

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

DEVB(PL)046

Question Serial No.

0089

Head : 82 Buildings Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme: Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question :

Regarding the completion of an interim review on the operation of the joint office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to handle public complaints about water seepage problems in "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2008-09", will the Administration inform this Committee:

- (1) the details of the review, its anticipated date of completion, manpower involved and expenditure required?
- (2) among those cases conducting water seepage tests, what is the ratio of different testing methods employed (for example, coloured water test, flow meter test, reversible pressure test, water ponding test for floor/roof slab, fluorescent water test and infrared temperature test, etc.)? What are the reasons for employing those methods, and their effectiveness?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

Since July 2006, the Buildings Department (BD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have extended the operation of the pilot Joint Office (JO) to handle public complaints about water seepage problems to the whole territory under a three-year programme. The JO has commenced a mid-term review on the effectiveness of the programme for the first 18 months of operation. The review will be completed shortly. No additional staff resource is required to carry out the review.

As the causes of water seepage vary, the investigation of suspected seepage sources involves a method of elimination through a series of systematic non-destructive testing and analysis of findings depending on the site conditions and needs of the concerned cases. To detect any seepage from a drainage pipe within a floor slab, for example, the investigator will pour coloured water into the sanitary fitment outlet and afterwards observe any water seepage underneath. Similar to the coloured water test for sanitary fitments, the coloured water ponding test is applied for floor or roof slabs. For suspected leakage from water supply pipes, the water meter flow check or reversible pressure test is applied. The infra red thermographic scanner can detect the variations of temperature, and hence is used to detect the presence of water on a surface.

Coloured water test and water ponding test are used in most cases. They are simple and effective tests for application in most situations and may attain a high success rate. However, no testing method or equipment would be able to detect the source if the seepage is very mild or intermittent. The JO does not keep statistical breakdowns on the tests applied in individual cases.

Signature _____

Name in block letters CHEUNG Hau-wai

Post Title Director of Buildings

Date 28 March 2008