

## Gazettal of amendments to Shatin to Central Link

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The Government published in the Gazette today (November 11) the second stage amendments to the railway scheme for the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) under section 7 and section 8 of the Railways Ordinance.

The SCL scheme gazetted in November 2010 includes a 17-kilometre-long railway with a total of 10 stations at Tai Wai, Hin Keng, Diamond Hill, Kai Tak, To Kwa Wan, Ma Tau Wai, Ho Man Tin, Hung Hom, northern Wan Chai and Admiralty. The railway will run mostly underground and will consist of two parts, namely the Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section, which will be an extension of the existing Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai to the West Rail Line via East Kowloon, and the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section, which will be an extension of the existing East Rail Line from Hung Hom across the harbour to Hong Kong Island.

Since the gazetting of the SCL scheme, the Government and the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) have been keeping in close contact with the respective District Councils and major stakeholders to listen to their views.

A Government spokesman said, "Owing to the extensive scale of the SCL, which passes through a number of districts, a variety of public concerns are involved. To strive to commence the construction works in 2012, we are amending the SCL scheme in two stages. By doing so, we can handle the necessary changes of the scheme in a more effective manner that enables us to achieve the target for completing the statutory consultation process within the first half of 2012.

"The first stage amendments gazetted on July 15 were mainly related to the technical aspects to accommodate a number of changes and improvement measures proposed by the MTRCL, which has been carrying out the detailed design, and in light of the ground investigation obtained.

"The second stage amendments gazetted today are to introduce appropriate amendments, as far as practicable, to further respond to the views and concerns of the public."

The spokesman explained, "The proposed amendments are the outcome of a series of detailed discussions with the District Councils and local people in the past

year, coupled with concerted efforts made by the Government and the MTRCL. In this regard, we have paid our greatest effort to enhance the SCL design, which will provide a strategic railway network to substantially improve the traffic conditions over a number of districts, and at the same time to address local needs and reduce the impact to a minimum.

"We are planning to complete the remaining statutory process under the Railways Ordinance in early 2012. However, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the SCL has been delayed by eight months due to the effect of the Judicial Review on the EIA of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge project. Since the Court of Appeal's unanimous decision in September, which upheld the appeal of the Director of Environmental Protection, we have resumed and are expediting the delayed EIA process. Although the schedule is extremely tight, we are striving to complete the process before mid-2012. Our target is to apply for funding approval before the 2012 summer recess of the Legislative Council with a view to commencing construction of the SCL within 2012."

Under the Railways Ordinance, members of the public have the right to lodge objections to the amendments to the SCL scheme gazetted today from now until January 10, 2012. Any person who has a compensatable interest can claim compensation under the provisions of the Ordinance.

The amendments to the scheme and the relevant plans are available for public inspection at the Public Enquiry Service Centres of the Central and Western, Wan Chai, Eastern, Southern, Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City, Wong Tai Sin, Kwun Tong, Sai Kung, Sha Tin, Tai Po and North District offices, and the District Lands Offices of Hong Kong East, Hong Kong West and South, Kowloon East, Kowloon West, Sha Tin, Tai Po, North and Sai Kung, during office hours.

A copy of the Amendments to Scheme and the Amendment Plans may be purchased from the Railway Development Office of the Highways Department. Enquiries on purchasing details can be made to the Highways Department at telephone number 2762 3976. The electronic version of the Amendments to Scheme and the Amendment Plans are viewable on the Highways Department's website ([www.hyd.gov.hk/eng/major/road/rail/index.htm](http://www.hyd.gov.hk/eng/major/road/rail/index.htm)).

Further enquiries regarding the amendments to the scheme can be addressed to the Highways Department at telephone number 2762 4038 or to the Transport and

Housing Bureau at telephone number 2189 2132 during office hours.

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