

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 3439)

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:

Regarding the problem of water seepage, please inform this Committee:

- 1) of the statistics on the numbers of water seepage complaints received, cases handled, cases with the source of seepage identified and applications to the court for entry warrants in each year from 2013 to 2016;
- 2) of the general follow-up work for cases where the source of seepage cannot be identified;
- 3) of the number of prosecutions instigated against owners connected with the source of seepage under the relevant provisions of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance and the number of convictions last year;
- 4) of the staff establishment and operational expenses of the Joint Office (JO) deployed by the Government in each year from 2013 to 2016; and
- 5) of the percentage of the expenditure of the JO spent on equipment for checking the source of seepage; and the estimated expenditure in the past three years for procurement of new equipment to increase the chance of successfully identifying the source of seepage.

Asked by: Hon WU Chi-wai (Member Question No. 98)

Reply:

- 1) Statistics on water seepage reports received, reports handled, cases with source of water seepage identified and entry warrants granted by the Court in the past three years are tabulated below –

Number of Cases	2013	2014	2015
Reports received	28 504	27 896	29 617
Reports handled ⁽¹⁾	24 856	22 056	25 093
• Cases screened out ⁽²⁾	13 062	10 961	12 000
• Cases with investigations concluded	11 794	11 095	13 093
Cases with source identified ⁽¹⁾	4 692	4 816	4 679
Entry warrants granted by the Court ⁽¹⁾	64	74	64

Note ⁽¹⁾: The figures do not necessarily correspond to the number of reports received in the same year.

Note ⁽²⁾: These include unjustified cases and withdrawn cases, in respect of which no investigation will be made by the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Buildings Department (BD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD).

- 2) For cases where the source of water seepage cannot be ascertained, the JO will notify the persons who lodged the water seepage reports and keep the investigation information for reference. Such persons may contact JO should the seepage condition deteriorate or when there is new information which may be useful for the investigation.
- 3) In 2015, the JO instigated 61 prosecutions against building owners connected with sources of water seepage under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance and there were 44 convictions. As there is a lapse of time between the instigation of prosecution and adjudication by the Court, the number of convictions may not necessarily correspond to that of the prosecutions instigated in the same year.
- 4) The staff establishment and the expenditure of the BD and the FEHD in connection with the operation of the JO in the past three years are tabulated below –

BD	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of professional and technical staff	64	64	64
Staff cost and departmental expenses (\$ million)	23	29	30 (estimated)
Expenditure for engaging outsourced consultants (\$ million)	24	28	30 (estimated)

FEHD	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of investigation staff	219	219	219
Staff cost and departmental expenses (\$ million)	70.8	72.1	81 (estimated)

- 5) Outsourced consultants engaged by the JO may make use of different methods and equipment in investigating sources of water seepage. We are not able to provide a breakdown of the expenditure spent solely on equipment.

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