

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

**DEVB(PL)106**

Question Serial No.

2297

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 continued the operation of the pilot Joint Office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to handle public reports about water seepage problems. Will the Government provide the number of cases received, number of cases handled, number of cases completed and the average handling time on cases by the pilot Joint Office in 2011-12 and 2012-13? How many staffs and cost have been allocated to the pilot Joint Office in 2012-13 and 2013-14? What are the additional manpower and establishment involved?

Asked by: Hon. TSE Wai-chuen, Tony

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 relevant statistics on the numbers of water seepage reports received and handled by the JO in the past two years are tabulated below:

<b>Number of Reports</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Reports received <sup>Note 1</sup>	23 660	27 353
Reports handled	23 210	24 553

Note 1 : As there is a lapse of time between receipt of a report and completion of handling a report, the number of reports handled in a year does not necessarily correspond to the number of reports received in that year.

The JO does not keep statistics on the average handling time for water seepage cases.

Name in block letters: AU Choi-kai  
Post Title: Director of Buildings  
Date: 2.4.2013