

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**DEVB(PL)141**

**(Question Serial No. 1638)**

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:

In view of the better performance of infrared thermography in identifying the sources of water seepage, whether members of the public seeking assistance could take the initiative to request JO or outsourced private companies to directly adopt infrared thermography or microwave tomography to identify the sources of water seepage; if so, of the procedures; if not, of the reasons.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 67)

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.

Professional investigation to be conducted by outsourced consultants includes conventional tests, namely colour water test for drainage pipes, ponding test for floor slabs, water spray test for walls and reversible pressure test for water supply pipes. Since the second half of June 2018, outsourced consultants have applied new testing technologies such as infrared thermography (IT) and microwave tomography (MT) in the water seepage investigation in three pilot districts (i.e. Kowloon City, Wanchai and Central and Western) where applicable. Specifically, if these new testing technologies cannot be effectively applied due to, for example, spalling of concrete ceilings at the locations of water seepage, blockage of pipes and other facilities, the outsourced consultants have to resort to the conventional tests.

With the experience and data obtained through the pilot adoption of the new testing technologies as mentioned above, JO will evaluate the effectiveness of the new testing technologies and refine the technical guidelines and procedures relating to the use of the testing methods. JO will progressively extend the use of IT and MT to other pilot districts in the third quarter of 2019.

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