

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)092

(Question Serial No. 1050)

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

Question:

The Buildings Department (BD) has listed identifying the sources of water seepage in buildings as one of the Matters Requiring Special Attention in the past years, yet the ineffectiveness of the BD and the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has been subject to criticism by members of the public for a long time, while the value for money audit by the Audit Commission also cited a considerable number of maladministration-related problems. Would the Director of Buildings inform this Committee:

- 1) of the policies and measures in the new financial year to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the JO in response to the recommendations of the audit report and the Public Accounts Committee, and to ensure the expenditure on identifying the sources of water seepage in buildings will be properly utilised by the Department and the JO, producing value for money;
- 2) of the estimated expenditures and manpower required for the work mentioned above.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (Member Question No. 1)

Reply:

- 1) The Joint Office (JO) has been implementing a series of improvement measures to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in the handling of reports on water seepage in buildings, including enhancing its management information system to ensure timely handling of cases, improving its record keeping and filing system, stepping up monitoring of the contractors' performance, continuing the consultancy study on the latest technological methods with a view to identifying the source of water seepage more effectively, and fostering building owners' awareness of their responsibilities in building maintenance and repair through publicity and public education. The JO will continue its efforts in these aspects. In parallel, the JO is also taking measures to implement the relevant recommendations made by the Audit Commission and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Legislative Council within practical limits. The PAC will be kept informed of the implementation progress.

- 2) The staff establishment and the estimated expenditures of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Buildings Department (BD) for the operation of the JO in 2017-18 are tabulated below –

FEHD

Number of investigation staff	220
Staff cost and departmental expenses (\$ million)	94 (estimated)

BD

Number of professional and technical staff	64
Staff cost and departmental expenses (\$ million)	33 (estimated)
Expenditure for engaging outsourced consultants (\$ million)	30 (estimated)

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