

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

DEVB(PL)081

Question Serial No.

2371

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

Programme: Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Buildings Department will continue the operation of the pilot Joint Office (JO) with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to handle public reports about water seepage problems for another two years from 2012-13. What is the estimated expenditure for the programme? Are there sufficient staff in the existing establishment of the JO to cope with the work concerned? Please provide the respective number of cases processed in 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Asked by: Hon. CHIANG Lai-wan

Reply:

Water seepage in private premises is primarily a matter of building management and maintenance for property owners. However, if the problem of water seepage causes public health nuisance, building structural safety risks or wastage of water, the Government will consider intervention by exercising the relevant statutory powers. To facilitate action, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Buildings Department (BD) have established the Joint Office (JO) as a pilot programme since 2006 to co-ordinate investigation of reports on water seepage and taking of enforcement actions. The programme has been extended for another two years from 2012-13 involving provision of 64 professional and technical staff from the BD at an estimated staff and departmental expenses of about \$26 million per year, and an estimated expenditure of about \$23 million per year for engaging outsourced consultants to assist in conducting professional investigation on water seepage cases. The Administration is now conducting a review on the long-term role, organisation and staffing of the JO.

The JO handled 23 210 and 24 553 reports on water seepage in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

Name in block letters: AU Choi-kai

Post Title: Director of Buildings

Date: 2.4.2013