

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)107

(Question Serial No. 0815)

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:

Regarding the environmental hygiene nuisances caused by water seepage in buildings, will the Department provide the following information:

- a. Since June 2018, the Joint Office (JO) has launched the pilot application of technologies such as infrared thermography (IT) and microwave concrete sub-layer moisture content test to water seepage investigation. Please list the financial provision for application of these technologies such as IT and microwave tomography (MT) and the staff establishment involved for the coming year.
- b. Please provide the number of districts among the 18 districts in Hong Kong where JO identifies sources of water seepage by using IT and MT as at March 2021.
- c. Please provide the timetable for extending the application of these technologies including IT and MT to more districts.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 80)

Reply:

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 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 and microwave tomography 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 tests. 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.

In 2021-22, the estimated expenditure for engaging outsourced consultants to adopt conventional tests and the new testing technologies in water seepage investigation is around \$47 million. BD does not compile statistics solely on the expenditure by using the new testing technologies. Professional investigation with the assistance of outsourced consultants using the new testing technologies is carried out by the professional and technical staff of BD in JO as part of their overall duties in handling water seepage reports. Hence, BD is unable to provide a breakdown of the financial provision and staff establishment involved for application of these new technologies in water seepage investigation.

- End -