

LCQ8: Connectivity between Northern Link and Central Rail Link

Following is a question by the Hon Gary Zhang and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (April 10):

Question:

The Northern Link (NOL) will be built between MTR Kam Sheung Road Station and MTR Kwu Tung Station which is under construction, and the MTR Corporation Limited's target is to commence construction in 2025. On the other hand, the Central Rail Link (CRL) is currently at the planning stage with its proposed alignment connecting Kam Tin in Yuen Long and Kowloon Tong. Many members of the public have indicated their hope for the provision of through train service between those two railway lines, which will save them the inconvenience of having to interchange at Kam Sheung Road Station. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council if the Direct Current (DC) or Alternating Current power supply specification will be adopted for NOL, and of the reasons and considerations involved; if the DC power supply specification will be adopted, whether there is a need for the same power supply specification to be adopted for CRL so as to set the condition for the provision of through train service between the two railway lines (i.e. from Kwu Tung Station to MTR Kowloon Tong Station direct via Kam Sheung Road Station); if there is such a need, whether it has studied the feasibility of the relevant technology; if it has studied and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether the Government will expressly require that relevant equipment (including power supply and signalling systems and trains) which is compatible with CRL must be adopted for NOL when it makes the relevant project agreement, so as to allow the provision of through train service between the two railway lines in the future; if it will not, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The reply to the Hon Gary Zhang's question is as follows:

As the transportation backbone of the Northern Metropolis, the Northern Link (NOL) would connect the existing East Rail Line (ERL) and Tuen Ma Line (TML) to form a railway loop linking up the New Territories and Kowloon, which will not only improve the connectivity of the existing railway network and serve the Kwu Tung North New Development Area and the San Tin Technopole, but also unleash the development potential of land around Au Tau, Ngau Tam Mei and San Tin. The MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) is carrying out the detailed planning and design for the NOL Main Line, and would review various technical specifications, including that for power supply, in the light of

technical feasibility, cost-effectiveness and relevant railway operation requirements.

The proposed Central Rail Link (CRL) would connect Kam Tin of Yuen Long with Kowloon Tong via Kwai Chung, connecting other existing and proposed railway lines including the TML, Tsuen Wan Line, Kwun Tong Line, ERL and NOL, and provide citizens with more direct and faster routes for travelling between the Northern Metropolis and different districts of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. The Government is preparing for the next stage of implementation of the CRL, which includes formulating the mode of implementation and financial arrangements, etc. The relevant technical specifications, including that for power supply, could only be established in the course of the subsequent detailed planning and design of the project.

As there is a proposed station at Kam Tin under CRL, the Government has requested MTRCL, in finalising the design of NOL, to consider the technical and operational arrangements for connecting NOL with the proposed CRL.