

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)114

(Question Serial No. 3474)

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:

With regard to completing “the consultancy study on the latest technological methods in identifying the sources of water seepage in buildings”, could the authorities inform this Committee:

- the parties, manpower and resources involved for the whole consultancy study;
- the respective numbers of water seepage reports received and cases with investigation completed by the Joint Office set up by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Buildings Department, as well as the number of completed cases where the source of water seepage could not be identified in the past three years;
- whether indicators will be set for investigation time in order to complete the investigation within a specified timeframe; if so, of the details; if not, of the reasons; and
- the timetable for reviewing and implementing the new technologies.

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 105)

Reply:

The Buildings Department (BD) has engaged a consultant to study the latest technological methods for identifying sources of water seepage in buildings. The estimated expenditure of the study is \$4.5 million. The consultancy agreement is administered by BD staff of the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and BD. We are not able to provide a breakdown of the JO's manpower solely involved in the administration of the consultancy study.

Statistics on water seepage reports received, reports handled and results of investigation in the past three years are tabulated below –

Number of Cases	2015	2016	2017
Reports received	29 617	36 376	36 002
Reports handled ⁽¹⁾	25 093	29 148	30 605
• Cases screened out ⁽²⁾	12 000	13 196	14 732
• Cases with investigations concluded	13 093	15 952	15 873
- Source of water seepage identified ⁽¹⁾	4 679	6 846	6 253
- Source of water seepage could not be identified and investigation terminated ⁽¹⁾	3 494	3 721	4 172
- Seepage ceased during investigation ⁽¹⁾	4 920	5 385	5 448

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Note ⁽²⁾: These include unjustified cases and withdrawn cases, in respect of which no investigation will be made by JO.

The time spent on 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 or occupants are cooperative. As JO has to enter the premises concerned for carrying out non-destructive tests so as to identify the seepage source, JO could normally complete the investigation and inform the informant of the outcome within 90 working days with the co-operation of the concerned owners/occupiers. If the investigation could not be completed within 90 working days, JO will notify the informant of the progress of the investigation. The above investigation time frame has been stipulated in JO's "Notes to Owners/Occupiers – General Procedures for Investigating Water Seepage" which will be issued to the concerned owners/occupiers upon receipt of a water seepage report.

Additional advanced technological testing methods for investigating of water seepage in buildings such as microwave tomography and infrared thermography are proposed in the consultancy study. In the new fiscal year, we will apply these methods in pilot districts with a view to formulating detailed technical guidelines for application of these methods by JO for handling reports on water seepage. The consultancy study is scheduled for completion in 2018.

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