

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)102

(Question Serial No. 1920)

Head: (82) Buildings Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (YU Tak-cheung)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

With reference to the written reply (Reply Serial No. DEVB(PL)090) from the Department to the Special Meetings of the Finance Committee last year, it is stated that the Joint Office “is refining the technical guidelines and procedures relating to the use of the new testing technologies and is planning to gradually extend such technologies to other districts”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the latest progress of the initiative?
2. Please provide the information regarding the pilot programme since 2018, with a breakdown by District Council district in the table below:

District Council district	Number of cases adopting conventional testing methods	Number of cases adopting new testing methods

3. Has the Government compared the effectiveness between the adoption of the conventional testing methods and that of the new testing methods? What are the details?
4. Does the Department have a schedule for general adoption of the new testing methods? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. 3. & 4. Investigation of reports on water seepage in buildings is carried out by the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Buildings Department (BD). Generally speaking, JO staff would carry out initial investigation of the source of seepage, including colour water test for drainage pipes. In cases where the source of seepage cannot be identified by the initial investigation, professional investigation will be carried out with the assistance of outsourced consultants.

Since the second half of June 2018, JO has applied new testing technologies such as infrared thermography (IT) and microwave tomography (MT) in professional investigation in selected pilot districts where applicable. With the experience gained and data obtained through pilot application of the new testing technologies, JO has extended the use of these technologies to a total of 12 districts as of March 2021. It should be noted that in cases whereby these technologies cannot be effectively applied due to, for example, spalling of concrete ceilings at the locations of water seepage and blockage of pipes and other facilities, the outsourced consultants have to continue to employ the conventional testing methods. As at 31 December 2020, the success rate⁽¹⁾ of cases using the new testing technologies is about 75% which is higher than the success rate of around 65% for cases using the conventional testing methods. JO is refining the technical guidelines and procedures relating to the use of these technologies and is planning to gradually extend such technologies to other districts.

	Cases with source of water seepage identified	
Note ⁽¹⁾ : Success rate =	Cases with source of water seepage identified	+
		Cases with source of water seepage not identified and investigation completed (viz. cases where investigation has not been completed due to, e.g. seepage ceases to exist during investigation are excluded)

2. As at 31 December 2020, there were eight pilot districts for the new testing methods. The numbers of cases with conventional testing methods and new testing methods (including IT and MT) conducted in professional investigation in the eight pilot districts are tabulated as follows –

Districts	Number of cases adopting conventional testing methods	Number of cases adopting new testing methods
Central and Western	123	546
Wan Chai	106	516
Kowloon City	868	810
Sham Shui Po	257	419
Kwai Tsing	118	325
Tuen Mun	185	349
Tai Po	19	261
North	9	131

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