The major railway operator in Hong Kong is the MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRCL") who operates 11 heavy rail lines and one light rail line, and the average daily patronage exceeds 5 million. The entire system comprises 93 stations and 68 light rail stops with total route length and track length of about 230.9 km and 674.7 km respectively.

The railway systems in Hong Kong also include trams (total route length 16.7 km, track length 32.3 km and 120 stops), the Peak Tramway (total route length 1.365 km, track length 1.498 km and 2 terminals plus 4 intermediate stops) as well as the Automated People Mover at the Hong Kong International Airport (total route length 4.7 km, track length 7.53 km and 5 stations).

Roles and Duties of Railways Branch

The Railways Branch ("RB") under EMSD is the regulatory authority on railway safety in Hong Kong. The RB regulates and monitors the safe operation of the railway systems operated by the MTRCL. The main functions of the RB include:

- ensuring the adoption of appropriate safety practices by the railway operator;
- investigating into safety-related railway incidents and following up the railway operator’s improvement measures;
- assessing and approving new railway projects and modifications to the existing major railway facilities;
- providing professional support on railway safety to government bureaux and other government departments;
- handling complaints and enquiries on matters related to railway safety, and
- promoting public railway safety.

Apart from the above, the RB is also responsible for regulating and monitoring the safe operation of trams, the Peak Tramway and the Automated People Mover at the Hong Kong International Airport.

For details, please visit the RB homepage at www.emsd.gov.hk/emsd/eng/pps/railway.shtml

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1 All tracks (two-way) including running lines, sidings, overruns and depots