

Press Release

PRESS STATEMENT

30 June 2005

MTR Corporation welcomes Government's decision on West Island Line and South Island Line

The MTR Corporation welcomes the Government's decision to proceed with detailed planning and preparations for the West Island Line and to continue the study on the proposed South Island Line together with the overall planning review on the Southern District.

The Corporation will immediately commence negotiations with the Government on the detailed scope, cost and implementation programme for the West Island Line.

As part of its proposal to the Government in February 2005, the Corporation recommended that the existing Island Line be extended westward to Sai Ying Pun, University and Kennedy Town. This extension is known as the West Island Line. The proposal for West Island Line was in response to the long standing demands from residents in the Western District for improved transport, as well as to support the HKSAR Government's policy of using railways as the backbone of public transport in Hong Kong.

The Corporation has worked closely with the residents of the Western District in the past years to ensure that the railway will be built to best suit their needs. The West Island Line will not only provide convenient and reliable MTR service to the 200,000 people living and working in the Western District, it will also make the University of Hong Kong more accessible to students and other associates from all parts of Hong Kong. Journey time from the Western District to other parts of Hong Kong will be significantly reduced. For example, the journey time by rail from Kennedy Town to Central will be 7 minutes, compared to 30 minutes by road. To Tsim Sha Tsui, it will be 14 minutes, compared to more than 40 minutes by road.

The Corporation will also work with the Government to further develop the proposed South Island Line in the light of the results of the overall planning review of the tourism and commercial development in the Southern District and the Ocean Park

Re-development. The South Island Line (East) will provide convenient and efficient transport to the New Ocean Park, supporting it to become another major tourist attraction in Hong Kong.

Studies showed that the South Island Line will generate substantial social, economic, environmental and transport benefits to the Southern District, and the community at large. Through the redevelopment of the Southern District, it is estimated that the South Island Line will lead to increased economic activities and generate 20,000 to 40,000 long term new employment. With the South Island Line, travel time from Wong Chuk Hang to Admiralty could be reduced from the current 30 minutes by road to 6 minutes by rail.

The MTR Corporation will continue to work with the Government to bring the new MTR lines forward.

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