

Action taken on rail failures: Scott

THE Secretary for Transport, Mr Alan Scott, gave an assurance yesterday that action had been taken over the series of breakdowns affecting KCRC trains.

Scott told Mrs Pauline Ng in the Legislative Council meeting that the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation had taken appropriate steps over the problem.

He said an internal inquiry would report in January and a copy of its conclusions would be forwarded to the government.

A decision would be made then on whether or not to hold a public inquiry. "In any case, there will be a full public statement. Inspectors have been appointed by the government for many years to ensure safety on the railway and to investigate accidents."

"The most recent appointment was the final inspection in mid-1983 before the public

opening of the final stage of electrification of the KCRC, by an Inspector of Railways of the UK Ministry of Transport," Scott said.

The inspector had been invited to return early in 1985, "somewhat earlier than was envisaged for his regular visit."

The KCRC had already decided to strengthen its emergency passenger service teams which are sent out to stations affected by service disruptions, Scott said.

He added that the procedure for notifying passengers of defects on the line was "under review."

Scott also told the Legislative Council that there had been no prosecutions of taxi drivers for refusing to accept a hire in the vicinity of Taikoktsui pier during the past year.

Nor had there been any reports to the police alleging this offence.

There had been problems with taxis in this area earlier in the year when the taxi stand was about 100 metres from the pier.

Since then, the stand had been moved closer and there had been no further reports of trouble.

Scott added: "It would be appreciated if members of the public who suffer from such illegal behaviour would report the matter to the police promptly."

On another subject, Scott said the need was being considered for a light-controlled crossing in Pokfulam Road, in an area where a number of fatal accidents had occurred in the last 15 months.

He said a survey to record traffic flow would be finished this week.

The number of accidents involving pedestrians near the zebra crossing close to houses

No. 140-142 had been small until recently, Scott said.

On October 25, a goods vehicle hit a family of three on the crossing.

One person died and the other two were injured.

Asked by Mr N.K. Chan whether the government had any plans to make use of areas beneath flyovers, Scott replied: "It is government policy to make the best use of land beneath flyovers, having regard to local needs."

"Typical uses include local open space, refuse-collection points, public toilets, vehicle parking and recreation and community facilities."

Scott said the use of the space beneath the Island Eastern Corridor was "in the planning stage" in consultation with district boards and government departments.