

**Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the
Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04**

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Session No. : 17 File name : HPLB(H)-e1.rtf

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HPLB(H)-002	0309	CHAN Yuen-han	62	Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance and Squatter Control
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HPLB(H)-006	0537	LI Ka-cheung, Eric	711	-
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HPLB(H)-009a	1256	LI Wah-ming, Fred	711	-
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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)- 001

Question Serial No.

0115

Head: 62 Housing Department
82 Building Department
91 Lands Department
162 Rating and Valuation Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: -

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : Regarding consultancy studies for policy making and assessment (if any) commissioned by the above bureau and departments, please provide details in the following format:

- (1) Please provide the following details on the consultancy studies for which financial provision has been allocated respectively in 2001-02 and 2002-03:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress / completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Reasons for no follow-up action on the study reports and whether other measures are available to deal with the subjects under study

- (2) Please provide the following details on the consultancy studies for which financial provision has not been allocated respectively in 2001-02 and 2002-03, though consultancy studies have been made during the year:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning / in progress / completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Reasons for no follow-up action on the study reports and whether other measures are available to deal with the subjects under study

- (3) Has financial provision been allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2003-04 ?
If yes, please provide the following details:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy fees	Status of consultancy studies (planning/ in progress / completed)

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply : My reply to the three-part question is as follows-

- (1) For the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and departments under its purview in respect of policy area 31: Housing, there is one consultancy study under the Planning Department with financial provision allocated in 2001-02 and 2002-03:

2001-02

Name of consultants	Description	Consultancy fees	Progress on consultancy studies	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Reasons for no follow-up action on the study reports and whether other measures are available to deal with the subjects under study
MDR Technology Ltd.	Survey of Housing Aspirations of Households 2002	nil	Completed	Findings will be taken into account in assessment of housing demand.	-

2002-03

Name of consultants	Description	Consultancy fees	Progress on consultancy studies	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Reasons for no follow-up action on the study reports and whether other measures are available to deal with the subjects under study
MDR Technology Ltd.	Survey of Housing Aspirations of Households 2002	\$2,480,000	Completed	Findings will be taken into account in assessment of housing demand.	-

- (2) No consultancy study was conducted in 2001-02 and 2002-03 for which financial provision has not been allocated.
- (3) No financial provision has been allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2003-04.

Signature _____

Name in block letters C.M.LEUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date 22 March 2003

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply : My reply to the three-part question is as follows-

- (1) For the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and departments under its purview in respect of policy area 31: Housing, there is one consultancy study under the Planning Department with financial provision allocated in 2001-02 and 2002-03:

2001-02

Name of consultants	Description	Consultancy fees	Progress on consultancy studies	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Reasons for no follow-up action on the study reports and whether other measures are available to deal with the subjects under study
MDR Technology Ltd.	Survey of Housing Aspirations of Households 2002	nil	Completed	Findings will be taken into account in assessment of housing demand.	-

2002-03

Name of consultants	Description	Consultancy fees	Progress on consultancy studies	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Reasons for no follow-up action on the study reports and whether other measures are available to deal with the subjects under study
MDR Technology Ltd.	Survey of Housing Aspirations of Households 2002	\$2,480,000	Completed	Findings will be taken into account in assessment of housing demand.	-

- (2) No consultancy study was conducted in 2001-02 and 2002-03 for which financial provision has not been allocated.
- (3) No financial provision has been allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2003-04.

Signature _____

Name in block letters C.M.LEUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date 22 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-002

Question Serial

0309

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : Why there is only a decrease of \$6.80M in the departmental operational expenses against the revised estimate for 2002-03 as most of the work on clearance and squatter control of the Housing Department has been completed or transferred to the Lands Department? Please set out the details of the eight posts to be deleted?

Asked by : HON. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply : The squatter control functions covering the urban and islands districts have been transferred to the Lands Department since 1 April 2002. The corresponding transfer of resources from Head 62 to Head 91 (Lands Department) had been reflected in the 2002-03 budget provision.

The departmental operational expenses provided under Head 62 in the 2003-04 budget estimate are in line with last year's provision to allow the Housing Department to continue with its squatter control activities in the New Territories and rehousing squatter clearerees and occupants of unauthorised rooftop structures upon Buildings Department's enforcement action.

The decrease of \$6.8M in the budget estimate is to be achieved by various cost-saving initiatives, including deletion of eight Housing Officer posts, one each from our eight squatter control districts. Deletion of these posts will achieve a saving of about \$3.1M.

Signature

Name in block letters

C. M. LEUNG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date

20 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-003

Question Serial

0571

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : The number of people rehoused as a result of programmed squatter and unauthorised rooftop structure clearances or emergency clearances following natural disasters is estimated to increase from 2 400 in 2002 to 9 400 in 2003. Please advise this Council of the reason for the substantial increase and its staffing and financial implications.

Asked by : HON. NG Leung-sing

Reply : The increase in the estimated number of people to be rehoused from 2 400 in 2002 to 9 400 in 2003 is based on anticipated demands of on-going and postponed clearance projects. The Housing Department will absorb the additional workload within the existing staff establishment and budget provision.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. M. LEUNG

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

20 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-004

Question Serial

0457

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : While the housing production reduces, the financial provision decreases by only 1.8%. What are the respective percentages of staff salaries and job-related allowances in the operational expenses (i.e. \$378 m) under Subhead 000?

Asked by : HON. Albert HO Chun-yan

Reply : There is no direct relationship between housing production by the Housing Authority and squatter clearance and control activities funded by the Government under Head 62. Reduced housing production concerns the Home Ownership Scheme only. Sufficient number of public rental flats will continue to be produced to meet the Government's pledge of maintaining the average waiting time at three years. On the other hand, funding under Head 62 is still necessary to enable the Housing Department to continue with squatter clearance and control activities and rehousing occupants of unauthorized rooftop structures upon Buildings Department's enforcement action. Reduction of expenditure by 1.8% to be achieved under this Head is aimed to meet the Government-wide efficiency savings initiative.

About 81% of the estimated expenditure under Subhead 000 for clearance and squatter control are staff costs. The remainders are operating expenses.

Signature

Name in block letters

C. M. LEUNG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date

20 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-005

Question Serial

0458

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : What is the Housing Department's estimated expenditure for rehousing occupants of rooftop structures this year? What are the compensation given to and the rehousing arrangements made for the occupants concerned?

Asked by : HON. Albert HO Chun-yan

Reply : The expenditure for rehousing occupants of rooftop structures is provided under Head 62, which covers all clearance activities. The total provision is \$378M. There is no separate breakdown for clearance of rooftop structures.

Occupants of illegal rooftop structures affected by enforcement action of the Buildings Department are not eligible for compensation or ex-gratia allowance. They are rehoused to public rental housing if they meet the prevailing eligibility criteria on income and assets, length of residence in the structures, property ownership and length of residence in Hong Kong. Families not meeting these criteria are given priority to apply for the Home Assistance Loan Scheme or rehoused to Interim Housing to meet their temporary housing needs. Families with special social or medical needs and elderly households are rehoused to public rental housing on compassionate grounds upon the Social Welfare Department's recommendation.

Signature

Name in block letters

C. M. LEUNG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date

20 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-006

Question Serial No.

0537

Head : 711- Housing

Subhead (No. & title) : B127WC-Mainlaying within
development near Choi Wan
Road and Jordan Valley

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question :

1. After the approval of the above item, the cumulative expenditure up to 31 March 2002 is only \$54,000. As the revised estimate for 2002-03 is only \$110,000 and the estimate for 2003-04 is \$1,100,000, what is the reason for the great difference between the expenditure and the Approved Project Estimate of \$79,900,000?
2. What is the anticipated completion date of the project?

Asked by : Hon. LI Ka-cheung, Eric

Reply :

1. This item covers the mainlaying works within the boundary of Civil Engineering Department's project B564CL "Development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley". The mainlaying works are incorporated into the site formation and associated infrastructure contract (Contract No. CV/2000/06) under B564CL which commenced in November 2001 and is scheduled for completion in mid 2006.

According to the contractor's programme, the mainlaying works will be carried out during the later part of the contract period from 2004 to 2005 after majority of the site formation works is completed. The expenditures up to now are mainly for consultant's fee which is small in relation to the approved project estimate. The majority of the expenditure under the item will occur during financial year 2004-05 and 2005-06 when the mainlaying works are carried out.

2. The anticipated completion date of the project is December 2005.

Signature _____

Name in block letters P W CHAN

Post Title Ag. Director of Water Supplies

Date 20 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)- 007

Question Serial

0699

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
 and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
 (Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : In regard to the Housing Department's squatter and temporary
 housing clearance and squatter control, will the
 Administration advise this Council of the following :-

1. What is the existing staffing provision (with breakdown of ranks)?
2. What is the proportion of staff costs in the estimates for 2003-04?
3. Has a cost-effectiveness analysis been conducted to decide whether there is the need to retain the structure?

Asked by : HON. James TIEN Pei-chun

Reply : My reply to the three-part question is as follows:

1. As at 1 March 2003, there are a total of 889 posts carrying clearance and squatter control duties. Details are at [Annex](#).
2. Staff costs constitute 81% of the financial provision of \$378M under Subhead 000 of Head 62. The remainders are operating expenses.

3. The Housing Department is responsible for squatter clearance and control functions including regular patrol, demolition of new illegal structures and maintenance and improvement of basic facilities in the New Territories, as well as rehousing occupants of illegal rooftop structures upon enforcement action taken by the Buildings Department. For the time being it is necessary to retain the staffing establishment to carry out these functions.

Following the review of the Director of Audit in 1996, 285 posts involved in clearance and squatter control have been deleted through business process re-engineering, enhanced productivity programme and efficiency saving initiatives. We will continue to keep the establishment under review to ensure cost-effectiveness.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. M. LEUNG

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

21 March 2003

**Staff Establishment
for Clearance and Squatter Control in the Housing Department**

(As at 1 March 2003)

Rank	Establishment	Rank	Establishment
Assistant Director	1	Personal Secretary I	1
Chief Housing Manager	1	Personal Secretary II	3
Senior Housing Manager	4	Foreman	8
Housing Manager	16	Motor Driver	86
Assistant Housing Manager	57	Artisan (Welding)	8
Housing officer	245	Artisan (Team Leader)	66
Clerical Officer	1	Tracer	9
Assistant Clerical officer	16	Workman I	296
Clerical Assistant	41	Workman II	15
Office Assistant	15	Total	889

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial
No.

HPLB(H)-008

Question Serial
No.

1244

Head : 62 - Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : Following the re-organisation of the Housing Branch of the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and the Housing Department, it is understood that some of the work undertaken by the Housing Branch will, with effect from 1 April 2003, be handed over to the Housing Authority. What kind of work is it? How much savings in resources this arrangement is anticipated to bring to the Housing Branch?

Asked by : Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply : The former Housing Bureau and the Housing Department was re-organised on 1 January 2003. The re-organisation has removed the overlap of functions between the two organisations, particularly in the areas of project management, research and planning, staff and office administration, and resource management. All the duties relating to the rental and sale of the private housing market and overseeing the Estate Agents Authority have also been handed over from the former Housing Bureau to the Housing Department after re-organisation. The re-organisation has resulted in the net deletion of four directorate and 20 non-directorate posts. The total savings in full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost was \$25.98 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ C M LEUNG

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date _____ 20 March 2003

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head: 711 – Housing Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question: R15. What is the progress of the following projects? How are the funds to be spent for 2003-04?

- (a) B564CL : Development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley;
- (b) B568CL : Development at Anderson Road - consultants' fees and site investigation;
- (c) B569CL : Development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley - consultants' fees and site investigation; and
- (d) B575CL : Site formation works for Lei Yue Mun phase 2 housing site.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

- Reply:
- (a) B564CL - Development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley
The construction works are in progress. The 2003-04 provision of \$340 million for the project is to meet the cost of construction works and related consultant's fees for contract administration and site supervision.
 - (b) B568CL - Development at Anderson Road – consultants' fees and site investigation
The consultant is finalising the site formation design. The 2003-04 provision of \$1.7 million for the project is to meet the cost of consultant's fees for the design.
 - (c) B569CL - Development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley – consultants' fees and site investigation
The site investigation and the detailed design have been completed. Tender documentation for the remaining contract is in progress. The 2003-04 provision of \$1 million for the project is to meet the cost of outstanding consultants' fees.

- (d) B575CL - Site formation works for Lei Yue Mun phase 2 housing site
The construction works are in progress. The 2003-04 provision of \$24 million for the project is to meet the cost of construction works and related consultant's fees for contract administration and site supervision.

Signature _____

Name in block letters T K TSAO

Post Title Director of Civil Engineering

Date 20 March 2003

*Please refer to the following for a full reply to this question –
HPLB(H)009(b)

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-009(b)

Question Serial No.

1256(b)

Head : 711- Housing

Subhead (No. & title) : B127WC-Mainlaying within
development near Choi Wan
Road and Jordan Valley

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question :

- (b) How is the progress of the project B127WC "Mainlaying within development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley"? Which areas will the allocation for 2003-04 be used?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

This item covers the mainlaying works within the boundary of Civil Engineering Department's project B564CL "Development near Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley". The mainlaying works are incorporated into the site formation and associated infrastructure contract (Contract No. CV/2000/06) under B564CL which commenced in November 2001 and is scheduled for completion in mid 2006.

According to the contractor's programme, the mainlaying works will be carried out during the later part of the contract period from 2004 to 2005 after majority of the site formation works is completed. The expenditures up to now and for the next financial year 2003-04 are mainly for consultant's fee and some minor works. The majority of the expenditure under the item will occur during financial year 2004-05 and 2005-06 when the mainlaying works are carried out.

Signature _____

Name in block letters P W CHAN

Post Title Ag. Director of Water Supplies

Date 20 March 2003

Please also refer to the HPLB(H)-009(a) for a full reply to this question

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)- 011

Question Serial

1138

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : Under the Programme "Squatter and Temporary Housing
Clearance and Squatter Control" of the Housing Department,
two major clearance tasks will be carried out in 2003-04.
What are the respective commencement and completion dates,
manpower requirements and expenditures of these tasks?

Asked by : HON. TIEN Pei-chun

Reply : The two major clearance tasks mentioned under the
Programme "Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance and
Squatter Control" in the Controlling Officer's Report refer to
the on-going Deep Bay Link clearance for the construction of
Shenzhen Western Corridor and clearance for the construction
of Kowloon-Canton Railway Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau
Spur Line. The Deep Bay Link clearance, scheduled for
completion in June 2003, was announced on 26 March 2002.
The Kowloon-Canton Railway project was announced on
30 August 1999 and was completed in March 2003, in
advance of 2003-04 as indicated in the Controlling Officer's
Report. The resources required for these clearances are
provided under Head 62, which covers all clearance activities.
There is no separate breakdown for the manpower and funding
requirements of individual clearance projects.

Signature

Name in block letters

C. M. LEUNG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date

21 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-012

Question Serial

1158

Head : 62 Subhead 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance
 and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : In the current year, did the Housing Department contract out any work to private consultancy firms? If yes, what was the percentage of the projects contracted out? What are the details of such work and the expenditure involved?

Asked by : HON. Albert HO Chun-yan

Reply : The Housing Department does not contract out any squatter clearance and control work to private consultancy company. No such expenditure will therefore be incurred in 2003-04.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. M. LEUNG

Permanent Secretary for Housing
Planning and Lands (Housing)

20 March 2003

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(H)-013

Question Serial No.

1293

Head : 62 - Housing Department

Subhead : 000 - Operational expenses

Programme : 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance and Squatter Control

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Housing)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : How many non-civil service contract staff were employed in the year 2002-03, and how much expenditure was incurred? Is there any plan to increase/reduce the number of non-civil service contract staff to be employed in 2003-04? If yes, what are the reasons for the increase/reduction, and how many staff and how much expenditure are involved?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply : We have employed 61 staff in 2002-03 on Housing Authority contract terms for the Programme 6201 – Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance and Squatter Control. The annual expenditure in 2002-03 was \$9.86M

We have no plan to recruit any such contract staff for the Programme in 2003-04.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ C.M. LEUNG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands (Housing)

Date _____ 24.3.2003