

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**DEVB(PL)090**

**(Question Serial No. 2359)**

Head: (82) Buildings Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified  
Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works  
Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (HUI Siu-wai)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The following questions on requests for assistance on water seepage are raised:

- (a) Please provide the respective numbers of inspections conducted regarding requests for assistance on water seepage, actual prosecutions instigated, successful prosecutions, average number of inspections conducted for each request and average number of days for handling each request in each of the past three years, as well as the estimated figures for each of the above in 2016-17, broken down by District Council districts.
- (b) Please list the areas of work and numbers of staff of the divisions and grades responsible for handling requests for assistance on water seepage.
- (c) In view of the trend of the number of requests for assistance on water seepage, will the authorities increase the manpower? If so, what will be the increase in manpower for each grade responsible for law enforcement? If not, what are the reasons for that?
- (d) What are the current details of the "study on the latest technological methods in identifying the sources of water seepage"? What are the specific work details and timetable in 2016-17?

Asked by: Hon POON Siu-ping (Member Question No. 49)

Reply:

- (a) Statistics on prosecutions instigated and convictions in respect of water seepage reports handled by the Joint Office (JO) of the Buildings Department (BD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) in the past three years are tabulated below –

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Prosecutions instigated	96	88	61
Convictions <sup>(1)</sup>	50	60	44

Note<sup>(1)</sup> The figures do not necessarily correspond to the number of prosecutions instigated in the same year.

There is no breakdown of the above statistics by District Council districts. The JO is unable to predict the number of prosecutions to be instigated and the number of convictions in 2016-17.

The JO does not compile statistics on the number of inspections conducted and the handling time for individual water seepage cases. The number of inspections and the time required for investigating a water seepage case varies due to a number of factors, including the nature and complexity of the case and whether the relevant owners and occupants are cooperative. Therefore, the JO is unable to predict the number of inspections and the time required for handling a water seepage case in 2016-17.

- (b)&(c) In 2016-17, the operation of the JO involves 64 professional and technical staff from the BD as well as 219 investigation staff from the FEHD. The 64 BD staff comprise two Senior Professional Officers, 10 Professional Officers, 26 Technical Officers and 26 Survey Officers, whereas the 219 FEHD staff comprise 15 Senior Health Inspectors, 128 Health Inspectors and 76 Environmental Nuisance Investigators. Generally speaking, the FEHD staff are responsible for carrying out initial investigation of the source of water seepage, as well as undertaking enforcement actions such as issuing nuisance notices and instigating prosecutions where necessary. In cases where professional investigation by outsourced consultants is required, the Professional Officers of the BD are responsible for monitoring the work of the consultants and coordinating the investigation process with the support of the Technical Officers and Survey Officers. While there is no increase in manpower compared to 2015-16, the BD and the FEHD will monitor the manpower situation and seek additional resources under established procedures as and when necessary.
- (d) The consultancy study on the latest technological methods in identifying sources of water seepage in buildings commenced in October 2014. The study researches into technological matters relating to water seepage investigation in buildings both locally and overseas. It will assess and recommend the most suitable testing methods for use in private buildings as well as help formulate technical guidelines for use by the JO. The study is expected to complete in early 2017 and the JO will then consider how best to follow up on the findings.

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