

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1260)

Head: (82) Buildings Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (Ms Clarice YU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the handling of water seepage under this Programme in 2022-23, please advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) What are the respective numbers of cases that the Joint Office for Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints yet to be handled in each of the past three years? What are the respective manpower and expenditure involved?
- 2) Does the Government have any plans to take measures to reduce the cumulative number of cases yet to be handled? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- 1) 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). As of 8 February 2023, the numbers of water seepage reports received by JO in the past three years with investigation still in progress are tabulated below –

Number of Cases	2020	2021	2022	Cumulative Total
(i) Reports received	39 166	43 233	39 555	121 954
(ii) Among the cases in (i) above, number of cases with investigation in progress	4	802	9 798	10 604

The staff establishment and expenditure of the JO in handling water seepage reports in buildings in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 are tabulated below –

FEHD	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of investigation and co-ordinating staff	241	250	252
Staff cost and departmental expenses (\$ million)	180.5	202.6	192.1 (estimate)

BD	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of professional and technical staff	82	82	82
Staff cost and departmental expenses (\$ million)	66.1	64.9	67.5 (estimate)
Expenditure for engaging outsourced consultants (\$ million)	37.9	47.4	38.6 (estimate)

- 2) JO has been implementing a series of improvement measures to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in the handling of reports on water seepage in buildings including expediting the completion of investigation of the ongoing cases. Such measures include: setting up four regional JOs to enhance communication between staff of JO (FEHD) and JO (BD) and operational efficiency, enhancing the Water Seepage Complaint Management System to facilitate effective monitoring of follow-up actions of water seepage cases, streamlining the work procedures to reduce the number of prior visits and standardising the documents for application for entry warrants, stepping up monitoring of the consultants' performance, and setting up customer service team to enhance public awareness on water seepage matters and to advise on practical ways to resolve water seepage disputes. The JO will continue to enhance and streamline its works procedures to achieve greater efficiency.

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