



## MEDIA RELEASE

# UTILITY DISRUPTIONS ALSO DUE TO UNMAPPED UTILITIES

## **Additional RM22m incurred due to utility damage, could total to RM150m**

Kuala Lumpur, 27 September 2013: Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) has responded to Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor's (SYABAS) claim that water disruptions are caused by MRT works, saying that some utility companies do not have updated utility maps. Taking utility companies to task over unmapped public utility services, MRT Corp says it has become a major issue in their construction work, and is resulting in costs going up unnecessarily.

"It's unfair of SYABAS to place the blame entirely on the MRT project. While it is true that there are many cases of disruption in all types of public utilities, some are due to the presence of unmapped services. This means that area which isn't supposed to have utility lines running through them actually do, and this must be addressed by utility companies," says MRT Corp CEO, Dato' Azhar Abdul Hamid.

Public utility services, which include water, electricity and telecommunications, are mapped by utility owners, and all construction work that requires temporary or permanent removal or relocation of these services are based on maps provided by the utility owners themselves.

For the record, up to 27 September 2013, there have been **97** reported cases of utility damage across the various MRT project sites. SYABAS and Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) lead the list with **51** and **27** cases respectively. Telekom Malaysia (TM) has **11** reported cases.



“There are obviously costs associated with such incidents. Up to August 2013, this has cost us some RM22 million, attributed to repair and additional work. Direct costs are the repair work, which includes both parts as well as labour costs. Relocating of unmapped utilities is considered an additional cost, given that it was not costed into the original pricing. All in, we estimate if things don’t improve, MRT Corp will incur an additional RM150 million due to unmapped utilities,” he explains.

Dato’ Azhar further explains that MRT Corp double-checks the data it receives from owners through scans and physical checks during the “piloting works” stage. However some utilities may not be detected by the scanner. Plastic for example, isn’t detected by the scanners. This underlines the need to have updated and current maps issued out to contractors.

“Some of our scan work has prevented a service disruption. In one incident last year, a major power supply cable was detected on Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock, which was not in the utility map. Thankfully we were able to avoid a disruption. But obviously there are also other challenges such as deteriorating condition of the utility, which means it is easily damaged,” explains Dato’ Azhar further.

Dato’ Azhar says it’s a problem that should not occur, since utility owners should have updated information about the location of their utilities.

“The onus is on them as owners of the utilities to ensure that this data is accurate. The construction industry in Malaysia cannot be burdened by this information gap.”

Dato’ Azhar is also concerned over the intangible cost to the end user of the utility, saying that over and above the cost escalation, it can cause a lot of inconvenience to the public. Such disruptions can inconvenience thousands of users at one time, and depending on the gravity, services may take days to be restored.

Dato’ Azhar has suggested that a body be formed by the appropriate agency to become a one-stop centre for such data.



“Perhaps it is time one body be set up to have a central repository of such information. Projects that require utility relocation must be compelled to submit their re-routed utility maps before the Certificate of Completion and Compliance (CCC) is issued. A one-stop centre for the location of all utility services can be a boon to the construction industry. For sure, it will enable construction projects to manage costs better, apart from reducing inconvenience to the public,” says Dato’ Azhar.

He acknowledges that there are cases where the contractor was at fault, but explains that this is not the major reason utility services are affected. MRT Corp deals with those cases directly with the contractor.

MRT Corp says it continues to work together with utility owners to minimise the number of incidents, and adds that they are receiving good cooperation from the companies.

**ENDS**

### **About the MRT Project**

*MRT is a new rail transport system for the Klang Valley. It is part of the government’s Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley’s National Key Economic Area (NKEA), under the Economic Transformation Programme. The Sungai Buloh – Kajang (SBK) Line runs for 51kms, from the north-west town of Sg Buloh to the south-east city town of Kajang. Upon completion, it will comprise 31 stations, and serve 1.2 million people along the route. It will also have strategic integration with KL’s existing rail transport network, namely the LRT, Monorail and KTM Komuter, as well as intra and inter-city bus routes. The end result will be better connectivity for KL and its surrounding cities, while reducing the number of cars that enter the capital.*

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