

(38) in L/M No. (15) to HAD HQ II/16-5/8/0
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Urgent by fax: 2869 6794

23 April 2010

Secretary General
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Mr Daniel SIN)

Dear Mr SIN,

Panel on Development
Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members
and Heung Yee Kuk members on 14 January 2010

I refer to your letter of 16 March 2010 addressed to the Secretary for Development.

The Home Affairs Department (HAD) introduced the “Rural Public Works (RPW) Programme” in 1999 with a view to improving the rural environment and responding to the needs for minor works in rural districts in a swift and flexible manner. Since 2008, HAD has also introduced the “District Minor Works (DMW) Programme” to improve the facilities, living environment and hygienic conditions in all districts.

Before the launch of the RPW Programme, HAD had thoroughly reviewed the problems associated with the implementation of minor works projects under the former Rural Planning and Improvement Strategy (RPIS) Programme. It was noted that for projects that involved land resumption, just the process relating to land resumption alone had taken a very long time (an average of 5.5 years) to complete. For projects that did not involve land resumption but required the land owners’ consent, the process of obtaining such consent was much shorter (which took an average of less than a year to

complete). The main reason attributing to the long time taken for land resumption was the time needed for resolving land title problems and objections to land resumption. These projects must also be processed in accordance with the prescribed statutory procedures which require a relatively long lead time. As a result of the long time taken, various district needs for improvement could not be addressed promptly and efficiently.

To address the above problems, the RPW Programme and DMW Programme are designed in such a way that the projects to be undertaken under these two programmes will not involve land resumption. If minor works have to be undertaken on private land, HAD will seek the consent of the land owners before proceeding to implement the works. Our past operational experience has shown that most land owners welcome the Administration to improve their environment and nearby facilities, and are willing to give consent for the planned works to proceed. If the land owners refuse to give consent, our works agents will realign the scope of the project concerned as far as practicable, or refer warranting projects to the works departments (e.g. Highways Department, Drainage Services Department, etc) for consideration and implementation.

Since 1999, HAD has successfully implemented a total of 2 630 RPW projects and DMW projects at a cost of \$ 1.7 billion. The two programmes have fulfilled the objectives of responding to the needs for minor works in districts swiftly and flexibly. The completed projects have also significantly improved the environment and facilities in districts, especially those in the New Territories.

We will keep the two programmes under review with a view to further improving their operation and enhancing effectiveness.

Yours sincerely,

(Andrew TSANG)
for Director of Home Affairs

c.c. Secretary for Development
(Attn.: Mr Ivan CHEUNG)

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