiatives to raise public awareness and to enhance risk management, including:

- Further engaging the Fire Services Department to provide additional fire safety training and briefings for station staff. In particular, portable fire extinguisher training will be provided for station assistants, even though their primary role is to assist in platform duties and facilitate crowd control;
- Working with the Fire Services Department and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to enhance public education through different channels to reinforce fire safety awareness, the ban on flammable/dangerous goods and the use of emergency equipment;
- Increasing the frequency of joint drills and exercises with Police and the Fire Services Department from 12 times a year to over 15 times in 2017;
- Providing additional portable fire extinguishers inside Fire Hose Reel Cabinets at stations as well as installing more prominent labelling on the location of portable fire extinguishers; and
- Providing a fire blanket at platform level for use by staff.

In-train CCTV

Regarding in-train CCTV, the Panel is of the view that the incident handling and evacuation were dealt with according to the established procedure in a timely and orderly manner, and the provision of in-train CCTV would likely have made no difference to the outcome of the incident.

However in line with MTR's continuous improvement philosophy, in-train surveillance will be enhanced with the ratio of in-train CCTV gradually increasing from the current 35% to 100% by 2023. This will be achieved by the commissioning of the 93 new trains which have been purchased to replace the first generation trains on urban lines, the commissioning of new trains to serve on the future Shatin to Central Link and the mid-life refurbishment of the remaining fleet without in-train CCTV.

Security Check of Flammable and Dangerous Goods

Given the established monitoring arrangement on security threat level between the MTR Corporation and Police, as well as the need to balance risk and operational considerations in a railway network that serves 5.6 million passenger journeys per day, the Panel does not recommend applying security checks on passengers at entry gates of stations.

Operations Director of MTR Corporation, Mr Adi Lau said, "Safety is of the utmost importance to MTR. We will adopt the recommendations of the Panel as part of our continuous efforts to strengthen our operational capabilities and enhance our services to customers.

"We convey our sympathy and best wishes to those injured during this incident, and wish them a speedy recovery," Mr Lau added.

Dr Peter Ewen, Engineering Director of MTR Corporation added "We would like to express our gratitude again to the affected passengers, frontline staff and the emergency services for the speedy and effective handling of the incident. We also appreciate the time and valuable contributions of Professor SL Ho and Mr Peter Bressington in assisting us in undertaking a thorough review into the different aspects of the incident and identify areas for improvement,"

As in all major incidents, the MTR Corporation set up a review panel to look into the arson incident on board a train which took place on 10 February 2017. The Executive Review Panel was jointly chaired by Operations Director Mr Adi Lau and Engineering Director Dr Peter Ewen, with another six senior members from the Corporation. Professor SL Ho and Mr Peter Bressington were appointed as external consultants to provide expert advice to the Panel.

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About MTR Corporation

MTR Corporation is regarded as one of the world's leading railway operators for safety, reliability, customer service and cost efficiency. In its home base of Hong Kong, the Corporation operates ten commuter railway lines, a Light Rail network and a high-speed Airport Express link on which about 5.6 million passenger trips are made on a normal week day. Another 5.6 million passenger trips are made on the rail services it operates outside Hong Kong in the Mainland of China, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Australia. In addition, the Corporation is involved in a range of railway construction projects as well as railway consultancy and contracting services around the world. Leveraging on its railway expertise, the Corporation is involved in the development of transit-related residential and commercial property projects, property management, shopping malls leasing and management, advertising media and telecommunication services.

For more information about MTR Corporation, please visit www.mtr.com.hk.