

21st January 2010

Ms. Eva Cheng, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing
Transport and Housing Bureau
16/F, Murray Building,
Garden Road,
Central,
Hong Kong

Eva
Dear Secretary,

Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link

You kindly agreed to brief the Transport Policy Committee of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong (CILTHK) on plans for the new Express Rail Link. Mr. Yau Shing-mu, Under Secretary for Transport, led the joint Government/MTRC delegation which briefed us on 3 November 2009.

Following that briefing, the CILTHK adopted the position set out in the annexed note, which was presented to the Legislative Council Panel on Transport, Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways, at their meeting on 6 November 2009.

We are pleased to note that the funding proposals have now passed the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council. However we hope that the Government will pursue the following in implementing the project:

- Co-location of Customs, Immigration and Quarantine facilities of both Hong Kong and the Mainland within the terminal to facilitate smooth passage across the boundary.
- Facilitation of transfer from the Airport Express/Tung Chung Line Kowloon Station and the West Rail Austin Road Station to the West Kowloon terminal, to minimise the time taken for railway passenger interchange.
- Implementation, by the time of opening of the new railway, of necessary and substantial road schemes in the vicinity to ensure smooth traffic flow in the already heavily congested roads surrounding West Kowloon – Austin Road, Canton Road etc.
- Government and MTRCL to reassure the public on the safety measures and evacuation arrangements in the very long (26 km) tunnel section.

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I am copying this letter to Mr. Yau, with our thanks for the excellent and informative briefing on 3 November.

Yours sincerely



~~Ir Prof. Wong Sze-chun~~ *se*
President
The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong

cc: Mr. Yau Shing-mu, Under Secretary for Transport

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**Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways
Meeting on 6 November 2009**

**Speaking Notes for the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
On Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link**

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong strongly supports the proposed connection to the mainland express railway network. We believe the construction of such a rail link is in Hong Kong's best interest in view of the following considerations:

1. This serves as a strategic link to the national inter-city express rail network and fosters better integration with Mainland, thus reducing the chance of being marginalised amid the rapid economic development in China.
2. Hong Kong has taken advantage of the rapid economic development of the PRD in the past three decades. Yet the Mainland hinterland that Hong Kong serves are moving towards north and west further away from Hong Kong. The Express Rail Link will improve our transportation linkage with the expanding hinterland and pull the travel time contour towards Hong Kong which is crucial to the sustainability of the Hong Kong service industries (four traditional pillars and six new areas).
3. High speed rail is a strong competitor for short haul air trips by offering a comparable door-to-door journey time with a competitive price and often more reliable service. It is acceptable as a far more sustainable service for regional travels, in terms of energy consumption and environmental impacts.

On the terminal station, we have considered the West Kowloon option, i.e. the Government's proposal, and the alternative Kam Sheung Road (KSR) option proposed by Professional Commons.

Views are divided, but the big majority considers the Government proposal to be the better:

- We consider early connection to be in our interest, we understand from Government that the KSR proposal may incur delays over the programmed completion date for the Government proposal;
- We understand from Government and MTRCL that the KSR option cannot be serviced by the Airport Express/Tung Chung lines due to the anticipated patronage growth for these two services in the short to medium terms.
- We understand from Government that the proposed KSR option would require considerable land resumption, well in excess of that for the West Kowloon option,

and would encroach onto other infrastructure in the area requiring for example temporary or permanent diversion of Route 3;

- We understand from Government that the proposed KSR option, being far away from the central commercial district would result in a dramatic loss of passengers on the Express Line;
- We understand from Government that the projected costs of the KSR option would likely far exceed the order of costs indicated by Professional Commons;
- We believe that the West Kowloon option is more attractive for most likely users, including business travellers and tourists from the Mainland.
- We do not believe that the KSR option can or should be used as a force to encourage development in the KSR area, nor is such envisaged by the planners.

We hope that in the implementation the Government will pursue the following:

- Co-location of CIQ (Customs, Immigration and Quarantine) facilities of both Hong Kong and the Mainland within the terminal to facilitate smooth passage across the boundary
- Facilitation of transfer from the Airport Express/Tung Chung Line Kowloon Station and the West Rail Austin Road Station to the West Kowloon terminal, to minimise the time taken for railway passenger interchange
- Implementation, by the time of opening of the new railway, of necessary and substantial road schemes in the vicinity to ensure smooth traffic flow in the already heavily congested roads surrounding West Kowloon – Austin Road, Canton Road etc.
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