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Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-25

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Session No. : 12

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2471)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As published in the feasibility study report of Ma Liu Shui reclamation project, the land use is changed from residential to innovation and technology (I&T) development. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The originally planned residential project is expected to provide 11 000 housing units. Does the Government still plan to build residential units at this site? If so, please state the updated number of residential units; if not, please state the reasons for that.
2. Further to the above question, does the Government have any alternative proposal to provide a residential site of comparable scale? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. What is the area of I&T land planned by the Government across the territory at present? What is the percentage of Ma Liu Shui reclamation project?
4. In view of extreme weather such as typhoons, will the Government conduct an assessment on the impact of the reclamation project on the hydraulic performance of Shing Mun River again?
5. As nearby residents are still worried about the possible impacts of the project on the environment, ecology, noise, air, etc., what measures will the Government put in place to explain the project to the residents so as to alleviate their concerns?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

To meet the housing demand of the community and various economic and social development needs of Hong Kong, the Government has been adopting a multi-pronged land supply strategy to ensure steady and sufficient land supply. Reclamation has long been a well-established means to generate more land to serve the social and economic development of Hong Kong.

1 to 3. The originally planned land uses of Ma Liu Shui reclamation project include residential and others. The Government has all along been identifying land for residential use in various districts. At present, sufficient land has already been

identified for meeting the supply target of 308 000 public housing units over the next ten years. Earlier on, in the 2021 Policy Address, the Government proposed to revive the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project and proposed that the newly provided land by reclamation should be mainly for innovation and technology (I&T) development, so as to strengthen the development of the Eastern Corridor with I&T as a major economic function.

According to the information provided by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, to support I&T development in Hong Kong, the Government has been proactively identifying land to provide the industry with space necessary for its development. For example, for the Northern Metropolis, it mainly includes about 300 hectares of I&T land (including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park located at Lok Ma Chau) from the San Tin Technopole; and about 15 hectares of land for developing a digital technology hub, digital infrastructures and supercomputing facilities at Lau Fau Shan. In response to the Government's proposal in the 2021 Policy Address that newly provided land by Ma Liu Shui reclamation should be mainly for I&T development, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation is conducting a preliminary study on the relevant land planned for I&T development (about 88 hectares, including about 28 hectares of land available after relocation of the existing Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works), which is expected to be completed within 2024.

- 4&5. To complement the proposal put forth in the 2021 Policy Address to revive the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project, the Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned the "Engineering Study for Ma Liu Shui Reclamation" in July 2022. Preliminary site investigation works have been completed while various technical assessments based on the latest design standards (including geotechnical, hydraulic, drainage and marine traffic) and environmental impact assessment are underway and expected to be completed within 2024.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0988)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

On promoting cost control measures and cost saving initiatives, please provide the following information in a table:

1. How many projects were awarded to the lowest bids in the tendering procedures for public works of the Government in the past five years?
2. How many works projects had a final outturn expenditure higher than the tender price in the past five years? How many projects had a final outturn expenditure higher than the Government's estimates? Will the Government review the situation?
3. Among the completed projects or projects that have been partially completed and put into operation in the past three years, which projects have had cost overruns and already applied to the Legislative Council for additional funding? Which projects have had cost overruns but not yet applied for additional funding? How the Government intends to deal with these projects that have not yet applied for additional funding?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The Government has been continuously taking forward capital works projects to improve people's quality of life, promote economic development and enhance Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness. To cope with Hong Kong's future construction volume and the challenges facing the construction industry, the Development Bureau established the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 to uplift productivity and the performance of public works projects through implementation of various strategic initiatives, which include strengthening project cost management, enhancing project delivery capability, leading strategic developments (such as Modular Integrated Construction, digitalisation of public works, applied research and development) and collaborating with international counterparts and local industry stakeholders.

Our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Government has been adopting the principles of “achieving best value for money” and “maintaining open and fair competition” for the procurement of public works contracts with clear guidelines and procedures set out for tender invitations and evaluations. Tender evaluation of public works contracts comprises two parts. First, we will assess tenderers’ technical competence and past performance, followed by considering their tender prices. Finally, a combined score for each of the tenders will be derived. In other words, such system does not use “the lowest bid wins” as the guiding principle. In the past five years (from 2019 to 2023), for public works contracts awarded by the Government in accordance with the above-mentioned tender evaluation mechanism based on combined scores derived from technical considerations and tender prices, about 60% of the projects on average were awarded to the lowest bidders each year in terms of number.

2. In the past five years, in terms of the number of completed works contracts with the final accounts settled, about 40% of the works contracts had their final contract sum higher than the awarded contract sum. It is mainly due to the additional costs incurred as a result of variation of works in the light of different situations during the construction period, such as design revisions in view of public aspirations or unforeseeable geological conditions. In general, if the works expenditure exceeds the awarded contract cum, the excess amount will be met by the contingency provision in the approved project estimate (APE). In the past five years, in terms of the number of works projects with the accounts settled, about 6% of the works projects required additional funding from the Finance Committee (FC).

3. Among the completed works projects or projects that have been partially completed and put into operation in the past three years (from 2021 to 2023), the details of works project applied to the FC of the Legislative Council (LegCo) for increase in APE are tabulated below:

Date of FC Meeting	Works project no.	Title of works project	Original APE	Approved increased project estimates
February 2021	8003QR	Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge - funding support for Main Bridge	\$9.0465 billion	\$10.5612 billion

The Government has always attached great importance to the performance of public works projects. Works departments will closely monitor project delivery and adhere strictly to fiscal discipline. Since the expenditure of each works project is capped by the APE, there will not be any projects that have experienced cost overruns but not yet applied for additional funding. If the estimated expenditure of a works project is expected to exceed the original APE, the concerned policy bureau and controlling officer will submit additional funding application to the FC of LegCo in accordance with the established procedures with reasons for the increase and latest estimates provided.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)003

(Question Serial No. 0989)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (600) Works

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Respective supervision teams have been engaged for public works related to the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, Hospital Authority and Airport Authority. In respect of enhancing project governance, improving site safety and continuously monitoring project performance, please advise on the following:

1. What is the expenditure for engaging the supervision teams for the above three areas of public works? What is the number of staff required to be employed? Please set out the information in a table.
2. Will the Government consider delegating the Architectural Services Department as the single supervisory body to achieve savings in expenditure and manpower? If so, what are the timetable and the amount of expenditure and manpower expected to be saved? Please set out the information in a table. If not, what are the reasons?
3. In the coming three years, what is the estimated increase in the number of staff and the budget of such supervisory bodies? Please set out the information in a table.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park ("the Park") is located in the Lok Ma Chau Loop ("the Loop"). The Government is responsible for the construction of the infrastructure within the Loop (including site formation and infrastructural facilities) and the provision of supporting infrastructural facilities outside the Loop which are necessary for the development of the Loop and its surrounding areas. At present, the Civil Engineering and Development Department is responsible for taking forward the site formation and infrastructure works in the Loop, while the Architectural Services Department is responsible for taking forward the works for the fire station and ambulance depot with departmental accommodations in the area.

The Hospital Authority is implementing public works projects under the First Ten-year Hospital Development Plan, which covers redevelopment/expansion of hospitals, and

construction of a new acute public hospital, community health centres and a supporting services centre.

The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) is currently taking forward the Three-Runway System (3RS) at the Hong Kong International Airport. In view of the exceptionally high degree of integration required amongst the airport facilities under the 3RS project and various government facilities located at different parts of the 3RS project area, and the critical interfacing issues among the proposed works, the Government has entrusted the design and construction of the projects to AAHK.

Our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Regarding the above public works projects, relevant works departments or public organisations will engage consultants to undertake contract administration and site supervision. The related estimated costs have been set out in the funding proposals submitted to the Finance Committee (FC). The estimates for resident site staff management and emoluments in public works projects approved by the FC in the past five years are as follows:

Public works projects at the Loop

Project title	Estimates for resident site staff management and emoluments (\$ million)
Development of Lok Ma Chau Loop – Main Works Package 1 - Site Formation and Infrastructure Works	1,106.5
Fire Station and Ambulance Depot with Departmental Accommodations in Lok Ma Chau Loop	2.2

Public works projects under the First Ten-year Hospital Development Plan

Project title	Estimates for resident site staff management and emoluments (\$ million)
Redevelopment of Prince of Wales Hospital, Phase 2 (Stage 1) - Demolition and Foundation Works	33.4
Expansion of United Christian Hospital - Main Works (Superstructure and Refurbishment Works)	220.3
Redevelopment of Grantham Hospital, Phase 1 - Demolition, Site Formation and Foundation Works	25.0
Expansion of North District Hospital - Site Formation and Foundation Works	45.7
Expansion of Lai King Building in Princess Margaret Hospital- Site Formation and Foundation Works	12.2
New Acute Hospital at Kai Tak Development Area - Main Works	416.8
Redevelopment of Grantham Hospital, Phase 1 - Main Works	175.3

Project title	Estimates for resident site staff management and emoluments (\$ million)
Redevelopment of Prince of Wales Hospital, Phase 2 (Stage 1) - Main Works	250.5
Redevelopment of Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital - Main Works	69.8
Expansion of North District Hospital - Main Works	502.5
Expansion of Lai King Building in Princess Margaret Hospital - Main Works	84.3
Redevelopment of Kwong Wah Hospital (Stage 2) - Main Works	162.1

Public works projects for the Three-Runway System at the Hong Kong International Airport

Project title	Estimates for resident site staff management and emoluments (\$ million) (Note)
Provision of police facilities to support the Three-Runway System at the Hong Kong International Airport	221.5
Provision of facilities and accommodation for various government departments to support the Three-Runway System at the Hong Kong International Airport	186.1
Fitting-out works for Government Facilities associated with Intermodal Transfer Terminal Project at the Hong Kong International Airport	24.8

Note: The estimates cover payment to be made to the AAHK for the design, project management, insurance and construction support, as well as airport on-costs. As contract administration and site supervision form part of the above-mentioned payment to be paid to the AAHK, the relevant breakdown is not available.

2. Works Departments will prudently examine whether they have sufficient and suitable in-house manpower resources to cope with the project requirements so as to determine the need to employ consultants. In fact, employing consultants could avoid the need for works departments to recruit a large number of staff so that their staff establishment could be controlled at a reasonable level. As compared with the Government which has a large structure, consultants are more flexible in staff deployment and they could readily mobilise requisite professional and technical staff to meet the project needs, and even engage experts to help resolve complicated technical problems, thereby enhancing the work efficiency.

3. As the public works projects concerned are still at the planning and design stage, the costs of resident site staff management and emoluments in the coming three years have yet to be confirmed. Therefore, relevant information is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)004

(Question Serial No. 3197)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government constructed a number of community isolation facilities during the COVID-19 epidemic. As the epidemic situation stabilised, many of them have ceased operation. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

1. Please specify the locations and site areas of various community isolation facilities.
2. For facilities that already have designated use/are in use, please specify their current purposes, staff establishments and related expenditures in the past financial year.
3. For facilities that are in standby mode, please specify their vacant dates, staff establishments and related expenditures for maintaining management services (such as essential security and cleansing services).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The locations and site areas of community isolation facilities (CIFs) established by the Government during the epidemic are set out in the table below:

Location of community isolation facilities	Site area
Tam Mei, Yuen Long	About 10 hectares
San Tin	About 3.5 hectares
Tsing Yi	About 5.5 hectares
Hung Shui Kiu	About 3 hectares
Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge	About 2 hectares
Fanling	About 2 hectares
Penny's Bay	About 65 hectares
Runway area of Kai Tak	About 11.5 hectares
Lok Ma Chau Loop	About 19 hectares

2. The Government has earlier announced the use of CIFs in Tam Mei, Yuen Long, San Tin and Tsing Yi, as well as the one at the southern end of the Lok Ma Chau Loop. Upon completion of the necessary modifications, the CIF in Tam Mei, Yuen Long, is now used as centralised quarters for imported labour for the construction sector, while the San Tin CIF is used to hold training courses and trade tests of the construction industry. As both facilities are operated by the Construction Industry Council, the operation-related staff establishment is not under the Government and the expenditure is not borne by the Government. After modifications, the Tsing Yi CIF is now a base for youth development and national education managed by the Hong Kong Army Cadets Association, providing a venue and ancillary facilities to youth uniformed groups to hold training on flag raising, foot drill and other youth development-related activities. Such uses did not begin in the previous financial year because the base for youth development and national education only began operation in April 2024. The CIFs on the five hectares of land at the southern end of the Lok Ma Chau Loop have been transferred to other suitable locations for reconfiguration and reuse. The Civil Engineering and Development Department is commencing the site formation works to facilitate the construction of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park.

3. At present, all CIFs have been turned to standby mode or have been put to other purposes. Apart from the CIFs mentioned in paragraph 2 above, the Government is reviewing how to gradually draw up the subsequent arrangements for the rest of the CIFs, releasing the sites in phases or utilising the facilities for other purposes. According to the information provided by the Department of Health, it has arranged for contractors to provide essential security services at existing standby CIFs for the integrity of the facilities. Some of the facilities still require outsourced cleansing services and need to maintain the operation of lighting, air-conditioning, fire services and telecommunication equipment, which involves electricity and maintenance costs. Also, individual facilities may incur additional

expenditure if they have to be put to other uses should actual needs arise, and the expenditure incurred may also change from time to time. For example, Kai Tak CIF is currently accommodating Light Public Housing (LPH) mock-up units, and the management of the CIF at the Lok Ma Chau Loop also covers the living facilities of the Central Government-aided Emergency Hospital, which include storage area and temporary offices. Overall speaking, the monthly actual expenditure of all CIFs is about \$3.75 million in total. A breakdown is as follows:

Location of community isolation facilities	Monthly expenditure (\$'000)
Hung Shui Kiu	About 120
Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge	About 65
Fanling	About 65
Penny's Bay	About 1,700
Runway area of Kai Tak	About 400
Lok Ma Chau Loop	About 1,400

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0334)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The key performance measures in respect of greening, landscape and tree management include the numbers of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants planted by the Government.

- 1) There is a decrease of around 16% in the estimated number of plants to be planted by the Government in 2024 when compared with the actual number in 2023. What are the reasons?
- 2) Has the Government worked with local universities to explore the possibility of introducing or improving species that are more suitable for planting in Hong Kong? If so, what are the expenditures involved?
- 3) Has the Government set a timeframe for replanting if the plants are destroyed by storms? If so, what is the manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- 1) The amount of vegetation newly planted each year varies depending on the type, scale and progress of greening works. With the completion of some major infrastructural projects in 2023, and the fact that country parks have been extensively vegetated over the years, the amount of newly planted vegetation has relatively decreased in recent years. Nevertheless, the Government will progressively carry out a number of major infrastructure projects in future, of which greening works are an integral part. The Government will continue its efforts in the planting, proper maintenance and preservation of trees and other vegetation.
- 2) In 2018, making reference to research of local academics and advice from experts, the Development Bureau compiled the "Street Tree Selection Guide" which introduces 80 less commonly used tree species that are suitable for planting on Hong Kong's streets. Among them, half are native species while the other half are exotic, to promote diversity of tree species across the territory which is conducive to the sustainable development of urban forest.

- 3) For a newly planted plant under a works contract which has been seriously damaged in a storm, the works department will review whether the location concerned is suitable for that plant species, and arrange replanting as soon as possible. If the damaged plant is an existing plant already planted for a period of time, its habitat might have changed due to changing urban environment and city development over time. The relevant department will follow the “Right Plant, Right Place” principle, review whether the surrounding environment and space around the original plant are suitable for replanting, and select suitable plant species as appropriate. The relevant planting works will be integrated to the tree management departments’ routine vegetation maintenance operations.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)006

(Question Serial No. 0335)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government will continue the study on the suitability and sustainability of existing roadside trees this year. Will the Government inform this Committee:

- 1) of the current number of government departments involved in tree management and the manpower involved; and
- 2) whether the above study involves exploring the possibility of turning roadside trees into tourist attractions by, for example, planting rows of cherry blossoms as check-in spots for visitors; if so, the funding for the study and the timetable for implementation?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- 1) The number of staff (including staff of departments and contractors) of the nine core departments responsible for tree management as at 31 December 2023 is tabulated below:

Department	Number of tree management staff (Note 1) (including staff of departments and contractors) (as at 31 December 2023)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	87
Architectural Services Department	209
Civil Engineering and Development Department	128 (Note 2)
Drainage Services Department	95
Highways Department	215
Housing Department	255

Lands Department	215
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	313
Water Supplies Department	42

Note 1: The figures include only staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude management-level staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level).

Note 2: The numbers of trees and tree management staff in infrastructural projects will vary at different project stages.

- 2) The aim of conducting the study on the assessment of suitability and sustainability of roadside trees is to draw up the criteria for determining the suitability and sustainability of Hong Kong's roadside trees and develop a scoring system, which will be used to identify existing roadside trees in locations of high pedestrian and vehicular flow with suitability and sustainability issues. Appropriate improvement measures and maintenance plans for different scenarios will also be devised. Moreover, we have developed Greening Master Plans for each district by studying the characteristics and particular needs of the districts concerned. The greening themes of various districts, including flowering trees, are also reviewed. On top of that, we encourage tree management departments and works departments to consider planting more flowering trees at suitable locations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1561)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Every year, many tree failure incidents occur in Hong Kong due to various factors. Although many tree failure incidents have been caused by typhoons, problems in different nature have been found after analysis by experts, such as “planter-bound trees” due to insufficient space root growth that leads to the problem of poor grip on ground. There are also views that the soil for planting is no different from sand at construction sites which lacks nutrients and is hard in texture. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee whether the Government, against the principle of “Right Tree, Right Place”, has reserved sufficient space for tree growth when formulating the design standards for roadside tree planting? What type of soil is used for planting at roadside or landscape site? Is it suitable for planting? What concrete measures will the Government adopt to avoid and address the current problem of growing “planter-bound trees” (“planter-bound trees” refer to trees planted in a pot or within confined area enclosed by concrete)?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) advocates the “Right Tree, Right Place” principle to encourage tree management departments and the industry to plant trees that suit the environment, so that they can deliver the designed functions and grow healthily in a sustainable manner.

As regards the provision of growing space for roadside trees, the DEVB promulgated a technical circular in 2012 that stipulates the required width for roadside planting strips, and requires new at-grade road projects to reserve sufficient growing space for roadside greening. In 2023, the DEVB formulated the “Guidelines on Soil Volume for Urban Trees”, which sets out the design standards for soil volume and soil depth for newly planted trees. As to regular soil management after planting, it issued the “Guidelines on Soil Improvement” in 2022, which provides strategies and methods for soil improvement to promote the healthy growth of plants.

Owing to changes in the growing environment resulting from rapid urban development, it is no longer suitable for certain roadside trees planted in the past to continue to grow at their original locations. Apart from regular tree care, tree management departments will also conduct tree inspection and tree risk assessment, and adopt appropriate risk mitigation measures to safeguard public safety. In the long term, in order to make the planting environment suitable for sustainable tree growth, the DEVB has engaged experts to draw up the assessment criteria and develop a scoring system for the suitability and sustainability of roadside trees, and devise appropriate improvement measures and maintenance plans for different scenarios, including trees grown in confined areas, such as “planter-bound trees”. It is expected that preliminary recommendations on the criteria and scoring system for the suitability and sustainability of roadside trees under the study will be available within 2024, and the entire study is expected to be completed in 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)008

(Question Serial No. 1393)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the Government's planning, delivery and implementation of public sector infrastructure development and works programmes, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

Please set out in tabular form information on public works projects with estimated costs exceeding \$15 million approved by the Legislative Council and implemented by each government department in the past three financial years (including the project titles, the estimated expenditures, the consultant's fees at the design stage, and the awarded contract sums).

What are the criteria and methods adopted by the Administration for calculating the consultants' fees at the design stage of public works projects, and whether a limit has been imposed on the related expenditures?

How does the Administration ensure that the works contractors can complete all the works within the contract period?

Further to the above question, if a works contractor fails to complete the works in accordance with the contract terms, will the Administration use the performance bond provided by the works contractors to cover the loss caused by the failure to complete the works?

Has the Government commenced any studies on underground space development? If so, what is the total expenditure? If not, will the Government commence such studies in the future?

Further to the above question, what are the projects under study, under construction and completed? What projects have made significant achievements, and among which how much expenditure has been saved or how many economic benefits have been created for the Government?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The Government has been continuously investing in capital works projects to improve people's quality of life, enhance Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness and promote economic development. With long-term planning, the Government will take forward the relevant projects in a timely and orderly manner. As mentioned in the 2023-24 Budget Speech, it is estimated that expenditure on capital works will start reaching its peak in the next three years. In the Medium Range Forecast, capital works expenditure could be contained at about \$90 billion per annum on average. This figure represents an increase of about 17% over the average annual expenditure of \$76 billion in the last five years, which demonstrates the Government's continued investment for capital works expenditure.

In the past three financial years, the Government had several thousands of public works projects with an estimated cost exceeding \$15 million, covering healthcare, land and housing supply, culture and recreation, education, transportation, water supply, drainage and sewerage aspects which are closely related to people's livelihood with the total approved project estimate exceeding \$400 billion. As these projects are mainly minor works carried out under Category D (with estimated cost below \$50 million), the checking of a large quantity of documents will be involved, and it is difficult to sort them out given the limited time. Moreover, Category A projects (with estimated cost over \$50 million) account for over 90% of the total approved project estimate, only about 220 Category A projects with estimated cost exceeding \$50 million approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in the past three financial years are set out in the table below:

Implementation department	Number of capital works projects (Note 2)	Total approved project estimate
Architectural Services Department	about 70	about \$147 billion
Civil Engineering and Development Department	about 50	about \$70 billion
Drainage Services Department	about 30	about \$31 billion
Highways Department	about 20	about \$18 billion
Water Supplies Department	about 10	about \$18 billion
Other departments and organisations (Note 1)	about 40	about \$106 billion
Total	about 220	about \$390 billion

Note 1: Including government departments such as the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Environmental Protection Department and other subvented organisations such as the Hospital Authority and schools.

Note 2: Capital works projects funded by the Capital Works Reserve Fund block allocations or seeking increase in approved project estimates are not included.

For projects with estimated costs not exceeding \$50 million, they are vetted under the Capital Works Reserve Fund block allocations with the relevant details set out in the discussion papers submitted to LegCo each year.

On estimation of consultants' fees, government departments will take into account a number of factors including the complexity and risk of the individual capital works projects, the scope of works involved and the implementation timetable, the estimated manpower demand of various professional and technical personnel, and the market wage levels in the assessment. During consultant selection exercises, government departments will thoroughly evaluate the proposed manpower inputs and the tender prices to ensure that the consultants' fees are reasonable. Based on our analysis, consultancy fees for investigation and design studies of large capital works projects generally account for about 2% to 3% of the overall project costs. Well-conducted consultancy studies and design are conducive to the smooth implementation of capital works projects.

In carrying out the design of works projects, there is a need to request consultants as necessary to provide additional services. For example, in response to the suggestions raised by stakeholders during the public consultation stage, consultants need to modify the engineering designs and conduct additional impact assessments, government departments will obtain the relevant prior approvals under the established mechanism and procedures before giving instructions to the consultants concerned to ensure that the consultants' fees for additional services are reasonable and can satisfy the projects' needs, thereby uplifting the overall cost effectiveness of projects.

Delays in project completion for some large-scale projects are mainly due to unforeseen circumstances, such as the COVID-19 epidemic, inclement weather conditions, etc. To address the risks of project delays, government departments have adopted the "New Engineering Contract" (NEC) form in capital works projects. With the introduction of an early warning mechanism in NEC, both the client's representative and the contractor are encouraged to identify and raise potential risks that may affect the project as early as possible, and when construction difficulties and problems are encountered, to negotiate and formulate the optimal solution for the smooth implementation of the project according to the prescribed procedure framework and timeframes in the contract. In addition, the Development Bureau will closely monitor the implementation timetable of projects through a high-level task force, complemented by the Project Surveillance System (PSS), for timely intervention so as to mitigate the risks of project delays. Regarding contracts, there are relevant provisions in capital works contracts that if the delay is caused by the contractor who fails to complete the works within the contract period, he will be liable to pay the liquidated damages to the Government. Besides, the contractor's performance in respect of works progress will be reflected in his quarterly performance report, which will have a direct bearing on his chance of being awarded capital works contracts in future.

Considering the financial burden involved if a contractor is required to procure performance bond, public works contracts in general do not require contractors to provide performance bond when undertaking capital works projects. However, to protect the Government's interests, government departments will stipulate in the works contracts that, depending on the contract size, about 1 to 2.5% of the payments due to the contractor will be retained as retention money, which will be released to the contractor after completion of the contract. If the contractor fails to complete the works under the contract, an appropriate amount will be deducted from the retention money by the government department(s) concerned in accordance with the contract to cover the losses.

To meet the housing demand of the community and various economic and social development needs of Hong Kong, the Government has been adopting a multi-pronged land supply strategy

to ensure steady and sufficient land supply. Underground space development is one of the feasible medium-to-long-term land supply options to create and increase urban development capacity. The Government has conducted the Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas (the Study) in recent years. The Study is generally divided into two stages, aiming to select and formulate conceptual schemes for prioritised underground space development, and recommend the way forward as reference for future implementation when necessary.

Stage 1 of the Study explored the potential for underground space development in four selected strategic urban areas, namely Causeway Bay, Happy Valley, Admiralty/Wan Chai, and Tsim Sha Tsui West, conducted baseline review for the areas, examined viable uses for underground space, and collected public views on their development opportunities and major considerations. The findings of the Study indicated that the strategic urban area with the greatest development potential was the underground space at Kowloon Park in Tsim Sha Tsui. The views and ideas of young people on its planning and design were also collected through a design competition.

Stage 2 of the Study formulated a conceptual scheme for underground space development at Kowloon Park to create space for retail and food and beverage, community facilities, public spaces, walkways and other uses; and carried out technical assessment and further collected public views and suggestions (including expansion and better utilisation of underground space in the area of Kowloon Park, with a view to further providing multi-purpose space and its distribution ratio, and connecting to adjacent developments; and further reducing the impact on trees and the ecology of the park, etc.). More than 30 000 submissions of views were received. Owing to the large number of views collected, it took time to consolidate and analyse them, with a view to optimising the conceptual scheme, updating its technical feasibility study and consulting stakeholders of various sectors on how to take forward the scheme in future. The Study has been substantially completed and has ascertained the technical feasibility of the conceptual scheme for underground space development at Kowloon Park. The total expenditure on the consultancy study is about \$60 million.

In the course of the Study, the situations of the tourism industry and retail market as well as the economy of Hong Kong have changed due to the outbreak of the epidemic since early 2020. In 2023, our society resumed normalcy in full after the epidemic. However, the commercial and retail market in Tsim Sha Tsui still takes time to adjust, construction works of underground space development at Kowloon Park would inevitably pose impact to park operation and enjoyment of park users. Also, the Government should exercise control over the pace of public expenditure through re-prioritisation of works. Considering the above, it is not the right time now to proceed with the project.

After all, underground space development belongs to the medium-to-long-term land supply options. We can consider taking forward the project on the basis of the Study at suitable juncture in future.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1156)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraphs 229-231 of the Budget that the Government will review and re-prioritise its capital works to ensure containment of its expenditure on infrastructure works at a sustainable level. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The Development Bureau revealed in January 2023 that the estimated cost of the reclamation of the Artificial Islands in the Central Waters was about \$580 billion. Please provide a detailed breakdown of the estimated (i) construction cost (including wages for workers, machinery cost and material cost), (ii) consultancy fee (including design and management fees, and site supervision fee of resident site staff), (iii) project contingencies (at January 2023 price) and (iv) the respective percentages of each part out of the total cost.
2. Has the Government updated the estimated cost mentioned above? If so, please provide a detailed breakdown of the latest estimate; if not, what are the reasons?
3. What is the estimated cost per hectare of land created after the completion of the artificial islands?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

We submitted the ballpark estimate on the construction cost of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI) to the Panel on Development of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in March 2019. That estimate was made based on the information available at that time, professional judgement and initial assumptions about design and construction. Subsequently, we made an interim report to the LegCo Panel on Development regarding the KYCAI in end-2022, in which it was mentioned that a rough estimate of the total construction cost of the project would be about \$580 billion (at the price of the second quarter of 2022). It was expected that about 30% of the estimated project cost would be used for the KYCAI reclamation project, about 20% would be used for constructing the infrastructure facilities of the artificial islands, and the remaining about 50% would be used for developing strategic transport infrastructure (including major roads and railways). The estimated expenditure of each of

the above items was a rough lump sum estimate. Conceptually, the works cost, project supervision fee, contingencies, etc. were already included, but no further individual assessments have been made for such items at this initial stage.

The first stage public engagement activities for the KYCAI project were completed last year. At this stage, we are committed to conducting the environmental impact assessment for the reclamation works. Our target is to commence the statutory environmental impact assessment process for the reclamation works within this year and a detailed engineering design progressively from this year. A more comprehensive and detailed estimate on the construction cost, consultancy fee, project contingencies, land value, etc. can only be made after the completion of the detailed design and formulation of the implementation timetable.

The Committee on the Financing of Major Development Projects led by the Financial Secretary will continue to explore specific financial arrangements for major land and transport infrastructure projects as a whole. We will formulate specific implementation strategies for the KYCAI and prepare the estimate for the investment, manpower and resources required for and a pragmatic works schedule for the project according to the progress of such studies and assessments, with a view to commencing the reclamation works within the term of this Government.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1319)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

According to Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, the Government will continue to organise public education and promotion activities under the “People • Trees • Harmony” campaign. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the total expenditure on staffing provision in the past three years;
- (b) the respective expenditures on each of the activities and publicity and education programmes organised under the campaign in the past three years?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The “People • Trees • Harmony” campaign organised by the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of the Development Bureau aims at stepping up promotion efforts to enhance public knowledge and appreciation of landscape and trees, as well as proper maintenance of trees, and to strengthen community involvement.

- (a) As the work involved in the activities is part of the overall work of the GLTMS, a breakdown of the manpower is not available.
- (b) The annual expenditures on the activities as well as publicity and education programmes organised under the “People • Trees • Harmony” campaign in the past three years are tabulated below:

Activities/publicity and education programmes	Actual expenditure (\$M)			
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)	Total amount of 3 years
Urban Forestry Pamphlets	0.18	0.21	0.23	0.62

“See Green, Go Green” webpage ^{Note1}	-	-	-	-
Landscape Corner (information webpage)	2.31	-	-	2.31
Media publicity activity	0.46	0.72	0.23	1.41
Urban forestry thematic guided tours ^{Note2}	-	-	-	-
“Your Story in our Urban Forest” Photography and Short Video Contest ^{Note2}	-	-	0.54	0.54
Animated videos on tree knowledge	-	0.12	0.48	0.60
Education & Careers Expo (setting up exhibition booths)	0.18	0.52	0.52	1.22
Hong Kong Flower Show (setting up exhibition booths)	-	1.22	- Note2	1.22
Urban Forestry Roving Exhibition	0.97	0.03	-	1.00

Note 1: The item was completed through deployment of internal resources with no additional expenditure incurred.

Note 2: The item is still underway.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)011

(Question Serial No. 0126)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the current core tree management departments (departments), will the Government inform this Committee of the following in the past three years:

- (1) the number of trees managed by the departments;
- (2) the number of tree management personnel in the departments; and
- (3) the number of outsourced contracts and total contract sum of the departments?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1&2. The number of trees maintained by the nine core tree management departments and the number of their tree management staff (including staff of departments and contractors) in the past three years are tabulated below:

Core tree management department	Number of trees (Note 1)			Number of tree management staff (Note 5) (including staff of departments and contractors)		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) (Note 2)	31 500	30 900	28 400	87	87	87
Architectural Services Department	145 900	143 700	143 700	205	198	209

Core tree management department	Number of trees (Note 1)			Number of tree management staff (Note 5) (including staff of departments and contractors)		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)
Civil Engineering and Development Department	8 900	9 000	40 500 (Note 3)	20	19	128 (Note 3)
Drainage Services Department	17 800	18 500	16 900	90	87	95
Highways Department	591 400	586 300	580 300	246	220	215
Housing Department	88 100	87 900	87 500	173	176	255
Lands Department (LandsD)	Not applicable (Note 4)			174	195	215
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	559 400	552 600	542 600	301	310	313
Water Supplies Department	145 700	149 800	149 100	37	40	42

Note 1: The number of trees is rounded to the nearest 100.

Note 2: The AFCD manages all trees in country parks. The figures above include only the number of trees in frequently used areas and facilities.

Note 3: The numbers of trees and tree management staff of infrastructural projects will vary at different project stages.

Note 4: The unallocated and unleased government land (UUGL) is under the jurisdiction of the LandsD, which is responsible for providing non-routine tree maintenance on the UUGL that is not maintained by any designated government departments. Given the large number of trees on the UUGL, an exact figure is not available. LandsD officers will take follow-up actions upon referrals or complaints.

Note 5: The figures include only staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude management-level staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level).

3. Trees on government land and within government facilities are managed by the respective tree management departments through in-house teams and/or outsourced contracts. The tree management-related contracts of the respective departments vary in terms of contract value, contract period, the number of trees involved, nature of work,

etc. Except for AFCD, the other eight core departments have engaged contractors to assist in tree management. In the past three years, the number of outsourced contracts and total contract sum of the respective core tree management departments are tabulated below:

Core tree management department	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)	
	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$M)	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$M)	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$M)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Not applicable					
Architectural Services Department	5	56	3	54	4	42
Civil Engineering and Development Department	0	0	1	9	2	10
Drainage Services Department	7	13	7	22	6	14
Highways Department	16	70	19	167	18	188
Housing Department	4	25	4	25	8	18
Lands Department	9	34	7	31	8	26
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	162	252	97	237	61	184
Water Supplies Department	8	43	5	37	7	28
Total	211	493	143	582	114	510

* Contract sum is rounded to the nearest million dollars.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1830)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the use of the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF), will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the following information for each year since its establishment: (i) the balance; (ii) the number of applications approved; (iii) the total amount of subsidies; (iv) the number of enterprises that have been granted subsidies; (v) the respective amounts of subsidies approved for project categories of “technology adoption” and “manpower development” and their proportions;
- (2) of the number of enterprises that have applied for the procurement or rental of the Smart Site Safety System (SSSS) products since 1 April 2023, and the amount of subsidies;
- (3) whether the Government will study introducing new measures to further encourage private contractors to adopt the SSSS; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) of the following information regarding the CITF for the past three years: (i) applications under the “technology adoption” category (i.e. Building Information Modelling, Modular Integrated Construction, Advanced Construction Technologies, Prefabricated Steel Rebar) - (a) the number of applications, (b) the number of applications approved, (c) the sizes of enterprises whose applications have been approved and the amount of subsidies; and (ii) applications under the “manpower development” category – (a) the number of applications approved, (b) a list of the organisations that have submitted applications, (c) the amount of subsidies and the number of training places in approved applications?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) was set up by the Government in 2018. With a further injection of additional funding into the CITF in 2022, the total amount of provision is \$2.2 billion. The CITF aims to encourage wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies in the construction industry, promote productivity, uplift built quality, improve site safety, enhance environmental performance, and boost the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in the application of new technologies.

To accelerate the promotion of smart site safety and to enhance site safety comprehensively with innovative technologies, on 1 April 2023, we launched a new initiative to subsidise contractors of private worksites to adopt the Smart Site Safety System (SSSS) through the CITF, and raised the funding ceiling for each company from \$6 million to \$7.5 million, of which the additional \$1.5 million must be used on SSSS. The Construction Industry Council (CIC) has also stepped up publicity and provided safety information and support to the industry to promote wider adoption of SSSS.

(1) As at end-February 2024:

(i) uncommitted balance

(ii) number of applications approved: 3 702

(iii) total amount of subsidies approved: about \$1.15 billion

(iv) number of enterprises that have been granted subsidies: 1 157

(v) amount of subsidies approved:

“technology adoption”: about \$1.1 billion

“manpower development” (including training subsidies for technology adoption): about \$50 million

The ratio of “technology adoption” to “manpower development”: about 95.7%:4.3%

(2) Since the launch of the new CITF initiative in April 2023 to support the industry to adopt SSSS, and up to end-February 2024, 46 main contractors and subcontractors have been granted about \$9 million for the procurement or rental of SSSS products.

(3) Since end-2023, the Government and the CIC have jointly held multiple meetings with private developers, main contractors, subcontractors and trade associations to discuss measures to promote the use of SSSS in private works projects. With an understanding of the needs of the industry, in particular those of the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), we have worked out various packages of SSSS products for different types and scales of private works projects, facilitating main contractors and subcontractors to apply for subsidies to purchase such products and use them in their projects. At the same time, we are also exploring the extension of the scope of the CITF to cover other costs associated with the adoption of SSSS, such as information technology support, network requirements arising from the use of SSSS, manpower training for the adoption of SSSS, procurement support, etc. so as to further assist the industry in adopting SSSS.

Moreover, the Government and the CIC are considering the launch of a scheme to issue certification to worksites (including public and private works) that have adopted SSSS. We also intend to upload the list of worksites that have SSSS certification to the related webpage of the CIC in recognition of their efforts.

(4) Statistical information about technology adoption and manpower development projects under the CITF in the past three years is as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
(i) Technology adoption projects			
(a) Number of applications	750	921	893
(b) Number of applications approved	533	538	574
(c) Size of enterprises whose applications have been approved and the amount of subsidies	SMEs *: 136 Amount of subsidies: \$80 million Non-SMEs: 63 Amount of subsidies: \$120 million	SMEs *: 87 Amount of subsidies: \$80 million Non-SMEs: 42 Amount of subsidies: \$130 million	SMEs *: 98 Amount of subsidies: \$100 million Non-SMEs: 53 Amount of subsidies: \$210 million
(ii) Manpower development projects (including training subsidies for technology adoption)			
(a) Number of applications approved	162	145	75
(b) Organisations that have submitted applications	Statistical information about applicants is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BIM training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 249 main contractors; ➤ 155 subcontractors; and ➤ 112 consultants ● Other manpower development items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 9 local higher education institutions; ➤ 4 professional institutions ➤ 1 trade association; and ➤ 2 quasi-government or statutory organisations 		
(c) Amount of subsidies and number of training places in approved applications	Amount of subsidies: \$4.3 million Number of training places: 2 766	Amount of subsidies: \$7.47 million Number of training places: 2 491	Amount of subsidies: \$2.2 million Number of training places: 411

* SMEs are enterprises with no more than 50 employees.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)013

(Question Serial No. 0470)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Bureau will set up the Building Testing and Research Institute within this year. Please inform this Committee of the details of setting up the Building Testing and Research Institute, including site selection, rental, manpower and expenditure on emoluments?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

Apart from research and development (R&D) activities for innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, the Building Testing and Research Institute (BTRI) will also devise standards, conduct testing and provide accreditation, in order to spearhead innovation in the construction industry and attract R&D talent to Hong Kong. The BTRI will also capitalise on Hong Kong's unique advantages to provide a platform for our country's construction standards and related products to align with those in the international market.

The BTRI is expected to be established within this year. At the initial stage, the BTRI will mainly focus on co-ordinating testing and accreditation of construction projects, promoting applied R&D and interfacing with the relevant Mainland authorities to provide support for the development of the construction standards for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Suitable sites will be identified for building relevant facilities in the Northern Metropolis. At present, we are identifying other suitable locations for the BTRI's initial operation. At the same time, we are drawing up the requirements for the initial operation of the BTRI, including the organisational structure, related staff and pay levels, and the operational budget, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)014

(Question Serial No. 2706)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In 2023, did the Development Bureau procure external legal consultancy services in accordance with the Stores and Procurement Regulations of the Government without going through the Department of Justice? If so, what were the nature of such services and the expenditures incurred?

Asked by: Hon LAM San-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

In the 2023-24 financial year, the Development Bureau (Works Branch) did not procure any external legal consultancy services without going through the Department of Justice.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)015

(Question Serial No. 1750)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 189 of the Budget Speech that we will strengthen collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to enhance the manufacturing, import/export facilitation, and exportability of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules, with a view to developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages. The Government of the HKSAR will also examine the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the itemised expenditures on government housing projects that have adopted the MiC method in the past three years;
- (2) whether the Government will examine ways to enhance the promotion of the MiC method given the views that MiC has not been widely adopted by developers; and
- (3) of the expenditures on the transportation of MiC modules in the past three years?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to lead the industry to adopt MiC to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, etc., have started the adoption or trial of MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address announced further promoting MiC by formulating and implementing a series of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, in order to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the Greater Bay Area (GBA); and by promoting the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC by the

private sector, with a view to reducing labour demand and expediting housing supply. The Development Bureau is proactively carrying out exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecosystem for the industry.

The 2024-25 Budget also announced developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages, and examining the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1&3. The projects awarded by the Government through the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) in the past three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) that have adopted MiC are set out in the **Annex**. However, the costs of transporting MiC modules have not been calculated separately in the estimates for the above projects.

As materials are assembled in factories, the adoption of MiC can effectively reduce the number of material deliveries to the construction sites, thereby reducing transportation costs. According to the University of Hong Kong's study on MiC pilot projects, the adoption of MiC can reduce construction time by about 30% to 50%, uplift on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, save construction costs by at least 10% and has better performance in terms of workmanship, environmental protection and safety than using traditional construction methods.

2. To encourage private developers to widely adopt high productivity construction methods such as MiC, the Government has introduced a series of measures including granting a 10% concession for MiC floor area in the calculation of gross floor area and site coverage, and a 4% relaxation of storey height restriction for MiC floors, providing subsidies through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund, and setting up the Modular Integrated Construction Dedicated Section to provide technical support to the industry, strengthen communication and collaboration with relevant departments, and facilitate project approvals. These measures will further promote the adoption of MiC by the private sector.

Among the projects awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in the past three years (2021-22 to 2023-24), MiC has been adopted in the following projects:

	Project title	Estimated project cost
1.	Light Public Housing –First Batch	about \$14.9 billion
2.	Light Public Housing –Second Batch	about \$9.8 billion
3.	Chinese Medicine Hospital in Tseung Kwan O	about \$8.6 billion
4.	Redevelopment of Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre	about \$5.5 billion
5.	Kwun Tong Composite Development Project	about \$4.5 billion
6.	Redevelopment of Western Police Married Quarters site	about \$2 billion
7.	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	about \$1.6 billion
8.	Public market in Tin Shui Wai	about \$1.5 billion
9.	Two special schools at Renfrew Road, Kowloon Tong	about \$800 million
10.	Fire station-cum-ambulance depot with departmental quarters and facilities in Area 72, Tseung Kwan O	about \$700 million
11.	A primary school at Lin Cheung Road, Sham Shui Po	about \$500 million
12.	A primary school and a kindergarten at Site E-1, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	about \$500 million
13.	A primary school in Tsuen Wan West Station (TW7) Development, Tsuen Wan	about \$400 million
14.	A primary school at Site 1B-4, Kai Tak Development	about \$400 million
15.	A primary school at Au Pui Wan Street, Fo Tan, Sha Tin	about \$400 million
16.	A primary school at Site KT2a, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	about \$400 million
17.	A primary school at Site KT2c , Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	about \$400 million
18.	A primary school at Area 9, Tai Po	about \$400 million
19.	Sunlight Market in Tung Chung	about \$50 million
20.	Lai Wan Market under the Market Modernisation Programme	about \$45 million

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0581)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the continued efforts to steer and support the wider use of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) method and other high productivity construction methods in the industry, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the details and estimated expenditures of the projects awarded by the Government that have adopted the MiC method in the past 3 years;
2. the details of the projects, including the number of projects and estimated expenditure, to be awarded by the Government in the coming year, that are expected to adopt the MiC method;
3. the estimated expenditure on supporting the wider use of the MiC method in the industry by the Government in the coming year, and whether the objectives involve cost control; if so, details of the objectives;
4. the number and expenditures pertaining to the adoption of the MiC method under the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund by the industry in the past 3 years; and
5. the details of efforts to strengthen the leading regional position of Hong Kong's construction industry in the adoption of MiC?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government has been leading the industry to adopt Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, etc., have started the adoption or trial of MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address announced further promoting MiC by formulating and implementing a series of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, in order to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the Greater Bay Area (GBA); and by promoting the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC by the private sector, with a view to reducing labour demand and expediting housing supply. The Development Bureau (DEVB) is proactively carrying out exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecosystem for the industry.

The 2024-25 Budget also announced developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages, and examining the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain.

Our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The projects awarded by the Government through the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) in the past three years (2021-22 and 2023-24) that have adopted MiC are set out in the **Annex**.
2. Among the projects to be awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in the coming year (2024-25), MiC will be adopted for the following projects:

	Project title	Estimated project cost
1.	Joint-user Complex with Market in Area 67, Tseung Kwan O	about \$3.3 billion
2.	Redevelopment of Shek Kip Mei Health Centre	about \$2.2 billion
3.	A primary school at Area 89 (Northern side), Tung Chung	about \$600 million
4.	A primary school at Area 29, Kwu Tung North New Development Area	about \$600 million
5.	A primary school at Area 17, Fanling North New Development Area	about \$500 million
6.	A special school at Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai	about \$400 million

3. The 2023-24 Budget has earmarked \$15 million for studying and promoting measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules. Moreover, the Modular Integrated Construction Dedicated Section, established by the DEVB last year, aims to provide technical support to the industry, facilitate communication and collaboration with relevant departments, streamline project vetting processes and further promote the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC. The dedicated section has four non-directorate professional staff with an annual expenditure of about \$7 million. The use of MiC can control construction costs effectively. Having construction processes transferred from the site to the factory can reduce the impact caused by weather factors and environmental constraints. According to the University of Hong Kong's study on MiC pilot projects, the adoption of MiC can reduce construction time by about 30% to 50%, uplift on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, save construction costs by at least 10% and has better performance in terms of workmanship, environmental protection and safety than using traditional construction methods.
4. The Government allocated \$1 billion to establish the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) in 2018. There was a further injection of \$1.2 billion additional funding into the CITF in 2022, making the total amount \$2.2 billion, for

supporting its ongoing operation and implementation of enhancement measures. Through the CITF, the Government encourages and supports the industry to adopt MiC. As at end-2023, more than 75 projects have received subsidies totalling about \$180 million.

5. To strengthen the leading regional position of Hong Kong in the adoption of MiC, the DEVB has established a cross-departmental steering committee on high productivity construction methods in early 2023. The steering committee is dedicated to co-ordinating and promoting the development of high productivity construction. It formulates measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain, fosters collaboration with the GBA, examines investing in the MiC supply chain, and promotes the industrialisation of MiC. Leveraging its close connection with the world and experience in the application of international construction standards, Hong Kong can support the GBA in developing into a MiC technology centre, drive the innovative development of MiC in the GBA as a strategic industry and subsequently expand it to overseas markets.

Among the projects awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in the past three years (2021-22 to 2023-24), MiC has been adopted in the following projects:

	Project title	Estimated project cost
1.	Light Public Housing –First Batch	about \$14.9 billion
2.	Light Public Housing –Second Batch	about \$9.8 billion
3.	Chinese Medicine Hospital in Tseung Kwan O	about \$8.6 billion
4.	Redevelopment of Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre	about \$5.5 billion
5.	Kwun Tong Composite Development Project	about \$4.5 billion
6.	Redevelopment of Western Police Married Quarters site	about \$2 billion
7.	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	about \$1.6 billion
8.	A public market in Tin Shui Wai	about \$1.5 billion
9.	Two special schools at Renfrew Road, Kowloon Tong	about \$800 million
10.	Fire station-cum-ambulance depot with departmental quarters and facilities in Area 72, Tseung Kwan O	about \$700 million
11.	A primary school at Lin Cheung Road, Sham Shui Po	about \$500 million
12.	A primary school and a kindergarten at Site E-1, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	about \$500 million
13.	A primary school in Tsuen Wan West Station (TW7) Development, Tsuen Wan	about \$400 million
14.	A primary school at Site 1B-4, Kai Tak Development	about \$400 million
15.	A primary school at Au Pui Wan Street, Fo Tan, Sha Tin	about \$400 million
16.	A primary school at Site KT2a, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	about \$400 million
17.	A primary school at Site KT2c , Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	about \$400 million
18.	A primary school at Area 9, Tai Po	about \$400 million
19.	Sunlight Market in Tung Chung	about \$50 million
20.	Lai Wan Market under the Market Modernisation Programme	about \$45 million

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1475)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 189 of the Budget Speech that “we will strengthen collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to enhance the manufacturing, import/export facilitation, and exportability of MiC modules. The Government of the HKSAR will also examine the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain. Moreover, the Development Bureau will set up the Building Testing and Research Institute within this year to promote innovative application in the industry.” Please advise on the following:

1. Which organisation is responsible for strengthening collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government and handling the follow-ups? If collaboration has already started, have the two sides agreed on any work plans or signed any agreements or memoranda of understanding? If so, what are the details? If collaboration has not yet started, has a preliminary collaboration programme been formulated? If so, what are the details?
2. When will the Government kick-start the examination of the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain and when will the work be completed? Will the related study be completed through internal resources or will it be outsourced to external consultants/professional bodies/universities for completion? If it will be outsourced, what are the reasons and what is the estimated expenditure involved?
3. When is the Building Testing and Research Institute expected to be set up? What are its initial targets, operating budget and staff establishment respectively?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to lead the industry to adopt MiC to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, etc., have started the adoption or trial of MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public

sectors.

The 2023 Policy Address announced further promoting MiC by formulating and implementing a series of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, in order to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the Greater Bay Area (GBA); and by promoting the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC by the private sector, with a view to reducing labour demand and expediting housing supply. The Development Bureau (DEVB) is proactively carrying out exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecosystem for the industry.

The 2024-25 Budget also announced developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages, and examining the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The DEVB has exchanged preliminary views on MiC with the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province (DHURDGP). On 23 January 2024, the DEVB, with the support from the DHURDGP and the People's Government of Huizhou Municipality, held the MiC Supply Chain Conference in Huizhou, attracting some 300 participants from the construction sector in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. The event aimed to promote the adoption of MiC among the GBA cities. On 26 March 2024, the DHURDGP and the DEVB signed the Letter of Intent on Cooperation at the Construction Forum co-organised by the Mainland and Hong Kong to deepen co-operation and exchanges between Guangdong and Hong Kong in the areas of construction and related engineering services, including promoting the collaborative development of MiC in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA. Subsequently, we will further discuss with the DHURDGP how to promote the collaborative development of MiC in the GBA, and the timetable for implementation of the co-operation details and relevant measures.
2. We will begin to examine the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain and expect to finish the work within this year. The scope of the study will include exploring investment opportunities in the MiC supply chain, studying investment risks and returns, and the benefits that the form and scale of investment would bring to MiC industry development and the economy as a whole. As investing in the MiC supply chain will involve investment expertise and experience, consultant(s) and university(ies) will be commissioned to conduct the study, the expenditure of which will be covered by internal resources.
3. Apart from research and development (R&D) activities for innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, the Building Testing and Research Institute (BTRI) will also devise standards, conduct testing and provide accreditation, in order to spearhead innovation in the construction industry and attract R&D talent to Hong Kong. The BTRI will also capitalise on Hong Kong's unique advantages to provide a platform for our country's construction standards and related products to align with those in the international market.

The BTRI is expected to be established within this year. At the initial stage, the BTRI will mainly focus on co-ordinating testing and accreditation of construction projects, promoting applied R&D, and interfacing with the relevant Mainland authorities to provide support for the development of construction standards for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA. We are drawing up the requirements for the initial operation of the BTRI, including the organisational structure, related staff and pay levels, and the operational budget. etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)018

(Question Serial No. 1477)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 230 of the Budget Speech that “relevant bureaux and departments have reviewed the cost-effectiveness of works projects and give due regard to priority and urgency to adjust the implementation schedule. For some works projects which are at a comparatively mature stage of planning, they will continue to be taken forward by the relevant bureaux and departments as planned. They include the site formation and infrastructure works for the Northern Metropolis. As for some works projects that are currently at the preliminary planning or conceptual stage, the implementation schedule will be adjusted in light of their importance, etc.” Please advise on the following:

1. What are the respective works projects that “will continue to be taken forward by the relevant bureaux and departments as planned” and of which “the implementation schedule will be adjusted” as mentioned above? Are the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project and Sunny Bay reclamation project included in the works projects of which “the implementation schedule will be adjusted”? If so, what are the details of adjustment and considerations?
2. In the 2023-24 Budget, the Government projected that the average annual capital works expenditure would exceed \$100 billion for 2024-25 to 2027-28. However, it has been updated in the current Budget that the average annual capital works expenditure will be about \$90 billion for 2025-26 to 2028-29. Please advise on the works projects of which the implementation will be affected by the downward adjustment of the medium range forecast of the capital works expenditure.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

Implementation of infrastructure projects is not only an investment for the future, but can also promote Hong Kong's economic development and enhance people's livelihood. In recent years, the Government has made all-out effort to press ahead with the land and housing supply projects, including new development areas and new towns, and also proposed a number of other works projects for improving the environment and people's livelihood. The Government needs to contain its expenditure on infrastructure works at a sustainable level.

To this end, relevant bureaux and departments have reviewed the cost-effectiveness of works projects and give due regard to priority and urgency to adjust the implementation schedule.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

Under the fiscal consolidation programme, relevant bureaux and departments will review works projects under planning. As regards works projects which are at a mature stage of planning, they will continue to be taken forward by the relevant bureaux and departments as planned after review. In 2024-25 financial year, it is planned to submit 66 new projects to the Legislative Council for upgrading to Category A. This figure is broadly the same as those in the past two years. Bureaux and departments will also review works projects currently at the preliminary planning or conceptual stage, and consider their implementation in light of priority, urgency and other relevant factors.

The revised estimate of capital works expenditure for 2023-24 financial year is \$85 billion and the estimate for 2024-25 financial year is \$90.2 billion. In the coming five years, the average annual capital works expenditure will be about \$90 billion. This figure still represents an increase of about 17 per cent over the average annual expenditure of \$76 billion in the last five years, which demonstrates the Government's continued allocation of resources for capital works projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)019

(Question Serial No. 1481)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (4) Energizing Kowloon East

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the work under Programme (4), please advise on the following:

What were the respective numbers of new public and private developments for which one-stop advisory and co-ordination services were provided by the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) in each of the past three years? Please list by year the public and private projects for which services were provided by the EKEO.

1. The comprehensive pedestrian environment improvement review for Kowloon East and San Po Kong Business Area was commenced in 2023. What is the completion time of and the related consultancy fees for the review? Having completed the San Po Kong Business Area Pedestrian Environment and Traffic Improvement Feasibility Study in 2019, the Administration conducted a comprehensive pedestrian environment improvement review for San Po Kong Business Area in 2023. By doing so, will it lead to duplication of review efforts or wastage of resources? What is the relation between the study completed in 2019 and the current review, or how the work is divided?
2. The Administration updated the Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) to version 6.0 in 2022. In 2024-25, the Administration will advocate and refine the CMP taking into account the latest circumstances and development proposals. What will be done, in specific terms, to "advocate and refine" the CMP, or what is the main difference from version 6.0 or what are the updates?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

To facilitate the transformation of Kowloon East into the second core business district (CBD2) of Hong Kong, the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) has all along adopted a co-ordinated and integrated approach to provide one-stop advisory and facilitation services through co-ordination and liaison across bureaux/departments for implementing various Energizing Kowloon East initiatives. EKEO's work focuses on four main aspects: (1)

Ensuring Sustainable Growth; (2) Enhancing Connectivity, Walkability and Mobility; (3) Developing a Smart, Green and Resilient CBD; and (4) Promoting the “Spirit of Creation”.

In ensuring sustainable growth of commercial floor space, EKEO has been striving to facilitate the supply of commercial land in Kwun Tong, Kowloon Bay and San Po Kong Business Areas as well as Kai Tak Development Area. In the past three years, EKEO has actively co-ordinated efforts of various government departments to release government sites including those in Kowloon Bay Action Area (KBAA), Kwun Tong Action Area and Lai Yip Street for commercial uses through planning and urban design reviews and by taking forward public works projects. Meanwhile, EKEO has co-ordinated and facilitated wholesale conversion or redevelopment of industrial buildings in private sector to provide additional commercial floor space.

At the same time, EKEO continues to provide co-ordination and advisory services to both public and private works as well as development projects in the district, which involve a wide range of projects covering different aspects, including large and small-scale local public improvement works; and case enquiries, co-ordination and follow-up of private development projects. Some projects involve cross-year works. The progress of projects with more public concern is set out below:

- (i) On enhancing connectivity, EKEO has actively co-ordinated with relevant works departments on implementation of various infrastructure projects in the past three years, such as the commencement of construction of the footbridge connecting Kowloon Bay and the new acute hospital in 2021; the construction of the new footbridges near MTR Kowloon Bay Station Exit A which was commenced in 2022; and the completion of the new footbridge near MTR Kowloon Bay Station Exit B in 2023. At the same time, EKEO continued to co-ordinate various engineering studies and designs for improving the pedestrian links in Kowloon East, including the proposed footbridge across Wai Yip Street near Siu Yip Street, the elevated walkway with travellators along Sheung Yee Road connecting KBAA, the proposal on improving the pedestrian connectivity near MTR Ngau Tau Kok Station, etc. Besides, as a pioneer in promoting the policy on facilitating provision of pedestrian links by the private sector, EKEO is responsible for handling the applications of relevant projects and providing one-stop advisory and co-ordinated services. These include the construction of a footbridge connecting Amoy Plaza and the East Kowloon Cultural Centre by the private sector, which is expected to commence in 2024.
- (ii) EKEO continues to take forward public open space and environment improvement projects, such as the Sze Mei Street comprehensive development with automated parking facilities which the works were commenced in 2022; the Lam Wah Street Playground which was completed in 2023 and the Tsui Ping River project embedded with environmental, ecological, drainage and landscape upgrading elements which will be completed by stages in 2024. The redevelopment of Choi Hung Road Playground and Sports Centre (including Choi Hung Road Market) in San Po Kong has also been proactively taken forward. Besides, EKEO also facilitates both private and public sectors using Kowloon East as a test-bed for the development of applied scientific research on smart cities through collaboration, for example, facilitating the launch of a project to provide indoor and outdoor voice guidance for the visually impaired or people in need in MTR stations and some shopping malls in Kowloon East. The project has been awarded the Smart Mobility (Smart Transport) Gold Award in Hong Kong ICT

As regards the “Spirit of Creation”, EKEO is committed to co-ordinating efforts of and liaising with various public and private organisations to facilitate the holding of culture, art and sports activities at Kwun Tong Promenade VESSEL venues, with a view to bringing more vibrancy to Kowloon East waterfront through a place-making approach. These activities include organising large-scale music and dance festivals, and pop-up markets for promoting new brand, design and image of products so as to enhance public engagement.

1. EKEO conducted pedestrian environment improvement studies for the Kowloon Bay Business Area, Kwun Tong Business Area and San Po Kong Business Area in 2013, 2014 and 2018 respectively. Relevant short and medium-term pedestrian environment improvement proposals recommended under these three studies have been progressively implemented in the past few years. Having regard to the gradual transformation of Kowloon East and to tie in with the overall development needs of Kowloon East, EKEO collaborated with the Civil Engineering and Development Department to commission in February 2023 a pedestrian environment improvement review study. The study area covers the whole Kowloon East (including Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong, Kai Tak and San Pan Kong) and extending to nearby residential areas. The study will holistically review relevant pedestrian environment improvement measures in Kowloon East, and examine further extension of the pedestrian network to the residential areas in the hinterland of Kowloon East. The expenditure on the consultancy study is around \$13 million and the study is expected to be completed in end 2024/ early 2025.
2. Upon announcement of the Energizing Kowloon East (EKE) initiative in the 2011-12 Policy Address, a Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) was prepared to set out the strategic directions and main focuses of the initiative and as guiding principles for the work of EKEO to realise the EKE vision. The CMP is meant to be an evolving document, which has been updated to version 6.0 at present. The CMP forms the basis for EKEO to implement various development projects. In the course of implementation, EKEO will constantly look into the details of each development projects for advocating and refining the CMP. For example, the above-mentioned pedestrian environment improvement review for Kowloon East aims to optimise and enhance the improvement measures which were proposed earlier, so as to cope with the latest overall development of Kowloon East. EKEO will also continue to review other EKE initiatives, ensuring that they address contemporary community needs and are in line with the development vision.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)020

(Question Serial No. 1482)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (4) Energizing Kowloon East

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In mid-2022, the Government sought approval from the Finance Committee to create 2 supernumerary posts under Head 159 to head the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) under the Development Bureau and continue taking forward the policy initiative of Energizing Kowloon East. The main responsibilities of EKEO include maintaining a steady supply and achieving a total of more than 4 million square metres of commercial floor space in Kowloon East by implementing planned comprehensive developments and encouraging wholesale conversion or redevelopment of industrial buildings to facilitate the transformation of Kowloon East into the second core business district (CBD2) with a scale comparable to the Central CBD. Please advise on the following:

1. Has the target of achieving a total of more than 4 million square metres of commercial floor space been updated or adjusted?
2. What is the total commercial floor space in Kowloon East at present?
3. Based on the information available to EKEO, what is the estimated total commercial floor space in the district in the coming few years? When will the target of achieving a total of more than 4 million square metres be met?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The policy objective of Energizing Kowloon East is to transform Kowloon East into the second core business district in Hong Kong by providing a steady supply of quality commercial sites in a timely manner, in order to attract wide range of enterprises to establish their offices in the district, to support Hong Kong's economic growth and enhance global competitiveness. Since the announcement of the relevant policy in the 2011-12 Policy Address, the total commercial floor space in the district has doubled to about 3.4 million square metres. Projects currently under construction or conversion together with projects with approved plans or executed lease modifications/special waivers, which amount a total of about 0.4 million square metres of commercial floor space, will provide additional commercial floor space in Kowloon East. Major commercial projects currently planned in Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and Kai Tak (including the commercial site in Kai Tak listed in

the 2024-25 Land Sale Programme, Kowloon Bay Action Area and Kwun Tong Action Area) can provide a total of around 0.5 million square metres additional commercial floor space. We will take into account the market situation and will dispose of relevant commercial sites in a timely and orderly manner. Upon completion of these development projects, the total commercial floor space in Kowloon East will increase to more than 4 million square metres.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1483)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Please advise since the upgrading of the Project Cost Management Office to the Project Strategy and Governance Office in April 2019:

1. whether any capital works projects under surveillance have not been completed on schedule; if so, the titles of the relevant projects, the reasons for and length of delay;
2. whether any capital works projects under surveillance have experienced cost overruns; if so, the titles of the relevant projects, the reasons for and length of delay; and
3. whether efforts have been made to steer and support the adoption of Modular Integrated Construction in private sector projects; if so, the titles, site areas and land uses of the relevant projects, and the effectiveness of reducing construction time and cost.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

The Government has been continuously taking forward capital works to improve people's quality of life, promote economic development and enhance Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness. To cope with Hong Kong's future construction volume and the challenges facing the construction industry, the Development Bureau established the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 to uplift productivity and the performance of public works projects through implementation of various strategic initiatives, which include strengthening project cost management, enhancing project delivery capabilities, leading strategic developments (e.g. Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), digitalisation of public works, applied research and development) and collaborating with international counterparts and local industry stakeholders.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) and (2)

Although some large-scale infrastructure projects have experienced delays or have to apply for additional funding in recent years, the overall estimation and management performance of the Capital Works Programme have remained sound. In the past ten years, the Finance

Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council approved a total of about 550 Category A projects with a total of funding amounting to about \$970 billion. Among these approved projects, 16 required application to the FC for additional provisions totalling about \$57 billion mainly due to unforeseen circumstances. In other words, increased estimates were deemed necessary in about 3% of the approved projects and their corresponding additional provisions amounted to about 6% of the total funding approved.

On the other hand, there is a total of 530 Category A projects with their final accounts settled in the past ten years. Although some of these projects required additional funding owing to individual circumstances, on the whole, the total final expenditure of these projects are still lower than their total original approved project estimates (APE).

Among the Category A projects approved by the FC since the establishment of the PSGO in April 2019, only two projects have applied to the FC for increase in APE. Details are tabulated below:

Financial year	Title of works project	Original APE	Increase in APE	Reasons for increase in APE
2022-23	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	\$1.1714 billion	\$391.2 million	Higher-than-expected tender price
2023-24	Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 2	\$2.453 billion	\$130.7 million	Enhancement of works design and the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic

Since the establishment of the PSGO in April 2019, about 280 Category A projects have been approved by the FC. Among these projects, a total of about 37 have been completed, of which 24 have experienced delay of about two quarters on average. The delays are mainly due to unforeseen circumstances, such as the COVID-19 epidemic, inclement weather conditions, etc. Although the situation of project delay has been improved in comparison with that before the establishment of the PSGO (projects have experienced delay of about three quarters on average), we will strengthen governance of public works projects with a view to enhancing performance of the project progress.

(3)

In addition to monitoring the delivery of capital works projects, the PSGO will implement various strategic initiatives, including MiC, to uplift cost effectiveness and project performance. Currently, residential development projects of private developers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that adopt MiC are set out in the Schedule:

According to the University of Hong Kong (HKU)'s study on MiC pilot projects, the adoption of MiC can reduce construction time by about 30% to 50%, uplift on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, save construction costs by at least 10% and has better performance in terms of workmanship, environmental protection and safety than using traditional construction methods. The HKU is studying on another three MiC construction projects of private

developers and NGOs to review the effectiveness of using MiC in reducing construction time and cost.

Schedule

Project location	Project title and scale	Building purpose
Tai Po	A 17-storey quarters block by Hong Kong Science Park	quarters
Wong Chuk Hang	Two 20-storey student hostel blocks by The University of Hong Kong	student hostel
Sha Tin	A 10-storey residential development by Hong Kong Housing Society	residential
Ma On Shan	Three 12-to-17-storey student hostel blocks by the City University of Hong Kong	student hostel
Hung Shui Kiu	A 27-storey residential development by Hong Kong Housing Society	residential
Sha Tin	A 3-storey facilities building with sports residence by Hong Kong Sports Institute	sports facilities with residence
Sham Shui Po	A 28-storey residential development by Chinachem Group/Urban Renewal Authority	residential
Lok Ma Chau	A 6-storey quarters block by Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park	quarters
Pok Fu Lam	Two 19-storey student hostel blocks and two 20-storey staff quarters by The University of Hong Kong	student hostel and staff quarters
Jordan	A 29-storey youth hostel development by the Hong Kong Girl Guides Association	youth hostel
Mong Kok	A 22-storey youth hostel development by the Hong Kong Association of Youth Development	youth hostel
Sheung Wan	A 21-storey youth hostel development by Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	youth hostel
Kwu Tung North	A 34-storey residential development by Hong Kong Housing Society	residential
Ho Man Tin	A 16-storey student hostel block by The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong	student hostel
Kowloon Tong	Five 9-storey student hostel blocks by The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong	student hostel
Kowloon Tong	Two 17-storey student hostel blocks by the City University of Hong Kong	student hostel
Tung Chung	Five 46-storey residential developments by Chinachem Group	residential

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)022

(Question Serial No. 2562)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Tree management is closely related to the personal safety of the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the numbers of trees planted by the Administration in each of the past five years;
- (2) of the numbers of problematic trees identified by tree management departments, the numbers of trees with risk mitigation measures implemented and the numbers of trees removed in the past five years;
- (3) whether there is a breakdown of the number of problematic trees identified by tree management departments, including but not limited to pests and diseases, leaning tree, fungal fruiting bodies, dead tree, decay in trunk, etc.; if so, the details in the past five years;
- (4) of the numbers of complaints and enquiries about tree management received by tree management departments via "1823", and the average completion time for a complaint received in each of the past five years;
- (5) of the numbers of tree incidents and the numbers of fallen trees after the issue of a Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above in each of the past five years; of which, the number of incidents involving casualties and the number of cases involving damage of vehicles/buildings/facilities;
- (6) of the amounts of compensation paid by the Administration for casualties and property loss caused by tree failures in each of the past five years; and
- (7) of the division of work among core tree management departments at present; and the respective numbers of their tree management staff in each of the past five years?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

- (1) The number of trees planted will be adjusted in the light of the actual circumstances such as the type, scale and progress of public works each year. The annual number of trees planted by government departments in the past five years are set out in the table below:

Year	Number of trees planted by government departments ('000)
2019	352
2020	262
2021	333
2022	329
2023	287

(2) & (3) Before the onset of the wet season every year, the tree management departments conduct tree risk assessment in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow according to the Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement (Guidelines) issued by the Tree Management Office (TMO) of the Development Bureau (DEVB). The departments will take appropriate mitigation measures according to the results of the tree risk assessment, including crown pruning, removal of dead branches, etc. If any tree with risk of failure is identified, the departments will remove it as soon as possible to safeguard public safety.

The numbers of problematic trees identified by tree management departments and trees handled or removed in the past five years are set out in the table below:

Year of tree inspection	Number of problematic trees identified	Number of trees handled	
		Risk mitigation measures implemented	Removed
2019-20	20 823	13 023	7 800
2020-21	18 529	12 313	6 216
2021-22	20 955	14 596	6 359
2022-23	22 546	15 915	6 631
2023-24 ^{Note 1} (as at 31 December 2023)	9 431	7 470	1 961

Note 1: Year of tree inspection refers to the annual tree risk assessment and management cycle which runs from October/November to April/May of the following year.

Tree problems include pests and diseases, leaning tree, fungal fruiting bodies, dead tree, decay in trunk, etc. A single tree may have multiple problems. The tree management departments do not have the itemised details.

- (4) The number of complaints and enquiries about tree management received by the core tree management departments^{Note 2} via “1823” in the past five years are set out in the table below:

	Number of complaints and enquiries (Note 3)				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total	23 620	19 980	22 830	16 820	24 250

Note 2: Core tree management departments include the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Architectural Services Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department, Drainage Services Department, Highways Department, Housing Department, Lands Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Water Supplies Department.

Note 3: Rounded to the nearest ten.

The complaints cover a number of areas such as blocking views, affecting streetlights, health and structural problems of trees, etc. In addition, some complaints involve other issues relating to various departments, including illegal occupation of land, cleanliness and hygiene, noise, refuse accumulation, etc. “1823” will refer the complaints to relevant departments for follow-up actions according to the content of complaints and the delineation of tree management work on government land. Since the circumstances of each complaint case vary and the tree locations also affect work arrangement, the completion time for a complaint received may range from a few days to a few months.

- (5) & (6) The annual number of tree incidents reported in the past five years are set out in the table below:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1. Number of tree incidents ^{Note 4}	244	358	295	271	383
Number of casualty cases	23	16	13	20	17
Number of cases involving damage of vehicles/buildings/facilities	81	137	127	135	170
2. Number of fallen trees after the issue of a Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above	851	1 041	2 065	1 322	4 790 ^{Note 5}

Note 4: Individual tree accidents can result in more than one incident at the same time.

Note 5: There was a significant increase in the number of fallen trees in 2023 due to the impacts of Super Typhoon Saola and Severe Typhoon Koinu.

The total amount of compensation paid by the Government for casualties and property damage caused by tree failure in the past five years was about \$3.2 million.

- (7) The Government manages trees through an “integrated approach”. The TMO of DEVB co-ordinates departmental tree management work at the policy level. Departments responsible for maintaining the government facilities or land allocated to them are responsible for taking care of the trees thereon in accordance with the

requirements and guidelines promulgated by the DEVB. This approach allows departments to use resources effectively when carrying out appropriate routine maintenance work for trees under their management. Each tree management department manages trees through their internal staff and/or outsourced contracts. The number of tree management staff (including staff of departments and contractors) of core tree management departments in the past three years are set out in the table below:

Core tree management department	Scope of management	Number of tree management staff ^(Note6) (inclusive of staff of departments and contractors)		
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Trees in country parks	87	87	87
Architectural Services Department	Trees on man-made slopes maintained by the department	205	198	209
Civil Engineering and Development Department	Trees within the sites of works projects of the department	20	19	128
Drainage Services Department	Trees within the sites of drainage facilities	90	87	95
Highways Department	Trees on roadside man-made slopes/retaining walls and along expressways	246	220	215
Housing Department	Trees in public housing estates	173	176	255
Lands Department	Trees on unallocated government land not managed by any other departments	174	195	215
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Trees at the venues under the department and the landscape areas next to public roads (excluding expressways)	301	310	313

Core tree management department	Scope of management	Number of tree management staff ^(Note6) (inclusive of staff of departments and contractors)		
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (As at 31 December 2023)
Water Supplies Department	Trees within the sites of water facilities	37	40	42

Note 6: The above table only provides data of the past three years as there was no detailed record of the number of contractor staff before 2021. The figures include only staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude management-level staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)023

(Question Serial No. 2643)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

1. The Government commenced the Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas in 2015, and the entire pilot study is expected to be completed within 2023. Please advise on the progress, and whether the study will increase the land supply of Hong Kong or create economic benefits for Hong Kong. If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. Will the Bureau make early planning for underground space development when planning future new development areas so as to facilitate vehicle-pedestrian segregation and foster more liveable communities?
3. The Government is progressively developing a three-dimensional digital underground utilities database for major underground utilities such as water mains, storm water drains, sewers and gas pipes. Please advise on the progress, and whether the database will contain information about utilities such as electricity, gas and optical fibre so as to facilitate the management of the pipes and lines of public utilities by the Government? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1. To meet the housing demand of the community and various economic and social development needs of Hong Kong, the Government has been adopting a multi-pronged land supply strategy to ensure steady and sufficient land supply. Underground space development is one of the feasible medium-to-long-term land supply options to create and increase urban development capacity. The Government has conducted the Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas (the Study) in recent years. The Study is generally divided into two stages, aiming to select and formulate conceptual schemes for prioritised underground space development, and recommend the way forward as reference for future implementation when necessary.

Stage 1 of the Study explored the potential for underground space development in four selected strategic urban areas, namely Causeway Bay, Happy Valley, Admiralty/Wan

Chai, and Tsim Sha Tsui West, conducted baseline review for the areas, examined viable uses for underground space, and collected public views on their development opportunities and major considerations. The findings of the Study indicated that the strategic urban area with the greatest development potential was the underground space at Kowloon Park in Tsim Sha Tsui. The views and ideas of young people on its planning and design were also collected through a design competition.

Stage 2 of the Study formulated a conceptual scheme for underground space development at Kowloon Park to create space for retail and food and beverage, community facilities, public spaces, walkways and other uses; and carried out technical assessment and further collected public views and suggestions (including expansion and better utilisation of underground space in the area of Kowloon Park, with a view to further providing multi-purpose space and its distribution ratio, and connecting to adjacent developments; and further reducing the impact on trees and the ecology of the park, etc.). More than 30 000 submissions of views were received. Owing to the large number of views collected, it took time to consolidate and analyse them, with a view to optimising the conceptual scheme, updating its technical feasibility study and consulting stakeholders of various sectors on how to take forward the scheme in future. The Study has been substantially completed and has ascertained the technical feasibility of the conceptual scheme for underground space development at Kowloon Park.

In the course of the Study, the situations of the tourism industry and retail market as well as the economy of Hong Kong have changed due to the outbreak of the epidemic since early 2020. In 2023, our society resumed normalcy in full after the epidemic. However, the commercial and retail market in Tsim Sha Tsui still takes time to adjust, construction works of underground space development at Kowloon Park would inevitably pose impact to park operation and enjoyment of park users. Also, the Government should exercise control over the pace of public expenditure through re-prioritisation of works. Considering the above, it is not the right time now to proceed with the project.

After all, underground space development belongs to the medium-to-long-term land supply options. We can consider taking forward the project on the basis of the Study at suitable juncture in future.

2. We will decide whether to develop underground space for a new development area according to its actual situation, including considering whether underground space development will create synergy for at-grade facilities and the cost effectiveness, etc. If conditions permit, we can utilise underground space under the “single site, multiple uses” model, for example, developing a well-connected and highly accessible underground space network by consolidating basements of shopping malls and railway stations, etc.
3. The Government is progressively developing an underground utilities database and formulating a mechanism for updating the database. The first-stage three-dimensional digital underground utilities database covers water mains, storm water drains, sewers, gas pipes and electricity cables. Such information has been provided by relevant government departments and utility companies. We finished the collection of the information of the above underground utilities of public roads across the territory last year and plan to establish the associated computer platform system at the end of this

year tentatively for accessing and analysing the underground utilities information. We will continue to take forward the work of the remaining stage, and strive to collect information of underground utilities including the telecommunication cables and transportation signal cables, etc., and update the system concerned.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0187)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, it is mentioned that the Government will strengthen the leading regional position of Hong Kong's construction industry in the adoption of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. At present, MiC modules mostly come from the Mainland. It has been reflected that there are challenges involving logistics and approval processes when transporting the modules to Hong Kong. How will the Government rationalise the arrangements, particularly the issue regarding co-ordination with the Mainland authorities?
2. In August 2022, the Buildings Department, Lands Department and Planning Department issued a joint practice note to grant a concession of 10% of gross floor area, and relax the building height restriction to 4% for building projects adopting MiC. Will the Government review the related policy and step up efforts to encourage more projects to adopt MiC in housing development? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to lead the industry to adopt MiC to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, etc., have started the adoption or trial of MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

The 2023 Policy Address announced further promoting MiC by formulating and implementing a series of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, in order to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the Greater Bay Area (GBA); and by promoting the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC by the private sector, with a view to reducing labour demand and expediting housing supply. The Development Bureau (DEVB) is proactively carrying out exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecosystem for the industry.

The 2024-25 Budget also announced developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages, and examining the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Currently, MiC modules used in Hong Kong are mainly manufactured in factories in the Mainland. To facilitate wider adoption of MiC by the industry and promote collaboration with the GBA supply chain, the DEVB established a steering committee and studied the implementation of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules since last year. The scope of the study covers areas such as the manufacturing, transportation, storage, certification, etc. as well as ways to resolve challenges regarding import and export transportation, logistics, approval processes, taxation, etc.

The HKSAR Government wishes that by making good use of the advantages of the manufacturing bases in the Mainland, supplemented by the certification system of Hong Kong and leveraging Hong Kong's function as an international commerce and trade centre, MiC and related advanced construction methods and product development will become an industry with clear advantages. The DEVB has been actively exchanging views on MiC with Mainland authorities including the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province and the Guangdong Development and Reform Commission, with a view to strengthening support for the industry in Hong Kong and rationalising the arrangements regarding logistics, approval processes, taxation, etc. to meet the needs of the construction industry. The DEVB will continue to liaise closely with relevant Mainland authorities to strengthen collaboration with the GBA on a series of measures to promote the MiC supply chain, including facilitating the industry in Hong Kong to establish manufacturing bases in the Mainland, with a view to promoting the development of this industry.

2. With a view to promoting a wider adoption of MiC in Hong Kong, the Buildings Department (BD), the Lands Department and the Planning Department issued a joint practice note in 2022 to provide a 10% concession for MiC floor area in the calculation of gross floor area (GFA) and site coverage, and a 4% storey height concession for MiC floors in the calculation of the building height restriction, so as to encourage private development projects to adopt MiC. As at February 2024, the BD has received a total of 28 applications for GFA concession in adoption of MiC, of which 27 applications have been approved. Furthermore, the Government also encourages the industry to adopt MiC through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF), and has been working with the Construction Industry Council to organise local and overseas project visits, technical seminars and workshops to equip the industry with the understanding of MiC technologies and applications. The DEVB will continue to closely monitor the situation and discuss with the industry and

stakeholders the application of MiC and the challenges encountered, as well as review relevant facilitating measures in a timely manner, in order to encourage a wider adoption of such a technology by the industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)025

(Question Serial No. 0191)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The total length of the entire cycle track network in the New Territories is about 82 kilometres, about 63 kilometres of which have been opened for use. According to the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, the Government will continue to oversee the implementation of improvement and expansion of the cycle track network in the New Territories. However, the latest information indicates that the works of the section between Tsuen Wan and So Kwun Wat, which is described as the “final missing link” of the cycle track network in the New Territories by the Government, has to be postponed. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the latest estimated works schedule of that section and the completion time for connecting the entire cycle track network in the New Territories?
2. Will the construction cost of the works project concerned change due to the postponement? If so, what are the details?
3. Apart from the construction of the cycle track, bicycle parking spaces are also very important. What initiatives will the Government, in collaboration with the relevant departments, adopt to enhance ancillary parking facilities, including whether it will work in conjunction with the relevant departments to review the number of bicycle parking spaces near the designated area of a railway station stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines so as to facilitate the residents to interchange from cycle to public transport? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. and 2. The total length of the cycle track network in the New Territories is about 80 kilometres (km), about 63 km of which have been opened. The remaining cycle track section between Bayview Garden in Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun, which is about 17 km long, is being taken forward in phases as follows:

(1) Section between Tuen Mun and So Kwun Wat

The detailed design of this cycle track section of about 3.6 km long has been completed. We plan to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council (LegCo) for the construction works in the second quarter of this year. The works are expected to be completed in phases within four years.

(2) Section between So Kwun Wat and Ting Kau

The alignment design of this cycle track section of about 9.2 km long has been substantially completed. We plan to seek funding approval from the LegCo for the detailed design and site investigation works in the second quarter of this year.

(3) Section between Ting Kau and Bayview Garden in Tsuen Wan

This cycle track section of about 4.5 km long is under detailed design.

The Government has been maintaining its expenditure on infrastructure works at a sustainable level and will give due regard to priority and urgency to adjust the implementation schedules of various works projects. As regards the remaining section between Tsuen Wan and So Kwun Wat of the cycle track network in the New Territories, we will estimate the construction cost and draw up the construction schedule in the detailed design stage so as to timely seek funding approval from the LegCo for the construction works according to priorities.

3. The Transport Department is conducting the Traffic and Transport Strategy Study (TTSS) and it is preliminarily recommended that cycling should be promoted in new development areas and new towns for short-distance travel and first-mile/last-mile connectivity, with an aim of reducing vehicle usage and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Measures include increasing the provision of bicycle parking spaces at appropriate locations. The Government will review the relevant standards according to the findings of the TTSS to facilitate the residents to interchange from cycle to public transport.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0424)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under this Programme, the provision for 2024-25 is considerably higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24 by 22.3%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the percentage change is due to "the increased cash flow requirement for a non-recurrent item and increased provisions for filling of vacancies and operating expenses." In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the details of the non-recurrent item concerned and the relevant provisions involved; and
- (b) the number and rank(s) of vacancies to be filled in 2024-25 and the provision involved?

Asked by: Hon Louis LOONG Hon-biu (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The non-recurrent item includes the Urban Forestry Support Fund (UFSF) and provisions to implement the enhancement measures recommended by the Task Force on Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance.

The increase in expenditure under UFSF is mainly related to the anticipated increase in the number of applications under the Study Sponsorship Scheme and the Trainee Programme as well as the expenditure of the International Urban Forestry Conference to be held in April 2024, totaling around \$12 million under the non-recurrent item.

The enhancement measures on roadside tree planting and maintenance is anticipated to incur around \$9 million in 2024-25 which includes the engagement of three part-time Senior Field Officers totaling \$1.5 million to handle the increased tree risk audit work, \$1 million for enhancing tree inspection technology, \$1.9 million for engaging a study on assessment of existing roadside trees as well as \$1.5 million and \$3 million to be allocated to the Lands Department and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department respectively for their enhanced tree works.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)027

(Question Serial No. 0425)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under this Programme, the provision for 2024-25 is considerably higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24 by 23.3%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the percentage change is due to "the increased cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items and increased provision for a net increase of one post." In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the details of the non-recurrent items concerned and the relevant provisions involved; and
- (b) the rank and responsibility of the post to be added and the provision for 2024-25 involved?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 for implementing strategies and reinforcing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance, including the promotion for wider adoption of high productivity construction methods such as Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) and Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), as well as digital technology and new construction materials.

Our coordinated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

The increased provision in 2024-25 is mainly attributed to the forecast expenditure based on the anticipated progress of on-going studies on (i) strengthening the supply chain of MiC modules, (ii) establishing the Building Testing and Research Institute and (iii) constructing an Advanced Construction Industry Building¹, and a net increase of one post in the PSGO.

¹ A total of \$14 million and \$28 million were allowed in 2023-24 and 2024-25 for the payment these three studies with reference to the anticipated progress of works.

The concerned additional post is a time-limited non-directorate professional staff post to support PSGO of DEVB to strengthen construction cost management and improve the performance of capital works projects. The total expenditure involved in 2024-25 is around \$1.7 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0426)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under this Programme, the provision for 2024-25 is considerably higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24 by 45.2%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the percentage change is due to various factors including "increased cash flow requirements for non-recurrent items, and increased provision for a net increase of one post." In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the details of the non-recurrent items concerned and the relevant provision involved; and
- (b) the rank and responsibility of the post to be added and the provision for 2024-25 involved?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

- (a) The non-recurrent items involve funding allocated under the initiatives of the previous Budgets for provision of subsidy for various construction manpower training schemes. The increase of these items in the estimates for 2024-25 is a result of the expected increase in the number of construction personnel to be trained under these schemes.

The initiatives include improvement of the training for construction workers, namely (i) Enhancements for Training of Construction Workers; (ii) Further Enhancement to Manpower Supply of the Construction Industry; and (iii) Enhancing the Skill Level of Construction Manpower. In addition, (i) Pilot Scheme for On-the-job Training Subsidy for Construction-related Part-time Degree Programme and (ii) Pilot Scheme for On-the-job Training Subsidy for Construction Safety Officers, both commenced in the 2023-24 academic year, provide training at professional and technician levels respectively. The total expenditure increases from \$157.1 million in 2023-24 to \$235.5 million in 2024-25.

- (b) A time-limited non-directorate professional grade post would be created for implementation of the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector. The newly introduced scheme is administered by DEVB in-house. The total provision involved in 2024-25 is around \$1.7 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0427)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under this programme, the Government has provided funding support to tertiary institutions and Construction Industry Council to implement pilot schemes, from the 2023/24 academic year onwards, for providing on-the-job training allowances to trainees of part-time degree and safety officer courses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) breakdown of the relevant courses offered by each training institution in the 2023/24 academic year;
- (b) the number of trainees enrolled in each of these courses in the 2023/24 academic year; and
- (c) the manpower and resources allocated for 2024-25 to execute this task?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

(a) and (b)

We have made use of the \$107 million funding allocated under the 2023-24 Budget for launching two pilot schemes, in collaboration with the Vocational Training Council (VTC), the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and other institutions, to provide on-the-job training subsidy for 1 000 trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes and 300 trainees attending construction safety officer courses respectively over a 2-year period. The funding allocations to these two schemes are \$100 million and \$7 million correspondingly. The funding also covers the associated administrative expenses.

Specifically for the pilot scheme for part-time construction-related degree programmes, the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) under the VTC has implemented the pilot scheme since the commencement of the 2023-24 academic year (AY). Currently, there are 333 trainees in the pilot scheme. The breakdown is as follows:

Part-time degree programme	Number of trainee enrollment in 2023/24 AY
Building Services Engineering	135
Civil Engineering	139
Green Engineering and Sustainability	5
Horticulture, Arboriculture and Landscape Management	37
Landscape Architecture	3
Surveying	14
Total	333

We are liaising with other tertiary institutions to implement the pilot scheme in the coming academic year.

The pilot scheme for trainees who have enrolled in construction safety officer courses was launched by the CIC in November 2023. The 10-month safety officer training courses are being progressively rolled out. Currently, there are 45 trainees in the scheme.

(c) As regards staff deployment, the Government will take forward the above two pilot schemes using existing internal resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1698)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As shown in the indicators, there is a continuous growth in the expenditure on greening works by the Government, but the numbers of trees and shrubs and the total number of plants planted by the Government have all decreased. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- a) of the reasons for the continuous decrease in the numbers of trees and shrubs planted by the Government;
- b) of the areas and communities in which the Government reduces planting, such as countryside, parks, schools, community facilities, etc. and the reasons for the decrease; and
- c) whether the Administration will make up the shortfall in the planting quantity and of the specific measures?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

At the planning and design stages of public works projects, departments will follow the principle of "Right Tree, Right Place" in the landscape and planting design for the projects, so that the plants planted can perform their designed functions and grow healthily in a sustainable manner. As the type, scale and progress of works differ every year, the number of plants planted each year will vary according to actual circumstances. Besides, with the completion of some infrastructural projects progressively in 2023, and the fact that country parks have been extensively vegetated over the years, the amount of newly planted vegetation has relatively decreased in recent years. Nevertheless, the Government will progressively carry out a number of major infrastructure projects in future, of which greening works are an integral part. The Government will continue its efforts in the planting, proper maintenance and preservation of trees and other vegetation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2668)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The 2023-24 revised estimate under Programme (5) is \$92.7 million, which is 28.8% lower than the original estimate of \$130.2 million. However, the 2024-25 estimate has increased to \$114.3 million. According to the Government, "this is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items and increased provision for a net increase of one post." In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the details of the non-recurrent items under Programme (5) in 2023-24 and 2024-25 respectively;
2. whether the increased cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items in 2024-25 indicates delays in these items; if so, whether the Government has looked into the reasons and taken delay recovery measures; if not, of the actual reasons;
3. of the (a) rank, (b) post, (c) duties and (d) expenditure on emoluments in respect of the net increase of 1 post under Programme (5);
4. of the respective expenditures on (a) emoluments, (b) operation and (c) equipment out of the 2024-25 estimate of \$114.3 million under Programme (5)?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Government has been implementing capital works to improve people's living environment, promote economic growth and enhance Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness. To cope with Hong Kong's future construction volume and the challenges facing the construction industry, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 to uplift productivity and the performance of public works projects through implementation of various strategic initiatives, which include strengthening project cost management, enhancing project delivery capability, leading strategic developments (e.g. Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), digitalisation of public works, applied research and development) and collaborating with international counterparts and local industry stakeholders.

Our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The non-recurrent items under Programme (5) include Strengthening Construction Cost Management and Uplifting Performance of Public Works Projects and Promoting the Application of Innovative Technology in the Construction Industry. The revised estimate for 2023-24 and the estimate for 2024-25 are \$32.5 million and \$51 million respectively.

2. In 2023-24, the Government earmarked a total of \$75 million to conduct studies on (i) formulating measures for strengthening the supply chain of MiC modules; (ii) establishing the Building Testing and Research Institute; and (iii) constructing an advanced construction industry building. These studies are making good progress with no delay. The estimates for non-recurrent items in 2023-24 and 2024-25 are mainly forecast expenditure based on the progress of the above on-going studies.

3. The concerned additional post is a time-limited non-directorate professional staff post. He/she will mainly assist the PSGO in implementing measures to strengthen construction cost management and uplift the performance of works projects. The total expenditure involved in 2024-25 is about \$1.7 million.

4. A breakdown of expenditure under Programme (5) in 2024-25 is as follows:

Personal emoluments (\$ million)	Departmental expenditure/ other expenses (\$ million)	Non-recurrent expenditure (\$ million)	Total (\$ million)
40.4	22.9	51.0	114.3

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0720)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under the Programme, it is mentioned that the Works Branch will “continue to introduce and monitor measures, including the wider adoption of the Smart Site Safety System (SSSS) in public works contracts and subsidising the adoption of SSSS at private worksites through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF), as well as organise promotional activities to enhance safety performance at construction sites”. In this regard, will the Bureau inform this Committee of the following:

- Please provide the expenditures, manpower deployment, specific situation and effectiveness of the promotion of “smart site safety” in the past 3 years.
- Please provide the expenditure, manpower deployment, specific work plan and implementation schedule of the promotion of “smart site safety” in the coming year.
- The Development Bureau issued guidelines in February 2023 requiring the adoption of SSSS in capital works with contract sum exceeding \$30 million. Please give a detailed account of the implementation of the guidelines, including the information on system content, number of projects, implementation progress and resistance or difficulties encountered, etc.
- For private projects, the Government mainly promotes the adoption of SSSS by subsidising private projects through CITF. Please give a brief account of all the measures involved in promoting the adoption of SSSS on private worksites and their effectiveness.

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) issued a technical circular in February 2023, requiring the adoption of Smart Site Safety System (SSSS) in capital works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million. SSSS is composed of a one-stop management platform and various smart safety devices. The configuration of SSSS depends on the size, type of works and site environment of the contract, and the expenditures on SSSS vary. Generally, the expenditure for SSSS will not exceed 1% of the total contract sum of a capital works contract or \$10

million (whichever is lower). Since the launch of the initiative, over 300 capital works contracts have adopted SSSS.

On private development projects, we have subsidised contractors of private worksites to adopt SSSS for uplifting site safety through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) since April 2023. It includes raising the combined funding ceiling for Building Information Modelling and advanced construction technologies (including SSSS) for each CITF applicant from \$6 million to \$7.5 million, of which the additional \$1.5 million shall be used for procurement or rental of SSSS products after the effective date of the new initiatives, so as to encourage wider adoption of SSSS by the industry. In other words, with the new initiative in place, each applicant may receive up to \$7.5 million funding support from the CITF to adopt SSSS. In addition, the CITF has significantly uplifted the funding ceiling for each safety-related technology from \$1.5 million to \$2 million since January 2022. The new initiatives substantially increased the CITF's funding support for the industry in applying technologies to uplift site safety. As at February 2024, the CITF has received a total of about 65 applications concerning the adoption of SSSS on private worksites since the new initiative launched on 1 April 2023, of which 35 applications have been approved, involving a funding grant of around \$9 million. The remaining applications are being processed at full speed.

To promote the wider adoption of SSSS by the industry, since end-2023, we have held numerous meetings with private developers, main contractors, subcontractors and trade associations to discuss measures to promote the use of SSSS on private worksites, in particular the small and medium-sized enterprises. Taking cognizance of the needs of the industry, we have worked out various SSSS product packages for different types and scales of private worksites, with a view to facilitating main contractors and subcontractors to apply for CITF to purchase the products and adopt them on their worksites. At the same time, we are also exploring the extension of the scope of the CITF to cover other costs associated with the adoption of SSSS, such as information technology support, network requirements arising from the adoption of SSSS, manpower training for the adoption of SSSS, procurement support, etc., so as to further support the industry to adopt SSSS.

Moreover, we are exploring with the Construction Industry Council (CIC) to launch a scheme to issue certificates to worksites (including public and private worksites) that have adopted SSSS. We also intend to upload the list of worksites that have SSSS certificates to the relevant webpage of the CIC in recognition of their efforts. The DEVB and the CIC will continue to step up the publicity and provide information and assistance for promoting the use of SSSS by the industry for uplifting site safety.

As the work of promoting SSSS is undertaken by existing staff as part of their work, a breakdown of the staff establishment involved in such work is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3212)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

To address the manpower shortage of the construction sector, the Government has launched the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (Construction Sector Scheme), which is a supplementary measure. On the premise of safeguarding the employment priority for local workers, the Scheme allows importation of labour at an appropriate scale to fill in the temporary manpower gap. It is open for application on a quarterly basis. The third round was open for application from 1 January to 31 January 2024. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- Please list by the application period of each round the number of construction works contract applications received under the Scheme, the number and types of workers involved (e.g. skilled construction workers, semi-skilled construction workers, technicians, site supervisory personnel), trades (e.g. refrigeration/air-conditioning/ventilation mechanic; fire service mechanic; cement sand mortar worker; woodworker, bar bender and fixer), level of wages, project cost, etc. Please provide the final approval status and quota usage.
- It is learnt that private sector construction works contracts with special circumstances may be considered, and they may include contracts involving construction labour of special trades/disciplines of which the local supply is very limited, or contracts with exceptional circumstances warranting special consideration and of a considerable scale. Please advise on whether applications from private sector construction works contracts have been received under the Scheme and the specific handling.
- There are a number of features to “safeguard the employment priority for local workers” under the Scheme, including local recruitment, manning ratio, participation of relevant stakeholders, etc. Please give a brief account of the implementation and effectiveness of the measures concerned.

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

To address the manpower shortage of the construction sector, the Special Administrative Region Government has been adopting multi-pronged measures such as enhancing local

training and recruiting new blood, promoting the application of technologies for uplifting overall productivity across the construction sector and implementing the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme) as a supplementary measure to help fill the manpower gap under the principle of safeguarding the employment priority for local labour.

- (1) The vetting of the first three rounds of applications under the Scheme have been completed. A total of 49 applications have been approved and all the contracts approved are public sector construction works contracts with contract value no less than HK\$1 billion, involving 7 107 importation quotas. Together with the 810 quotas previously approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, which are to be counted towards the importation quota of the Scheme, a total of 7 917 quotas have been approved so far. The fourth round was opened on 1 April and would be closed on 30 April 2024. The application details and approval results of each round of applications are set out at the Annex. The wage levels of all imported labour should be no less than the median wages of the relevant trades/disciplines promulgated on the dedicated website of the Scheme.
- (2) A total of four applications involving private sector construction works projects were received in the first and second rounds of applications under the Scheme. Those four applications were not supported as they failed to meet the basic application requirements of the Scheme, including the fact that the application was not submitted by the principal contractor responsible for the contract concerned or failed to prove special circumstances. One application involving a private sector construction works project was received in the third round, but was subsequently withdrawn by the applicant.
- (3) Measures to safeguard the employment priority for local labour under the Scheme are as follows:
 - (i) All applications shall comply with the local recruitment requirements under the Scheme (including the specified requirements regarding recruitment advertisements and recruitment days). Local recruitment should be conducted within four months prior to the submission of an application to prove that the required construction personnel cannot be recruited locally, otherwise the application will not be accepted.
 - (ii) Employers shall employ imported labour in accordance with the prescribed employment terms, including the monthly wages being no less than the prevailing median monthly wage levels promulgated. Other employment terms include the specific requirements of daily working hours, monthly working days, qualifications and job descriptions.
 - (iii) All works contracts with importation quota approved shall comply with the minimum manning ratio of 1:2 (i.e., one imported labour to at least two full-time local labour employed for the relevant works contract).
 - (iv) Applicants with approved importation quotas shall provide additional training places under the existing collaborative training programmes for local labour in a number no less than 10% of the approved quota for importation of labour.

The approving authority has the right to specify any additional condition/requirement for application or approval or adjust the existing conditions/requirements for application or

approval under the Scheme for individual applications having regard to the circumstances of individual cases and the general principles stipulated under the Scheme.

There are various stakeholders participating in the Scheme, for example, through the Task Force on Short-Term Labour Supply of the Construction Industry Council (Task Force) and the Consultative Committee for Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (Consultative Committee), which comprise employers, employees and representatives of training institutions of the construction sector. They provide recommendations to the Development Bureau on eligible trades/disciplines, prevailing median wages and employment terms, and offer views on the overall operation of the Scheme. Since the launch of the Scheme, we have been maintaining contact with the industry and trade unions to introduce to them details of the Scheme and listen to their views through briefing sessions and the abovementioned Task Force and Consultative Committee. We have reported to the Consultative Committee on the implementation progress of the Scheme. Members of the Committee agree that the Scheme has been implemented smoothly and its operation has been effective on the whole. We have also reported to the Labour Advisory Board on the implementation of the Scheme in due course.

Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector
Quota application details and approval results

Table (1): Quota application details and approval results

		First round of applications	Second round of applications	Third round of applications
1.	Application period	17 July to 16 August 2023	1 October to 31 October 2023	1 January to 31 January 2024
2.	Number of applications received (a construction works contract for each application)	26	31	20
3.	Number of applications (i.e. construction works contracts) approved	20	15	14
4.	Number of quotas approved	4 680	1 669	758
	category			
	skilled worker technician	4 625 55	1 641 28	729 29
5.	Trades/disciplines and numbers involved in the quotas approved	see Table (2), Table (3) and Table (4)		

Table (2): Approval results for the first round of applications under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector

Trade of skilled/semi-skilled workers	Number of quotas approved
1. Refrigeration/Air-conditioning/Ventilation Mechanic	680
2. Fire Service Mechanic	500
3. Cement Sand Mortar Worker	534
4. Woodworker	343
5. Bar Bender and Fixer	335
6. Metal-steel Worker	300
7. Plant and Equipment Mechanic (Construction Work)	280
8. Concrete and Grouting Worker	275
9. Curtain Wall and Glass Panes Installer	225
10. Rigger/Metal Formwork Erector	184
11. Electrician	172
12. Drain and Pipe Layer	170
13. Welder	149
14. Metal Scaffolder	105
15. Painter and Decorator	98
16. Paving Block Layer	65
17. False Ceiling Installer	50
18. Plant and Equipment Operator	40
19. Lift and Escalator Mechanic	35
20. Leveller	31
21. Asphalter (Road Construction)	30
22. Blasting worker	20
23. Construction Goods Vehicle Driver	4
Total	4 625

Discipline of technicians and site supervisory personnel	Number of quotas approved
1. (a) Site Foreman (b) Assistant Site Foreman	50
2. Site Supervisor	1
3. Structural Engineering Technician	1
4. Surveying Technician (Quantity)	1
5. Surveying Technician (Land)	1
6. Draftsman	1
Total	55

Table (3): Approval results for the second round of applications under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector

Trade of skilled/semi-skilled workers	Number of quotas approved
1. Woodworker	355
2. Bar Bender and Fixer	272
3. Cement Sand Mortar Worker	228
4. Refrigeration/Air-conditioning/Ventilation Mechanic	178
5. False Ceiling Installer	115
6. Metal Scaffolder	69
7. Welder	66
8. Drain and Pipe Layer	60
9. Leveller	53
10. Fire Service Mechanic	37
11. Curtain Wall and Glass Panes Installer	35
12. Rigger/Metal Formwork Erector	33
13. Metal-steel Worker	25
14. Demolition Worker	25
15. Lift and Escalator Mechanic	20
16. Concrete and Grouting Worker	19
17. Painter and Decorator	16
18. Plant and Equipment Mechanic (Construction Work)	12
19. Paving Block Layer	13
20. Blasting worker	10
Total	1 641

Discipline of technicians and site supervisory personnel	Number of quotas approved
1. (a) Site Foreman (b) Assistant Site Foreman	20
2. Surveying Technician (Land)	4
3. Draftsman	2
4. E&M Engineering Technician (Electrical)	2
Total	28

Table (4): Approval results for the third round of applications under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector

Trade of skilled/semi-skilled workers	Number of quotas approved
1. Bar Bender and Fixer	105
2. Electrician	89
3. Rigger/Metal Formwork Erector	72
4. Welder	71
5. Refrigeration / Air-conditioning / Ventilation Mechanic	60
6. Plant and Equipment Operator	53
7. Lift and Escalator Mechanic	50
8. Woodworker	45
9. Concrete and Grouting Worker	33
10. Drain and Pipe Layer	32
11. Leveller	30
12. Metal-steel Worker	26
13. Cement Sand Mortar Worker	24
14. Plant and Equipment Mechanic (Construction Work)	21
15. Piling Operative	12
16. Painter and Decorator	6
Total	729

Discipline of technicians and site supervisory personnel	Number of quotas approved
1. (a) Site Foreman (b) Assistant Site Foreman	19
2. Draftsman	9
3. Civil Engineering Technician	1
Total	29

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0750)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 189 of the Budget Speech that the Government of the HKSAR will strengthen collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to enhance the manufacturing, import/export facilitation, and exportability of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules, with a view to developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages. The Government of the HKSAR will also examine the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the latest situation regarding the application of MiC in the public and private sectors of the construction industry in Hong Kong, including the benefits and difficulties anticipated;
2. the preliminary plan to strengthen collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to promote MiC and the implementation timetable;
3. the preliminary plan to examine the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain and the implementation timetable; and
4. other measures related to the promotion of MiC in 2024-25 and their expenditures?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 48)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to lead the industry to adopt MiC to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, etc., have started the adoption or trial of MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address announced further promoting MiC by formulating and implementing a series of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, in order to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the Greater Bay Area (GBA); and by promoting the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC by the private sector, with a view to reducing labour demand and expediting housing supply. The Development Bureau (DEVB) is proactively carrying out exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecosystem for the industry.

The 2024-25 Budget also announced developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages, and examining the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1&4. Currently, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public sectors in Hong Kong. Since the nature of each project is different, the extent to which it has applied MiC and the benefits brought by MiC also vary. According to the University of Hong Kong's study on MiC pilot projects, the adoption of MiC can reduce construction time by about 30% to 50%, uplift on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, save construction costs by at least 10% and has better performance in terms of workmanship, environmental protection and safety than using traditional construction methods.

At present, applications of MiC in private sector are still in the early stage. They need to better understand and gain more experience of the application of this construction method and its benefits. In view of this, the DEVB has established the Modular Integrated Construction Dedicated Section to promote MiC to the industry, provide technical support, help strengthen communication and collaboration with relevant departments, and streamline project approval processes. The Modular Integrated Construction Dedicated Section will further promote the understanding and adoption of MiC in the industry. The dedicated section has four non-directorate professional staff with an annual expenditure of about \$7 million. The 2023-24 Budget has earmarked \$15 million for studying and promoting measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules.

2. The DEVB of the HKSAR Government has exchanged preliminary views on MiC with the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province (DHURDGP). On 23 January 2024, the DEVB, with the support from the DHURDGP and the People's Government of Huizhou Municipality, held the MiC Supply Chain Conference in Huizhou, attracting some 300 participants from the construction sector in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. The event aimed to promote the adoption of MiC among the GBA cities. On 26 March 2024, the DHURDGP and the DEVB signed the Letter of Intent on Cooperation at the Construction Forum co-organised by the Mainland and Hong Kong to deepen co-operation and exchanges between Guangdong and Hong Kong in the areas of construction and related engineering services, including promoting the collaborative development of MiC in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA. Subsequently, we will further discuss with the DHURDGP on how to promote the collaborative

development of MiC in the GBA, and the timetable for implementation of the co-operation details and relevant measures.

3. We will begin to examine the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain and expect to finish the work within this year. The scope of the study includes exploring investment opportunities in the MiC supply chain, studying investment risks and returns, and the benefits that the form and scale of investment would bring to MiC industry development and the economy as a whole.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1226)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 241 of the Budget Speech that the Government will continue to conduct studies on the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. Will the Financial Secretary inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the amount of public funds expected to be required for the studies concerned? When will they be completed?
2. In the unfortunate event of worsening structural deficits, will the Government "postpone" the project repeatedly or have the "postponed" project "terminated" instead?
3. The studies may become outdated or redundant as a result of multiple "postponements" or "termination" of the project. In what ways can the Government compress the expenses on the studies to the maximum extent to avoid wasting public funds?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The importance of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI) lies not only in its "quantity" of land which amounts to 1 000 hectares, but also in its strategic location (becoming an important transport hub in future to connect the central business district on Hong Kong Island, Lantau Island, the airport, New Territories West of Northern Metropolis and Qianhai of Shenzhen) and nature (large tracts of new land created by reclamation without the constraints of current title and users can enhance the Government's leading role in land supply and enable the formulation of forward-looking urban design). The Government is determined to implement the KYCAI project properly.

The approved project estimate of the related studies of KYCAI is \$550.4 million, including the fees for the technical studies on reclamation and strategic transport network, and ground investigation.

The first stage public engagement activities for the KYCAI project was completed last year. We are carrying out the remaining work of the studies and environmental impact assessment (EIA). At this stage, we are committed to conducting the EIA for the reclamation works,

and aim to commence the statutory EIA process for the reclamation works and a detailed engineering design progressively within this year. The Committee on the Financing of Major Development Projects led by the Financial Secretary will continue to explore specific financial arrangements for major land and transport infrastructure projects, including the KYCAI project, as a whole. We will formulate specific implementation strategies for the KYCAI and prepare the estimate for the investment, manpower and resources required for and a pragmatic works schedule for the project according to the progress of such studies and assessment, with a view to commencing the reclamation works within the term of the current Government.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0251)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government needs to contain its expenditure on infrastructure works at a sustainable level and has formulated a fiscal consolidation programme. The fundamental principle is to maintain the sustainability of public finances with a view to restoring fiscal balance in a few years' time. There are views that it may be easier to control the Government's operating and social service expenditures, but the frequent cost overruns of infrastructure projects will be the main cause for the higher-than-expected government expenditure.

In this connection, please advise this Committee: whether the Government will further improve the budget management for the expenditure on infrastructure projects and optimise the tendering mechanism so as to attract more high-quality and low-cost contractors in and outside Hong Kong to participate in the bidding; and whether it will control the infrastructure expenditure when its fiscal position falls short of expectations so as to better implement the revenue and expenditure control mechanism of "keeping expenditure within the limits of revenues"?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The Government has been continuously taking forward capital works to improve people's quality of life, promote economic development and enhance Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness. In fact, the performance of Hong Kong's public works projects is highly rated internationally. For example, Professor Bent Flyvbjerg of the University of Oxford has compared the performance of Hong Kong's public works projects with that of the works projects of other places, including Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The findings indicate that our mechanism for delivering public works projects and cost control measures are better than those of other places, and thus the probability of Hong Kong's public works projects experiencing cost overruns is far lower than that of other places.

Although some large-scale infrastructure projects have experienced delays or have to apply for additional funding in recent years, the overall estimation and management performance of the Capital Works Programme have remained sound. In the past ten years, the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council approved a total of about 550 Category A projects with a total of funding amounting to about \$970 billion. Among these approved projects, 16 required application to the FC for additional provisions totalling about \$57.1 billion mainly due to unforeseen circumstances. In other words, increased estimates were deemed necessary in about 3% of the approved projects and their corresponding additional provisions amounted to about 6% of the total funding approved.

On the other hand, there is a total of 530 Category A projects with their final accounts settled in the past ten years. Although some of these projects required additional funding owing to individual circumstances, on the whole, the total expenditures of these projects at final accounts were still lower than their total original approved project estimates.

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

As regards budget management for the expenditure on infrastructure projects, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 to implement strategic initiatives and enhance capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance, with a view to further uplifting the performance of infrastructure projects.

The main task of the PSGO is to vigorously scrutinise cost estimates of major projects under planning and design stage. While not compromising the functionality, quality and safety of works, the PSGO follows up on project development and design optimisation from inception stage and continuously monitors the performance of the projects during construction stage, and implements suitable measures for cost saving in accordance with the principle of "fitness-for-purpose and no frills".

The PSGO uplifts productivity and efficiency in order to reduce project costs through the implementation of "Construction 2.0" and promotion for wider adoption of high productivity construction methods such as Modular Integrated Construction and Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing, as well as digital technology and new construction materials.

The PSGO is conducting a strategic study to analyse the main reason for high construction cost and review our existing consultancy study arrangement and tender arrangement, with a view to formulating strategic initiatives to reduce construction cost by making reference to the ways to success, both locally and overseas.

Besides, in selection and appointment of consultants and contractors, we have been adopting the principles of "achieving best value for money" and maintaining open and fair competition" with clear guidelines and procedures set out for tender invitation and evaluation. We consider that the existing tender evaluation mechanism, which adopts relevant weighting for technical score based on complexity of the projects, can comply with the principle of "achieving best value for money", and attract consultants and contractors of different scales to proactively participate in bidding public works projects of the Government. The mechanism is therefore conducive to the sustainable development of the industry, particularly

small and medium enterprises, and is widely supported by public works consultants and contractors.

In addition, in order to attract contractors with relevant contract experience outside the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (including the Mainland and overseas countries) to participate in future major infrastructure projects of Hong Kong, as well as encourage healthy competition, we launched new facilitation measures in December 2023. These facilitation measures allow the above contractors to apply for direct entry to Group C with confirmed status under the List of Approved Contractor for Public Works without first attaining the probationary status, based on their non-local contract experience while fulfilling other relevant requirements for direct entry.

We hope to strengthen the cost management of public works projects and enhance their cost effectiveness through the above measures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1948)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

1. Please provide in a table the establishment and estimates of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) for 2024-25, 2023-24 and 2022-23, as well as the projects related to publicity, promotion and education, and their expenditures.
2. Please provide in a table the existing declared monuments and historic buildings managed by the AMO and are open for public visits, the number of visitors each month, and the distribution of local and non-local visitors.
3. Please list the declared monuments and graded historic buildings that are privately owned or managed and open for public visits.

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. The establishment and estimates of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 are set out in the table below:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Establishment (a) Civil servant	129	129	129
(b) Contract staff	19	20	19
Financial provision#	\$173.9 million (actual)	\$198.2 million (revised)	\$215.6 million (estimate)

Including the AMO's staff costs, operational expenses (covering the costs of promotion and publicity, public education, management and maintenance of the venues, and research and support) and plant, equipment and works expenses

The AMO attaches great importance to education, promotion and publicity. To enhance public awareness of and interest in heritage conservation, the AMO organises various activities such as free exhibitions, guided tours, lectures, symposiums, workshops and fun

days, and arranges students to join the Cultural Heritage Summer Course in the Mainland. For promotion and publicity, the Development Bureau (DEVB) also attends media interviews, writes newspaper articles/ online feature articles and utilises social media platforms such as Instagram.

Taking 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years as examples, the AMO organised a number of large-scale exhibitions such as “Inseparable Ties: Cohesion as Told by Hong Kong Historic Buildings” and “Under the Same Roof: Origin and Art of Lingnan Traditional Architecture”. The AMO has been actively promoting heritage education. Collaborating units include the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, the Greater Bay Area Philharmonic Hong Kong Orchestra, Kai Tak Sports Initiative and District Offices of the Home Affairs Department. In November 2022, the first Greater Bay Area (GBA) Built Heritage Summit (Summit) was held to foster exchange and collaboration within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA in heritage conservation. In 2024-25 financial year, the AMO is planning large-scale exhibitions such as “Launch from Greater Bay Area: Nanhai I Shipwreck and the Maritime Silk Road”, and will continue to organise various heritage education activities. Besides, the DEVB will jointly hold the second Summit in Macao with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region Government in October 2024.

The AMO’s publicity and public education efforts take various forms and involve collaboration with different sections. The management and maintenance costs of the venues, various administrative costs of organising the events, and costs of research and support were included in the overall budget of the AMO. Breakdown of expenses for publicity, promotion and education has not been maintained.

2. At present, a total of 39 declared monuments and historic buildings managed by or with the assistance of the AMO are open for public visits. The number of visitors per month in 2023 is provided at Annex 1. These buildings are all open at weekends and most are open six days a week. For group visits, venue staff will provide appropriate assistance where practicable. The AMO does not maintain statistics on the respective numbers of local and non-local visitors.
3. The DEVB has always encouraged owners of declared monuments and historic buildings to open their buildings for public visits. 29 privately owned items which are open for public visits with the assistance from the AMO are listed in Part 2 of the table at Annex 1. The details of 15 government-owned declared monuments and historic buildings which are managed by non-profit-making organisations and open to the public under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalisation Scheme) and other revitalisation projects of the DEVB, and 64 privately-owned declared monuments and historic buildings which received financial assistance to carry out maintenance works under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage (FAS) and are open for public visits are set out at Annex 2. We do not have the information of other declared monuments and historic buildings that are privately owned or managed and open for public visits.

**Declared monuments and historic buildings which are open for public visits
under the management of or with the assistance from the AMO**

No.	Name	Declared monument / Grading	Number of visitors per month (January to December 2023)												
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Declared monuments and historic buildings which are open for public visits under the management of the AMO															
1.	Tai Fu Tai Mansion ¹	Declared monument	0	0	0	0	0	204	2 299	1 852	1 636	2 706	2 438	2 192	13 327
2.	Tung Lung Fort and Information Centre ²	Declared monument	526	529	659	1 131	864	578	453	341	153	538	671	0	6 443
3.	Tung Chung Fort and Information Centre	Declared monument	925	1 341	664	1 576	2 277	1 439	1 051	1 293	1 179	4 353	4 369	2 530	22 997
4.	Old House at Wong Uk Village	Declared monument	1 234	1 151	1 540	1 999	1 793	1 217	1 324	1 492	6 052	4 008	4 346	4 508	30 664
5.	Fortified Structure at Ha Pak Nai	Declared monument	500	560	652	689	359	201	480	304	126	427	370	420	5 088
6.	Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre	Grade 1	18 041	18 616	23 049	18 031	10 904	10 326	15 287	19 081	13 839	22 929	15 059	14 698	199 860
7.	Haw Par Mansion ³	Grade 1	0	0	0	0	0	721	952	967	835	949	900	1 231	6 555

No.	Name	Declared monument / Grading	Number of visitors per month (January to December 2023)												
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
8.	Old House of No. 10 at San Wai	Grade 2	36	0	0	0	0	29	26	17	19	33	22	94	276
9.	Ping Shan Tang Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre	Grade 2	2 512	2 013	4 038	4 236	3 483	2 400	2 381	2 642	2 807	4 368	3 638	3 075	37 593
10.	Fong Yuen Study Hall	Grade 3	1 081	841	659	904	787	296	923	1 149	598	1 042	1 157	988	10 425
Privately-owned declared monuments and historic buildings which are open for public visits with the assistance from the AMO															
11.	Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall	Declared monument	2 179	2 475	4 544	5 043	3 468	2 410	2 252	1 602	2 419	5 078	4 710	4 272	40 452
12.	Tang Ancestral Hall, Ping Shan	Declared monument	5 304	4 585	7 905	6 861	5 533	4 842	4 001	3 298	4 201	8 881	8 008	6 971	70 390
13.	Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall	Declared monument	1 078	2 195	2 820	2 443	1 575	559	700	490	587	1 065	1 263	3 335	18 110
14.	Yi Tai Study Hall	Declared monument	2 057	2 805	1 802	3 599	2 085	1 509	582	999	1 490	2 646	2 503	1 997	24 074
15.	Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall	Declared monument	1 397	1 468	1 242	2 171	1 354	771	366	342	482	1 183	1 007	1 810	13 593
16.	Liu Man Shek Tong	Declared monument	0	0	0	0	0	0	976	531	619	1 148	779	950	5 003

No.	Name	Declared monument / Grading	Number of visitors per month (January to December 2023)												
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
	Ancestral Hall ⁴														
17.	Hau Ku Shek Ancestral Hall	Declared monument	1 195	2 044	1 460	1 035	796	1 004	1 060	548	832	2 020	1 313	1 517	14 824
18.	Kang Yung Study Hall	Declared monument	2 140	2 307	3 390	3 591	3 272	2 385	2 412	1 285	1 294	3 312	3 066	2 860	31 314
19.	Cheung Shan Monastery ⁵	Declared monument	1 209	1 429	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 419	2 895	2 010	1 750	10 712
20.	Man Lun Fung Ancestral Hall	Declared monument	933	862	738	868	465	493	479	327	321	1 106	716	581	7 889
21.	Cheung Ancestral Hall, Shan Ha Tsuen	Declared monument	307	247	333	187	165	184	116	139	185	288	235	260	2 646
22.	King Law Ka Shuk ⁶	Declared monument	0	0	0	0	0	0	423	1 001	730	624	3 099	561	6 438
23.	Fan Sin Temple ⁷	Declared monument	570	989	1 079	1 141	709	888	2 206	1 635	0	0	0	0	9 217
24.	Leung Ancestral Hall, Pat Heung	Declared monument	97	144	115	110	108	92	91	114	105	138	153	134	1 401
25.	Tsui Sing Lau Pagoda	Declared monument	2 557	3 157	373	4 828	3 595	2 643	2 544	1 828	2 165	5 494	5 478	4 754	39 416
26.	I Shing Temple	Declared monument	1 052	596	360	322	399	475	493	561	496	581	638	729	6 702
27.	Chik Kwai Study Hall	Declared monument	226	144	115	139	146	154	103	110	154	136	154	132	1 713

No.	Name	Declared monument / Grading	Number of visitors per month (January to December 2023)												
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
28.	The Residence of Ip Ting-sz	Declared monument	259	365	305	310	204	152	157	163	154	211	257	258	2 795
29.	Tang Ancestral Hall, Ha Tsuen	Declared monument	1 496	2 870	2 560	2 943	2 111	1 823	1 577	1 458	2 691	2 813	2 541	4 061	28 944
30.	Yan Tun Kong Study Hall	Declared monument	1 493	1 683	2 115	2 170	1 942	1 541	1 084	775	933	1 820	1 712	2 417	19 685
31.	Race Course Fire Memorial	Declared monument	102	100	132	153	138	36	30	24	19	40	72	60	906
32.	Tat Tak Communal Hall ⁸	Declared monument	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 079	1 325	2 404
33.	Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall	Declared monument	264	373	583	364	232	224	296	163	244	334	361	216	3 654
34.	Yeung Hau Temple, Ha Tsuen ⁹	Declared monument	0	0	0	0	0	138	141	135	113	238	162	165	1 092
35.	Tin Hau Temple, Lung Yeuk Tau ⁹	Declared monument	0	0	0	0	0	1 166	1 380	1 331	1 138	1 299	1 618	1 607	9 539
36. - 37.	Kun Ting Study Hall and Ching Shu Hin ¹⁰	Grade 1	2 787	2 938	4 282	4 379	3 438	2 378	1 973	1 634	2 445	6 451	5 674	5 310	43 689
38.	Cheung Chun Yuen	Grade 1	802	1 390	589	2 406	959	234	379	254	178	910	524	1 317	9 942

No.	Name	Declared monument / Grading	Number of visitors per month (January to December 2023)												
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
39.	Lik Wing Tong Study Hall	Grade 1	776	798	690	917	677	365	164	219	252	509	618	805	6 790
Total:			55 135	61 015	68 793	74 546	53 838	43 877	51 161	50 104	52 910	92 573	82 720	79 890	766 562

- Remarks:
- ¹ Tai Fu Tai Mansion was closed to the public from 28 December 2022 to 26 June 2023 for maintenance.
 - ² Tung Lung Fort and Information Centre were closed to the public from 1 December 2023 to 24 January 2024 for maintenance.
 - ³ Haw Par Mansion has been reopened since 9 June 2023 for the public to visit by appointment through a guided tour.
 - ⁴ Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall was closed to the public from 28 November 2022 to 30 June 2023 for maintenance.
 - ⁵ Cheung Shan Monastery was closed to the public from 23 February 2023 to 31 August 2023 for maintenance.
 - ⁶ King Law Ka Shuk was closed to the public from 14 November 2022 to 4 July 2023 for maintenance.
 - ⁷ Fan Sin Temple was closed to the public from 30 August 2023 to 15 March 2024 for maintenance.
 - ⁸ Tat Tak Communal Hall was closed to the public from 23 April 2021 to 11 November 2023 for maintenance.
 - ⁹ The AMO has provided security services to two declared monuments, namely Yeung Hau Temple, Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long and Tin Hau Temple, Lung Yeuk Tau, Fanling since June 2023. Both are open to the public.
 - ¹⁰ Kun Ting Study Hall and Ching Shu Hin are adjacent to each other, so visitors will visit both buildings at the same time.

**Privately-owned or managed declared monuments and historic buildings
which are open for public visits under the Revitalisation Scheme / Projects and
Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage of the Development
Bureau**

No.	Name	Declared monument/ Grading
Declared monuments and historic buildings under the Revitalisation Scheme		
1.	Lui Seng Chun	Declared monument
2.	Old Tai Po Police Station	Declared monument
3.	Blue House Cluster	Grade 1
4.	Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters	Grade 1
5.	Old Tai O Police Station	Grade 2
6.	Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre	Grade 2
7.	Mei Ho House	Grade 2
8.	Former Lai Chi Kok Hospital	Grade 3
9.	Stone Houses at Junction Road in Kowloon	Grade 3
10.	Bridges Street Market	Grade 3
11.	Former Fanling Magistracy	Grade 3
12.	No.12 School Street	Grade 3
13.	Luen Wo Market	Grade 3
Other revitalisation projects		
14.	Central Police Station Compound (comprises the former Central Police Station, Central Magistracy and Victoria Prison)	Declared monument
15.	Former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road	Grade 3
Declared monuments and historic buildings agreed to open for public visits under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage		
16.	Kowloon Union Church	Declared monument
17.	Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall	Declared monument
18.	Hip Tin Temple, Sha Tau Kok	Declared monument
19.	Island House	Declared monument
20.	Jamia Mosque, Shelley Street, Central	Declared monument
21.	The Helena May Institute Main Building	Declared monument
22.	Lo Pan Temple	Grade 1
23.	Tsang Tai Uk	Grade 1
24.	Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Kau Yan Church	Grade 1
25.	Yuen Kwan Tai Temple, Mong Tseng Wai Yuen Long	Grade 1
26.	Tin Hau Temple, Fung Chi Tsuen	Grade 1
27.	St. Andrew's Church Compound	Grade 1
28.	Man Ancestral Hall, Fan Tin Tsuen	Grade 1
29.	Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre	Grade 2
30.	St. Stephen's College, Bungalow No. 3	Grade 2

31.	Hung Shing Temple, Ping Shan	Grade 2
32.	Tat Yan Study Hall	Grade 2
33.	No. 176 Shung Ching San Tsuen, Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long	Grade 2
34.	S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral	Grade 2
35.	No. 8 San Lau Street	Grade 2
36.	Tin Hau Temple, Lam Tsuen	Grade 2
37.	First Church of Christ Scientist	Grade 2
38.	No. 60 Kat Hing Street	Grade 2
39.	Lai Mansion, Pat Heung	Grade 2
40.	No. 14 Tai O Market Street	Grade 2
41.	Sik Lo	Grade 2
42.	Kwan Tai Temple, Tai O	Grade 2
43.	No. 7 Tai O Market Street	Grade 2
44.	Hong Kong Adventist College Administration Block, Sai Kung	Grade 2
45.	No.139 Ping Yeung, Ta Kwun Ling	Grade 2
46.	Kowloon Cricket Club	Grade 2
47.	Mi Tak Study Hall Main Block and Ancillary Building	Grade 2
48.	No. 11 Tai O Market Street	Grade 2
49.	Hong Kong Red Swastika Society Building	Grade 2
50.	St. Joseph's Chapel, Yim Tin Tsai	Grade 2
51.	Earth God Shrine of Kam Tsin	Grade 2
52.	High Rock Christian Camp	Grade 2
53.	Tin Hau Temple, Kam Tin	Grade 3
54.	Hung Shing Temple, Fanling	Grade 3
55.	Leung Ancestral Hall, Ma Po Mei	Grade 3
56.	Tsang Ancestral Hall, Chuen Lung	Grade 3
57.	Ip Ancestral Hall, Sha Tau Kok	Grade 3
58.	Holy Spirit Seminary Chapel	Grade 3
59.	Entrance Gate, Mong Tseng Wai	Grade 3
60.	No. 71 San Wai Tsuen	Grade 3
61.	Municipal Services Staff Recreation Club	Grade 3
62.	Kwong Yuet Tong Public Office	Grade 3
63.	Tin Hau Temple, Kat O	Grade 3
64.	No. 21 San Lung Tsuen	Grade 3
65.	No. 22 San Lung Tsuen	Grade 3
66.	Shrine, Tin Sam Tsuen	Grade 3
67.	Kowloon Bowling Green Club	Grade 3
68.	Ling Wan Monastery	Grade 3
69.	Tin Hau Temple, Sha Kong Tsuen	Grade 3
70.	St. Stephen's College, St. Stephen's Chapel	Grade 3
71.	Law Ancestral, Tai Po	Grade 3
72.	Tin Hau Temple, Kat Hing Back Street, Tai O	Grade 3
73.	Ng Ancestral Hall, Fung Wong Wu, Ta Kwu Ling	Grade 3
74.	Old village school, Yuen Long	Grade 3

75.	Yeung Hau Temple, Ping Shan	Grade 3
76.	Nos. 1 & 3 Playing Field Road	Grade 3
77.	Law Uk and Ancillary Block, Shek Chung Au, Sha Tau Kok	Grade 3
78.	Entrance Gate of Shek Po Wai, Shek Po Tsuen	Grade 3
79.	Lutheran Yan Kwong Church (Church Building, Former Kindergarten and Former Primary School)	Grade 3

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2894)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the expenditure on infrastructure works will be contained at a sustainable level financially, and at the same time, the implementation schedule of works projects will be adjusted after reviewing the cost-effectiveness of the projects. To ensure the progress and efficiency of works projects, the Government has started in recent years to invite tenders for public works projects by adopting "two-envelope system" in order to improve the situation of awarding contracts to the lowest bidders. Taking the public works projects which have to be scrutinised individually by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council as an example, please advise this Committee:

1. since the adoption of the two-envelope system, the number of works contracts which were awarded to the lowest bidders each year and their respective amount of expenditure involved, as well as their respective proportion against the total number and total value of the works contracts in the year concerned; and
2. among the works contracts tendered under the two-envelope system, the proportion of those contracts which were completed on time or ahead of schedule, the average period of delay for the projects experiencing delay, and the mean, maximum and minimum percentages expressed in terms of the values of the actual project expenditure against the approved project estimate; as well as the aforesaid indicators for works contracts of the same category which were tendered under the general arrangement.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The Government has been adopting the principles of "achieving best value for money" and "maintaining open and fair competition" in the procurement of public works contracts. Tender invitation and evaluation are conducted according to clear guidelines and well-established procedures. In 2002, we started to adopt the "two-envelope system" to evaluate tenders for public works. Firstly, we will assess tenderers' technical competence and past

performance, then followed by considering their tender prices. Finally, an overall score for each tender will be derived. Depending on the nature of the works, the weighting of technical score is generally set at 40% of the overall score, which could be increased to 50% for projects with high complexity. In general, the tender with the highest overall score would be recommended for acceptance. However, when examining the tender which obtains the highest overall score, we would carefully consider whether the tender price is at reasonable level. If the tender price is considered to be unreasonably low, the tender concerned would not be accepted. In other words, "the lowest bid wins" is not the guiding principle in tender evaluation of public works contracts.

Our reply to Hon ZHANG's question is as follows:

1. In the past five years, an average of about 90 works contracts per year were tendered under the two-envelope system, with a total value of about \$80 billion per year. About 60% of these works contracts (either in terms of number or contract value) were awarded to tenderers submitting the lowest tender prices. Nevertheless, before awarding the contracts concerned, we had applied the mechanism mentioned above to scrutinise that the prices of the winning tenders were not unreasonably low.
2. In the past five years, about 95% of the works contracts tendered under the two-envelope system were completed on time or ahead of schedule, while the remaining contracts experienced a delay of about 29 days on average.

Although some isolated infrastructure projects have experienced delays or have to apply for additional funding in recent years, the overall estimation and management performance of the Capital Works Programme have been satisfactory. In the past ten years, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a total of about 550 Category A projects with a total approved amount of about \$970 billion. Among these approved projects, 16 required applications to the Finance Committee for additional provisions totalling about \$57.1 billion mainly due to unforeseen circumstances. In other words, increased estimates were deemed necessary in about 3% of the approved projects and their corresponding additional provisions amounted to about 6% of the total funding approved. In addition, the final accounts of a total of 530 Category A projects had been settled in the past ten years, and the total expenditures of these projects were lower than their total original approved project estimates.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)039

(Question Serial No. 2895)

Head: (159) Government Secretariat: Development Bureau
(Works Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (Ricky C K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the application of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) mentioned in paragraph 189 of the Budget, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the specific projects conducted in collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government?
2. Please provide in a table the Category A projects approved in the past year and those that intend to adopt MiC. Please also set out the project types and technologies applied, and the estimated benefits to construction time/cost.
3. What are the estimated manpower and expenditure of the Building Testing and Research Institute of the Development Bureau, and its specific area of work?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government is leading the industry to adopt Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, etc., have started the adoption or trial of MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address announced further promoting MiC by formulating and implementing a series of measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, in order to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the Greater Bay Area (GBA); and by promoting the adoption of high productivity construction such as MiC by the private sector, with a view to reducing labour demand and expediting housing supply. The Development Bureau (DEVB) is proactively carrying out exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of

implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecosystem for the industry.

The 2024-25 Budget also announced developing MiC as one of the industries in the GBA that enjoy clear advantages, and examining the feasibility of investing in the MiC supply chain.

Our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The DEVB is proactively exchanging views on MiC with the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province (DHURDGP). On 23 January 2024, the DEVB, with the support from the DHURDGP and the People's Government of Huizhou Municipality, held the MiC Supply Chain Conference in Huizhou, attracting some 300 participants from the construction sector in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. The event aimed to promote the adoption of MiC among the GBA cities. On 26 March 2024, the DHURDGP and the DEVB signed the Letter of Intent on Collaboration at the Construction Forum co-organised by the Mainland and Hong Kong to deepen co-operation and exchanges between Guangdong and Hong Kong in the areas of construction and related engineering services, including promoting the collaborative development of MiC in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau GBA. Subsequently, we will further discuss with the DHURDGP the timetable for implementation of the co-operation details and relevant measures.
2. Among the projects awarded by the Architectural Services Department in the past year, MiC has been adopted for the following projects:

Project title	Estimated project cost	Project type	MiC technology
Implementation of Light Public Housing – the First Batch of Projects	about \$14.9 billion	public housing	steel MiC systems
Implementation of Light Public Housing – the Second Batch of Projects	about \$9.8 billion	public housing	steel MiC systems
Redevelopment of Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre	about \$5.5 billion	correctional services facility	steel MiC systems
New public market in Tin Shui Wai	about \$1.5 billion	market	steel MiC systems
Modernisation of Lai Wan Market	about \$45 million	market	steel MiC systems

Since the nature and scale of each project are different, the extent to which it has applied MiC and the benefits brought by MiC also vary. According to the University of Hong Kong (HKU)'s study on MiC pilot projects, the adoption of MiC can reduce construction time by about 30% to 50%, uplift on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, save construction costs by at least 10% and has better performance in terms of workmanship, environmental protection and safety than using traditional construction methods. The

HKU is also conducting a study on another three MiC construction projects of private developers and NGOs to review the effectiveness of using MiC in reducing construction time and cost.

3. Apart from research and development (R&D) activities for innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, the Building Testing and Research Institute (BTRI) will also devise standards, conduct testing and provide accreditation, in order to spearhead innovation in the construction industry and attract R&D talent to Hong Kong. The BTRI will also capitalise on Hong Kong's unique advantages to provide a platform for our country's construction standards and related products to align with those in the international market

The BTRI is expected to be established within this year. At the initial stage, the BTRI will mainly focus on co-ordinating testing and accreditation of construction projects, promoting applied R&D, and interfacing with the relevant Mainland authorities to provide support for the development of construction standards for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau GBA. We are drawing up the requirements for the initial operation of the BTRI, including the organisational structure, related staff and pay levels, and the operational budget, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1317)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Facilities Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services (Michael LI Kiu-yin)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Government will promote rooftop and vertical greening, and enhance practices on greening, landscape works and tree management in government building works. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) of its specific efforts to promote greening works;
- (b) given that new government building projects should have greening measures on 20% to 30% of the site area, of the approximate percentage of the expenditure on such greening works against the total project expenditure; and
- (c) of its estimated number of greening works in total for implementation in 2024-25, as well as the expenditure, staff establishment and project details involved?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- (a) Urban greening is one of the important design elements in building a livable city. The Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) strives to promote greening works in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Development Bureau. Through rigorous design and planning, various greening measures, including rooftop and vertical greening, are incorporated into newly-developed government facilities and buildings as far as practicable so as to improve the community environment and enhance people's quality of life.
- (b) The percentage of expenditure on greening measures varies in different types and scales of construction projects. For projects such as community facilities or complexes, schools and parks, the expenditure on relevant greening measures ranges from 0.3% to 5.3% of the total project expenditure.

- (c) As estimated by the ArchSD, in 2024-25, greening works will be carried out in 25 government building projects which include parks, hospitals and community facilities or complexes, involving an estimated expenditure on greening of about \$140 million in total. As greening is part of the overall development of building projects, in which different staff and project details are involved, a breakdown of the relevant information is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1460)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Facilities Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services (Michael LI Kiu-yin)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Government will enhance buildability and constructability of the projects through innovative construction methods. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) of the number of projects in which innovative construction methods are being adopted, and whether additional expenditure and staff establishment are required as compared to those in which conventional construction methods are used; and
- (b) whether the Government has assessed the specific extent of enhancement to constructability with the adoption of innovative construction methods, in aspects such as the manpower saved, the construction time shortened and the construction cost saved?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the Member's question is as follows:

Over the past few years, the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) has more widely adopted the application of innovation and technology as advocated under the "Construction 2.0" initiative. This includes the Modular integrated Construction (MiC), Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), Digital Works Supervision Systems (DWSS) and Building Information Modelling (BIM). In addition to the Disciplined Services Quarters for the Fire Services Department at Pak Shing Kok in Tseung Kwan O, North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, various community isolation and treatment facilities, and the Skylight Market on Tin Sau Road, Tin Shui Wai completed previously, other MiC projects include the Sunlight Market in Tung Chung, Kwu Tung North Multi-welfare Services Complex and a primary school at Area 9 in Tai Po which have been recently completed, and the Light Public Housing projects currently underway.

Apart from the above, the ArchSD is also specifying more in application of BIM and DWSS in tender requirements to encourage contractors adopting different innovative construction technologies in optimising the design, construction, project management and asset management for improvement of the overall efficiency, safety performance, quality assurance as well as construction productivity.

Over the past 3 years, the ArchSD has commenced 60-odd capital works projects. The ArchSD would adopt innovative construction methods and technologies where applicable in the planning stage of individual project. Due to the different nature and scale of each project, it is difficult to compare the specific benefits gained from adopting innovative construction methods and technologies.

In terms of the MiC method, the extent of benefits varies among individual projects. According to a study by the University of Hong Kong on 2 completed MiC pilot projects including the Disciplined Services Quarters for the Fire Services Department at Pak Shing Kok in Tseung Kwan O, the adoption of MiC achieved a shorter construction time by about 30% to 50%, higher on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, lower construction costs by at least 10%, and better quality, site safety and sustainability performance compared to traditional construction methods.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0160)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Monitoring and Advisory Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services (Michael LI Kiu-yin)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) will, among others, provide advice on a safe and healthy working environment for building works through promoting site safety, and promote awareness of safety and health among staff, contractors, consultants and stakeholders through maintaining ISO 45001:2018 certification. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

What are the financial provision and manpower to be allocated by the ArchSD for promoting awareness of site safety and health among the relevant stakeholders in response to the frequent occurrence of industrial accidents at construction sites in recent years?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The ArchSD always accords high priority to the provision of a safe and healthy working environment for those involved in public works projects and has been implementing various policies and measures to promote awareness of safety and health among the relevant parties through maintaining ISO 45001:2018 certification.

Project officers and resident site staff in charge of works contracts of the ArchSD are responsible for supervising and monitoring the implementation of occupational safety and health measures in construction sites, including conducting routine and surprise site inspections, performing independent site safety audits, providing safety training, equipment and on-site safety briefings. Having regard to the relevant works technical circular, the ArchSD has also required the installation and adoption of the Smart Site Safety System (SSSS) concerning works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million to enhance site safety performance and improve the site working environment. The ArchSD also organises and participates in safety promotional schemes such as site safety forums, the Site Safety Model Worker Award Scheme, Construction Safety Week, and Considerate Contractors Site Award Scheme, while sustained efforts are made to foster wider application of innovative construction methods and technology in works contracts, such as the Modular Integrated

Construction method and prefabricated steel reinforcing bar products. Moreover, the Departmental Safety and Environmental Advisory Unit of the ArchSD provides advice on the site safety performance of the department's contractors and promotes awareness of occupational safety and health among the relevant parties.

Since the above-mentioned works and other associated activities are integral to the department's overall project management duties, the ArchSD does not maintain any separate breakdown of the resources involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)043

(Question Serial No. 2336)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure, (8) Advice on Development Proposals

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is stated in "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25" that the Government will continue to ensure that all land and infrastructure required to meet development targets are delivered on time and cost-effectively. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the basis adopted by the Government in estimating project costs, apart from making reference to similar projects; and
- (b) the respective percentages of the costs of feasibility studies, small-scale investigations and consultants' fees in the total project costs.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

- (a) Generally speaking, the project estimate for a public works project includes the construction cost, consultancy fee, site supervision cost of resident site staff, site investigation cost, project contingency and provision for price adjustment, etc. When estimating the construction cost, we will not only refer to the costs of other similar projects (e.g. tender prices of recently awarded contracts of similar nature and unit prices of similar types of work) and the latest market situation, but also consider the nature, uniqueness, difficulty, and complexity of the project itself to ensure a reasonable cost estimate. Consultancy fees cover the costs of feasibility studies, design, tendering, and supervision of site investigation works. The cost of site supervision by resident site staff includes the expenses for hiring professional, technical, and other related personnel. When estimating these expenses, we assess the required manpower and salaries of the relevant personnel based on factors such as the nature, scale, uniqueness and complexity of the project, and make reference to other similar projects.

During the detailed design stage, site investigation is required to obtain the necessary geological data, and the related costs will be included in the project estimate. We will also reserve project contingency in the project estimate to cover additional expenses caused by unforeseen circumstances and unexpected geological conditions, etc. We will follow the established guidelines and procedures to assess the risks of the project and estimate the required project contingency.

We also allow a provision for price adjustment in the project cost to cater for fluctuations in labour and material costs during the contract period. We will use price adjustment factors calculated by government economic consultants to convert the constant prices of the basic project estimate into money-of-the-day prices. The difference between these two prices will be the provision for price adjustment reserved in the project estimate.

Since September 2020, the Government has adopted parallel tendering for the procurement of all works contracts and works-related consultancies as far as practicable. The purpose is to enable the commencement of works contracts/works-related consultancies as soon as possible after funding approval by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, and to reflect the tender prices in the approved project estimate for better financial management of the projects.

- (b) The actual costs of feasibility study, site investigation, and consultancy fees as a percentage of the total project cost vary according to a number of factors such as the nature, characteristics, scale, and complexity of each individual project. In terms of site investigation costs, the complexity of underground geological conditions, changes in terrain, characteristics, scale, height, and location of the buildings or structures to be constructed, among other factors, need to be considered. Taking the relatively large-scale site formation and infrastructure projects currently undertaken by the Civil Engineering and Development Department as an example, the relevant costs involved generally account for about 1% of the total project expenditure.

Consultancy fees include the costs of feasibility studies (see Note), design, tendering and supervision of site investigation works, etc. Generally, these fees constitute approximately 3% of the total project expenditure.

(Note: Feasibility studies are generally carried out before the commencement of relatively large-scale or complex works projects to assess the impacts of the project on land, traffic and transport, environment, infrastructure (drainage, sewage and water supply), etc., followed by public consultations and preliminary cost estimates to establish the feasibility of the works project.)

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1559)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Some construction works are occasionally delayed due to problems with the land conditions. For example, in the case of Long Tin Court Phase 1 works in Yuen Long, it is learnt that during its construction, additional support columns were required due to the discovery of suboptimal underground soil conditions, resulting in a delay in the expected completion date of the works. In view of the above, and in the context of “enhancing quantity, speed, efficiency and quality” in land production, please inform this Committee of the effective ways to ensure that the spade-ready sites supplied by the Government after land production are of adequate standards and have sufficient data to enable the smooth implementation of works projects.

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) provides formed land for various public housing development projects. Due to the diverse geological conditions in different areas of Hong Kong, to expedite the construction of public housing, the CEDD closely collaborates with the Housing Department (HD) at different stages of the projects, aiming to acquire sufficient geological data as early as possible to facilitate smooth project implementation.

During the feasibility study and detailed design stages of site formation works, the CEDD conducts site investigation at suitable locations to obtain geological data for geotechnical engineering design, such as retaining wall and slope design. The data is also shared with the HD for preliminary design and reference purposes. In the construction stage of site formation works, the CEDD collaborates with the HD to adjust the construction procedures appropriately without affecting the progress of the site formation works, so that the HD can conduct the preliminary works, such as site investigation, in advance. Formed land is also handed over to the HD in phases in advance, facilitating the HD to carry out the public housing works or related preparatory works in advance. The above measures can help the HD

accelerate its housing construction works, enabling the smooth implementation of its public housing development projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0964)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Greening and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the management of Hong Kong's marine fill resources and mud disposal facilities, please advise on the following:

- (a) the annual sediment disposal volume for the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), as well as the names of the major sediment disposal projects (please list separately the locations for disposal of uncontaminated and contaminated sediment);
- (b) the details of the various locations for disposal of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment (including (i) the remaining capacity, (ii) the environmental monitoring results, and (iii) an overview of the operation) (to be tabulated);
- (c) whether the Government has any plans to provide more locations for disposal of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment;
- (d) whether the Government has estimated the annual sediment disposal volume in the coming 3 years, as well as the names of the major sediment disposal projects (please list separately the locations for disposal of uncontaminated and contaminated sediment).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

Through the Marine Fill Committee, the Civil Engineering and Development Department oversees the operation of marine disposal facilities for disposal of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment, and formulates strategies to ensure the provision of adequate marine disposal capacity.

(a) The annual sediment disposal volume and the major sediment disposal projects in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows. The disposal locations are shown in (b) below.

Year	Sediment disposal volume (contaminated sediment)	Sediment disposal volume (uncontaminated sediment)	Major sediment disposal project
2021	About 0.46 million m ³	About 0.56 million m ³	Hong Kong Offshore Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels
2022	About 0.20 million m ³	About 0.94 million m ³	Central Kowloon Route and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels
2023	About 0.29 million m ³	About 0.38 million m ³	Central Kowloon Route and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels

(b) Relevant details of the existing contaminated sediment and uncontaminated sediment disposal facilities are set out in the table below:

Facility	Location	Remaining capacity	Environmental monitoring result	Current operation status
For disposal of contaminated sediment	To the east of Sha Chau	About 2.18 million m ³	The regular environmental monitoring result indicated that the facility had no unacceptable impact on the nearby environment.	Based on the current forecast, the facility may operate until 2027.
For disposal of uncontaminated sediment	To the south of Cheung Chau, to the east of Ninepin Group, to the east of Tung Lung Chau and to the south of Tsing Yi	About 44.12 million m ³ in total	The regular environmental monitoring result indicated that the facilities had no unacceptable impact on the nearby environment.	Based on the current forecast, the facilities may operate beyond 2033.

(c) Based on the capacity, the existing contaminated sediment disposal facility located to the east of Sha Chau is expected to operate until 2027. We are currently planning for the provision of a new disposal facility in the waters to the west of Lamma Island so that when the capacity of the only existing disposal facility is exhausted, we can continue to provide a facility to meet the demand for disposal of contaminated sediment.

(d) Based on the current information, we anticipate that the average annual sediment disposal volume of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment in the coming 3 years (from 2024 to 2026) will be about 0.45 million m³ and 0.40 million m³ respectively. The major sediment disposal projects will include various navigation channel improvement works and other dredging works. We will keep reviewing the estimated sediment disposal volume based on the latest information of sediment disposal projects to ensure the provision of adequate marine disposal facilities have adequate capacity to meet the demand.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)046

(Question Serial No. 0968)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In respect of marine pollution caused by marine works, please advise:

- (a) the existing mechanism for handling marine pollution caused by marine works;
- (b) the number of marine pollution incidents caused by marine works for each year over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) whether the Government has imposed any penalties on the responsible parties for the marine pollution incidents caused by marine works over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023 24) and the details;
- (d) regarding the impact of marine pollution caused by marine works on the fisheries industry, the compensation mechanism put in place by the Government. If there is such a mechanism, has the mechanism been activated over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24)?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

(a) The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)'s contractors are required to carry out marine works in accordance with relevant laws and contractual provisions, while the CEDD will arrange resident site staff to supervise the contractors' works. For works classified as a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, the CEDD's contractors are required to carry out the works in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the Environmental Permit, including the submission of an Environmental Management Plan and deployment of Competent Person to implement the Environmental Monitoring and Audit programme. In the occurrence of marine pollution caused by incidents happened during the course of works, the CEDD will immediately assess the pollution situation and take appropriate measures, including considering the need to suspend the works temporarily and supervising the contractors to implement appropriate remedial measures. In addition, the contractors' performance will be reflected in their regular Contractor Performance Reports, affecting the contractors' chances of being awarded public works contracts in the future. If necessary, the CEDD will also inform relevant departments for coordination.

(b), (c) and (d)

Regarding the impact of marine pollution caused by marine works on the fisheries industry, the affected parties are entitled to claim against the relevant project office taking forward the marine works for follow-up actions. In the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), there were no marine pollution incidents caused by marine works under the CEDD's purview.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)047

(Question Serial No. 0471)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Civil Engineering and Development Department expects to complete the statutory procedures of environmental impact assessment on reclamation and commence the detailed design for the reclamation works of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands in 2024-25. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the expected completion time of the design work, as well as the manpower and expenditure involved; and
2. whether the Government has evaluated the impact of the delay in the works project on the construction cost, given that the reclamation works is originally scheduled to commence in 2025.

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

After completing the first stage of public engagement activities for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project last year, we are now working on the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the reclamation works. We target to commence the statutory EIA process for the reclamation works within this year and proceed with the detailed design of the works from this year onwards. The detailed design of the reclamation works is expected to be completed in phases from 2026 onwards, and we strive to commence the reclamation works within the current term of the Government. Staff of the Civil Engineering and Development Department will be responsible for overseeing the detailed works design carried out by the consultants. As the staff concerned will also be responsible for other tasks of the project, we are unable to provide a separate breakdown of the manpower and the emoluments of the staff involved in the detailed design work.

The Committee on the Financing of Major Development Projects led by the Financial Secretary will continue to explore specific financial arrangements for large-scale land and transport infrastructure projects, including the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. Based on the progress of the studies and assessments, we will formulate a specific implementation

strategy for the artificial islands, prepare an estimate for the investment and manpower and resources deployment of the project, and formulate a pragmatic works programme. By then, we will have a more solid basis to work out the construction cost estimates.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)048

(Question Serial No. 0431)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2024-25 under this Programme is \$1,531.8 million, which is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2023-24 by 42.0%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the change is partly due to increased provisions for handling of surplus public fill. As mentioned in the key performance indicators, the public fill delivered to the Mainland for beneficial reuse will be increased from 2.5 million tonnes in 2023 to 11 million tonnes in 2024. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the justification for increasing the public fill delivered to the Mainland for beneficial reuse;
- (b) the measures to maximize reuse of the public fill in local projects; and
- (c) the manpower and resources allocated for 2024-25 in handling of surplus public fill?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

The Government has been properly managing the public fill arising from the construction industry in Hong Kong through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reducing generation, we request the construction industry to reduce the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects. On the aspect of proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or delivered to the two temporary fill banks for storage and later reuse. On the aspect of recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to the Mainland for beneficial reuse as the last resort.

- (a)&(b) In 2022 and 2023, a number of large-scale local reclamation projects (including the Three-runway System of the Hong Kong International Airport, Tung Chung New Town Extension and the Integrated Waste Management Facilities in Shek Kwu Chau) were undergoing reclamation operation and absorbing part of the public fill generated locally. In 2024, these local reclamation projects would be substantially

completed. As local reuse and recycling could not fully absorb all the public fill generated in Hong Kong, coupled with the fact that the capacities of temporary fill banks are limited, the estimated quantity of surplus public fill to be delivered to the Mainland will be increased to about 11 million tonnes.

- (c) For the management of public fill in financial year 2024-25, the forecast expenditure is \$1,531.8 million which mainly includes the operation and maintenance cost of public fill reception facilities, costs for the delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland and for the supply of the public fill stockpiled in fill banks to local projects for reuse, associated staff costs and administrative expenses, as well as costs for the provision of required facilities for disposal of public fill. Meanwhile, the estimated number of government staff allocated for the management of public fill in 2024-25 including professional, technical and resident site staff, etc. is 85, with an associated emolument expense accounting for about 3% of the forecast expenditure.

– End –

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)049

(Question Serial No. 2675)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 230 of the Budget Speech that “for some works projects which are at a comparatively mature stage of planning, they will continue to be taken forward by the relevant bureaux and departments as planned. They include the site formation and infrastructure works for the Northern Metropolis. As for some works projects that are currently at the preliminary planning or conceptual stage, the implementation schedule will be adjusted in light of their importance, etc.”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the list of works projects that will continue to be taken forward as planned;
2. (a) the works projects that the Civil Engineering and Development Department plans to commence in 2024-25; (b) the respective requirements for (i) manpower, (ii) expenditure on emoluments and (iii) cash flow for these works projects;
3. the reason for the significant decrease in the estimated area of land to be formed in 2024, given that the Estimates indicates that the actual area of land formed in 2023 is 106.9 hectares but the area is estimated to decrease to only 31.1 hectares in 2024, a drastic reduction of 70%.

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

1 & 2. Infrastructure investment can boost the economy, create jobs and enhance the quality of life of the public. The Government will continue to take forward works projects under planning according to the established procedures and adjust the progress of implementation based on project priorities and urgency.

As for the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), works projects under planning and design stages are detailed in the Controlling Officer's Report, and among them, works projects planned to commence in 2024-25 and the 2024-25 estimates are set out in Table 1. Since these projects require funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council before they can be implemented, the actual expenditure in 2024-25 will depend on the timing of funding approval and the actual progress of the works. As the staff

of the CEDD overseeing these works projects also undertake other duties, there is no separate breakdown of the number of staff involved and their expenditure of emoluments.

Table 1

Works Projects	2024-25 Estimates (\$m)
Cycle Track between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun — detailed design, site investigation and construction (Stage 2)	113.000
Trunk Road T4 in Sha Tin	401.872
Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area advance works phase 3 — site formation and engineering infrastructure	197.222
Remaining phase of site formation and engineering infrastructure works at Kwu Tung North New Development Area and Fanling North New Development Area — construction	675.529
Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area stage 2 works — site formation and engineering infrastructure	701.955
Site Formation and Infrastructure Works for public housing development at Ngau Chi Wan Village, Wong Tai Sin	3.746
Tung Chung New Town Extension — site formation and infrastructure works (Phase 2)	23.557
Development of San Tin Technopole phase 1 stage 1 works — site formation and engineering infrastructure	8.888
Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at Tin Wah Road, Lau Fau Shan	42.768
Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at To Yuen Tung, Tai Po	32.227
Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at Tsing Yi Road West, Tsing Yi	40.641
Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at Kwok Shui Road, Tsuen Wan — Phase 2	31.459
Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at A Kung Ngam Village, Eastern	19.361
Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development near Chai Wan Swimming Pool, Chai Wan	18.375

3. The area formed in a particular year represents the land formation completed in various projects in that particular year. The area of land formed varies each year according to the progress and phasing of on-going site formation and infrastructure projects.

The decrease in the area of land to be formed in 2024 (31.1 hectares) as compared with the area of land formed in 2023 (106.9 hectares) is due to the relatively large area of land formed (i.e. 75 hectares approximately) under the project of Tung Chung New Town Extension in 2023.

There are other major land formation projects in the coming years, such as Yuen Long South New Development Area (NDA), Kwu Tung North/Fanling North NDA, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA and San Tin Technopole, which will be completed in stages to ensure the continuous supply of land to support the housing, economic and social development of Hong Kong.

– End –

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)050

(Question Serial No. 2367)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government announced in 2021 the revival of the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project to increase medium and long-term land supply. About 60 hectares of land will be reclaimed along the coastline opposite to the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Science Park. The reclaimed land will mainly be used for innovation and technology development. There are sources saying that the project could be completed in phases in 2029 at the earliest. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the total expenditure on the feasibility study of the current Ma Liu Shui reclamation project; whether the Government has estimated the total expenditure of the overall reclamation works;
2. there is a saying "Money will go to places with roads", when planning the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project, whether the Government has considered including the construction of "Pak Shek Kok Station" and "Science Park Station" in the plan to enhance the connectivity of public transport in the area;
3. continuing from the above question, if the Government has no plan to build the MTR stations, whether the Government has made other provisions for constructing ancillary transport facilities other than the mass transit railway; if yes, the expenditure and estimated provision involved; if not, the reasons;
4. it is stated in the 2021 Policy Address that "the relevant land should be mainly for innovation and technology (I&T) development, so as to strengthen the development of the Eastern Corridor with I&T as a major economic function", whether the Government will consult the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, the District Council of the area, and the public regarding the reclamation plan.

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

1. The Government proposed to revive the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project in the 2021 Policy Address and recommended that the newly provided land through reclamation should be mainly for innovation and technology (I&T) development, so as to strengthen the development of the Eastern Corridor with I&T as a major economic function. To tie in with the reclamation project, the Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned the “Engineering Study for Ma Liu Shui Reclamation” (the Study) in July 2022, with an approved project estimate of about \$41.75 million. The Study mainly covers the preliminary design of the reclamation works, assessments/studies on environmental impact, marine ecology and marine traffic, etc., as well as preliminary site investigation works and project cost estimating.

2&3. As the aforementioned Policy Address proposed that the newly provided land through Ma Liu Shui reclamation project should be mainly for I&T development, according to the information provided by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation is currently conducting a preliminary study on the said development direction.

4. The above two studies are expected to be completed within 2024. The public will be informed of the recommendations of the studies in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1219)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Budget proposes stringent control of government expenditures. The Secretary for Development has indicated that the Bureau will press ahead with its works projects, such as public housing, but acknowledged the need for trade-offs. Some works, including the beautification of waterfront promenades and the cycle track connecting Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan, are expected to be “postponed slightly”. It is stated in the Estimates of the Civil Engineering and Development Department that the Department has continued the investigation and design study of the remaining cycle track sections between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun for the cycle track network in the New Territories. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the latest cost and timetable for the remaining sections of the cycle track network in the New Territories between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun.

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The cycle track between Tsuen Wan Bayview Garden and Tuen Mun of about 17 km long under the New Territories Cycle Track Network is being implemented in stages as follows:

(1) Section between Tuen Mun and So Kwun Wat

Detailed design for this cycle track section of about 3.6 km long has been completed. We plan to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council (LegCo) in the second quarter of this year for the construction works with an estimated cost of about \$700 million in money-of-the-day prices. The project is estimated to be completed in phases within 4 years.

(2) Section between So Kwun Wat and Ting Kau

Alignment design for this cycle track section of about 9.2 km long has been substantially completed. We plan to seek funding approval from the LegCo in the second quarter of this year for carrying out detailed design and site investigation works.

(3) Section between Ting Kau and Tsuen Wan Bayview Garden

Detailed design for this cycle track section of about 4.5 km long is currently underway.

The Government has been maintaining its expenditure on infrastructure works at a financially sustainable level and would give due consideration to their priority and urgency to adjust the implementation schedule of various works projects. Regarding the remaining cycle track section between Tsuen Wan and So Kwun Wat of the New Territories Cycle Track Network, we will estimate the construction cost and confirm the implementation programme in the detailed design stages, and will seek timely funding approval from the LegCo according to the priority to proceed with the construction works.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)052

(Question Serial No. 1220)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is indicated in the Estimates of the Civil Engineering and Development Department that the Department will commence the engineering study for Sunny Bay reclamation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee whether there are any relevant directions for the study (including industries), and the estimated timetable for completing the study report.

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply: The Civil Engineering and Development Department commenced the engineering study for Sunny Bay reclamation in May 2023 for anticipated completion in mid-2025 to ascertain the extent of reclamation required and its technical feasibility. Once the extent of the reclamation is ascertained, the Government will explore the relevant land uses. Apart from accommodating the railway depot facilities under the preliminary proposal of the Hong Kong Island West – Hung Shui Kiu Rail Link for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project, the Government will also explore the provision of various recreational and entertainment facilities on the Sunny Bay reclamation site, including a multi-purpose venue and a motor racing circuit.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)053

(Question Serial No. 1221)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

For the financial year 2024-25, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)'s estimated provision for slope safety and geotechnical standards is 0.3% less than the original provision for 2023-24. According to the indicators for the years 2023 and 2024, the number of slope features upgraded and landscaped is 152. I have inquired with the Government and learnt that at present, 3 000 slopes need to be upgraded using soil nails, and based on the current annual target of upgrading about 150 slopes, it will take about 20 years to complete the work.

At present, drastic changes in global climate have brought about serious disasters. The torrential rain in Hong Kong in 2023 triggered 181 landslides, which severely affected traffic and threatened the safety of lives and properties. Despite this, the CEDD has not allocated additional resources this year to handle more slopes each year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

(a) whether additional resources will be requested for handling more slopes; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;

(b) whether additional resources will be allocated for study of new technologies and utilisation of technologies, such as the use of robots for slope upgrading works; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;

(c) whether additional resources will be allocated to establish community co-ordination groups to work with local stakeholders to determine the works schedule so as to increase the annual number of slope features to be upgraded and landscaped, and to enhance promotional and educational efforts to reduce the nuisance caused by slope upgrading works to the community; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) of the CEDD has been implementing an effective slope safety system to improve slope safety. The landslide risk of man-made slopes and natural hillsides depends on a number of factors. The most important one of

which is their potential impact. By dealing with slopes with higher potential impacts, the overall landslide risk can be significantly reduced. To this end, in addition to ensuring slope safety through regular inspections and maintenance, the CEDD has been following a risk-based approach to systematically upgrade government man-made slopes, conduct safety-screening studies for private man-made slopes, and implement risk mitigation measures for natural hillside catchments.

According to the Catalogue of Scopes of GEO, there are about 61 000 registered man-made slopes in Hong Kong. Among them, about 45 000 are government man-made slopes and about 16 000 are private man-made slopes. All man-made slopes with relatively high potential impacts in the Catalogue of Scopes (e.g. locating near residential buildings, hospitals, and schools) have been upgraded in the early years. At present, the CEDD continues the Landslip Prevention and Mitigation Programme (LPMitP) mainly to deal with the remaining man-made slopes with moderate potential impacts (e.g. locating near major infrastructures, heavily used roads and footpaths) and about 3 300 natural hillside catchments which have been identified as imposing relatively high potential impacts in case of landslide (e.g. being closer to existing buildings or important transport corridors).

- (a) Man-made slopes or natural hillsides with potential impacts refer to those that may affect nearby existing facilities if a landslide occurs, but this does not mean that these slopes or hillsides are in poor condition and posing a danger. As mentioned above, all man-made slopes with relatively high potential impacts have been upgraded in the early years. Under the LPMitP, the CEDD continues to systematically carry out slope upgrading works for about 150 government man-made slopes, safety-screening studies for about 100 private man-made slopes and risk mitigation works for about 30 natural hillside catchments according to a risk-based approach every year. When setting the annual targets, the CEDD has taken into account the need to control landslide risk and balance factors such as resources, industry capabilities and the impacts of the works on the public and the environment. In addition, relevant government departments and private owners responsible for the maintenance of man-made slopes should regularly inspect the slopes and carry out necessary maintenance according to the Guide to Slope Maintenance published by the CEDD. The landslide risk of man-made slopes has been effectively reduced through these measures. At present, the overall landslide risk in Hong Kong has been substantially reduced compared with that existed in the 1970s and the 1980s, reaching the international best practice in risk management.
- (b) The CEDD is committed to apply innovation and technology (I&T) to reduce landslide risk and improve service effectiveness and quality, and has formulated dedicated strategies and allocated resources for this purpose. These include the development of four-legged robotic dog and climbing robot with caterpillar tracks which are equipped with various data-collecting devices and equipment for conducting inspections and collecting data at steep landslide sites or dangerous places to help analyse the landslide cause, assess the risk of recurrence of landslide and provide field data for the emergency repairing works design; and the study on the use of satellite remote sensing technology to conduct extensive monitoring of landslides in Hong Kong. The CEDD would explore ways to make better use of existing resources, such as the TechConnect (block vote) established by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, research grants from the University Grants Committee and the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund established by the Development Bureau, to promote suitable I&T projects.

- (c) The CEDD always attaches great importance to close communication with the community and consults the relevant District Councils on the upgrading works for man-made slopes and mitigation works for natural hillsides every year. During the works period, the CEDD and the contractors also explain the details and progress of the works to local stakeholders and deal with their concerns in a coordinated manner to minimise any inconvenience that may be caused by the works. Members of the public can also obtain information of the works such as the locations and construction period through the CEDD's website and the "Hong Kong Slope Safety" website.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0253)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The financial provision for 2024-25 is 42% higher than the revised provision for 2023-24, reaching \$1.53 billion, which is nearly double that of the actual provision for 2022-23. Due to the substantial completion of major reclamation works in Hong Kong and the existing fill banks gradually approaching their temporary stockpiled capacities, the local receiving capacity has diminished recently, resulting in more deliveries of surplus public fill materials to Taishan. Other than that, the key indicators of performance measures are generally not higher than those of the previous two years.

In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee: whether the Government will study to identify temporary storage sites in Hong Kong for the fill materials generated from the construction of the future Northern Metropolis and other projects under planning; and whether more concrete performance indicators will be formulated to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of such materials in the future.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

The Government has been properly managing the public fill arising from the construction industry in Hong Kong through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reducing generation, we request the construction industry to reduce the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects. On the aspect of proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or delivered to the 2 temporary fill banks for storage and later reuse. On the aspect of recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal as the last resort.

The Civil Engineering and Development Department keeps reviewing the demand for public fill reception facilities based on the anticipated quantity of public fill to be generated or

absorbed by future large-scale construction projects (including the Northern Metropolis development), and scrutinises the public fill management plans of project proponents at the planning and design stages to ensure that in their work plans, the construction waste is minimised and the public fill is reused and recycled as far as practicable. The Government is progressively implementing reclamation projects, which will gradually absorb public fill and help reduce the delivery of public fill to Taishan. It is anticipated that the indicator of public fill supplied to local projects for beneficial reuse will increase. The Government will review from time to time the indicators relating to management of construction and demolition materials and make adjustments when necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)055

(Question Serial No. 2881)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Michael H S FONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Of the \$1.1055 billion estimated financial provision for 2024, what are the respective proportions of personal emoluments, personnel related expenses, departmental expenses, non-recurrent expenditure, and expenditure on plant, equipment and works?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

In 2024-25, the estimated financial provision for Programme (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure is \$1.1055 billion, of which the respective proportions of personal emoluments, personnel related expenses, departmental expenses, non-recurrent expenditure and expenditure on plant, equipment and works are as follows –

	Percentage
Personal emoluments	74%
Personnel related expenses	7%
Departmental expenses	14%
Non-recurrent expenditure	4%
Expenditure on plant, equipment and works	1%
Total:	100%

– End –

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0336)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government will continue to take forward the “Rivers in the City” concept in the current year. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the projects completed and being carried out in the past 3 years, together with their respective details, commencement dates, anticipated completion dates and project funding involved; and
2. whether there are any projects to be implemented in the Central and Western District, Southern District and Islands District this year and in the next 3 years; if so, of the details and commencement dates of the projects with the expenditures involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

Embracing the “Rivers in the City” concept, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has been striving to carry out channel revitalisation works aimed at enhancing the ecological value of channels, promoting a water-friendly culture, improving the community environment, and increasing the connectivity between channels and their surrounding environment for better integration.

1. The projects completed and being carried out based on the “Rivers in the City” concept in the past 3 years are as follows:

Project Title	Details	Commencement Date	Completion Date	Project Funding (money-of-the-day (MOD) prices)
Revitalisation of Jordan Valley Nullah	To implement landscaping works at the downstream section of the channel and its adjoining areas; to build a viewing platform above the nullah so as to provide an open space; and to green the upstream section of the channel and provide ponds and fish ladders.	March 2020	April 2022	\$28 million

Project Title	Details	Commencement Date	Completion Date	Project Funding (money-of-the-day (MOD) prices)
Revitalisation of Tsui Ping River	To transform the 1-km-long King Yip Street Nullah into Tsui Ping River by improving the environment and adopting ecological elements and landscape design.	July 2020	scheduled for completion in 2024	\$1.342 billion
Tung Chung New Town Extension - River Park	To restore the engineered channel section of Tung Chung River; to enhance the ecological connection between upstream and downstream sections of Tung Chung River; to create a river park; and to increase the drainage capacity of Tung Chung River.	May 2021	scheduled for completion in 2025	\$415 million
Improvement of Yuen Long Town Nullah (town centre section)	To improve the overall environment of the nullah at the town centre section by carrying out a series of improvement and revitalisation works.	May 2023	scheduled for completion in phases in 2030	\$857 million

2. At present, there is no plan for the DSD to commence channel revitalisation projects in the Central and Western District, Southern District and Islands District within the next 3 years.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2315)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is stated under “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25” that the Government will continue with the planning and upgrading of the stormwater drainage systems and implement by stages the proposed improvement works, including doing design work and commencing construction works. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) of the number of projects whose design work will be carried out and the number of projects that will commence in 2024-25; and of the estimated expenditure and manpower involved in these projects; and
- (b) whether the completed improvement schemes have proved effective; and of the annual expenditure on repair and maintenance?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) has been striving to enhance the drainage capacity of stormwater drainage facilities throughout the territory. Replies to the questions raised by the Legislative Councillor are as follows:

- (a) The DSD is currently carrying out 11 drainage improvement projects. The total approved project estimate is \$10.919 billion. Moreover, there are 23 drainage improvement projects in planning and design stages. In 2024-25, the DSD will seek funding of about \$8 billion (in the prices of September 2023) for a total of 7 of these projects to facilitate the implementation of the drainage improvement works in relevant districts, including Mong Kok, Wong Tai Sin, Kwun Tong, Kowloon City, Eastern, Sha Tin, Sai Kung and Tai Po. On manpower, since the DSD will deploy its existing professional and technical staff to carry out the above-mentioned drainage improvement works in addition to their own duties, a breakdown of the manpower involved in the above-mentioned works is not available.
- (b) Over the years, the DSD have completed more than 90 drainage improvement projects, including about 110 kilometres of river training works, more than 90 kilometres of drains, 4 drainage tunnels totalling about 20 kilometres in length and 5 stormwater

storage schemes. These facilities have already come into operation. These improvement projects have proved effective in alleviating the flood risk over the territory. In 2023-24, the expenditure on repair and maintenance of drainage systems is about \$180 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1588)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Systematic Drainage in the New Territories

It is learnt that in the New Territories, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has not only completed river training works involving some 110 kilometres of channels, but also implemented 27 village flood protection schemes for low-lying villages. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the length (in kilometres) of the channels in the New Territories at which river training works are yet to be carried out, and the anticipated completion date of the entire works project?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

Since its establishment in 1989, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has been formulating drainage master plans for rural areas and implementing long-term improvement measures including, inter alia, river training works, in particular those targeting the districts prone to flooding in the northern New Territories and village flood protection schemes aimed at protecting low-lying villages. So far, in the New Territories, the DSD has not only completed river training works involving some 110 kilometres of channels, but also implemented 27 village flood protection schemes for low-lying villages. Through the implementation of these projects, the flood risk of the districts concerned has been significantly reduced.

Since 2008, the DSD has been conducting, in phases, reviews of the drainage master plans in the New Territories and implementing drainage improvement works for rural areas as planned to further reduce the flood risk of the areas. Currently, the DSD is carrying out 3 drainage improvement projects in North District and Yuen Long, the scope of which include providing facilities such as drainage systems, flood storage ponds, flood protection walls and barrages, involving stormwater drains measuring approximately 15 kilometres. The 3 projects are expected to be completed between 2027 and 2030. Moreover, the DSD is planning river training works for the remainder measuring about 5 kilometres.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2458)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In 2019, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) identified three additional locations where the waterfronts were vulnerable to the impact of overtopping waves (i.e. overtopping wave spots), namely Tseung Kwan O South, Heng Fa Chuen and South Horizons. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following?

1. The DSD said it would set up a storm surge warning system under which residents of the buildings and housing estates affected by overtopping waves would be alerted around the clock and notified by short message service (SMS) regarding the forecast of storm surge and the water level. What is the progress of setting up the warning system? Please provide the list of buildings and housing estates covered by the warning system.
2. The DSD said it would provide earth bunds and drainage facilities at overtopping wave spots. How many improvement projects in connection with overtopping wave spots will be or are being carried out? Please give the details.
3. Regarding overtopping wave spots, the DSD conducted a pilot trial of temporary floating breakwaters anchored at the seabed. What is the result of the pilot trial? What is the cost of the pilot trial?
4. Can the temporary floating breakwater mentioned above be widely used in Hong Kong?
5. Will the Government plan to increase the number of overtopping wave spots in view of extreme weather?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 148)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to Member's questions is as follows:

In 2021, having regard to extreme weather, the Government completed the relevant studies and identified 26 higher risk coastal low-lying or windy residential areas (including the 3 overtopping wave spots in Tseung Kwan O South, Heng Fa Chuen and South Horizons), and formulated plans for the necessary improvement works (such as raising the height of wave walls and installing demountable flood barriers) and management measures to cope with storm surges and overtopping waves. While the improvement works are scheduled for

completion in phases by 2027, the management measures have already been put in place to meet the emergency needs of the housing estates and the people affected.

Regarding the above-mentioned overtopping wave spots, upon the issuance of the storm surge alerts by the Hong Kong Observatory, relevant government departments including the Drainage Services Department (DSD) and the Home Affairs Department (HAD) will be notified. The DSD will immediately deploy the emergency response teams to assist the locals concerned in implementing appropriate management measures and handling flooding problems, while the HAD will notify the people affected via the property management companies of the housing estates concerned.

The DSD conducted a trial of temporary floating breakwaters at the waters off the Ap Lei Chau Preliminary Treatment Works. The trial results showed that the use of temporary floating breakwaters could not yield the expected wave attenuation effect. Thus, the protection it could offer to nearshore drainage facilities is quite limited. Therefore, the DSD does not have any plans for wider use of the technology at the moment. The total expenditure on the trial is approximately \$5 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2651)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Sewage Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to caverns, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the progress of the project and the respective expenditures for its various stages;
2. of the measures taken to monitor the progress of the project and ensure it can be completed on schedule;
3. of the estimated expenditure on the management, maintenance and repair of the existing Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works; and
4. in view of the population growth in Sha Tin and Ma On Shan, whether consideration will be given to upgrading the sewage treatment level of the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to the tertiary level and exploring the feasibility of using reclaimed water to flush toilets?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The project concerning the relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works (STSTW) to caverns aims to release the existing STSTW site mainly for development of innovation and technology and improve the existing site and its surrounding environment.

1. The entire project concerning the relocation of STSTW to caverns is mega in scale and complex, covering various professional disciplines and works categories. A large number of works items are interrelated and are currently being implemented in 4 stages in a proper and timely manner. Stage 1 works (including site formation, construction of access tunnels and retaining structures as well as associated roadworks), the approved project estimate for which is \$2.0775 billion in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices, commenced in 2019 and were completed in 2022. Stage 2 works (including excavation of the main cavern complex and construction of upstream sewerage works), the approved project estimate for which is \$14.0765 billion in MOD prices, have commenced in July 2021. Stage 3 works (including provision of buildings to the sewage treatment works and installation of a cavern ventilation system), the approved

project estimate for which is \$3.1238 billion in MOD prices, commenced in August 2023. Regarding the remaining works (including the construction and installation of sewage treatment facilities; construction of maintenance workshop buildings; and decommissioning and demolition of the existing STSTW), we plan to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee for commencement of works in 2024. We will continue to press ahead with the works in each stage, with a view to completing the entire relocation project in 2031.

2. To ensure the project can be completed on schedule, the Drainage Services Department (DSD), together with its resident site staff, will closely monitor works progress through various means such as regular meetings, site inspections and innovative technologies. With the introduction of an early warning mechanism in the New Engineering Contract (NEC) adopted in the project, both the client's representative and the contractor are encouraged to identify and raise potential risks that may affect the project as early as possible, and when construction difficulties and problems are encountered, to negotiate and formulate the optimal solution for the smooth implementation of the project according to the prescribed procedure framework and timeframes in the contract, so as to reduce the risk of project delay. At present, all stages of works are being implemented on schedule, with the entire project scheduled for completion in 2031.
3. The estimated expenditure on the management, maintenance and repair of the existing STSTW in 2024-25 is about \$160 million (excluding the salary for DSD staff members). The DSD will continue to optimise the operation of STSTW so as to keep the costs under control.
4. Currently, the STSTW is a secondary sewage treatment works. As the plan for relocation of STSTW to caverns will not involve any change in the flow, quality and discharge point of the effluent to be discharged, maintaining the secondary treatment level of STSTW is the most cost-effective way for relocation without affecting the quality of the receiving water bodies.

Besides, the Government has been implementing the Total Water Management Strategy, under which expanding the use of lower grade water (including seawater and reclaimed water) for non-potable purposes is one of the key initiatives to contain fresh water demand growth. Since seawater is currently being used for flushing toilets in Sha Tin and Ma On Shan, switching from seawater to reclaimed water would require the Government not only to bear an additional treatment cost for raising the sewage purification level to the reclaimed water quality standards, but also to carry out various roadworks in many parts of the district for provision and connection of a new network of water mains. Overall, it is more cost-effective to continue using seawater for flushing toilets in Sha Tin and Ma On Shan.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0014)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned by the Government, the study for Strategic Planning Study on Flood Management Against Sea Level Rise and Extreme Rainfall will be completed in 2024. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the progress of the study and the expenditure involved in the current year;
2. of the estimated expenditure and establishment involved in drainage improvement works for 2024-25;
3. whether there are any plans to introduce new technologies or innovative methods that can enhance drainage efficiency in order to reduce and manage stormwater runoff; if so, of the details;
4. regarding long-term town planning, of how the impact of extreme weather is taken into account and the sustainability of drainage infrastructures is ensured;
5. whether comprehensive risk assessments have been made to identify the districts most vulnerable to the impact of extreme weather, and of the way to establish an effective monitoring system;
6. whether consideration will be given to the establishment of a Steering Committee on the Safety of the City to optimise the strategy aimed at enhancing the overall capability for tackling extreme weather; and
7. whether there will be any exchanges of experience with other cities so as to learn from those who have successfully tackled extreme weather and strengthened drainage infrastructure?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

As climate change is an important issue across the globe, Hong Kong must come up with a forward-looking strategy to tackle such a challenge in a proactive manner. In order to further cope with the more frequent extreme weather events in recent years, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) proactively commenced the Strategic Planning Study on Flood Management Against Sea Level Rise and Extreme Rainfall (Strategic Study) in 2022.

1&3 to 5. Having taken account of the topographical features of Hong Kong, the DSD has been adopting multi-pronged approaches including stormwater interception, flood

storage and drainage improvement to upgrade the flood protection capability over the territory. To continuously strengthen Hong Kong's overall capability of coping with extreme weather conditions, the Government has incorporated the concept of "Blue-Green Infrastructure" into town planning.

"Blue-Green Infrastructure" is not only an urban drainage system that interweaves the natural environment with community characteristics and modern functions, but it is also a modernised stormwater management concept. "Blue-Green Infrastructure" aims to simulate the water cycle in nature in accordance with the principle of "infiltration, storage, purification, reuse and discharge" so that rainwater can be collected and used before being discharged. It is instrumental in reducing the burden of drainage facilities. The design elements concerned include flood storage ponds, flood lakes, floodable areas, revitalised channels and other sustainable drainage systems.

Moreover, having regard to the latest Sixth Assessment Report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the United Nations, along with the studies conducted by the relevant departments on the latest changes in climate, the DSD updated in August 2022 the design parameters set out in the Stormwater Drainage Manual for rainfall increase and sea level rise associated with climate change, with a view to further enhancing the resilience of the drainage systems against climate change. In response to the extreme rainstorm in September 2023, the DSD has conducted a review of the design parameters set out in the Stormwater Drainage Manual. The relevant updating work was completed in the first quarter of the current year.

In order to further cope with the more frequent extreme weather events in recent years, the DSD commenced in 2022 the Strategic Study to assess the impact of climate change on Hong Kong's stormwater drainage systems till the end of the century and formulate new and comprehensive territory-wide flood management strategies. The Strategic Study has been progressing well, and is expected to be completed in 2024. The expenditure on the Strategic Study in 2023-24 is approximately \$5 million.

To enhance Hong Kong's overall flood prevention capabilities, the DSD is actively adopting new technologies. In order to monitor and analyse the risk of flooding associated with water level rise at major rivers/drainage channels for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of necessary contingency measures in a timely manner, the DSD has developed a hydrometric information system whereby hydrometric data (including the water level of these rivers/drainage channels, rainfall and the tide level) can be collected and analysed in real time via remote devices installed throughout the territory. Furthermore, the DSD has introduced a river desilting robot and a pipeline inspection robot to assist with maintenance work so as to enhance the efficiency in and safety of maintenance of the drainage system.

2. The DSD is currently carrying out 11 drainage improvement projects. The estimated expenditure on drainage improvement works is approximately \$1.87 billion (in money-of-the-day prices) in 2024-25. On staffing provision, the

DSD will arrange for its existing internal professional and technical staff to carry out the relevant improvement works.

6. The Government attaches great importance to the impact of climate change and extreme weather. In this connection, the Government has set up the inter-departmental Steering Committee on Climate Change and Carbon Neutrality to oversee the efforts of various bureaux and departments (including the DSD) to optimise the strategies on coping with extreme weather, thereby strengthening the overall capability for coping with climate change and extreme weather.
7. Over the years, the DSD has not only been sharing its experience with other cities such as Guangzhou (the Mainland), Copenhagen (Denmark), London (UK) and Hull (UK), but also drawing on their experience in implementing measures and strategies to cope with extreme weather.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2900)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the infrastructure projects in support of rural development, please provide this Committee with a breakdown, by district, of the number of the projects carried out in rural areas for the past 5 years, including the information on the project types and project expenditures.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

Apart from formulating drainage master plans for rural areas and implementing long-term improvement measures, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has also been conducting, in phases, reviews of the drainage master plans for the New Territories and implementing the necessary drainage improvement works to further reduce the flood risk of the areas concerned. Details of the drainage improvement projects carried out by the DSD in support of rural development for the past 5 years are as follows:

District	No. of Public Works Projects	Project Type	Approved Project Estimate (\$)
North	2	Drainage Improvement Works (including flood storage tank)	1.0155 billion
Yuen Long	2	Drainage Improvement Works	785.3 million
Islands	1	Drainage Improvement Works	216 million

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2905)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Would the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the work progress of the Strategic Planning Study on Flood Management Against Sea Level Rise and Extreme Rainfall;
2. of the specific timetable of drainage improvement works for such districts as Wong Tai Sin and Eastern District where more serious flooding occurred, and whether there are any measures taken to speed up the relevant work; and
3. of the innovative technologies used to enhance the quality and efficiency of drainage works?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

As climate change is an important issue across the globe, Hong Kong must come up with a proactive strategy to tackle such a challenge. In order to further cope with the more frequent extreme weather events in recent years, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has proactively commenced the Strategic Planning Study on Flood Management Against Sea Level Rise and Extreme Rainfall (Strategic Study) aimed at assessing the impact of climate change on Hong Kong's stormwater drainage systems till the end of the century and formulating new and comprehensive territory-wide flood management strategies.

1. The Strategic Study commenced in 2022. Since then, the Strategic Study has been progressing well, and is expected to be completed in 2024.
2. The DSD plans to seek funding approval this year from the Legislative Council for 7 projects including drainage improvement works in Wong Tai Sin and Eastern District while at the same time inviting tenders so as to shorten the length of time required for project contract procurement, with a view to implementing the works as soon as possible to reduce the flood risk in the districts concerned.

Apart from planning to implement the above-mentioned drainage improvement works, the DSD and other relevant departments are also carrying out a raft of short term improvement works including repair of damaged catchpits, improvements to water

intakes and provision of roadside gullies. It is expected that the works will be completed in phases by the end of March 2024.

3. On maintenance and desilting, the DSD has in recent years actively made use of technologies to increase work efficiency, for example introducing river desilting robots and pipeline inspection robots to assist with maintenance work so as to enhance the efficiency of the drainage system and occupational safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0438)

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

Controlling Officer: Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (POON Kwok-ying)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, the Government states that it will provide support to the Urban Renewal Authority for implementation of the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme. The provision for 2024-25 under this Programme is \$1,031.6 million, which is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2023-24 by 12.1%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the increase is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for the non-recurrent item for the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the manpower and resources allocated for 2024-25 to the implementation of the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

Since 2019, the Government has implemented the \$4.51 billion Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS) to provide subsidies to eligible building owners, so as to encourage them to carry out lift modernisation works to enhance the safety of aged lifts. The Government has commissioned the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to administer the LIMSS.

The LIMSS has received a total of about 1 900 eligible applications involving around 7 900 lifts. We have adopted a risk-based approach to assign priorities for receiving subsidies by the applicants. As at March 2024, URA has approved about 1 600 applications involving around 5 100 lifts. Given the higher-than-expected number of cases applying for full replacement of lifts and elderly owner-occupier applicants, which will incur higher subsidy for each case, we anticipate that the allocated funding of \$4.51 billion will only be able to subsidise not more than 5 200 aged lifts with higher priority for modernisation. Considering the current fiscal situation of the Government and the proper allocation of public resources, we will make the best use of the remaining funding to subsidise the modernisation of as many lifts out of the eligible applications received as possible.

Based on the implementation progress of the LIMSS, the 12.1% increase in expenditure from \$920.1 million for 2023-24 to \$1 031.6 million for 2024-25 under Programme (2) is mainly

driven by the increase in expenditure under the LIMSS as more approved applications are progressing from the pre-construction stage to the construction stage.

While the administration work of the LIMSS is handled by URA, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department has deployed one Senior Engineer and three Engineers to support the implementation of the LIMSS and oversee the work of URA, with an estimated expenditure of about \$6.4 million in 2024-25.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)065

(Question Serial No. 3002)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in Programme (1) that there will be a net decrease of 31 posts in 2024-25. Would the Government explain the reasons for the substantial decrease in the number of posts, as well as the posts to be deleted and the savings achieved in the total expenditure?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

In Programme (1), the posts are mainly deleted by the Department to enhance effectiveness and efficiency through re-prioritisation, internal redeployment and streamlining of work processes under the Government's policy to strictly control the civil service establishment. In addition, some posts to be deleted are time-limited posts which will be deleted upon expiry of the duration for which the posts are created or upon completion of the jobs concerned. Posts which no longer have operational needs will be deleted by the Department after review of the establishment. The total expenditure on the posts to be deleted is \$4,324,680.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2485)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution, (2) Water Quality Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding water consumption in the past 3 years in Hong Kong, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- the water consumption per year in Hong Kong, the source of drinking water supply and the proportion of drinking water purchased from the Mainland;
- the number and results of tests on drinking water of residential units each year;
- the ratio of using fresh water for flushing; whether it will be lowered in the coming 10 years; if yes, of the details;
- the estimated number of households living in village houses in rural areas that will convert to salt water for flushing in the coming year (broken down by District Council district);
- with the increasing popularity of smart water closet, the number of illegal installation cases identified by the Department in which no backflow prevention device was installed as required in the past 3 years;
- the respective number of reports of fresh water main bursts and salt water main bursts in each district each year;
- the total quantity of drinking water wasted each year; and
- the progress of the Replacement and Rehabilitation Programme for water mains?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

At present, the major sources of fresh water supply in Hong Kong include rainwater collected from local catchments of impounding reservoirs, Dongjiang (DJ) water imported from Guangdong Province and fresh water produced by the first stage of Tseung Kwan O Desalination Plant commissioned at the end of 2023.

1. The fresh water consumptions (including consumption of fresh water for flushing), the supply quantity and proportion of DJ water in Hong Kong in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Fresh water consumption (million cubic metres)	DJ water	
		Supply quantity (million cubic metres)	Percentage in fresh water consumption
2021	1 055	811	77%
2022	1 066	810	76%
2023	1 068	820	77%

2. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) implemented the Enhanced Water Quality Monitoring Programme (Enhanced Programme) in December 2017 to monitor the drinking water at consumers' taps in randomly selected premises. The parameters being monitored include 6 metals (viz. antimony, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead and nickel), residual chlorine and Escherichia coli. The numbers of tests on drinking water samples under the Enhanced Programme in the past 3 years are as follows:

	2021	2022 ^(Note)	2023
Number of randomly selected premises (Number of samples)	675 (1 525)	460 (1 385)	661 (1 987)

Note: In view of the COVID-19 epidemic situation at the time, the WSD suspended collection of drinking water samples under the Enhanced Programme from 13 January to 19 May 2022.

According to the test results of the sampling protocol under the Enhanced Programme in the past 3 years, with the exception of the cases of lead exceedance found in the drinking water in 2 non-domestic premises in 2021 and 2022 due to the cleansing and maintenance problem of the inside services, the drinking water of all premises randomly selected for monitoring complied with the Hong Kong Drinking Water Standards. Follow-up works on the 2 exceedance cases were completed in the respective year.

- 3.&4. Seawater for flushing is largely adopted in Hong Kong. The consumption of temporary fresh water for flushing currently accounts for about 15% of the total flushing water consumption. The WSD is proactively expanding the use of lower grade water (including seawater and recycled water) for flushing to save fresh water resources. The consumption of fresh water for flushing in the future will gradually decrease to an amount accounting for about 12% of the total flushing water consumption by 2030.

Regarding the major plan for expanding the use of lower grade water, the WSD is constructing a district-based grey water recycling system at the Anderson Road Quarry Development in order to treat grey water collected at the development area (i.e. collected from baths, wash basins, kitchen sinks, etc. and can be treated for non-potable uses) and supply the treated grey water for flushing and other non-potable purposes within the area. The system is anticipated for commissioning in phases starting from the end of this year.

Besides, as Tung Chung New Town is still being supplied with fresh water for flushing, the WSD is constructing a salt water supply system in the area to replace fresh water for flushing. The system is expected to be completed in the middle of this year and commence operation in phases.

In addition, the WSD will supply reclaimed water to Sheung Shui and Fanling in phases from this year to replace the current temporary mains fresh water for flushing. We will also extend the supply of reclaimed water to Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Areas in accordance with their development programmes.

Currently, villages in the New Territories using fresh water for flushing are mainly located in the Yuen Long, North, Tai Po, Islands, Sai Kung and Tuen Mun District Council districts. Only a few villages in these districts are located within the salt water supply network. We will construct water mains and carry out conversion works to supply salt water to the villagers concerned whenever technically feasible and cost-effective. For the other villages which are mostly situated in remote locations, conversion to salt water for flushing will not be cost-effective.

The Government will continue to review the situation and expand the use of seawater and recycled water to other new development areas and those areas still using fresh water for flushing whenever technically feasible and cost-effective to further save fresh water resources.

5. In the past 3 years, the WSD did not institute prosecution against the cases of smart water closets without a backflow prevention device installed as required which contravene the Waterworks Regulations.
6. The numbers of fresh water and salt water main burst cases in the past 3 years by District Council district are tabulated below:

District	Burst cases					
	Fresh water main			Salt water main		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Central & Western	2	2	2	2	2	1
Eastern	1	1	1	2	0	1
Islands	0	2	4	0	0	0
Southern	0	1	1	1	2	0
Wan Chai	2	1	0	2	1	0
Kowloon City	1	0	1	1	2	0
Kwun Tong	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sham Shui Po	0	0	1	1	1	1
Wong Tai Sin	0	0	0	0	1	4
Yau Tsim Mong	0	2	1	0	0	0
North	0	0	2	0	0	0

District	Burst cases					
	Fresh water main			Salt water main		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Sai Kung	1	0	3	0	0	0
Sha Tin	1	3	0	2	2	1
Tai Po	0	2	1	2	1	1
Kwai Tsing	1	1	0	1	1	1
Tuen Mun	3	1	1	0	3	3
Tsuen Wan	2	2	2	0	2	0
Yuen Long	0	0	1	0	0	0
Total	15	18	21	14	18	13

7. In the past 3 years (i.e. 2021, 2022 and 2023), the leakage rates of government fresh water mains were 14.6%, 14.4% and 14% respectively.
8. Since 2015, the WSD has implemented the “risk-based asset management programme for water mains” by introducing factors such as age of use, materials, past records of bursts or leaks, surrounding environment, etc. for assessing the risk of water main bursts or leaks so as to replace or rehabilitate specific sections of water mains with higher risk progressively with a view to maintaining the healthiness of the water supply network and reducing the risk of water main bursts or leaks. As of 2023, a total of approximately 490 km long water mains has been included in the “risk-based asset management programme for water mains”. Amongst them, approximately 185 km long water mains have been replaced or rehabilitated while the improvement works for the rest are underway or will be progressively carried out.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0991)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the work to establish the Water Intelligent Network (WIN):

1. Please provide the number of districts among the 18 districts in Hong Kong where the WIN have been established. Has the situation of water main bursts improved after the establishment of the WIN? What are the functions of the WIN in respect of the monitoring and repair works of water mains?
2. Regarding the problem of frequent occurrences of water main bursts at the area of Shek Yam Road and Wo Yi Hop Road in Kwai Chung, has the WIN been established in the area? Could the Government give an account of the coverage of the WIN and its effectiveness on improving or monitoring water main bursts?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) is establishing the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) in the fresh water distribution network over the territory, with a target of about 2 400 District Metering Areas (DMAs). It helps to strengthen management of leakage in water supply network with the strategy of “divide and conquer” and continuous monitoring, and to implement appropriate measures including active leakage detection, pressure management, speedy repair of water main leaks as well as replacement or rehabilitation of water mains etc. with a view to maintaining the healthiness of the network. As at the end of February 2024, about 2 020 DMAs have been established covering all districts across Hong Kong. The remaining DMAs are expected for completion in 2025. Shek Yam Road and Wo Yi Hop Road in Kwai Chung are located in Kwai Tsing District where about 125 DMAs have been established as at the end of February 2024.

Besides, the WSD will assess the risk of water mains taking into account various factors such as age of use, materials, records of bursts or leaks, surrounding environment and consequence resulting from bursts or leaks, so as to replace or rehabilitate specific sections of water mains with higher risk progressively with a view to continuously maintaining the healthiness of the water supply network and reducing the risk of water main bursts or leaks. As at the end of

2023, a total of approximately 16 km long water mains in Kwai Tsing District has been included in the “risk-based asset management programme for water mains”. Amongst them, approximately 7 km long water mains have been replaced or rehabilitated while the improvement works for the rest are underway or will be progressively carried out.

Through the establishment of the WIN and the implementation of the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains, the WSD effectively maintained the healthiness of the water supply network and reduced the risk of water main bursts or leaks. The measures are gradually taking effect. As regards Kwai Tsing District including the area of Shek Yam Road and Wo Yi Hop Road in Kwai Chung, in the past 10 years, the number of burst cases of fresh water mains dropped from around 30 each year to 0 in 2023, while the number of leakage cases decreased from about 230 each year to about 110 in 2023.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1581)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Dongjiang (DJ) water mains transfer DJ water to the reservoirs in Hong Kong. At present, the water mains are normally laid above ground. With the development of the Northern Metropolis, would the Government inform this Committee whether it will consider laying the water mains underground when carrying out maintenance or another replacement works in the future?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The Government currently has no plan to replace Dongjiang water mains. When necessary, the Government will carry out the design work in accordance with the established principles, including considering the feasibility and costs of different technical proposals, the requirements for future management and maintenance, as well as the impacts of the proposals on the area, such as environmental and traffic impacts, and consulting relevant stakeholders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3059)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Fresh water is a precious resource and the purchase of Dongjiang (DJ) water is the main source of fresh water in Hong Kong. DJ water mainly comes from natural rainfall. However, climate is ever-changing and although Hong Kong has signed a water supply agreement with Guangdong Province to secure a stable water supply, we still cannot prevent the problem of inadequate yield caused by climate change or other factors, not to mention the increasing population in Greater Bay Area, as well as the growing demand for fresh water. In view of this, would the Government inform this Committee of the measures to promote water conservation and save water while ensuring a reliable water supply? Are there measures to cope with the possible insufficient water supply under extreme climate?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has been proactively implementing the Total Water Management Strategy (Strategy) since 2008 with emphasis on containing fresh water demand growth by promoting water conservation through public education, and exploiting diversified water resources for building resilience of water supply to cater for effects of climate change. WSD is conducting a mid-term review of the Strategy to adjust the strength and pace of various options of measures in the Strategy in accordance with the latest water demand forecast. WSD expects the review to be completed at the end of this year.

On water conservation, we consider it necessary to educate the public at young age. Thus, WSD has launched the "Cherish Water Campus" Integrated Education Programme in kindergartens and primary schools. Over 450 kindergartens and 400 primary schools have joined the programme so far. WSD has also launched the Cherish Water Ambassador Scheme for secondary students to deepen their understanding on the importance of cherishing water resources, fulfil and publicise the habits of cherishing water and promote water conservation culture to the public through an array of events. A Water Resources Education Centre named "H2OPE Centre" was set up in Tin Shui Wai to provide more information on

water resources and water conservation to the general public so as to foster a culture of cherishing water in society.

To encourage the use of water-saving devices, WSD launched the voluntary Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme in 2009 covering showers for bathing, water taps, washing machines, urinal equipment, flow controllers and water closets to inform customers of the water efficiency performance of different products for selecting water-saving devices of high efficiency. Since 2014, we have progressively installed flow controllers for domestic consumers and schools. We have also distributed flow controllers for free to those consumers who have signed a commitment certificate about water conservation on WSD's website or who have successfully applied for e-Bill service.

To promote water cherishing culture to commercial and industrial sectors, WSD organised the Enterprises Cherish Water Campaign (ECH2O) with the Green Council in 2022-23 to publicise water conservation through initiatives including signing of charter, appointment of cherish water manager, recognition programme, etc. Over 600 premises have joined the campaign. Due to the active participation and positive response, we are organising the ECH2O in 2024-25. We have also issued "Best Practice Guidelines for Water Usage" for catering and hotel sectors and promote water conservation to the sectors through relevant associations.

WSD launched a new water conservation campaign "Save Water Today for a Sustainable Future" in February this year to step up publicity. Through introducing the theme song, organising water conservation carnival, and the wide use of social media and online campaigns, it is aimed to convey the message of water conservation and encourage active public participation in a more effective way.

In coping with the impacts of climate change, the Government is actively exploiting seawater desalination and recycled water to build resilience in water supply. The first stage of Tseung Kwan O (TKO) Desalination Plant was commissioned in December 2023. With a water production capacity of up to 50 million cubic metres (mcm) per annum, it can meet about 5% of the total fresh water consumption in Hong Kong. Besides, WSD is reviewing the programme and conducting investigation study for the implementation of the second stage of TKO Desalination Plant, which is expected to provide an extra fresh water supply of about 50 mcm per annum.

Regarding the plan to promote the use of recycled water, WSD will supply reclaimed water to Sheung Shui and Fanling in phases starting from March this year to replace the current temporary mains fresh water for flushing and also extend the supply of reclaimed water to Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Areas in accordance with their development programmes. In addition, WSD is constructing a district-based grey water recycling system at the Anderson Road Quarry Development in order to treat grey water (i.e. collected from baths, wash basins, kitchen sinks, etc. and can be treated for non-potable uses) collected at the development area and supply the treated grey water for flushing and other non-potable purposes within the area. The system is anticipated for commissioning in phases starting from the end of 2024.

We will continue to review the actual situation and expand the use of recycled water to other new development areas and those areas still using fresh water for flushing whenever technically feasible and cost-effective to further save fresh water resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1318)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) Water Quality Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Government will oversee the implementation of initiatives under the Action Plan for Enhancing Drinking Water Safety in Hong Kong (Action Plan) and Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme (WSPSS). In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) The Action Plan collects drinking water samples from water taps of randomly selected consumers of the territory for testing. What were the number of samples collected, and the expenditure and staffing involved in each of the past 3 years?
- (b) Since the implementation of WSPSS in 2020, what were the number of applications, and the expenditure and staffing involved in each of the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

- (a) Under the Action Plan for Enhancing Drinking Water Safety in Hong Kong, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) launched the Enhanced Water Quality Monitoring Programme (Enhanced Programme) in December 2017 to monitor the drinking water at consumers' taps in randomly selected premises. The parameters being monitored include 6 metals (viz. antimony, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead and nickel), residual chlorine and *Escherichia coli*. The numbers of tests on drinking water samples under the Enhanced Programme in the past 3 years are as follows:

	2021	2022 ^(Note)	2023
Number of randomly selected premises (Number of samples)	675 (1 525)	460 (1 385)	661 (1 987)

Note: In view of the COVID-19 epidemic situation at the time, the WSD suspended collection of drinking water samples under the Enhanced Programme from 13 January to 19 May 2022.

The Water Safety Unit of the Water Science Division in the WSD is responsible for the implementation of the Enhanced Programme and there are 18 staff posts in the Unit. Apart from the Enhanced Programme, the Unit is responsible for other water quality monitoring programme, such as the testing on the concentration of disinfection by-products and volatile organic compounds in drinking water. Therefore, a separate breakdown of the expenditure under the Enhanced Programme is not available.

- (b) The numbers of applications for the Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme (WSPSS) received by the WSD in the past 3 years are as follows:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of applications	47	65	334
(Number of eligible buildings)	(160)	(151)	(594)

The total expenditure on the WSPSS in the past 3 years (i.e. 2021-22 to 2023-24 (as at the end of February)) was around \$12.5 million. About 10 staff comprising engineers, administration managers and waterworks inspectors are deployed by the WSD to promote the WSPSS, provide assistance and process applications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1822)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the combat against overcharging for water, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the number of reports on suspected overcharging for water received by the Water Supplies Department (WSD) since the amendment of the Waterworks Regulations in 2021; of these, the number of cases which (i) are still under investigation, (ii) were not pursuable due to insufficient evidence, and (iii) have been successfully prosecuted and convicted; and
- (2) the number of joint inspections conducted by the WSD and other departments and the number of cases of irregularities identified last year and this year to date?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The Government is committed to combating the unscrupulous landlords for overcharging their tenants for water through an inter-departmental and multi-pronged approach, including enacting relevant legislative amendments, stepping up inspections and streamlining the application procedures for the installation of separate water meters, and strengthening publicity and education efforts, with a view to enhancing the deterrent effect against overcharging subdivided unit (SDU) tenants for water.

- (1) Since the amendment of the Waterworks Regulations in 2021 up to the end of February this year, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has received a total of 126 reports on suspected overcharging for water. Amongst them, 11 cases are still under investigation, 99 cases were not pursuable due to insufficient evidence, and 16 cases have been successfully prosecuted and convicted.
- (2) In last year and this year up to the end of February, the WSD and the Rating and Valuation Department have jointly visited around 3 700 SDUs, among which about 40

suspected water overcharging cases were identified. The WSD is following up on the relevant cases.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2450)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the various situations contributing to water seepage in buildings, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) may carry out inspections and enforcement actions in accordance with the Waterworks Ordinance. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. How many cases were received in respect of suspected leakage of water supply pipes in each of the past 3 years? Among such cases, how many of them were referred by the Joint Office each year?
2. How many site inspections and "flow-checks" were carried out regarding the suspected leakage of water supply pipes in each of the past 3 years? Among such cases, how many of them were confirmed with leakage of water supply pipes?
3. How many repair notices were issued in each of the past 3 years?
4. How many disconnections of water supply were arranged for consumers who failed to carry out the repair works as required by the notices in each of the past 3 years?
5. As revealed by the Audit Commission in the past, the WSD did not arrange disconnection of water supply even when consumers failed to complete the repair works on time after the issuance of repair notices, letting the leakage continued and causing water wastage. At present, does the WSD have a performance pledge on the number of days required to arrange disconnection of water supply when consumers fail to comply with the notices?
6. In cases where WSD staff suspect that there is leakage of water supply pipes in the premises but the owner denies their entry to the premises for inspection, does the WSD have any mechanism in place to arrange disconnection of water supply so as to avoid water wastage or further leakage which may affect other consumers? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 129)

Reply:

1&2. The cases received by the Water Supplies Department (WSD) in respect of water seepage in buildings due to suspected leakage of water pipes in the insides services include those referred by the Joint Office (JO) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Buildings Department after investigations and follow up, and those with site inspections and checks directly conducted by the WSD. The numbers of cases handled by the WSD in the past 3 years are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

	Cases received in respect of water seepage in buildings due to suspected leakage of water supply pipes		
	2021	2022	2023
Cases referred by the JO after investigations and follow up (Cases confirmed with leakage in water supply pipes)	438 (119)	426 (93)	391 (92)
Other cases with site inspections and checks directly conducted by the WSD (Cases confirmed with leakage in water supply pipes)	1 339 (147)	1 454 (116)	1 806 (144)
Total	1 777	1 880	2 197

3. The WSD will study whether the cases involve water wastage in accordance with the Waterworks Ordinance (Cap. 102). After investigations, if the WSD obtains concrete evidence to prove that the leakage of water supply pipes has caused water wastage, the WSD will issue repair notices to the registered consumers concerned and require them to repair the defective pipes within a specified time limit. In 2021, 2022 and 2023, the numbers of cases with repair notices issued by the WSD were 266, 209 and 236 respectively.

4. If consumers fail to complete the repair works as required by the repair notices, the WSD will seriously consider arranging disconnection of their water supply. According to record, in 2021, 2022 and 2023, the numbers of cases where consumers failed to complete the repair works as required by the repair notices which eventually led to the disconnection of water supply were 8, 4 and 10 respectively.

5. WSD staff will visit the premises for follow up inspection after the time limit specified in the repair notice to ascertain the repair works are completed as required by the repair notice. Registered consumers who are unable to complete the repair works within the time limit may apply to the WSD in writing for extension of time and provide supporting documents. The WSD will assess the justifications of the applications and determine whether to accept the applications. If the consumers fail to complete the repair works within the time limit of the repair notice or the extended period granted, the WSD will issue disconnection notices and disconnect the water supply of the premises concerned after the specified due date. Since every case is unique (e.g. longer time may be required to complete the repair works due to its

complexity), the WSD does not set a standard time limit for arranging disconnection of water supply.

6. If there is prima facie evidence showing the leakage of water supply pipes in the premises, and the owner denies the entry of WSD staff to the premises for inspection, the WSD will apply to the Court for a warrant to enter the premises for inspection in accordance with the Waterworks Ordinance. Enforcement actions will also be taken according to the above mechanism to avoid water wastage.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0423)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-2025, the Government states that it will oversee the stepping up of prosecution and inspections against overcharging for water at sub-divided units. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the manpower and resources allocated for 2024-25 to execute this task; and
- (b) the key performance indicators in respect of inspections against overcharging for water at sub-divided units?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The Government is committed to combating illegal acts concerning overcharging of water in subdivided units (SDU) through an inter-departmental and multi-pronged approach, including enacting relevant legislative amendments, stepping up inspections and streamlining the application procedures for the installation of separate water meters, and strengthening of publicity and education efforts, with a view to enhancing the deterrent effect in preventing SDU tenants from being overcharged for water by the landlord.

- (a) The Water Supplies Department (WSD) will step up inspections, investigations and prosecution against overcharging for water at SDU. In 2024-25, a team of 35 staff members deployed from the WSD's existing internal resources will carry out these tasks.
- (b) Upon passing the Waterworks (Amendment) Bill 2023, the WSD's power in evidence collection and information disclosure will be enhanced. This will help the WSD identify contravention cases and conduct investigations, which may lead to an expected increase in number of cases to handle. The WSD will monitor the number of cases to assess the situation and the way forward for establishing key performance indicator.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2674)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1) that the Department will continue with the construction of infrastructure in stages for supplying reclaimed water for non-potable uses in the north-eastern part of the New Territories including Sheung Shui and Fanling, and the construction of grey water treatment plant for supplying treated grey water for non-potable uses in the Anderson Road Quarry Development. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the differences between “reclaimed water” and “treated grey water”;
2. the respective costs per cubic metre of “reclaimed water” and “treated grey water” supplied;
3. the (i) manpower, (ii) salary expenses and (iii) project expenditures for supplying reclaimed water in the north-eastern part of the New Territories (a) in 2023-24 and (b) in 2024-25 as anticipated;
4. the (i) manpower, (ii) salary expenses and (iii) project expenditures for supplying treated grey water in the Anderson Road Quarry Development (a) in 2023-24 and (b) in 2024-25 as anticipated?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) adopts a two-pronged approach with emphasis on containing fresh water demand growth and building resilience in fresh water supply to cater for extreme effects of climate change with diversified water resources. One of the key initiatives of containing water demand is the expansion of use of recycled water (including reclaimed water and treated grey water) for non-potable purposes.

1. Reclaimed water is the water converted from treated sewage effluent collected from sewage treatment plant with further treatment for reuse, while treated grey water is the used water collected from baths, lavatory basins, kitchen sinks or similar fitments in premises with further treatment for reuse.

2. Currently, the estimated unit cost per cubic metre of reclaimed water supplied from Shek Wu Hui water reclamation plant of the WSD in Sheung Shui is around \$7.8, which includes

the costs for the collection and further treatment of treated sewage effluent, distribution of reclaimed water and customer services, etc. The estimated unit cost per cubic metre of treated grey water supplied from the grey water treatment plant at Anderson Road Quarry site is around \$12.2, which includes the costs for the collection and treatment of grey water, distribution of treated grey water and customer services, etc.

3. Regarding the works for supplying reclaimed water to the north-eastern part of the New Territories, there are 6 staff posts of the WSD involved in overseeing the consultants and contractors in carrying out the infrastructure works. Since the staff concerned have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available. In 2023-24, the expenditure of the WSD on the project was about \$351 million. The estimated expenditure in 2024-25 is around \$143 million.

4. As regards the construction of grey water treatment plant in the Anderson Road Quarry Development, there are 4 staff posts of the WSD involved in overseeing the consultants and contractors in carrying out the construction of grey water treatment plant. Since the staff have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available. In 2023-24, the expenditure of the WSD on the project was about \$136 million. The estimated expenditure in 2024-25 is around \$54 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2055)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the service of Non-routine Bill for Sub-divided Units (SDUs) of the Water Supplies Department, would the Government inform this Committee:

What was the number of non-routine water bill applications in each month of 2023?

1. What are (a) the expenditure on research and development, (b) the operational expenses in 2023, (c) the estimated operational expenses in 2024 and (d) the manpower involved for the computer system?

2. What measures did the Department take to ensure the non-routine water bills are applied and downloaded by SDU tenants in order to prevent landlords from concealing the actual water charges and continuing with the overcharging for water?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The Waterworks (Amendment) Bill 2023 is going through the legislative process in the Legislative Council. The amendment clearly specifies that landlords can only receive reimbursement of water charges from their tenants after a water bill is issued by the Water Authority. Such requirement can further reduce the chance of overcharging for water by landlords. If a tenant terminates the tenancy before the issue of a routine water bill, the landlord of the sub-divided unit (SDU) may pay the water bill issued through the service of Non-routine Bill for SDUs of the Water Supplies Department (WSD), and receive reimbursement of water charges from the tenant afterwards. Notwithstanding this, given that an accurate apportionment of water charges among SDU tenants may involve complicated calculations, SDU landlords may consider joining WSD's Scheme for Installation of Separate Water Meters for SDUs to install separate water meters for their SDUs and save the efforts at such apportionment.

1. The service of Non-routine Bill for SDUs was launched on 5 October 2023. No non-routine water bill application was recorded in 2023.

The expenditure on development of the computer system for the service of Non-routine Bill for SDUs was about \$460,000. As the operational expenses are borne by the

existing service contract, there is no extra operational expense incurred. The relevant administrative work is absorbed by the existing staff establishment of the WSD.

2. The WSD launched the service of Non-routine Bill for SDUs to facilitate SDU tenants' settlement of water charges under special circumstances. In general, the WSD issues routine water bills to domestic consumers every 4 months. If an SDU tenant terminates the tenancy during the routine billing period of the WSD (i.e. within 4 months), the WSD registered consumer of the relevant SDU flat (usually the SDU landlord) may apply for and download the non-routine water bill through this service. Registered consumers may receive a proportionate portion of the water charges from their tenants after payment to the WSD. SDU tenants may request landlords who charge them for water to produce the water bills. If such request is denied or overcharging for water is suspected, they may report to the WSD for investigation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2057)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

On preventing subdivided unit (SDU) tenants from being overcharged for water, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of (i) inspections on SDUs conducted by the Water Supplies Department (WSD), and the numbers of those which were jointly operated with (ii) the Rating and Valuation Department or (iii) the Buildings Department (a) in 2023 and (b) in 2024 as anticipated;
2. the numbers of SDUs that have been/will be installed with separate water meters by the WSD (a) in 2023 and (b) in 2024 as anticipated;
3. the numbers of (a) complaints received, (b) prosecutions and (c) court convictions in respect of overcharging for water by SDU owners in 2023;
4. the (a) dedicated manpower, (b) salary expenses and (c) expenditures on equipment for the WSD to support SDU tenants (a) in 2023-24 and (b) in 2024-25 as anticipated?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

The Government is committed to combating the unscrupulous landlords for overcharging their tenants for water through an inter-departmental and multi-pronged approach, including enacting relevant legislative amendments, stepping up inspections and streamlining the application procedures for the installation of separate water meters, and strengthening publicity and education efforts, with a view to enhancing the deterrent effect of overcharging subdivided unit (SDU) tenants for water.

- 1.&3. In 2023, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) inspected about 3 500 SDUs. All inspections were jointly conducted with the Rating and Valuation Department. Besides, the WSD received a total of 53 complaint cases of overcharging SDU tenants for water. For most cases, no follow-up investigation could be pursued by the WSD as the complainants were not willing to serve as witnesses or were unable to provide the relevant information. Therefore, only 10 cases of which could be prosecuted and they were all successfully convicted by courts.

The Waterworks (Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill) is going through the legislative process in the Legislative Council. If the Bill is passed, it will strengthen the power of the WSD in evidence collection for cases involving water overcharge, leading to an expected increase in number of complaints to follow up. We will closely monitor the change in the number of complaints and suitably deploy internal resources to conduct inspections on SDUs, as well as investigations and prosecutions on the complaints.

2. In 2023, the WSD has installed separate water meters for 342 SDUs. Subject to the passing of the Bill, the WSD will strengthen the relevant publicity and promotional activities, which are expected to encourage more SDU owners to install separate water meters in 2024.
4. In 2023-24, the WSD has deployed internal manpower and equipment to support SDU tenants, which includes conducting inspections on SDUs, following up on the investigations on overcharging for water in SDUs, and assisting in processing applications for the installation of separate water meters. Since the staff participating in the above work also handled other duties, we are unable to provide the expenditure on such work.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0498)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As fresh water is a precious resource, the Government will continue to expedite the conversion to seawater for flushing for more buildings. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. What were the manpower and expenditure involved in the operation and maintenance of the seawater flushing supply system in the past 3 years?
2. Is the extension of seawater supply network for flushing involved in the estimates for 2024-25? If yes, what are the areas involved and the estimated expenditure?
3. For areas where the extension of seawater supply network has been completed, what measures did the Government take to encourage the consumers to convert to seawater for flushing? Will the Government consider taking enforcement actions against consumers who have not converted to seawater for flushing for a long time and mandating the conversion?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

Seawater has been used for flushing in Hong Kong since the 1950s. Over the years, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has been progressively extending the seawater supply network for flushing to conserve precious fresh water, i.e., potable water resources. The WSD will, from time to time, review the technical feasibility of extensions of the seawater supply network for flushing and continue to enhance the network wherever it is cost-effective to do so.

1. According to our record, the number of WSD staff involved in the operation and maintenance of the seawater flushing supply system in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 were 799, 791 and 790 respectively. Since the staff participating in the above work have other duties to handle as well, we are unable to provide expenditure figures in respect of such work.
2. The WSD is implementing various works for the extension of seawater supply network across the territory, including the conversion from fresh water to salt water for flushing, the network improvement and equipment upgrading works to the seawater flushing supply system, etc. The relevant expenditure accounts for about \$300 million of the overall estimate for 2024-25.

3. To encourage consumers to convert to seawater for flushing, the WSD will continue to explain to them the benefits of using seawater for flushing, including (i) seawater flushing is free to use while temporary mains fresh water for flushing is chargeable based on consumption; (ii) seawater and fresh water systems operate independently and thus, for premises using seawater for flushing, the flushing water supply will not be affected even when the fresh water system is not working, or vice versa; (iii) converting to seawater for flushing saves precious fresh water resources; and (iv) the cost and energy consumption for supplying seawater are relatively low and the conversion to seawater for flushing helps to reduce carbon emission. Besides, connection between the inside services and the government seawater network may be required for conversion to seawater for flushing in some premises. The WSD will waive the connection fee in accordance with the established conditions. If the consumers encounter technical difficulties when altering the inside services for the conversion works, the WSD will provide technical advice to them when necessary.

When the seawater supply network is ready, the WSD will request consumers to replace fresh water with seawater for flushing. If consumers refuse to cooperate in conducting the conversion, the WSD will, having regard to individual circumstances, consider revoking the approval of the use of fresh water for flushing.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1405)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the progress of establishing the Water Intelligent Network (WIN), would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number and rank of staff responsible for the WIN, their ratio of permanent to supernumerary posts and the relevant expenditure;
2. the details of updating the WIN in the past 3 years, such as the frequency of system upgrade, the new monitoring areas and their locations, the lengths of new water mains and the relevant expenditure;
3. the number of water main leaks detected through the WIN, the number of leakage areas and the quantity of fresh water loss in the past 3 years;
4. the average and longest time taken to rehabilitate the water mains after detecting the leakage through the WIN in the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

Since 2015, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has implemented multi-pronged measures to maintain the healthiness of the water supply network and reduce the risk of water main bursts or leaks through the establishment of the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) and the implementation of the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains based on the "Risk-based Asset Management Programme for Water Mains". The WSD is establishing the WIN in the fresh water distribution network over the territory, with a target of about 2 400 District Metering Areas (DMAs). It helps to strengthen management of leakage in water supply network with the strategy of "divide and conquer" and continuous monitoring, and to implement appropriate measures including active leakage detection, pressure management, speedy repair of water main leaks and replacement or rehabilitation of water mains, etc.

1&2. As at the end of February 2024, the WSD has established around 2 020 DMAs covering all districts across Hong Kong. The remaining DMAs are expected for completion in 2025. The numbers of new established DMAs under the WIN across the territory in 2021, 2022 and 2023 by District Council district are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of new established DMAs in 2021	Number of new established DMAs in 2022	Number of new established DMAs in 2023
Central & Western	0	6	5
Eastern	8	10	6
Islands	13	13	10
Southern	6	10	6
Wan Chai	3	2	2
Kowloon City	2	2	1
Sham Shui Po	26	8	5
Wong Tai Sin	2	5	11
Kwun Tong	4	4	3
Yau Tsim Mong	0	0	2
North	1	17	30
Sai Kung	2	4	5
Sha Tin	28	33	9
Tai Po	0	31	3
Kwai Tsing	4	5	6
Tsuen Wan	5	5	19
Tuen Mun	2	16	6
Yuen Long	0	31	81
Total	106	202	210

In 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, the estimated expenditures on new established DMAs of the WIN were about \$120 million, \$180 million and \$190 million respectively.

In 2024-25, there are 6 permanent posts in the WSD involved in overseeing the consultants and contractors in establishing the WIN, including 1 assistant director, 1 chief engineer, 1 senior engineer and 3 engineers. Since the staff concerned have other duties to handle as well, the Government does not keep separate statistics on the salary expenses involved in the establishment of the WIN.

3&4. In 2021, 2022 and 2023, the numbers of leakage cases of government fresh water mains detected by the WSD through the WIN were 660, 880 and 1 037 respectively, while the respective quantities of fresh water loss reduced to about 30 million, 60 million and 75 million litres per day. The time taken from detecting water main leaks to repairing the water mains depends on various factors such as the implementation of temporary traffic arrangement, congested underground utilities or other obstructions in the leakage area and suspension of water supply, etc. In 2021, 2022 and 2023, the average time taken to repair the fresh water mains was about 5 hours. The longest time taken was about 12 days as the case required the handling of congested underground utilities and the arrangement of temporary water supply facilities during the repair of the concerned fresh water mains.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2901)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the infrastructure works to support rural development, please inform this Committee of the number, types and costs of works conducted in rural areas in the past 5 years, breakdown by district.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 47)

Reply:

The Government has always been committed to enhancing the infrastructure in rural areas and improving various public facilities on a need basis. In this regard, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has been reviewing the water consumption in rural areas, and will construct water supply systems for areas without treated water supply whenever technically feasible, cost-effective and the water demand is sufficient without causing potential water quality risk.

In the past 5 years, the WSD has provided treated water supply to the following villages:

District	Name of village	Type of works	Approved project estimate (\$ million)
Sha Tin	Mui Tsz Lam, Sha Tin	Water supply facilities including pump house, water tank and associated pipework (completed in 2021)	27.7
Islands	Tai Long, Chi Ma Wan Peninsula, South Lantau	Water supply facilities including pump house, water tank and associated pipework (commenced in August 2021 and expected to complete in the second quarter of 2024)	29.4

- End -

