

SETW's opening remarks at Bills Committee of Railway Merger Bill meeting

Following is a translation of the opening remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works, Dr Sarah Liao, at the Bills Committee of Railway Merger Bill meeting today (March 30):

Honourable Members have started the discussion on the Railway Merger Bill (the Bill) for a long time. We really hope that we can complete all the legislative procedures of the Bill by the end of this Legislative Council session. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, there is public demand asking that the rail systems merger be speeded up so that the public can be benefited by the fare reduction brought by the merger. Secondly, the MTR Corporation Limited is a publicly listed company. We want to minimise the uncertainty incurred because any prolonged uncertainty is likely to affect the operation of the whole railway system. Thirdly, the staff of the two railway companies are very concerned about the merger. Their morale may be undermined by the uncertain situation at present. Therefore, I really hope that we can complete all the legislative procedures as soon as possible.

We aim at resolving all the items today that have been discussed. As regards other outstanding issues, we shall try to tackle them when we discuss the Committee Stage Amendments.

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