

LCQ20: Enhancing the facilities of the MTR Lam Tin Station

Following is a question by the Hon Tang Ka-piu and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, in the Legislative Council today (July 17):

Question:

There are views that when the MTR Lam Tin Station was commissioned in 1989, due consideration was not given to residents' needs for barrier-free access. For example, residents in Lam Tin and Cha Kwo Ling travelling between Exit A and Exit D of Lam Tin Station respectively and the station concourse can only do so via escalators due to the lack of lifts. Moreover, there are views that given the intake of residential development projects at Ko Ling Road and the forthcoming redevelopment of Cha Kwo Ling Village, the patronage of Lam Tin Station is expected to increase continuously. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has compiled statistics and made estimates on the respective total populations and the populations of elderly of Lam Tin and Cha Kwo Ling (i) in 1989, (ii) at present, (iii) in 2034 and (iv) in 2044;

(2) whether it knows if the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has compiled statistics and made estimates on the respective carrying capacity and average daily patronage of Lam Tin Station (i) in 1989, (ii) at present, (iii) in 2034 and (iv) in 2044;

(3) whether it knows if MTRCL has compiled statistics on the respective design capacities and the highest usage rates during peak hours of the escalators at Exit A and Exit D of Lam Tin Station; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) whether it knows the contingency measures put in place by the MTRCL in case of service suspension of the escalators at Exit A or Exit D of Lam Tin Station due to equipment failures or accidents, so as to ensure that passengers can still travel between those exits and the areas nearby;

(5) whether it knows if MTRCL will consider wholesale replacement of the escalators at Exit A and Exit D of Lam Tin Station to enhance their safety and reliability;

(6) given that MTRCL currently provides Accessible-car for the carriage of wheelchair-bound passengers between Exit A or Exit D1 of Lam Tin Station and Exit B1 of Yau Tong Station, while it is reported that as Accessible-car can only carry one electric wheelchair-bound passenger or two manual wheelchair-bound passengers at a time, and advance booking service is not available, wheelchair-bound passengers in need can only request such service after arriving at Lam Tin Station or Yau Tong Station, and the waiting time can be

as long as half an hour, whether it knows if MTRCL has examined how the service can be further optimized to provide more convenience to wheelchair-bound passengers; and

(7) whether it knows if MTRCL has examined the expansion of Exit A and Exit D of Lam Tin Station for the construction of inclined lifts (to provide more convenient barrier-free connections) and/or staircases (for diversion and evacuation purposes); if MTRCL has, of the progress; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the Planning Department (PlanD) and the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), my reply to the question raised by the Hon Tang Ka-piu is as follows:

(1) The C&SD conducts a population census/by-census once every five years and can provide population figures for smaller geographical areas based on these results. The latest population census was conducted in 2021. According to the results of the 1991 and 2021 Population Census, the population residing in Lam Tin area and Cha Kwo Ling area are given in the table below. The C&SD does not maintain relevant statistics for 1989 and 2024.

Population		Year	
		1991	2021
Population of Lam Tin area (Tertiary Planning Unit 297)	Total population	69 600	98 500
	Elderly persons (Aged 65 or above)	6 800	23 100
Population of Cha Kwo Ling area (Tertiary Planning Unit 290)	Total population	4 700	52 700
	Elderly persons (Aged 65 or above)	300	9 200
Total		74 300	151 200

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

According to the Projections of Population Distribution published by the PlanD in March 2024, the projected population in Lam Tin and Cha Kwo Ling by the abovementioned Tertiary Planning Units are 95 500 and 49 300 respectively in 2027. The Government does not maintain the projected number of elderly persons and the projected population in 2034 and 2044 for such Units.

(2) All train compartments of the MTR railway lines were designed in accordance with the prevailing industry standards at the time of their construction, and the maximum carrying capacity of train compartments was

calculated based on an average of up to six standing persons per square metre (ppsm). At present, the maximum carrying capacity of the Kwun Tong Line is 71 400 passenger trips per hour per direction.

When assessing the service demand for railway lines, the MTRCL will normally use the loading of the highest loading section (i.e. the critical link of railway lines) as an indicator. In 2023, the patronage per direction in the busiest hour of the morning peak for the critical link on the Kwun Tong Line (from Choi Hung to Kowloon Bay) was about 34 500. Based on a four ppsm passenger density, the loading was about 68 per cent, while the loading was about 48 per cent based on a six ppsm passenger density. According to the information of the MTRCL, the overall passenger flow at the MTR Lam Tin Station is generally smooth, and the station can cope with the patronage at peak hours.

The MTRCL has been closely monitoring the operation of its stations, while the Government would also urge the MTRCL to keep abreast of the development of neighbouring communities and passenger needs, review its station facilities in a timely manner and upgrade station facilities when necessary, with a view to providing passengers with more comfortable and convenient railway services. Apart from upgrading station facilities, the MTRCL would implement appropriate passenger flow management measures during peak hours when patronage is higher. These measures include deploying station staff to facilitate the boarding and alighting of passengers and maintain order at platforms, as well as adjusting the entry and exit directions of station entrances to smoothen the passenger flow.

(3) There are a total of nine escalators at Entrance/Exit A of Lam Tin Station, which are divided into three groups at three sections (i.e. the upper, middle and lower sections), connecting the station concourse with Kai Tin Road. At Entrance/Exit D, there are two escalators facilitating passengers' access to the station concourse and Sin Fat Road. Each escalator has a design capacity of around 120 commuters per minute. While the MTRCL does not have the statistics on the actual escalator throughput, it is observed that the escalators are in smooth operation and are effective in easing passenger flow during peak hours and other periods.

(4) To ensure the smooth operation of escalators in its stations, the MTRCL has put in place a stringent system of repair and maintenance for escalators within the MTR network, and will carry out regular inspections and maintenance works in accordance with the statutory requirements. The MTRCL will carry out major refurbishment and replace components to ensure the safe and reliable operation of escalators, and offer passengers with highly efficient services.

In case an escalator in Lam Tin Station is out of service due to various factors, the MTRCL will implement passenger flow management measures correspondingly, such as deploying additional staff to maintain order, proactively assisting passengers in making use of the escalators, enhancing station announcement, and arranging contractors to promptly repair the facility. When necessary, a station entrance/exit might be used as a one-way exit while other temporary supporting measures will be implemented as

appropriate to ease passenger flow.

(5) In general, escalators within the MTR network have a design lifespan of over 40 years. Apart from routine inspection and maintenance, the MTRCL will carry out a major mid-life refurbishment for an escalator after about 25 years of usage through a contractor to thoroughly repair and maintain the components of the entire escalator and replace the worn-out parts. During the refurbishment, the MTRCL will closely monitor the work progress while ensuring the smooth flow of passengers. Relevant measures will also be taken to minimise the impact on passengers.

In fact, the MTRCL already carried out a major refurbishment for all 11 escalators at Entrances/Exits A and D of Lam Tin Station by batches between 2015 and 2019. In addition, most of the escalators at Entrance/Exit A are undergoing component replacement works between May and August this year to further enhance the efficacy of these facilities.

(6) Since September 2016, the MTRCL has been providing barrier-free connection service at Lam Tin Station free of charge by arranging the Accessible-Car Service for wheelchair passengers to facilitate their travelling between station entrances/exits on Kai Tin Road and Lei Yue Mun Road. The service is welcomed by the local community and people with disabilities.

Since the launch of the connection service, the MTRCL has been maintaining communication with and listening to the views of the stakeholders, including members of the Legislative Council and District Councils, disability groups, and other passengers and community stakeholders. Upon thorough study and wide consultation of the stakeholders, the MTRCL has enhanced the service by relocating the pick-up/drop-off point at Entrance/Exit C of Lam Tin Station near Lei Yue Mun Road to the vehicular access of Yau Lai Estate outside Entrance/Exit B1 of Yau Tong Station since April 16, 2023. The adjustment enables wheelchair passengers to get on/off the vehicles in a safer and more convenient environment, and is generally welcomed by various stakeholders. The operation of the barrier-free connection service, though subject to the time required for deploying the vehicles and road traffic conditions, is observed to be smooth in general.

(7) At present, there is a barrier-free ramp at Entrance/Exit C of the MTR Lam Tin Station to connect the station with Lei Yue Mun Road, which facilitates the access of passengers to/from the station. The MTRCL had explored retrofitting barrier-free facilities at Entrance/Exit A on Kai Tin Road and Entrance/Exit D1 on Sin Fat Road, but found them unfeasible due to the constraints of geographical conditions, spaces inside the station, and land ownership, etc..

The MTRCL will communicate with the disability groups on a regular basis to understand the needs of people with disabilities in relation to station facilities and services, with a view to continuously improving the barrier-free accessibility of railway services.