

**Works on the Shatin to Central Link Enters Milestone Stage
as MTR launches 9-car trains and commissions new signalling system at East Rail Line**

The MTR Corporation announced today that construction of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) will achieve a new project milestone in mid-2020, with the commissioning of the new signalling system and the introduction of new 9-car trains into passenger service in preparing for the extension of the East Rail Line (EAL) across the harbour to Admiralty Station.

The new signalling system, which has undergone comprehensive system testing and safety validation, will enhance the train service headway on the SCL.

Meanwhile, the new 9-car trains will be introduced as a required standard to cope with space constraints on the tracks on Hong Kong Island. The existing 12-car trains will gradually be replaced by new 9-car trains under a programme that would take place by phases over the coming 18 months.

The new 9-car trains, with their wider body and newly designed interior, will provide a more spacious and comfortable travelling environment for passengers. They are equipped with dynamic route maps and gangway displays, providing more information for passengers during their journeys. Passengers will be able to ride on the new EAL trains from mid-2020 when the first of the new 9-car trains enters service.

“After achieving the major milestone of opening the Tuen Ma Line Phase 1 on 14 February 2020, we are glad to proceed towards opening the full Tuen Ma Line in 2021 and the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section, that is the extension of the EAL, in the first quarter of 2022. These will see the completion of the SCL project for the benefit of the Hong Kong public. We have completed the tunneling works for the EAL extension across the harbour and are now about to start on the complex railway systems on the new and existing sections,” said Mr James Chow, Divisional General Manager - Projects Construction of MTR Corporation.

Extending the EAL under Victoria Harbour from Hung Hom to Admiralty, via the newly built fourth cross harbour rail tunnel with an intermediate station at Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai North will offer a fast, direct and convenient passenger service connecting Northeast New Territories and Hong Kong Island.

“The new 9-car trains will gradually replace the existing 12-car trains over a period of time. For a while there will be a mix of 9 and 12-car trains, ie Mixed Fleet Operations. We will ensure that comprehensive measures will be introduced to facilitate passenger familiarization with the arrangements for Mixed Fleet Operations,” said Mr Sammy Wong, Chief of Operating of MTR Corporation. “Passengers will be guided by prominent signage, clear public announcements and additional customer service staff in stations. We would like to thank passengers in advance for their cooperation in helping us through this critical stage of the project,” he added.

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“The new signalling system and the new trains have already gone through stringent testing, as is the case for all new train introduction and new major signalling system enhancements. In the event of unforeseeable teething problems in the initial period of this work, the Corporation has prepared a contingency plan to deal with any railway service disruption and our team of engineers and contractors will continue to work closely in a professional manner to ensure that any impact to customers and train service is kept to a minimum,” said Mr Wong. “We will strive to deal with the issue quickly while providing timely information and assistance.”

Besides the Mixed Fleet Operations, another critical piece of work is the bifurcation work, or track realignment, between Mong Kok East and Hung Hom Stations. Preparation is in hand with a target to commence this work in the third quarter of 2020. We shall continue to provide update on the matter.

The opening of the full Tuen Ma Line is expected to be in 2021. As for the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section (extending the EAL to Admiralty Station), the targeted completion date in the first quarter of 2022 faces a number of challenges, but the project team continues to work hard to achieve this programme.

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About MTR Corporation

Every day, MTR connects people and communities. As a recognised world-class operator of sustainable rail transport services, we are a leader in safety, reliability, customer service and efficiency.

MTR has extensive end-to-end railway expertise with more than 40 years of railway projects experience from design to planning and construction through to commissioning, maintenance and operations. Going beyond railway delivery and operation, MTR also creates and manages dynamic communities around its network through seamless integration of rail, commercial and property development.

With more than 40,000 dedicated staff*, MTR carries over 13 million passenger journeys worldwide every weekday in Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Australia and the Mainland of China. MTR strives to grow and connect communities for a better future.

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

*includes our subsidiaries and associates in Hong Kong and worldwide

Photo caption:

1. Mr James Chow, Divisional General Manager - Projects Construction (left), and Mr Sammy Wong, Chief of Operating (right) of MTR Corporation report on the latest works progress on the SCL project and announce the commissioning of new signalling system and 9-car trains from mid-2020.



2. Tailor-made signage and Passenger Information Displays will be in place to guide passengers to appropriate boarding areas during mixed-fleet operations on the EAL. (Images are indicative only)

