

TAC discusses application for tram fare increase and briefed on work and progress of MTRCL in building rail tech ecosystem

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) today (March 12) discussed the fare increase application from Hong Kong Tramways Limited (HKT) and received a briefing from MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) on its work and progress in building a rail tech ecosystem.

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The TAC Chairman, Professor Stephen Cheung, said, "Members noted that HKT is facing fierce competition from other public transport modes and its patronage has not yet recovered to the pre-pandemic level, while the non-farebox revenue could be quite volatile. At the same time, the operating costs of HKT have been rising and continuous capital expenditure is required to implement improvement projects.

"In deliberating on the fare increase application, members have considered and balanced all relevant factors, including HKT's latest operation situation and financial forecast, improvement projects being implemented and public acceptability. Members also appreciate the Government's continuous effort in exploring other alternatives with HKT to ensure its financial sustainability."

"Similar to other fare increase applications, the TAC will submit its advice to the Government on the fare increase application from HKT for consideration by the Chief Executive in Council," Professor Cheung added.

In addition, members were briefed on the work and progress of MTRCL in building a rail tech ecosystem. MTRCL conducted a strategic review in 2020 and decided to introduce more innovative technologies in the corporation's businesses under the broad direction of "Transforming the Future" to enhance its operations and asset management. Through collaboration with the Government, research institutions, tertiary institutions, etc, MTRCL develops various innovative solutions to facilitate the development and application of such technologies in railway operations and constructions, thereby providing a better travel experience to passengers.

Professor Cheung said, "Members support MTRCL's development and utilisation of innovative technologies. It not only enhances MTR services and passenger experience but also contributes to the smart city development in Hong Kong. Members also expressed appreciation to MTRCL for its active collaboration with various stakeholders and its effort in nurturing talent in the innovation and technology (I&T) field, which inject new impetus into the I&T ecosystem."