

Shatin to Central Link

The Shatin to Central Link (“SCL”) is a strategic railway project, with Tuen Ma Line connecting the West Rail Line and the former Ma On Shan Line through new stations, and the extension of the East Rail Line from Hung Hom across the Victoria Harbour to Admiralty via a new Exhibition Centre Station. Tuen Ma Line and the East Rail Line cross-harbour section will significantly improve the connectivity, coverage and convenience of the MTR network to better serve the whole of Hong Kong. The project is funded by the Government and the design and construction are entrusted to the Corporation. Tuen Ma Line (“TML”) Phase 1, commenced services on 14 February 2020, connecting Kowloon East to the former Ma On Shan Line.



Project Profile:

1. SCL project comprises two parts:

- i. Tuen Ma Line – extend the former Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai to the West Rail Line via Kowloon East.
- ii. East Rail Line cross-harbour section – extend the East Rail Line from Hung Hom across the Victoria Harbour to Wan Chai North and Admiralty

2. Route Length: 17 km in total

- i. Tai Wai to Hung Hom section of Tuen Ma Line: 11 km
- ii. Hung Hom to Admiralty section (East Rail Line cross-harbour section): 6 km

3. Phased Opening: Tuen Ma Line Phase 1

- i. Date of opening: 14 February 2020
- ii. Alignment – From Wu Kai Sha Station to Kai Tak Station
- iii. New Stations – Hin Keng Station and Kai Tak Station, and the expanded part of Diamond Hill Station

Construction Works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension

In May 2018, there were allegations concerning the workmanship and timely reporting to the Government of issues in the construction works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension under the SCL project. This has subsequently led to the Government's decision in June 2018 to set up a Commission of Inquiry ("Commission") to investigate the works at and near Hung Hom Station Extension. The Corporation has given its full cooperation to the Commission and the Government during the whole course of the investigation and related reviews. (Note: see below for further information regarding the Commission).

The Corporation has taken the matter seriously and has actively responded to ensuing findings and recommendations with appropriate measures to assume our managerial responsibility, address public concerns, minimise the potential impact and prevent reoccurrence. The Corporation also took immediate steps to investigate the matter, report its findings to the Government and reserves its position against the relevant contractors. Throughout the process, the Corporation has been transparent in keeping our stakeholders informed.

Board-level Involvement

Since June 2018, the Corporation's 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 matter, 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 the SCL project 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 PIMS and digitising the central database of "Non-Conformance Reports";
2. Establishing a "Second Line of defence" on assurance, monitoring & certification to enhance governance;
3. Considering the relevant recommendations for future contracts in terms of commercial & contractual 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 enhanced 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 platform slabs at the Hung Hom Station extension. Subsequently, on 13 July 2018, the Corporation notified the Government that errors were discovered in the above report, particularly regarding the number 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 of the SCL project. The then CEO 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"), detailed verifications of the works based on methodologies agreed with the Government were carried out. The Corporation subsequently submitted to the 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. The reports concluded 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 was completed in mid-2020.

Transparency

Throughout the development of the matter, the Corporation has been transparent and communicating in an open and timely manner with stakeholders and the general public through various means, including media conferences, press releases, public speeches at results announcements, updates on the SCL project website, as well as in our Annual Report, Sustainability Website and Sustainability Report.

Commission of Inquiry

In June 2018, the Government announced the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry (“Commission”) to look into the works for the diaphragm walls and platform slabs at the Hung Hom Station extension. The Commission was tasked to also review the project management regime of the Corporation, and the way in which the Government regulates and monitors railway projects.

In February 2019, the Government expanded the terms of reference of the Commission to cover matters relating to the NAT, SAT and HHS, as certain works-related documentations were found incomplete and some of the construction works deviated from the designs, plans or drawings accepted by the relevant authorities.

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 and related reviews

Both the Interim Report and Final Report of the Commission 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 in the two reports identified certain inadequacies in respect of the construction process and made recommendations on the Corporation’s project management practices. In this regard, the Corporation continues to refine and improve a number of its project management practices, with many of these already being incorporated into the Corporation’s standard practices. Improvements already forming part of the Corporation’s project management approach include an enhanced quality management process and organisational structure, the use of a digital reporting and supervision system, including the Request for Inspection and Survey Check (“RISC”), Non-conformance Report (“NCR”) process, site diaries and photographic records, to improve the inspection process and monitoring, and enhanced staff training.

Further improvements are being developed, including new techniques the Corporation will use to manage future projects, examples being the use of Building Information Modelling (“BIM”) and adoption of the New Engineering Contract Version 4 (“NEC4”). Both of these are already being adopted in the design for the new railway projects.

The independent audit panel appointed by the Government completed an independent follow-up audit on the implementation progress of the recommendations in the Commission’s Interim Report. In its report released on 3 June 2020 regarding the implementation of 58 recommendations made by the Commission, the Panel is of the view that 14 have completed and 42 are making satisfactory progress, whereas the remaining two have also made some progress.

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.

Going Forward

The Corporation is fully committed to delivering safe and reliable train services in the Tuen Ma Line and East Rail Line cross-harbour section of the SCL project leveraging the experiences gained.

TML Phase 1 was successfully launched on 14 February 2020. The full TML has entered into trial operations and is making good progress towards the planned commissioning in Q3 2021. As for the East Rail Line cross-harbour section, the targeted opening of Q1 2022 remains challenging. The Corporation is making every effort to meet the programme.

References

References mentioned above can be accessed through the following links:

[Shatin to Central Link Project Website](#)

[Shatin to Central Link Press Releases](#)

[Results Announcements](#)

[Annual Report](#)

[Sustainability Report](#)

[Commission of Inquiry](#)

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

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

[Report of the Independent Audit Panel for Recommendations in the Interim Report of the Commission of Inquiry](#)
