

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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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:

Regarding the Joint Office for Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints (JO) under the Buildings Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, please advise this Committee:

of the number of cases adopting testing methods such as infrared thermography and microwave tomography, the proportion accounted for and the percentage changes, upon the completion of the study on the latest technological methods in identifying the sources of water seepage; as well as the changes in costs and effectiveness of such testing methods.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 64)

Reply:

Reports on water seepage in buildings are handled by the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Buildings Department. Generally speaking, JO staff are responsible for carrying out initial investigation of the source of seepage. In case the initial investigation cannot identify the source of seepage, professional investigation by outsourced consultants is required. In 2018, among the 9 716 cases with professional investigation completed, 92 cases had adopted new testing technologies (i.e. infrared thermography (IT) and microwave tomography (MT)) in the investigation.

Since the second half of June 2018, JO has applied new testing technologies such as IT and MT to water seepage investigation in three pilot districts (i.e. Central and Western, Wan Chai and Kowloon City). In 2018, investigation in respect of 56 cases involving the use of IT and MT in the pilot districts were completed. Among these cases, there were nine cases where the source of seepage could not be identified by IT and MT. With the experience and data obtained through the pilot application of these new testing methods, JO will evaluate the effectiveness of the new testing technologies and refine the technical guidelines and procedures relating to the use of these testing methods. JO will progressively extend the use of IT and MT to other pilot districts in the third quarter of 2019.

Taking an ordinary domestic flat with one kitchen and one toilet as an example, the cost for engaging an outsourced consultant to conduct conventional tests is estimated to be around \$3,500 per case while the cost for adopting IT and MT is estimated to be around \$9,000. The estimates do not include the overall staffing and operating expenditure of JO.

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