

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(PL)098****(Question Serial No. 2381)**

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:

What is the number of complaint cases lodged by members of the public due to dissatisfaction with identifying the sources of water seepage in buildings to the Office of The Ombudsman, District Council Members and LegCo Members according to the records of the Buildings Department and the Joint Office in the 2016-17 financial year? What follow-up actions have been taken by the Department after receiving the complaints?

Has the Department reserved manpower to record and follow up the complaints in the 2017-18 financial year? If so, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (Member Question No. 7)

Reply:

Statistics on the numbers of complaints about “water seepage in buildings” lodged with the Office of The Ombudsman involving the Buildings Department (BD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) in 2016-17 are tabulated below -

	2016-17 (as at 3 March 2017)
BD	71
FEHD	83

The BD and the FEHD do not compile statistics on the number of complaints lodged with District Council Members and Legislative Council Members against the work of Joint Office (JO).

The cause of water seepage in a building is complicated and often involves more than one source. The JO set up by BD and FEHD will conduct a series of appropriate non-destructive tests to ascertain the source of seepage, including moisture level monitoring, colour water test at drainage outlets, ponding test for floor slabs, water spray test for walls, and reversible pressure test for water supply pipes. If necessary, JO staff will collect plaster or seepage samples at the seepage spots for analysis by the Government Laboratory. However, there may still be cases where the source of water seepage cannot be established after conducting extensive practical tests, especially where the seepage is not obvious or is only intermittent. Upon the receipt of a complaint against the result of water seepage investigation, the JO will comprehensively review the case to verify if all the practical tests have been conducted properly. For cases where the source of water seepage cannot be ascertained, the JO will record all the investigation information and inform the complainants that they may contact the JO should the seepage condition deteriorate or when there is new information which may be useful for further investigation.

The JO deals with complaints as part of its overall duties in handling reports on water seepage. We are not able to provide a breakdown of the manpower involved solely for dealing with these complaints.

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