



## Railway Network

Railways play a vital role in serving the transport needs of Hong Kong. They account for about 39 per cent of domestic public transport and some 59 per cent of the land-based cross-boundary passenger trips by end August 2013. Being high speed off-road mass carriers, railways provide fast, reliable and comfortable services, reduce the pressure on the road network, and avoid many of the environmental problems associated with road traffic. They are therefore the backbone of our public transport network.

**Existing Network:** The existing railway network in Hong Kong has a total rail length of over 200 kilometres. The Legislative Council passed in June 2007 the Rail Merger Ordinance which provides the legal framework for the post-merger corporation to operate both the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) system and Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR) system. The post-merger Corporation, i.e. the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has been granted a 50-year franchise to operate the MTR and KCR systems with effect from December 2, 2007. Other fixed track systems include the Tramway and the Peak Tram.

**MTR:** MTR is a heavily patronized railway network consisting of nine lines, including Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line, Island Line, Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Line, Disneyland Resort Line, East Rail Line, Ma On Shan Line and West Rail Line. The East Rail Line was commissioned in 1910. The first passenger train of the Kwun Tong Line started operation in late 1979, followed by the subsequent expansion of the network to include Tsuen Wan Line (1982), Island Line (1985), the Eastern Harbour Crossing connecting Lam Tin to Quarry Bay (1989), Tung Chung Line (1998), Tseung Kwan O Line (2002), West Rail Line (2003), Ma On Shan Line (2004), Disneyland Resort Line (2005), bifurcation of East Rail to boundary crossing at Lok Ma Chau (2007), bifurcation of Tseung Kwan O Line to Lohas Park Station (Jul 2009) and extension of West Rail Line to Hung Hom Station interchanging with East Rail Line (Aug 2009). The total route length is about 175 kilometers with 82 stations. By end August 2013, the network carries about 4.32 million passenger trips per day.

**Airport Express (AEL):** The AEL, which came into service in 1998, provides services to the Hong Kong International Airport and also in-town check-in facilities in some stations. The AEL has a route length of 35.3 kilometres and a maximum speed of 135 kilometres per hour. An average journey between the Airport Station and the Hong Kong Station takes about 24 minutes. In end 2005, the AEL was further extended to an in-venue station in the AsiaWorld-Expo located at the northeast corner of the Airport. The AEL carries about 36 000 passenger trips per day.

**Light Rail:** Light Rail is a local transportation network which started operation in 1988 to meet the transport needs of the residents in the Northwest New Territories. It now has a route length of about 36 kilometres with 68 stops. It carries about 470 000 passenger trips every day.

It has four interchange stations in Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai, Siu Hong and Tuen Mun to facilitate passenger interchange between the Light Rail and West Rail Line networks.

**Tramway and Peak Tram:** Electric trams have been operating on Hong Kong Island since 1904. The tramway operates seven routes on 16 kilometres of tram track. Its average daily passenger trips are about 200 000 by end August 2013. The Peak Tram is a cable-hauled funicular railway running between Central and the Peak. In operation since 1888, the peak tram runs at a gradient ranging from 4 to 27 degrees, and is one of the popular tourism facilities in Hong Kong.

**Railway Projects under implementation:** There are five new railway projects under construction, namely, West Island Line (WIL), the Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL), South Island Line (East) (SIL(E)), Kwun Tong Line Extension (KTE) and Shatin to Central Link (SCL).

**WIL:** The WIL is an extension of the Island Line from Sheung Wan to Kennedy Town. The project is expected to be completed in 2014.

**XRL:** The Hong Kong section of the XRL is a 26-km long underground rail corridor, which will run from the West Kowloon Terminus to Huanggang for connection with the Mainland section. The Government has commenced construction in January 2010 for completion in 2015.

**SIL(E):** The SIL(E) is a new railway from South to North of Hong Kong Island, from South Horizons on Ap Lei Chau to Admiralty. Construction works commenced in May 2011 for completion in 2015.

**KTE:** The KTE is an extension of the Kwun Tong Line from Yau Ma Tei Station to Whampoa. Construction works commenced in May 2011 for completion in 2015.

**SCL:** The SCL, with a total length of 17km, consists of the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section and the Hung Hom to Admiralty section. Construction works commenced in July 2012 for completion of the Tai Wai to Hung Hom section in 2018 and the Hung Hom to Admiralty section in 2020.

**Railway Projects under Planning or Review:** To meet the increasing transport needs due to Hong Kong's population growth, continued developments and strengthened links with the Mainland, in a sustainable manner, the Government has launched the Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000 in March 2011 to conduct a comprehensive review on railway projects recommended in the Railway Development Strategy 2000 that have yet been implemented, and study other proposals made by the Government or the public. It will assist in future decisions concerning the implementation of these railway projects based on their needs and interfaces with other developments. The Government plans to report to the public the way forward for the railway projects in 2014.