

**Legislative Council
Panel on Development**

Follow-up actions to Meeting on 28 November 2017

The Administration provides the supplementary information as required by the Panel as follows.

- (9) The Administration was requested to, before the submission of the relevant staffing proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee, provide supplementary information on how the dedicated team proposed to be set up in the Development Bureau could maintain independence and impartiality in monitoring the work of the Water Supplies Department in taking forward water safety initiatives.**

The dedicated team for overseeing the performance of Water Supplies Department (WSD) in respect of drinking water safety will be headed by the proposed Principal Government Engineer, to be designated as Deputy Secretary (Works)3 (DS(W)3), who will be directly responsible to the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works). DS(W)3 will not be involved in the day-to-day housekeeping of WSD including overseeing the department's operations, which is being handled by another Deputy Secretary of the Works Branch of the Development Bureau (DEVB(WB)). Such arrangement is considered appropriate and enables the dedicated team to perform independently in terms of monitoring the performance of WSD over drinking water safety.

In order to ensure impartiality, the dedicated team will not only perform by itself auditing and surprise checks of WSD's quality system in supplying potable water, but also engage independent auditing firms to conduct additional external audits on the same as and when necessary. DEVB(WB) will also set up a Drinking Water Safety Advisory Committee with members comprising academics and experts of related fields to give advice to DEVB(WB) on various drinking water safety issues such as reviewing

existing/formulating new policies and operational measures related to drinking water quality. Furthermore, the dedicated team will closely liaise with and seek input from the Department of Health to jointly monitor drinking water safety in Hong Kong.

Development Bureau
Water Supplies Department
December 2017