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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 10th meeting
held at the Legislative Council Chamber
on Wednesday, 29 March 2000, at 10:45 am**

Members present:

Hon HO Sai-chu, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Edward HO Sing-tin, SBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Prof Hon NG Ching-fai
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon Christine LOH
Hon CHAN Yuen-han
Hon CHAN Kam-lam
Dr Hon LEONG Che-hung, JP
Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP

Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP

Public officers attending:

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| Miss Elizabeth TSE | Deputy Secretary for the Treasury |
| Mr Augustine LEE | Principal Assistant Secretary for the Treasury (Works) |
| Mr S S LEE | Secretary for Works |
| Mr Gordon SIU | Secretary for Planning and Lands |
| Mr Rob LAW | Director of Environmental Protection |
| Mr Raymond H C WONG | Deputy Secretary for Security |
| Mr TSANG Yam-pui | Deputy Commissioner of Police (Management) |
| Mr KWOK Ka-keung | Director of Finance, Administration and Planning, Hong Kong Police Force |
| Mr D G THOMAS | Chief Superintendent of Police (Planning and Development) |
| Mr S H PAU | Director of Architectural Services |
| Mr Albert LAI | Government Property Administrator |
| Mr David F L WONG | Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B) |
| Mr LAM Chun-man | Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters) |
| Mr MAK Kwai-pui | Chief Ambulance Officer, Fire Services Department |
| Mrs Margaret CHAN | Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower |
| Mr Peter P Y LEUNG | Assistant Director (Special Duties), Education Department |
| Mr S K LEE | Principal Education Officer (Services) |
| Mrs Lessie WEI | Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation |
| Miss Dora FU | Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment and Food |
| Mr K K LIU | Assistant Director (Agriculture, Quarantine and Inspection), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department |
| Mr John COLLIER | Director of Drainage Services |
| Mr Grahame R S LOW | Chief Engineer / Hong Kong and Islands, Drainage Services Department |
| Mr Hugh PHILLIPSON | Director of Water Supplies |
| Mr LEUNG Mang-chiu | Assistant Director (New Works), Water Supplies Department |
| Mr H K WONG | Director of Territory Development |
| Mr H W TIN | Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing (Project Management) |

Mr C L NG Chief Engineer (Tai Po / North), New Territories North Development Office, Territory Development Department
Mr H H YEUNG Chief Engineer (Hong Kong), Hong Kong Island and Islands Development Office, Territory Development Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG Assistant Secretary General 1

Staff in attendance:

Ms Sarah YUEN Senior Assistant Secretary (1)4

PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

Upgrading of projects to Category A

Item deferred from the meeting held on 26 January 2000

HEAD 703 - BUILDINGS

PWSC(1999-2000)88 234LP Redevelopment of Police Headquarters, Arsenal Street, Wanchai (Arsenal Yard Phase 3 development) - stage 2

The Chairman reminded members that this proposal, which sought funding for the redevelopment of the Police Headquarters (PHQ) complex, was carried over from the meeting of the Subcommittee on 26 January 2000 due to insufficient time. At the Chairman's invitation, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Management) (DC of P(M)) briefed members on Information Note PWSCI(1999-2000)42, which highlighted the major changes to the original plan in the light of comments expressed by members at the 26 January 2000 meeting. Members in general welcomed the changes proposed. Individual members however questioned the standard of provision for the planned reserved space, the proposed barbershop, the auditorium as well as the multi-purpose hall, the indoor firing range and the 36 lifts to be installed.

2. Miss Emily LAU found it unacceptable to reserve 4,415 square metres, i.e., 8% of the total net operating floor area (NOFA) of the new PHQ complex, for future expansion. This was contrary to the Administration's repeated appeals to departments for optimising the potential use of space. She could

not envisage any significant growth in the establishment of the Police, especially in the face of the current Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP). Hence, reservation of such a high percentage of office space was not justified.

3. In response, representatives of the Administration put forward the following justifications -

- (a) As the complex was designed for long-term use and would take a few years to construct, flexibility should be provided for meeting possible demand for office accommodation and operational facilities that might emerge during the construction period and thereafter.
- (b) It was an established Government policy to reserve space in new Government buildings to cater for future operational requirements. The new North Point Government Offices, for example, had utilised all of its 8% reserved space at the time when it was commissioned in 1998. As for the Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices presently under construction, the percentage of space reserved was 6%. While there was no fixed percentage for the reservation of space for future expansion, the Administration considered that the 8% proposed for the PHQ complex was reasonable when compared with other Government buildings.
- (c) While the overall effect of EPP was that staffing might be cut, it might not necessarily be reflected in the staffing of the Police Headquarters. Moreover, although there was no plan to increase the establishment of the Police Force, there might still be a need for the complex to house additional offices of the Force presently accommodated elsewhere.

4. Miss Emily LAU opined that instead of reserving 8% space for possible future expansion, the Administration should ensure that all space of the complex would be fully utilised to satisfy concrete current accommodation requirements. She urged the Administration to make immediate plans to utilise the 8% reserved space and report on its planned use before the relevant Finance Committee (FC) meeting. Mr James TO shared her view and said that every effort should be made to effect more intensive use of the complex to enhance its cost-effectiveness.

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5. Regarding the whereabouts of the reserved space of the complex, the Government Property Administrator advised that the space would be evenly distributed among the 43 storeys of the complex, so that each storey would be allocated around 100 square metres to meet individual departments' needs for expansion. Members noted that a flexible open plan design had been adopted for the offices so that future expansion could be easily accommodated by

repartitioning at minimum cost.

6. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong questioned the justification for providing an auditorium as well as a multi-purpose hall in the new PHQ complex. He considered that the functions of these facilities were quite similar. In response, DC of P(M) explained that the auditorium only served to re-provision the lecture theatre previously located at May House. With fixed seating, its functions would be very different from those of a multi-purpose hall. The hall would provide a venue for the holding of community activities such as open days and exhibitions which required flexibility in the use of space.

7. DC of P(M) also confirmed that all the activities to be held in the auditorium as quoted in the Information Note were regular activities organised by the Force and their number might even increase further. While these activities were presently held in different districts, the Force saw the need to centrally hold the activities at the Headquarters. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong pointed out that the two facilities would together take up 13,000 square feet of NOFA of the complex which could otherwise be used to provide more office space. He urged the Force to genuinely put them to sufficient use to ensure that public money was well spent.

8. Ir Doctor Raymond HO, on the other hand, endorsed the need for both the auditorium and the multi-purpose hall but called upon the Administration to ensure good utilisation of them. Professor NG Ching-fai also supported the provision of the auditorium in consideration of the Force's need to hold large-scale seminars and exchange programmes in keeping with the times. He however opined that the multi-purpose hall should be located on lower floors to facilitate public access.

9. In response, DC of P(M) confirmed that the multi-purpose hall was in fact located at the lower level of the 43-storey-building, immediately above common facilities such as restaurants, Fast Food Cafeteria, etc. There was also easy public access to the facility. He however agreed with Professor NG Ching-fai that some of the activities to be held in the multi-purpose hall should also be held on a district basis to better disseminate the relevant messages.

10. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong queried the need for a barbershop in the complex, which appeared to be out-dated in today's situation. DC of P(M) emphasised that it was necessary to impose a very high standard of turnout on members of the Force for projecting Hong Kong's image. The proposed barbershop was only a very small facility and was a standard provision in nearly every district police headquarters of the territory as well as in the police headquarters of most South East Asian countries. Mr CHEUNG was not convinced that staff of the Force should be given special treatment. He pointed out that the upholding of a high standard of turnout was not unique in the disciplined forces of Hong Kong, but the provision of a barbershop in the

office premises was not a common facility in all disciplined forces. Professor NG Ching-fai and Ir Dr Raymond HO however found the provision of the barbershop acceptable. In reply to Professor NG, DC of P(M) confirmed that the shop would provide service to both male and female members of the Force.

11. On the need to provide an indoor firing range in the new PHQ complex, DC of P(M) stressed that in view of the prime location of the site, they had exercised great caution in ensuring that only the most essential facilities would be included in the complex. In particular, the Administration had paid special attention to the security requirements and its environmental impact. Since most users of the facility would be working in the complex, the usage rate was expected to be quite high. The Chief Superintendent of Police (Planning and Development) supplemented that the range was in fact planned to re-provision the range previously located in May House which was fully utilised by a number of special units working in the Police Headquarters over a two-shift period longer than that of other ranges. Since other firing ranges were already fully utilised and could not accommodate further users, it was essential that the May House firing range be re-provisioned in the complex to meet the needs of those units previously using it. Ir Dr Raymond HO shared his views, adding that it would not be cost-effective to require officers working in the complex to travel to other firing ranges even if they had spare capacity.

12. Messrs LEE Wing-tat and James TO queried the need to install 36 lifts in the new PHQ complex and called for a reduction in the number of lifts so as to maximise the utilisation of the complex. In reply, the Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) pointed out that the overall efficiency of the office tower was already 78.9%, which was comparable to the 80% of private developments. As for the number of lifts, he emphasised that for security and operational reasons, there was an actual need for providing 36 lifts to effect separate zoning and circulation to different areas of the complex, not to mention that one of them would be for the exclusive use of the Force Armoury. He further claimed that where the 26 passenger lifts serving the HQ Office Tower and the Common Facilities of the complex were concerned, the provision was comparable to those of similar buildings such as the 62-storey high Cheung Kong Centre which had 37 lifts, the 47-storey high Queensway Government Offices which had 24 lifts, and the 48-storey high Revenue and Immigration Towers which had 32 lifts.

13. While Ir Dr Raymond HO shared D Arch S's views, Mr LEE Wing-tat was not convinced of the need for such a large number of lifts to achieve separate zoning and circulation and pointed out that such could be achieved through better management. D Arch S noted Mr LEE's request to provide before the relevant FC meeting further details in this regard. He however explained that there was a practical need for operational reasons for those lifts in order to cope with the passenger traffic, and that some of the lifts were open for use by members of the public while some were for staff use only. The 36

lifts would be able to meet the special requirements of the building.

14. Commenting on Mr James TO's proposal to simplify the categorisation of the passenger design capacity of the lifts to be installed in the complex so as to reduce their number, D Arch S explained that a higher capacity was required for lifts serving higher floors to enable them to serve more people despite longer and hence fewer trips. He assured members that in determining the number of lifts in the project, the Administration had already carried out a detailed lift traffic analysis in accordance with the internationally recognised principles and recommendations of the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers UK.

15. Responding to Miss CHAN Yuen-han's comment on the seemingly hasty decision to accommodate in the new complex additional Police formations/units such as the Training Wing Headquarters and facilities, DC of P(M) advised that the Administration had not considered the Wing for relocation in the complex earlier mainly because there was then a plan to seek separate funding for alternative purpose-built facilities for training. However, since this plan had subsequently been shelved to make way for other priorities and more space had been released as a result of the revisions to the plan of the complex, it was considered appropriate that the Training Wing Headquarters be housed in the new complex as well.

16. In reply to Mr James TO on the allocation for the Security Wing in the complex, DC of P(M) explained that in balancing priorities in the face of space constraints, it was found more appropriate to move just the VIP Protection Unit (VIP PU) instead of all the units of the Security Wing to the complex. This was because such a move could release more space in the complex to enable the Commercial Crime Bureau, Technology Crime Division to move in to make the best use of the advanced information technology features available in the new complex such as optic fibre cabling and computer flooring. As to why the VIP PU had to take up an area of about 1,900 square metres, DC of P(M) explained that although its establishment was small, the Unit had greater need for training and emergency accommodation.

17. On how the \$5.7 million increase in the estimate for the project could be absorbed within the project estimate, D Arch S pointed out that apart from finding savings in the fitting-out and partitioning costs, the contingency reserve of the project would be able to absorb the extra costs.

18. Mr James TO and Miss Emily LAU requested the construction unit cost of the superstructure excluding the basement and the firing range. They would also like to know the construction cost of the basement. Mr James TO pointed out that the reason for asking the information was to find out the difference in costs of the superstructure with and without the basement and firing range. Due to the cost in piling for the basement, the construction cost

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of the basement should therefore take into account the piling works because of the additional basement floors. At members' request, D Arch S agreed to provide after the meeting a more detailed comparison between the two taking into account the relevant piling costs.

19. Miss Emily LAU expressed concern about the utilisation rate of the proposed catering facilities in the new PHQ complex, referring to the Director of Audit's No. 31 Value-for-Money Report, which indicated a low utilisation rate of police station canteens by uniformed staff. In response, DC of P(M) said that the Administration was reviewing the policy on provision of canteens in police stations. As for canteens in Government office buildings, patronage of the one in May House was very high. It was therefore believed that the planned dining facilities in the complex would also be well utilised, especially as they could only serve about 10% of the 8,000 personnel to be housed in the complex.

20. At Ir Dr Raymond HO's request for details of the waste management plan which the contractor of the project was required to submit, D Arch S explained that two reclamation sites had already been designated for disposal of waste arising from the project. In addition, the contractor would also be encouraged to sort demolition waste by category on site to facilitate reuse/recycling.

21. In response to Miss Emily LAU, D Arch S provided the following technical information about the project -

- (a) The cost of curtain walling for the new PHQ complex was \$4,500 per square metre, which was considered reasonable given the good quality;
- (b) The annual maintenance cost of the mechanised double-deck carparking facility on the basement levels of the complex was \$2,000 per space; and
- (c) There were three emergency generators for the new complex, of which two had a generating capacity of 1,500 kVA and one had a generating capacity of 1,800 kVA. All three could be activated within 15 seconds to provide power to three important areas, namely, the central control centre, the fire alarm system, the computer centre and parts of the complex housing emergency facilities or requiring continuous air-conditioning.

22. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong stated the position of the Members of the Democratic Party as follows -

- (a) While welcoming the decision to combine the executive dining area

with the Chinese Restaurant in response to members' concerns, Members of the Democratic Party were of the view that such luxurious items as the former should not have been proposed in the first place.

- (b) In taking a decision on this proposal, members of the Legislative Council should exercise care to ensure reasonable and fair allocation of public money rather than just look at the Police Force's needs. The project's huge financial commitment of over \$3,200 million was comparable to the \$3,900-million estimated cost of the School Improvement Programme, which had been temporarily shelved because of financial constraints, affecting 109 schools which were no less important than the headquarters of the Police Force.
- (c) Detailed information on the allocation of the 8% space reserved for future expansion should be provided to members before the relevant FC meeting.
- (d) Shared use of lifts should be effected as far as practicable to ensure proper use of facilities.
- (e) The Force should ensure good utilisation of both the auditorium and the multi-purpose hall to achieve rental savings.

23. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong further stated that in consideration of 22(a), members of the Democratic Party would abstain from voting pending the Administration's response to the above points.

24. In response to point 22(b), Ir Dr Raymond HO remarked that as different members might look at the proposal from different points of view, it was only natural that they might have different positions.

25. The item was put to vote. 15 members voted for the item, none voted against and nine abstained.

For:

Mr Kenneth TING Woo-shou

Dr Raymond HO Chung-tai

Prof NG Ching-fai

Miss CHAN Yuen-han

Dr LEONG Che-hung

Mr WONG Yung-kan

Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-yee

Dr TANG Siu-tong

(15 members)

Mr Edward HO Sing-tin

Mr Eric LI Ka-cheung

Miss Christine LOH

Mr CHAN Kam-lam

Mr Gary CHENG Kai-nam

Mr LAU Kong-wah

Mr TAM Yiu-chung

Abstention:

Miss Cyd HO Sau-lan
Mr LEE Wing-tat
Mr Fred LI Wah-ming
Mr James TO Kun-sun
Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong
Mr SIN Chung-kai
Miss Emily LAU Wai-hing
Mr Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Mr LAW Chi-kwong
(9 members)

New items

HEAD 703 - BUILDINGS

**PWSC(1999-2000)105 118BF Fire station-cum-ambulance depot in
area 87, Tseung Kwan O**

26. Elaborating on the need to improve emergency services for Pak Shing Kok, Siu Chik Sha and Tai Chik Sha areas with the provision of the proposed fire station-cum-ambulance depot, the Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters) (CFO(HQs)) pointed out that presently fire calls in the areas which were currently classified as Category D under the Fire Risk Categorization System could be met within 15 minutes. By late 2002, in consideration of the planned large-scale residential and industrial developments which would result in significant population growth and location of potentially hazardous installations in the areas, the fire risk category of Tai Chik Sha and Pak Shing Kok would be upgraded to Category B and Category C which required the response time of 6 minutes and 9 minutes respectively. Hence, there was a need to provide a fire station cum ambulance depot at Tseung Kwan O Area 87 as the response time of fire and ambulance resources from the existing Tseung Kwan O Fire Station and Ambulance Depot at Po Lam would fall outside the pledged graded response time.

27. Miss Cyd HO noted that the Administration had claimed that they had tried without success to identify compatible joint users to enhance the utilisation of the site of the depot in Tseung Kwan O. She pointed out that the Social Security Field Unit (SSFU) in Tseung Kwan O on the other hand could not be reprovisioned within the same district due to non-availability of suitable sites in Tseung Kwan O. As a result, the SSFU had to be split into two offices and moved to Lam Tin and Sai Kung separately. The clients of SSFU who were basically elderly persons would have to travel all the way to Lam Tin and Sai Kung for services. She was concerned about the process of consultation with departments and asked whether the Social Welfare Department (SWD) was

aware of the availability of this site before the Government Property Agency (GPA) confirmed that no other departments were interested in the site.

28. In response, the Secretary for Planning and Lands (SPL) explained that in identifying joint users, consideration had to be given to the compatibility of the potential joint users with regard to the nature of their businesses. According to GPA, the reprovisioning needs of SSFU had been considered but it had been found unsuitable for certain reasons, such as the relatively isolated location of the site and the lack of access by potential social security recipients who mostly lived in public housing estates, temporary housing areas, etc. In this connection, Miss Cyd HO stated that she would not vote on this item before more information about the subject was available. She also requested further details on the criteria for identifying joint users.

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29. In assuring members that best efforts had been made to effect joint use of sites by different departments where appropriate, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B) advised that as a result of the principle of optimising site utilisation, GPA had to review the requirements of Government departments and try to identify possible joint users according to a set of internal procedures. He emphasised that in the case of the depot, GPA had also gone through the same process but no joint user had been identified.

30. Miss Emily LAU however was not convinced and opined that the Administration should withdraw the proposal until members were satisfied that adequate efforts had been made to identify joint users of the site of the depot as well as a suitable site for the SSFU. Mr James TO considered that the site could be utilised for storage purposes. He asked if the construction timetable would allow a deferment of the decision on the proposal so as to explore again other joint use without compromising the timely improvement of emergency services for the areas concerned. In response, CFO(HQs) confirmed that active efforts to identify joint users were made in 1997.

31. Members agreed that the policy on joint use of sites should be further followed up at the relevant LegCo Panel. At Miss Emily LAU's request, the Administration agreed to provide information on successful and unsuccessful cases of joint use. To facilitate the successful joint use of sites, Mr James TO pointed out that there might be a need to remind potential joint users not to be too meticulous in considering the site or the co-users.

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32. In view of the need to provide additional information to address members' concerns, the Deputy Secretary for the Treasury agreed to withdraw the item. She however highlighted the need to note the large number of proposals awaiting consideration by the Subcommittee.

**PWSC(1999-2000)104 90ET Special school for mildly mentally
handicapped children in area 3C, Tuen
Mun**

33. While expressing support for the proposal, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong opined that the proposed positioning of the school building would not be able to maximise the use of the irregular site. He enquired if it was viable to re-position the building structure to allow the space for the basketball pitch to be merged with the open and parking space in the front of the building.

34. In response, D Arch S explained that the southern tip of the site had in fact been designated as open space for public use, but was allocated for use by the special school on a temporary basis to be extended annually. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong however pointed out that it was unlikely that the small piece of site for public purposes could be put to meaningful use in view of its remoteness and the only development next to it was a Taoist temple. He suggested that the Government should consider allocating the plot to the school permanently in recognition of its need for more space to hold special activities. D Arch S explained that land allocation was the decision of the Planning Department (Plan D) made according to a set of established criteria. SPL however agreed to check with Plan D on the planned use of the plot and, if it was clear of other claims on it, would follow up Mr CHEUNG's proposal with regard to all relevant factors, including soil conditions.

35. Mr Edward HO, on the other hand, considered that it might not be feasible to re-position the building as there might not be sufficient room along the western side of the site to accommodate the entire building, especially as the southern tip was adjacent to a slope, which would give rise to piling problems. Besides, after re-positioning, the classrooms would be facing west which was undesirable from design point of view. In this connection, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong pointed out that the staff quarter presently positioned at the other end of the western side could be relocated elsewhere to make room for the school. D Arch S also advised that the problem might be overcome by using blinds or placing all corridors on the western side of the school. He undertook to examine the above technical factors in detail and if technically feasible would consider the repositioning proposal.

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36. Referring to the permanent use of the public land on the southern tip of the site, Mr TAM Yiu-chung advised members that the Ching Chun Koon Home for the Aged next to the school site had encountered space problem in its redevelopment programme. The Administration agreed to look into this matter. At Miss Emily LAU's request, the Administration also agreed to provide before the relevant FC meeting information on the feasibility of the repositioning proposal and a revised plan of the site if necessary.

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37. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

PWSC(1999-2000)106 174GK Veterinary laboratory at Tai Lung

38. Miss Emily LAU requested a cost comparison between testing influenza virus or suspected new virus specimens in Hong Kong upon commissioning of the new veterinary laboratory (V-lab) under this proposal and sending them to overseas laboratories for testing. In response, the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (D of A,F&C) said that there would not be any significant difference in cost but overseas testing had a longer turn-around time depending on the workload, competing priorities and goodwill of the overseas laboratories. She also explained that the cost for constructing the new V-lab had not been taken into account in making the cost comparison because the V-lab had to be constructed in any case to replace the existing 50-year old V-lab at Castle Peak planned for clearance. The Administration had found it justified to take this opportunity to equip the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) with local laboratory facilities of international standard to enable it to carry out the above testing and to strengthen services on fish disease investigations. D of A,F&C further confirmed that as a result of the avian influenza incident, AFCD had been urged to strengthen the functions for the protection of animal and public health by improving local veterinary testing capacity.

39. Miss Emily LAU questioned the use of expanding fish disease investigations in reducing losses suffered by fish farmers, pointing out that most fish mortalities might be caused by pollution rather than by fish disease. In response, D of A,F&C and the Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Agriculture, Quarantine and Inspection) (AD of A,F&C(A,Q&I)) pointed out that the great majority of fry mortalities was the result of fish diseases caused by parasites, bacteria and viruses. There was thus a need to expand fish disease investigations to more accurately identify the causes of fish mortalities. At Miss LAU's request, D of A,F&C agreed to try to provide statistics on fish kills caused by red tides and by diseases. But she added that such statistics were difficult to collect as individual fish farmers might not always report fish mortalities.

Admin 40. Miss Emily LAU noted that the number of tests which AFCD staff could undertake under the enhanced programme (40%) had coincided with the anticipated test load (at 36%). AD of A,F&C (A,Q&I) explained that it was AFCD's plan to provide the facility capable of absorbing the anticipated workload.

41. In response to Mr TAM Yiu-chung, D of A,F&C confirmed that the branch laboratory set up at Man Kam To to do fast chicken blood testing since the re-import of poultry after the avian influenza incident was over had been moved into the Sheung Shui Slaughter House (SSSH) upon its opening. However, after the commissioning of the new V-lab, chicken blood testing would be conducted by the new V-lab instead to enable the laboratory at SSSH

to do more tests on pig urine.

42. Noting that there was a lot of open space around the future new V-lab, Mr Edward HO was concerned whether the site had been fully utilised. D of A,F&C and AD of A,F&C(A,Q&I) explained that the site was situated within the existing Tai Lung Experimental Farm and the land around was agricultural land. The location was preferred for its relative isolation from populated areas, which was necessary to minimise the impact of any incidents that might happen. They further assured members that efforts had been made to maximise use of the site, which was on a slope, where flat land was limited.

43. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

HEAD 704 - DRAINAGE

PWSC(1999-2000)107 59BL Investigation of sewers and drains affecting the safety of slope features in the new Government Catalogue of Slopes, phase 1

44. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

HEAD 709 - WATERWORKS

PWSC(1999-2000)108 225WF Extension of fresh water supply to Tuen Mun East

45. In reply to Mr CHAN Kam-lam on why fresh water would be used for flushing to the new developments in the Tuen Mun East area, the Director of Water Supplies assured members that it was the policy of the Water Supplies Department to use sea water flushing where feasible. However, for cost-effectiveness in this particular case, sea water flushing would be implemented in the area by phases according to the progress of the relevant sea water system involving construction of pumping stations, sea water service reservoirs, etc.

46. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

HEAD 707 - NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

PWSC(1999-2000)109 476CL Formation and servicing of area 36, Fanling - remaining works

47. Miss Emily LAU welcomed the incorporation of landscaping works in the proposal and enquired whether landscaping was a standard provision in new town developments. In reply, the Director of Territory Development (DTD) confirmed that the Territory Development Department (TDD) had always taken care to improve the environment where possible. Under this proposal, trees would be planted along both sides of Roads D1 and D2 as well as in the designated amenity area. As to whether the Administration had designated the proportion of project fee to be spent on landscaping, DTD replied in the negative and pointed out that landscaping expenses would mainly be determined by the nature of the project and the physical environment. Miss LAU opined that a policy in this regard should be formulated to encourage landscaping efforts.

48. Mr Edward HO enquired if it was feasible to incorporate landscaping in the design only when the site under development was located in a new development area. In response, DTD referred members to the local open space site on the relevant plan where major landscaping works would be conducted. In other sites on the plan, landscaping works would mainly be conducted along the roadside.

49. In response to Mr LEE Wing-tat, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing (Project Management) advised that the housing site of the Hong Kong Housing Society on the land to be formed under this proposal would be used for housing development under its Flat for Sale Scheme.

50. In reply to Miss Cyd HO on rehousing arrangements for the 66 households affected by the relevant land acquisition and clearance exercise, DTD reported that of the 174 persons involved, 62 had already been identified to be eligible for rehousing in public rental housing, 39 were eligible for rehousing in interim housing and 36 persons had made other arrangements. As a result, only 37 persons had yet to make the necessary relocation arrangements. However, measures were available to assist clearerees found to be genuinely homeless at the end of the clearance exercise.

51. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

Revision in approved estimate of a project in Category A

HEAD 707 - NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

**PWSC(1999-2000)110 444CL Central reclamation, phase II
(Tamar basin reclamation)**

52. Regarding the additional funding sought as a result of delays in individual works under the project under examination, the Chief Engineer, Hong Kong Island and Islands Development Office, TDD (CE/HK,TDD), provided the following information -

- (a) The Approved Project Estimate of 444CL was in June 1994 prices;
- (b) Around \$11 million had been incurred as a result of the increase in the quantities of works completed after conducting actual measurement on site;
- (c) \$0.1 million had resulted from constructing the signal-controlled crossing;
- (d) \$25.9 million had been incurred due to fluctuations in construction prices during the period June 1994 to September 1997; and
- (e) \$8.2 million was to cover the prolongation costs incurred by the contractor through extending the construction period by nine months, to compensate for the loss of time due to rainy weather and the removal of an uncharted seawall along Harcourt Road and abandoned facilities for the Prince of Wales Barracks.

53. As regards the breakdown of the increases in consultants' fees, CE/HK,TDD confirmed that \$0.9 million was for construction stage and \$12.4 million was for in-site staff costs. The total increase in project estimate was \$59.2 million. However, as a result of savings from deletion of certain items and contingencies provided, the increase in cost of the completed works less the savings and contingencies was only around \$18 million.

54. The item was voted on and endorsed by the Subcommittee.

55. The Subcommittee was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.