

Barrier-free access and noise situation of individual MTR stations

Barrier-free access

- At present, there is at least one barrier-free access at every MTR station for the convenience of the mobility impaired in travelling to and from the stations. These accesses are equipped with passenger lifts, wheelchair aids, stair lifts or ramps. The MTRCL strives to, as far as practically feasible, install at each station one passenger lift connecting the street level and concourse. However, before adding facilities, such as entrances/exits or lifts, to those stations built in earlier years, MTRCL would need to first ascertain if there is enough space in the station area, and also consider the feasibility and complexity of the works as well as emergency evacuation arrangements.

Lam Tin Station

- The barrier-free access of Lam Tin Station is situated at Exit C. According to the MTRCL, given the physical constraint of Lam Tin Station, which is built on the hillside, it is extremely difficult to provide barrier-free facilities at other exits of the station. Nevertheless, the MTRCL endeavoured to make suitable arrangements by launching a free pilot barrier-free connection service for Lam Tin Station in 2016. With this service, wheelchair users can conveniently travel from the uphill Exits A and D1 to Exit C, which is equipped with barrier-free access. Members of the Kwun Tong District Council and wheelchair passengers generally welcome this initiative.

Kowloon Bay Station

- Currently, the MTRCL is responsible for managing the passenger flow and hygiene of the footbridge connecting to Exit A of Kowloon Bay Station. In response to local views, the Government has explored the feasibility of converting part of the stairs into a ramp. However, the viaduct of the MTR Kwun Tong Line above the staircases

restricted the headroom. If a ramp is added at the staircase, the headroom of the ramp will be less than 1.7 metre, falling short of the design standard of a footbridge.

- As there was no sufficient space to add a ramp which would be up to standard, the Government installed a stair lift to facilitate wheelchair passengers to travel between the footbridge and Kowloon Bay Station. The routine maintenance of the stair lift is provided by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD). The EMSD has already provided wheelchair passengers with safety instructions by the side of the stair lift, and stepped up the monitoring and maintenance of the stair lift. Besides, the Transport Department has requested special assistance from the MTRCL. Station staff will provide assistance to passengers as far as possible when the stair lift is out of order.
- Due to the abovementioned limitation of the insufficient headroom, a ramp which is up to standard can only be constructed separately from the existing footbridge. As stated in the latest Policy Agenda Booklet, the Government will investigate the feasibility of providing a new footbridge across Kwun Tong Road near Exit A of Kowloon Bay Station, providing suitable barrier free access.

Yau Tong Station and Lok Fu Station

- The open space outside Exit A of Lok Fu Station is a piece of government land. To assist wheelchair passengers to enter and leave Lok Fu Station, the MTRCL built a barrier-free access ramp outside Exit A in 2000. As to the barrier free access connecting Exit B of Yau Tong Station and the covered walkway and Yau Lai Shopping Centre, it was built and managed by the Housing Department.
- The examples above touch on the purviews of various Government departments and the MTRCL. Taking into account resources allocation and impact of the works on daily operation of the railway stations, relevant Government departments and the MTRCL are pleased to continue to explore the suggestion of adding a cover for the ramps so as to respond to community's needs as far as possible.

Noise

- Noise is generated when the wheels of the running trains come into contact with the train rails, both being made of steel. In fact, some of the railway lines (such as the East Rail Line, Tsuen Wan Line, Kwun Tong Line and Island Line) were constructed before the enactment of the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO). There are practical difficulties and constraints in retrofitting them with noise abatement facilities. In this connection, section 37 of the NCO also stipulates that the NCO shall apply to the MTRCL only so far as is practicable and compatible with the discharge of any function or the exercise of any power or duty conferred or imposed upon it according to law. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) will carry out investigations upon receipt of complaints against noise. If the noise levels of MTR trains in operation are found to have exceeded the standards under the NCO, the EPD will require the MTRCL to adopt various practicable measures to abate the noise from running trains as far as possible, with due regard to the actual conditions of each and every case and the rail sections involved, the technology available and the site conditions. Those measures include regular grinding of the tracks and wheels; proper maintenance of trains and rails; application of lubricant to the wheels. In recent years, the MTRCL has also installed low-noise steel joints on the tracks of the viaducts of the Kwun Tong Line to further reduce the noise of the trains passing the joints. EPD will continue to monitor the train operations on the Kwun Tong Line and will request the MTRCL to ensure that the rails are kept in good condition through maintenance programmes, so as to minimise the noise during operation.