

## LCQ13: Facilities of West Kowloon Station of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Chan Han-pan and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (June 4):

Question:

Quite a number of members of the public have relayed that the absence of refreshment vending facilities or automatic vending machines in the waiting hall for departing passengers at the West Kowloon Station (WKS) of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, coupled with the many shops that have been left vacant for a long time in the waiting hall area, has affected passengers' service experience at WKS. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the current vacancy situation of shops in the waiting hall area at WKS, and the main reasons for such shops being left vacant;
- (2) as the Government indicated in its reply to a question from a Member of this Council on December 11 last year that it was actively working with the MTR Corporation Limited on the details of the arrangement for providing food and beverages services and shops in the waiting hall at WKS, of the progress of the relevant work; and
- (3) as some members of the public have relayed that the relatively basic ancillary facilities of the Lounge at WKS have affected travellers' perception of WKS, whether the Government has discussed and explored improvement proposals with the relevant parties; if so, of the details of and implementation arrangement for the improvement proposals; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) connects with the over 47 000 kilometres long national high-speed rail network. It is a key component of the highly accessible transport network and economic circle of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and consolidates Hong Kong's position as a regional transport hub. To fully unleash the transport, social and economic benefits of the XRL and maximise the convenience to passengers, the "co-location arrangement" is implemented at the Hong Kong West Kowloon Station (WEK), enabling passengers to complete the clearance procedures of Hong Kong and the Mainland at the station consecutively.

My consolidated reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Chan Han-pan is as follows:

At the design stage of the WEK, consideration has been given to the operational needs of the station, with spaces reserved for shops. At present, there is a diversity of shops and vending machines on Level B1, B2 and Ground Level of the WEK to meet the different needs of passengers. The majority of the retail spaces have already been leased out. Since the commissioning of the XRL Hong Kong Section and WEK in 2018, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), as the Hong Kong operator of the XRL Hong Kong Section, has been closely monitoring the operation of the station as well as the travelling pattern and demand of passengers while continuously enhancing the station facilities and XRL services as necessary. The MTRCL also maintains ongoing communication with its tenants and reviews the operation of the shops for continuous enhancement of services and customer experience.

The waiting hall at the WEK falls within the boundary of the Mainland Port Area (MPA), where all operating arrangements (including the provision of shops) must comply with the "co-location arrangement". The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is actively working with the MTRCL on refining the arrangement for providing food and beverage services and shops at the waiting hall in the MPA. There have been preliminary discussions with the relevant Mainland authorities regarding the feasible arrangements for the operation of shops and the regulatory work. Further follow-up is underway, with a view to providing food and beverage services and shops at the waiting hall as soon as practicable to further enhance the travelling experience of passengers at the WEK.

At present, both First Class and Business Class passengers departing from WEK may use the VIP lounge while waiting for trains. To further enhance the travelling experience of Business Class passengers, the MTRCL has set up a dedicated lounge for Business Class passengers to provide them with a more comfortable waiting environment. In addition, with a steady growth in patronage since the service resumption of the XRL Hong Kong Section, the MTRCL has re-planned the queueing layout and design of the waiting hall on Level B3 last year, including extending the entrances of some of the boarding gates towards the centre of the hall, enhancing signage and using large electronic displays to provide train information to facilitate the entry and boarding of passengers and enhance their overall travelling experience on the XRL. The MTRCL has also been providing additional seats progressively at all levels of the WEK since August 2024. In particular, a total of over 1 300 seats have been provided at the waiting hall on Level B3 across the various waiting areas for use by passengers in need. Meanwhile, the MTRCL will reserve sufficient queuing space in the waiting areas to ensure that passengers can queue for boarding the trains in a smooth and orderly manner during peak periods.

The HKSAR Government and the MTRCL will continue to monitor the operation of the XRL Hong Kong Section and the WEK, and will review and upgrade station facilities in a timely manner to meet the needs of passengers.