

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**DEVB(PL)284**

**(Question Serial No. 4633)**

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”, would the authorities inform this Committee:

- a) the parties, manpower and resources involved for the whole consultancy study;
- b) 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;
- c) 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
- d) the timetable for reviewing and implementing the new technologies.

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (LegCo internal reference no.: 118)

Reply:

- a) The consultancy study commissioned by the Buildings Department (BD) was administered by BD staff of the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and BD as part of their overall duties. The estimated expenditure of the study is about \$4.1 million. BD is not able to provide a breakdown of the manpower and expenditure solely involved in the administration of the consultancy study.

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

<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Reports received	36 376	36 002	36 684
Reports handled <sup>(1)</sup>	29 148	30 605	28 221
• Cases screened out <sup>(2)</sup>	13 196	14 732	14 571
• Cases with investigations concluded	15 952	15 873	13 650
- Source of water seepage identified	6 846	6 253	5 729
- Source of water seepage could not be identified and investigation terminated	3 721	4 172	3 164
- Seepage ceased during investigation	5 385	5 448	4 757

Note <sup>(1)</sup>: The figures do not necessarily correspond to the reports received in the same year.

Note <sup>(2)</sup>: These include unjustified cases and withdrawn cases where no investigation was conducted by JO.

- c)&d) 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 staff have to enter the premises concerned for carrying out non-destructive tests to identify the source of seepage, 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/occupants. 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/Occupants – General Procedures for Investigating Water Seepage" which will be issued to the concerned owners/occupants upon receipt of a water seepage report.

Since the second half of June 2018, JO has applied new testing technologies such as infrared thermography and microwave tomography in three pilot districts (i.e. Kowloon City, Wanchai and Central and Western). With the experience gained and data obtained through the pilot application of the 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 the testing methods. JO will progressively extend the use of the new testing methods to other pilot districts in the third quarter of 2019.

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