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Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2023-24

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Session No. : 13

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)001

(Question Serial No. 2049)

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:

Hong Kong is facing a shortage of manpower and varying standards in tree management. With over 1 million trees in Hong Kong, there are only some 1 000 licensed arborists.

1. What is the amount spent on training arborists per year?
2. What is the amount spent on emoluments of arborists per year?
3. What is the expenditure for the removal of dead trees and trees at risk per year?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

1. The Government has always been concerned about the development of the arboriculture and horticulture industry in Hong Kong, and is committed to allocating resources to the training of tree management personnel (including arborists). In mid-2020, the Development Bureau launched the \$200 million Urban Forestry Support Fund (the Fund) to encourage more new entrants to join the arboriculture and horticulture industry, and uplift the professional standards of practitioners comprehensively. Under the Fund, various new initiatives have been rolled out, including the Study Sponsorship Scheme which provides sponsorships and scholarships to encourage more people to undertake arboriculture, tree management and tree work programmes. Separately, the Government provides training allowances to arboriculture and tree management graduates through the Trainee Programme to facilitate them to receive structured on-the-job training to acquire actual working experience, with training periods lasting from 18 months (climber trainee) to three years (arborist trainee). As at late 2022, about 600 students have applied for subsidies from the Study Sponsorship Scheme, and about 150 trainees of the Trainee Programme have been employed by government departments and private organisations.

The actual expenditures for the Study Sponsorship Scheme and the Trainee Programme are tabulated below:

Scheme/ Programme	Actual expenditure (\$ million)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at 31 December 2022)
Study Sponsorship Scheme	0.09	1.02	2.25
Trainee Programme	1.02	3.85	2.71

At present, there are several professional qualifications in arboriculture in Hong Kong that are recognised by the Government. Applicants can make their own choice and obtain relevant qualifications through various training pathways.

2. Trees on government land and within government facilities are managed by the respective tree management departments through in-house staff or outsourced contracts (or both), including government staff and outsourced contractors who are qualified arborists. As the relevant government staff have to undertake other non-tree management duties at the same time, a breakdown of the amount spent on emoluments is not available. For arborists engaged by the departments' outsourced contractors, the expenditure for emoluments of arborists is not available because the cost related to tree management and the emoluments of the contract staff are included in the overall contract sum.
3. As the removal of dead trees and trees at risk is part of routine tree maintenance handled by tree management departments, a breakdown of expenses is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)002

(Question Serial No. 1418)

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 Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 include the implementation of enhancement measures proposed by the Task Force on Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance. Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What are the enhancement measures mentioned above? What is the estimated amount of expenditure involved for their full implementation?
- 2) The Bureau expects that the number of participants in training organised by the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section in 2023 is 5 700. What is the estimated manpower required for the implementation of the above enhancement measures?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- 1) The enhancement measures on roadside tree planting and maintenance proposed include:
 - i. making clear the line of command concerning tree management;
 - ii. expanding the scope of 'tree basis' risk assessment;
 - iii. arranging periodic inspections for trees along village roads on unleased and unallocated government land;
 - iv. enhancing implementation of risk mitigation measures;
 - v. enhancing reporting of tree failure cases and stepping up auditing of tree risk assessment reports;
 - vi. more extensive use of technology in tree management;
 - vii. replacement of senescent pioneer species;
 - viii. formulating new guidelines for minimum soil volume and soil depth for tree planting;
 - ix. introducing suitability and sustainability assessment – devising suitable measures to improve site conditions or replacing trees which are no longer suitable for site in urban areas; and
 - x. building up capacity of tree management personnel.

All the departments concerned are working out the details for taking forward the enhancement measures, and the estimated expenditure can only be ascertained after the details of the measures are finalised.

- 2) The Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of the Development Bureau has been actively organising on-the-job training on greening, landscape and tree management for government departments. It is expected that courses with about 5 700 attendances will be arranged in 2023, including sponsoring the study of academic courses and attainment of professional qualifications as well as seminars or technical conferences to ensure that the relevant staff possess adequate professional and vocational skills for discharging various duties in greening, landscape and tree management effectively. As regards manpower, the GLTMS will arrange the manpower required internally and outsource some training work.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)003

(Question Serial No. 1419)

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 Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 include steering the studies related to the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands and the associated network of strategic transport infrastructure. Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

Lantau Island is an essential route to the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, its overall transport planning will have a profound impact on the long-term development in future. Will the Secretary inform this Committee of the scope of the above studies and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

In June 2021, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Planning Department commenced the study on the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI), the scope of which mainly includes:

- (a) a detailed planning and engineering study for the KYCAI to establish the reclamation extent, land uses and technical feasibility;
- (b) preparation of preliminary design of the associated engineering works, as well as conducting statutory environmental impact assessment, other detailed impact assessments (including fisheries impact assessment) and public engagement exercise in relation to the formulation of development proposals;
- (c) an area-wide transport study covering the priority road link and the possible road link for longer term, between Hong Kong Island, KYCAI and Northeast Lantau; and a technical feasibility study and an investigation study for the priority road link;

- (d) an area-wide transport study covering the priority rail link and the possible rail link for longer term, between Hong Kong Island, KYCAI, Northeast Lantau and coastal areas of Tuen Mun; and a technical feasibility study for the priority rail link; and
- (e) exploration of possible financing options for the implementation of the KYCAI and its connecting transport infrastructure.

The KYCAI provides a good opportunity to improve Hong Kong's overall transportation network. The strategic transport infrastructure will connect Hong Kong International Airport, Zhuhai and Macau to the west; Qianhai, Shenzhen and Northern Metropolis to the north; West Kowloon to the east; and Hong Kong Island West and Central to the south. We have formulated preliminary proposals for the above priority road and rail link, which will allow the public to travel to and from the KYCAI via Lantau or Hong Kong Island.

In addition, the CEDD completed the "Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau" in June 2022. Following the overarching principle of "Development in the North; Conservation for the South", the study examined the traffic needs for road connection within Lantau and recommended improvement options.

East Lantau

- (i) constructing a new road tunnel connecting Mui Wo in the south and the existing road/tunnel at Discovery Bay in the further north; or
- (ii) constructing a new road tunnel directly connecting Mui Wo in the south to Siu Ho Wan in the north.

West Lantau

- (i) constructing a new road tunnel connecting Shek Pik in the south and Tai O in the north; and/or
- (ii) providing a viaduct to improve a few section of Keung Shan Road with steep, narrow bends, so as to improve the connection between South Lantau and Tai O.

The study also recommended exploring the re-use and improvement of Old Tung Chung Road in Central Lantau.

In March 2023, the CEDD commenced a feasibility study on enhancing the road network in Lantau, which is expected to be completed by mid-2025. The study will further explore the feasibility of the above recommendations, identify the most suitable combination of options and prioritise them with a view to taking forward the project as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)004

(Question Serial No. 1372)

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:

The \$1 billion Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) was established in October 2018, with a further injection of \$1.2 billion in 2022-23, to encourage wider application of technology in the construction industry and provide technology-related training to practitioners. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) What are the respective numbers of applications received and approved since the establishment of the CITF? What are the amounts of subsidies involved?
- (2) Regarding applications for training programmes, how many beneficiaries are involved?
- (3) What are the practical application outcomes of the approved cases?
- (4) Among the subsidies approved by the CITF, what is the amount related to the application of and training in industrial safety technologies? What is the percentage of the amount of subsidies against the total amount of subsidies approved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

The \$1 billion Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) was established by the Development Bureau in 2018 to encourage wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies. Since the launch of the CITF, there has been a significant increase in the number of construction projects adopting various innovative technologies, such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), Modular Integration Construction (MiC), prefabricated steel rebar products and various advanced construction technologies. The mid-term review of the CITF showed that about 80% of the respondents recognised the CITF's effectiveness in promoting innovation in the industry.

The Government has injected an additional \$1.2 billion into the CITF in 2022 and implemented enhancement measures, which include raising the funding ceiling, expanding the funding scope to cover more types of technology trainings with a view to meeting the

operational needs of local construction projects and supporting innovation for creating added value to the industry.

(1) and (2):

Up to end January 2023, the CITF has received about 4 300 applications, of which around 3 000 have been approved, involving a total funding grant of over \$800 million for subsidising some 1 000 enterprises in adopting various types of technologies in local construction projects and about 15 000 technology training places.

(3):

The CITF focuses on boosting productivity in the construction industry through automation, digitalisation and industrialisation by promoting wider application of innovative construction methods and technologies, such as BIM, MiC, prefabricated steel rebar products, advanced construction technologies, etc. in the construction industry. The outcomes of adopting some of the CITF-funded items are as follows:

(I) MiC

A number of construction projects, including schools, dormitories, residences, etc. have been successfully funded by CITF to adopt MiC to enhance site productivity. Taking two pilot projects (i.e. the InnoCell by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and the Disciplined Services Quarters for the Fire Services Department at Pak Shing Kok in Tseung Kwan O) as examples, a study conducted by The University of Hong Kong showed that by adopting MiC, the construction time of these two projects was shortened by about 30% to 50% compared to those using conventional construction methods, construction costs were reduced by at least 10%, site productivity was increased by 100% to 400%, and performances in terms of built quality, environmental protection, construction safety, etc. were better than that of conventional construction methods.

(II) Innovative construction technologies

Innovative construction technologies cover a wide range of technologies such as the internet of things, robotics, automated tools and equipment, digitalisation and Common Data Environment platforms and advanced construction material. The nature and functions of the products vary and it is difficult to have a generic quantification of their benefits. The following are some examples of approved funding applications involving robotics that have been effective in directly improving productivity and enhancing site safety:

Automatic bar bending machine - reduces the traditional 12-man bar bending and fixing work to 3 men, lowering manpower requirements by approximately 75%.

Automatic wall plastering machine - capable of plastering approximately 500 to 750 square metres of wall per day, a significant productivity increase by over 13 times compared to traditional manual plastering output of 30 to 60 square metres per day.

Delivery robot - with a maximum load capacity of 200 kg, it can operate continuously for eight hours when its battery is fully charged, offering a ten times increase in productivity compared to manual handling (without any tools) of up to 20 kg.

Demolition robot - five to six times faster than manual work with hand-held tools.

(4):

Among the funding approved by the CITF, about \$150 million was granted for adoption of technologies for which the primary function was for enhancing safety, which accounted for 19% of the total funding approved. Most of the remaining funded technologies also served to enhance site safety, some examples of which are listed in part (3) above.

We plan to launch a new initiative in April this year to enhance site safety by subsidising contractors of private worksites to adopt the Smart Site Safety System (SSSS) through the CITF. It includes raising the total funding ceiling for each CITF applicant for BIM and innovative construction technologies (including SSSS) from the current \$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 enjoy a maximum of \$7.5 million funding support from the CITF to adopt SSSS. The new initiative will substantially increase the CITF's funding support for the industry to apply technology to enhance site safety. The DEVB and the Construction Industry Council will step up publicity and provide information and assistance to promote the use of the SSSS by the industry to enhance site safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)005

(Question Serial No. 1375)

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:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that the Government will earmark \$7 million to launch a two-year "First-hire-then-train" subsidy scheme, to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have chosen to enrol in Construction Safety Officer courses. Also, the Government will provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes under a two-year pilot scheme. It is estimated that a funding of about \$100 million will be incurred. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) How many subsidised places are expected to be provided annually under these two schemes respectively?
- (2) Regarding the "First-hire-then-train" subsidy scheme for trainees enrolling in Construction Safety Officer courses, are all persons hired by the construction sector entitled to apply under the arrangement of "first-hire", or is application only limited to persons hired to take up the post of Safety Officer?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

- (1) In order to attract new entrants (including young people) to join the construction industry to meet the manpower demand of future infrastructural development, we propose to launch a two-year pilot scheme for providing on-the-job training with subsidies to trainees who have enrolled in construction safety officer courses. The scheme targets at graduates of Secondary Six or the Diploma Yi Jin Programme. It is anticipated that a total of about 300 trainees will be subsidised during the two-year period.

In addition, we also propose to roll out a two-year pilot scheme to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes. The scheme targets at graduates of higher diploma programmes. It is anticipated that a total of about 1 000 students will be subsidised during the two-year period.

- (2) Trainees participating in the “first-hire-then-train” subsidy scheme for construction safety officers will first be employed as assistant safety officer or equivalent by contractors, and during employment they will be arranged to enrol in part-time construction safety officer courses provided by the Hong Kong Institute of Construction under the Construction Industry Council, so that they can acquire both theoretical knowledge and work experience at the same time.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)006

(Question Serial No. 2173)

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:

Manpower demand of various local infrastructure projects

The Government has announced various infrastructure projects, including the Northern Metropolis, Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, public housing projects, light public housing, three railways and three roads, etc. Regarding local labour supply, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Has an assessment been made to see if the local labour force can meet the demand from multiple projects launched at the same time?
2. If the demand cannot be satisfied, will importation of workers be considered?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

With regard to the overall manpower needs of the construction industry, the Construction Industry Council released the latest "Construction Manpower Forecast" on 8 February 2023, which covers the manpower needs of the future infrastructure projects of Hong Kong. The Government is making reference to the forecast data and assessing how to enhance manpower supply through a multi-pronged strategy including leveraging local manpower resources, enhancing training and bringing in non-local resources as necessary, as well as reducing manpower needs through productivity uplifting measures. Our target is to present the assessment and a holistic strategy for addressing manpower needs of the construction sector by mid-2023.

According to the existing mechanism, on the premise of safeguarding the employment priority for local labour, the Government allows importation of labour on an appropriate and regulated basis, with a view to alleviating the manpower shortage in individual sectors/trades. Employers may, on account of their actual operational need, apply for importation of labour at technician level or below under the Supplementary Labour Scheme of the Labour Department to supplement skills not readily available in the local labour market.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)007

(Question Serial No. 0057)

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:

In the coming year, the Bureau will “continue to promote the construction and related professional services and to liaise with the relevant Mainland authorities to pursue further market access in the Mainland, with focus on extending the existing scope of the professional services and striving for further liberalisation measures, direct provision of services in the Pilot Free Trade Zones and the Greater Bay Area and providing more opportunities to participate in the national foreign aid projects.”

1. What are the details and plans for “extending the existing scope of the professional services and striving for further liberalisation measures”? What are the estimated manpower and expenditure involved?
2. In future, will the Government collaborate with other organisations to extend the scope of professional services? If so, what organisations will be involved and how much will be earmarked?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

To cope with the National 14th Five-Year Plan in respect of supporting the strategy of high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), we have been working closely with the relevant Mainland authorities to actively promote a number of preferential measures for Hong Kong, including the promulgation of a registration system in the nine Mainland cities of the GBA in 2021, which allows eligible Hong Kong enterprises and professionals in five disciplines, namely engineering, architecture, surveying, planning and landscape architecture, to acquire equivalent qualifications in the Mainland through a simple registration process, thereby facilitating them to provide direct services in the nine Mainland cities of the GBA. In early 2023, the Qianhai Free Trade Zone launched two projects for the construction of primary-junior secondary schools. Two Hong Kong architectural firms were appointed via open tender to provide one-stop-through services to implement the projects using Hong Kong’s project management practices. Looking ahead, we will continue to maintain a close dialogue with the relevant Mainland authorities, with a

view to soliciting more architectural and engineering pilot projects in the Mainland cities of the GBA, thereby enabling more Hong Kong enterprises and professionals to participate in our country's development. With the injection of Hong Kong's design and project management elements into the projects, it would assist in forging the GBA into a renowned world-class bay area.

We will continue to maintain close liaisons with various stakeholders of the construction sector, including professional institutions and trade associations, so as to understand the problems that they have encountered in providing professional services in the Mainland, and duly reflected the situation to the Mainland authorities in a timely manner with a view to enhancing the relevant preferential policies for Hong Kong.

The above work is mainly undertaken by a dedicated team comprising 1 Senior Executive Officer and 1 Executive Officer, whom are led by a Chief Assistant Secretary and an Assistant Secretary. As the relevant work is part of the overall duties of the existing officers, we are unable to provide a breakdown of the manpower or expenditure in this regard.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)008

(Question Serial No. 1329)

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:

1. Regarding trees in rural areas, will the Bureau commission professionals to pass on tree knowledge to villagers so that they know how to identify trees at risk and make timely reports?
2. Regarding trees in urban areas, will the Bureau look into ways to make optimal use of the strengths of 18 districts' care teams to monitor and care for trees more comprehensively?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. Every year, the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management (GLTM) Section of the Development Bureau (DEVB) will write to private property owners, Rural Committees, etc. to remind them that they must engage professionals to undertake risk assessment on the trees within their property and implement appropriate mitigation measures before the onset of the typhoon and rainy season. The GLTM Section also organizes seminars to enhance public knowledge about common tree problems, tree inspections and general tree maintenance. In addition, the GLTM Section has been working closely with the Heung Yee Kuk New Territories recently and the latter will from time to time consolidate information on problematic trees reported by villagers and pass it to the DEVB for follow-up.

The GLTM Section organises various promotional and educational activities for the public and the industry every year, including talks, seminars and roving exhibitions, as well as place or broadcast advertisements in different media. Moreover, the GLTM Section will continue to participate in building management workshops organised for private property owners in various districts by District Offices, to explain the importance of proper tree maintenance, and address questions about tree management raised by property owners and property managers.

2. Members of the public are the target audience of the promotion and education efforts of the GLTM Section, the goal of which is to raise public awareness of tree maintenance and foster a culture of tree care, so that the public can help with tree monitoring and maintenance. At present, the 18 districts' care teams are still at the preparatory and organisational stage. Upon their establishment, the GLTM Section will approach them to explore collaboration and assistance regarding tree monitoring and maintenance.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)009

(Question Serial No. 2206)

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 Government's tree management work, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) In January this year, the Development Bureau issued the paper "Review of Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance", proposing to enhance the standards for tree inspection and planting. What are the additional workload and work procedures that the Government estimates will be brought to frontline tree management staff upon implementation of the enhancement measures? What are the number of additional frontline tree management staff and details of training resources required for implementing the enhancement measures?
- (2) Regarding the tree maintenance personnel of each core tree management department, what were their (i) establishment, (ii) number, (iii) proportion with professional arboricultural qualifications, and (iv) average number of trees maintained per person per year in each of the past three years?
- (3) Regarding the contracts outsourced by each department to contractors for providing tree management services, what were their (i) number and (ii) contract sum, as well as the (a) service period, (b) types of services specified, (c) professional qualifications required for the outsourced staff, and (d) service areas or scope of each contract in each of the past three years?
- (4) What were (i) the number of tree-related complaints received and (ii) the average time taken to complete handling each tree complaint by each department in each of the past three years?
- (5) How many tree failure reports were received, and what were the numbers of casualties and property damages caused in each of the past three years?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

- (1) The tree management departments will deploy suitable staff internally to cope with the increased workload arising from the implementation of the enhancement measures, and

will also step up outsourcing of work to qualified contractors. As regards resources, priority will be given to internal deployment of resources. If there is still a shortfall, we will apply for additional resources in accordance with established procedures. Moreover, the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of the Development Bureau (DEVB) has been actively organising on-the-job training on greening, landscape and tree management for government departments. It is expected that courses with about 5 700 attendances will be arranged in 2023, including sponsoring the study of academic courses and attainment of professional qualifications as well as seminars or technical conferences to ensure that the relevant staff possess adequate professional and vocational skills for discharging the various duties in greening, landscape and tree management work in a proper manner.

- (2) Trees on government land and within government facilities are managed by various tree management departments. The number of trees maintained by the nine core tree management departments and the number of their staff involved in day-to-day tree management work in the past three years are tabulated below:

Core tree management department	Number of trees (Note 1)			Number of tree management staff (Note 5)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) (Note 2)	32 500	31 500	30 900	87 (87)	87 (87)	87 (87)
Architectural Services Department	150 000	145 900	143 700	5 (4)	5 (4)	5 (4)
Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) (Note 3)	9 000	8 900	9 000	11 (11)	10 (10)	9 (9)
Drainage Services Department	12 700	17 800	19 500	8 (3)	8 (3)	8 (3)
Highways Department	584 000	591 400	591 200	55 (41)	68 (59)	64 (54)
Housing Department	89 000	88 100	89 800	63 (58)	62 (55)	62 (58)
Lands Department (LandsD)	(Note 4)			37 (9)	41 (8)	55 (9)
Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)	566 200	559 400	554 100	263 (263)	263 (263)	263 (263)
Water Supplies Department	145 800	145 700	149 800	16 (2)	17 (3)	17 (3)

Note 1: Rounded to the nearest 100.

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

Note 3: Trees managed by the CEDD include only trees at its facilities.

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 UUGL that is not maintained by any designated government departments. In practice, trees on the UUGL cannot be counted due to the large number of trees. LandsD officers will take follow-up actions upon referrals or complaints.

Note 5: The figures include only government staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude senior staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level). The figures within brackets indicate the number of tree management staff with professional qualifications in arboriculture (including the qualification of Certified Arborist of the International Society of Arboriculture). Any staff member with multiple qualifications in arboriculture is counted as one staff member only.

Departmental tree management staff are from various grades such as Engineer, Inspector of Works, Landscape Architect, Forestry Officer, Field Officer, Leisure Services Manager, Amenities Assistant and Lands Executive. Depending on their internal staff grades and operational needs, departments carry out tree management work either by internal staff or through outsourcing (or both). As at the end of 2022, the number of staff involved in contracts engaged by the tree management departments totalled about 800. As the number of tree management staff employed by contractors varies over time depending on their work requirements, and internal staff of departments do not include staff temporarily deployed on a need basis, we consider it infeasible to calculate the average number of trees maintained per person each year based on a fluctuating number of staff.

- (3) The relevant contracts of the tree management departments vary in terms of cost, contract period, number of trees involved, service area/scope, nature of work, etc. The scope of work of outsourced contracts generally includes tree inspection and risk assessment, tree maintenance, pruning, planting, transplanting, risk mitigation and pest and disease management. Except the AFCD, the other eight core departments have engaged contractors to assist in tree management. In the past three years, the numbers of outsourced contracts of the nine core tree management departments and their total expenditures are tabulated below:

Core tree management department	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)	
	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$ million)	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$ million)	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$ million)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Not applicable					
Architectural Services Department	3	57	5	56	3	42
Civil Engineering and Development Department	2	10	1	13	1	5

Core tree management department	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)	
	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$ million)	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$ million)	Number of contracts	Contract sum (\$ million)
Drainage Services Department	8	16	7	13	7	22
Highways Department	13	64	16	70	16	63
Housing Department	11	40	4	25	4	19
Lands Department	7	18	9	34	7	24
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	141	264	162	252	91	176
Water Supplies Department	7	15	8	43	5	26
Total	192	484	212	506	133	377

* Contract sum is rounded to the nearest million dollars.

The DEVB launched the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel on 1 December 2020 and encourages five types of in-service arboriculture practitioners, namely arborists, tree risk assessors, tree work supervisors, tree climbers and chainsaw operators, to register. New works and maintenance contracts of government departments issued on or after 1 December 2021 have specified that the relevant arboricultural work should be carried out by registered tree management personnel.

- (4) The number of complaints and enquiries about tree management received by the nine core tree management departments via “1823” in the past three years are set out in the table below:

Core tree management department	Number of complaints and enquiries (Note 1, 2)		
	2020	2021	2022
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	100	190	120
Architectural Services Department	430	550	380
Civil Engineering and Development Department	130	160	180
Drainage Services Department	110	140	150
Highways Department	4 090	4 860	2 980
Housing Department	1 090	1 040	650
Lands Department	6 410	7 830	6 740
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	7 440	7 820	5 460

Water Supplies Department	180	240	160
Total	19 980	22 830	16 820

Note 1: The figures include the number of tree complaints and enquiries received via "1823".

Note 2: Rounded to the nearest 10.

The complaints cover a number of areas such as blocking views, affecting streetlights, health and structural problems of trees, etc. Some complaints also involve a basket of issues relating to various departments, including illegal occupation of land, cleanliness and hygiene, noise, refuse accumulation in addition to tree complaints. "1823" will refer the complaints to responsible government departments for follow-up actions according to the content of complaints and the delineation of tree management on government land detailed in technical circulars. Since the content of complaints varies and the tree locations also affect work arrangement (e.g. the need to apply for temporary traffic arrangement for handling roadside trees or consult with people affected in surrounding areas), for general complaint cases, the completion time for a complaint received may range from a few days to a few months.

- (5) The tree incidents reported in the past three years are set out in the table below:

	2020	2021	2022
Number of tree incidents	358	295	271
Number of fallen trees after the issue of a Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above	1 041	2 065	1 322
Total number of trees involved	1 399	2 360	1 593
Number of tree incidents involving casualties	16	13	20
Number of cases involving damage of vehicles/buildings/facilities ^{Note1}	137	127	135

Note 1: Individual tree accidents can result in more than one incident at the same time.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)010****(Question Serial No. 0865)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Energizing Kowloon East

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) was inaugurated in 2012 under the Development Bureau to steer, supervise, oversee and monitor the Energizing Kowloon East initiative (initiative), with a view to facilitating the transformation of Kowloon East into another core business district of Hong Kong. As we are aware, there are views that the EKEO, after its establishment, has not been able to take forward effectively the planning proposals for the Kai Tak Development Area as set out in the initiative, such as the monorail, modern trams, and the underground shopping street connecting Sung Wong Toi Station and Kai Tak Station, which are yet to be materialised. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the staff establishment and expenditure involved in taking forward the initiative in the past five years;
2. whether the Government will review the effectiveness of the initiative; if so, the details and the implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that;
3. the Bureau's key performance indicators if the effectiveness of the initiative is to be reviewed; and
4. whether the Government will consider deleting posts that are not necessary for the implementation of the initiative?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

1. The staff establishment and expenditure for the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) in the past five years are set out below:

Year	Staff establishment	Expenditure (HK\$)#
2022-23	15	About \$30.9 million
2021-22	19	About \$37.8 million

Year	Staff establishment	Expenditure (HK\$)#
2020-21	19	About \$36.5 million
2019-20	19	About \$32.2 million
2018-19	19	About \$31.4 million

Rounded to the nearest 100 000.

2&3. The Government facilitates the transformation of Kowloon East into the second core business district (CBD2) through a holistic strategy. A number of measures have been progressively implemented and the CBD2 is starting to take shape. For example, through the planning and facilitation/co-ordination efforts of EKEO, the supply of commercial gross floor area (GFA) in Kowloon East has increased by about 90% over the past ten years to 3.2 million square metres. Together with projects under construction or approved, the commercial GFA in the district will be about 4 million square metres, the scale of which is comparable to that of the CBD in Central. Moreover, CBD2 will have a walkable pedestrian network and a quality environment. We will also establish a unique brand for CBD2 and enhance the vitality of the district. In this regard, the EKEO has completed nearly a hundred projects to improve pedestrian connectivity, built/renovated more than 26 hectares of open space, and supported/organised various events and activities, attracting about 1.25 million participants. EKEO will continue to take forward these endeavours.

In taking forward projects under the Energizing Kowloon East initiative, the Development Bureau will formulate targets and timetables to facilitate monitoring of the progress of individual projects, which can also serve as performance indicators.

4. To maintain the effective operation of the EKEO, there is a need to keep all existing posts in order to cope with the above tasks. Nevertheless, EKEO will review from time to time its manpower needs and make adjustments as appropriate.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)011

(Question Serial No. 1054)

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 Development Bureau set up the Task Force on Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance (Task Force) in September 2022 for recommending various enhancement measures on roadside tree planting and maintenance and tree risk assessment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. If the recommendation of expanding the scope of 'tree basis' risk assessment is implemented, the number of trees to be covered by individual tree inspection is expected to increase by around five times. What is the increase in additional financial provision and manpower required?
2. At present, tree inspection forms are audited by various departments and the Tree Management Office (TMO). If the above recommendation is implemented, the number of inspection forms to be audited will increase substantially, from previous years' around 1 000 to potentially 4 500 forms. What is the increase in additional financial provision and manpower required?
3. If the recommendation to arrange periodic inspections for trees on unleased and unallocated government land is implemented, what is the increase for additional estimate and manpower required for the periodic inspections of these trees by the Lands Department, and what is the duration of the whole cycle of inspection?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

1&2. At present, the total number of forms of individual tree risk assessment (i.e. Form 2) conducted at locations with high pedestrian and vehicular flow in the territory by tree management departments is about 9 000 per year. It is estimated that after the expansion of the scope of individual tree risk assessment, the number of Form 2 will increase to about 45 000 per year (i.e. five times of the current number). Relevant associated work will also increase, including implementing various risk mitigation measures and conducting audits. The Development Bureau is updating the existing Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement with regard to the

expansion of the scope of 'tree basis' risk assessment, and the updated version will be promulgated in the first quarter of 2023 for departments to follow and to make corresponding manpower and resource arrangements. Departments will, as a priority, arrange internal deployment of suitable personnel to cope with the additional work. Given that the number of trees managed by various departments varies, if the internal resources is found insufficient, the departments concerned will apply for additional resources according to the established procedures and may also outsource part of the works to qualified contractors.

3. To enhance the maintenance of trees on unleased and unallocated government land (UUGL), the Lands Department (LandsD) will, under the risk-based principle, arrange contractors to conduct periodic inspections of trees on both sides of village roads not under the management of other government departments, focusing on those along village roads with higher pedestrian and/or vehicular flow. Since the UUGL constitutes about one-third of the land in Hong Kong, and there is no detailed record of the number of trees thereon, the LandsD needs some time to identify the scope of work and resources required and is now reviewing the additional financial provision and manpower required, with a view to completing the cycle of inspection within a few years.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)012

(Question Serial No. 1537)

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 existing nine core tree management departments of the Government, will the Government inform this Committee of the following in the past three years:

1. the number of trees managed by each of the departments;
2. the tree management approach adopted by each of the departments (through in-house teams, outsourced contracts or both);
3. the number of in-house tree management staff and the total staff cost of each of the departments; and
4. the number of outsourced tree management contracts and the total contract expenditure of each of the departments?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.:2)

Reply:

1&3. The number of trees maintained by the nine core tree management departments and the number of their tree management staff in the past three years are tabulated below:

Core tree management department	Number of trees (Note 1)			Number of tree management staff (Note 4)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) (Note 2)	32 500	31 500	30 900	87	87	87
Architectural Services Department	150 000	145 900	143 700	5	5	5

Core tree management department	Number of trees (Note 1)			Number of tree management staff (Note 4)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)
Civil Engineering and Development Department	9 000	8 900	9 000	11	10	9
Drainage Services Department	12 700	17 800	19 500	8	8	8
Highways Department	584 000	591 400	591 200	55	68	64
Housing Department	89 000	88 100	89 800	63	62	62
Lands Department (LandsD)	Not applicable (Note 3)			37	41	55
Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)	566 200	559 400	554 100	263	263	263
Water Supplies Department	145 800	145 700	149 800	16	17	17

Note 1: Rounded to the nearest 100.

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

Note 3: The unallocated and unleased government land (UUGL) is under the jurisdiction of the LandsD, which is responsible for providing non-routine tree maintenance on UUGL that is not maintained by any designated government departments. In practice, trees on the UUGL cannot be counted due to the large number of trees. LandsD officers will take follow-up actions upon referrals or complaints.

Note 4: The figures include only government staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude senior staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level). In addition to government staff, the departments have engaged contractors to assist in tree management. As at the end of 2022, the total number of contractor staff is about 800.

As tree management is part of the overall work of the departments and the share of tree management work in the work of their staff varies, a breakdown of the staff cost of the departments is not available.

2&4. 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 cost, contract period, the number of trees involved, job nature, etc. Except the 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	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23 (As at 31 December 2022)	
	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	3	57	5	56	3	42
Civil Engineering and Development Department	2	10	0	0	0	0
Drainage Services Department	8	16	7	13	7	22
Highways Department	13	64	16	70	16	63
Housing Department	11	40	4	25	4	19
Lands Department	7	18	9	34	7	24
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	141	264	162	252	91	176
Water Supplies Department	7	15	8	43	5	26
Total	192	484	211	493	133	372

* Contract sum is rounded to the nearest million dollars.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)013

(Question Serial No. 1538)

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:

Regarding the International Urban Forestry Conference organised by the Development Bureau in 2020 and 2022, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the respective expenditures for and the numbers of participants in the two conferences;
2. of the numbers of speakers invited to attend the two conferences, whether they are from overseas, the Mainland or Hong Kong, and the expenditure incurred in inviting the speakers;
3. given that it was announced that the technical sessions of the second conference originally scheduled for March 2022 would be postponed to a later date in light of the pandemic, whether the sessions were actually conducted; and
4. whether the effectiveness of the two conferences were evaluated after their conclusion; if so, the details; whether the second conference was better received than the first one; and the improvements to be made if another conference is to be organised in the future?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1. The first and the second International Urban Forestry Conference were successfully held by the Development Bureau in 2020 and 2022. The conferences aimed at keeping urban forestry practitioners abreast of the latest global best practices, research and development and technological advancements in urban forestry management, and providing a platform for the sharing of regional and international experience and expertise. The 2020 conference had a physical attendance of about 800 and its total expenditure was about \$2.3 million. The 2022 conference had an online attendance of about 1 200 and its total expenditure was about \$2.8 million.
- 2&3. For speakers, the two conferences each invited 20 experts and academia from the Mainland, overseas and Hong Kong. For the first conference, which was held in person, we invited one speaker from the Mainland, 11 from overseas and eight locally

from Hong Kong, and the relevant expenses were about \$0.7 million. For the second conference, we invited six speakers from the Mainland, eight from overseas and six locally. Due to the pandemic, the second conference was an online event, hence no transportation, meal and accommodation expenses had to be incurred for the speakers. The technical sessions of the second conference originally scheduled for March 2022 were postponed to June and September 2022 in light of the pandemic, and were held successfully.

4. Upon the conclusion of both conferences, views was collected from participants. They gave positive feedback and indicated that their expertise in respect of urban forestry planning and management had been enhanced after participating in the conferences. They also gave valuable suggestions. For example, participants of the first conference suggested inviting more speakers from southern part of the Mainland to share their experience and research findings, having regard that the climate in South China is more similar to that in Hong Kong, making the knowledge exchange more applicable to Hong Kong. Therefore, a session entitled “Urban Forestry in the Greater Bay Area” was specially held in the second conference, in which Mainland and local speakers explored topics such as tree management techniques and the control of pests and diseases in southern part of the Mainland.

We learnt that there was a significant increase in the number of participants in the second conference when compared to that in the first, reflecting the growing attention on the topic of urban forestry and the sharing of knowledge with the Greater Bay Area. Also, organizing the conference in the hybrid mode (with both online and offline platform) will facilitate participants to attend the event. Based on the above experience, we are planning to organise the third conference in 2024, with an increased focus on the application of new technologies in urban forestry management and enhancing student participation and exchange.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)014

(Question Serial No. 1539)

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:

At present, the Tree Management Office (TMO) is under the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the total number of civil service posts in the TMO and the relevant total staff cost;
2. whether non-civil service posts have been created in the TMO; if so, the number, posts and the relevant total staff cost; and
3. the distribution of the civil service posts in the TMO, including but not limited to the number of Tree Management Officers, Senior Field Officers, Field Officers I and Assistant Secretaries?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- 1&3. The Tree Management Office (TMO) comprises a total of 27 civil service posts, including one Head of TMO, three Assistant Secretaries, six Tree Management Officers, two Senior Field Officers, five Field Officers I, five Field Officers II, two executive personnel and three Clerical Officers. The estimated total staff cost in 2023-24 is about \$21.82 million.
2. There are seven non-civil services posts in the TMO, including two Engineers, one technical support personnel, two executive personnel and two Clerical Officers. The estimated total staff cost in 2023-24 is about \$5.7 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)015

(Question Serial No. 1540)

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

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

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 \$200 million Urban Forestry Support Fund (the Fund) established by the Government in 2019, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the annual total expenditures of the Fund since its establishment? What is the current balance of the Fund? Does the Government have any plan to seek an injection into the Fund?
2. The Fund has assisted the Government in taking forward four major initiatives, including the Study Sponsorship Scheme, Trainee Programme, International Urban Forestry Conference, and public education and promotion activities. What are the annual expenditures on each of these initiatives since the establishment of the Fund?
3. Has the Government conducted any review on the effectiveness of these major initiatives? What are the areas for improvement in future?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1&2. In mid-2020, the Development Bureau (DEVB) launched the \$200 million Urban Forestry Support Fund ("the Fund") to encourage more young people to join the arboriculture and horticulture industry, to uplift the professional standards of practitioners comprehensively, and to strengthen public education and promotion on proper tree care. The Fund supports four major initiatives, namely the Study Sponsorship Scheme, Trainee Programme, International Urban Forestry Conference, and public education and promotion activities. As at 31 December 2022, the committed expenditure of the Fund is \$37 million, comprising actual expenditure of about \$20 million and future expenditure of around \$17 million earmarked for participants of the Study Sponsorship Scheme and Trainee Programme, leaving the Fund a balance of approximately \$163 million available for the ongoing operation. At present, the DEVB has no plan to apply for a funding injection. The annual expenditures of the Fund since its establishment are tabulated below:

Major initiatives	Actual expenditure (\$ million)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at 31 December 2022)
i. Study Sponsorship Scheme	0.09	1.02	2.25
ii. Trainee Programme	1.02	3.85	2.71
iii. International Urban Forestry Conference	0	1.68*	1.12*
iv. Public education and promotion activities	1.70	2.95	1.55
Total	2.81	9.50	7.63

* The above table shows the expenditures incurred in 2021-22 and 2022-23 respectively for the second Conference, while the first Conference was organised using internal resources.

3. The DEVB has been reviewing the effectiveness of the major initiatives in a timely manner and making improvements as necessary. For the Study Sponsorship Scheme and Trainee Programme, we are conducting a review which is expected to be completed by mid-2023.

Moreover, upon the conclusion of two editions of the International Urban Forestry Conference, views were collected from participants. They gave positive feedback and indicated that their expertise in respect of urban forestry planning and management had been enhanced after participating in the Conferences. They also gave valuable suggestions. For example, participants of the first Conference suggested inviting more speakers from southern part of the Mainland to share their experience and research findings, having regard that the climate in South China is more similar to that in Hong Kong, making the knowledge exchange more applicable to Hong Kong. Therefore, a session entitled “Urban Forestry in the Greater Bay Area” was specially held in the second Conference, in which Mainland and local speakers explored topics such as tree management techniques and the control of pests and diseases in southern part of the Mainland. There was a significant increase in the number of participants in the second Conference when compared to that in the first, reflecting the growing attention on the topic of urban forestry and the sharing of knowledge with the Greater Bay Area. Also, organising the Conference in the hybrid mode (with both online and offline platform) will facilitate participants to attend the event. Apart from drawing on the above experience, we will organise the third Conference in 2024, with an increased focus on the application of new technologies in urban forestry management and enhancing student participation and exchange.

As regards enhancing public participation in our promotion activities, we have been reviewing the level of public interest and participation. For example, there has been an upward trend in the number of visits to our online promotion activities in the past two years, and our Urban Forestry Roving Exhibitions also attracted active participation from the public, achieving both promotional and educational effects. We will continue to promote our activities through various means and media to attract the participation of more people.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)016

(Question Serial No. 2165)

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:

Regarding the operation of the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) since its establishment in October 2018, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the following information for each year since its establishment:
 - (i) the number of applicants;
 - (ii) the number of projects approved;
 - (iii) the total amount of subsidies approved;
 - (iv) a breakdown of the categories of projects approved (i.e. (a) technology adoption, (b) Building Information Modelling, (c) Modular Integrated Construction, (d) Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing, (e) prefabricated steel rebar and (f) manpower development);
- (2) a breakdown of the categories of successful applicants since the establishment of the CITF (i.e. registered specialist trade contractors, registered subcontractors, players in the construction process, local higher education institutions, professional institutions, trade associations, labour unions, quasi-governmental organisations or statutory bodies), and their respective percentages?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

In 2018 and 2022, the Government allocated a total of \$2.2 billion to the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) to encourage wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies, as well as various types of technology adoption training. Since the launch of the CITF, there has been a significant increase in the number of construction projects adopting various innovative technologies, such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), Modular Integration Construction (MiC), prefabricated steel rebar products and various advanced construction technologies. The mid-term review of the CITF showed that about 80% of the respondents recognised the CITF's role in promoting innovation in the industry.

(1):

As at end-January 2023, a breakdown of the numbers of applications received and the amount of subsidies approved is as follows:

	October to December 2018	2019 (whole year)	2020 (whole year)	2021 (whole year)	2022 (whole year)	January 2023	Total
Number of beneficiaries	65	447	489	515	529	58	992 (Note 1)
Number of applications approved	15	738	800	695	683	17	2 948
(a) Advanced construction technologies	0	156	351	273	299	10	1 089
(b) Building Information Modelling	15	504	388	356	342	2	1 607
(c) Modular Integrated Construction	0	17	19	20	5	0	61
(d) Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	0	0	0 (Note 2)
(e) Prefabricated steel rebar	0	40	36	39	36	5	156
(f) Manpower development	0	21	6	7	1	0	35
Total amount of subsidies approved (\$)	1.5 million	159 million	156 million	255 million	245 million	10 million	860 million

Note 1: An applicant making multiple applications is counted as one beneficiary.

Note 2: Subsidies for Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing were introduced recently in August 2022. Applications received so far are still being processed.

(2):

As at end-January 2023, a breakdown of the categories of successful applicants is as follows:

	Number of successful applicants	Percentage
Main contractors	196	19.8%
Registered specialist trade contractors and registered subcontractors	613	61.8%
Consultants	163	16.4%
Local higher education institutions	11	1.1%
Professional institutions	5	0.5%
Trade associations	2	0.2%
Others (e.g. quasi-governmental or statutory organisations)	2	0.2%
Total	992	100%

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)017

(Question Serial No. 0254)

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, progress against objectives or project strategies for supporting the wider use of the MiC method in the industry by the Government in the coming year;
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 three years; and
5. the details of other high productivity construction methods, including types and estimated expenditures?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. It is announced in the 2022 Policy Address that a multi-pronged approach has been adopted to widely use the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity and efficiency. Furthermore, the Government has been leading by example and piloting MiC, with a view to leading the industry in this regard.

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 also started to adopt MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in the construction works of over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

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

1. Among the projects awarded by the Government through the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) in the past three years, MiC has been adopted for the following projects:

	Project title	Estimated project cost
1.	Chinese Medicine Hospital in Tseung Kwan O	about \$8.6 billion
2.	Kwun Tong Composite Development Project	about \$4.5 billion
3.	Redevelopment of Western Police Married Quarters site	about \$2 billion
4.	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	about \$1.6 billion
5.	Two special schools at Renfrew Road, Kowloon Tong	about \$800 million
6.	Fire station-cum-ambulance depot with departmental quarters and facilities in Area 72, Tseung Kwan O	about \$700 million
7.	A primary school at Lin Cheung Road, Sham Shui Po	about \$500 million
8.	A primary school and a kindergarten at Site E-1, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	about \$500 million
9.	A primary school in Tsuen Wan West Station (TW7) Development, Tsuen Wan	about \$400 million
10.	A primary school at Site 1B-4, Kai Tak Development	about \$400 million
11.	A primary school at Au Pui Wan Street, Fo Tan, Sha Tin	about \$400 million
12.	A primary school at Site KT2a, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	about \$400 million
13.	A primary school at Site KT2c, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	about \$400 million
14.	A primary school at Area 9, Tai Po	about \$400 million

2. Among the projects to be awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in the coming year (2023-24), MiC will be adopted for the following projects:

	Project title	Estimated project cost
1.	Implementation of Light Public Housing – the First Batch of Projects	about \$14.9 billion
2.	A primary school at Site E-2, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	about \$500 million
3.	A secondary school at Site E-3, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	about \$500 million
4.	A special school at Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai	about \$400 million

3. The Government has been actively promoting and encouraging the adoption of MiC in the construction industry. Apart from setting example by piloting MiC in public projects, we have also introduced various measures to encourage the industry to adopt MiC. The Buildings Department, Lands Department and Planning Department issued a joint practice note last year to increase the gross floor area (GFA) concession from 6% to 10%, provide corresponding site coverage concession, and support applications for relaxation of building height restriction due to the adoption of MiC. Through the wider adoption of MiC, we aim to shorten construction time, address the problem of manpower shortage in the construction industry, and reduce the environmental impacts brought by construction works.

A cross-departmental steering committee to coordinate the development of high productivity construction methods was established by the Development Bureau (DEVB) in early January 2023. The steering committee will formulate measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain. The estimated expenditure will be mainly spent on the study and implementation of new measures covering the following areas:

- the establishment of an accreditation scheme for MiC factories to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the GBA;
 - exploring the reservation of suitable land in the Northern Metropolis for manufacturing and storage of MiC modules by the industry;
 - the implementation of measures that can facilitate the logistics of MiC modules, including arrangements regarding cross-boundary tariffs;
 - the setting up of a dedicated team to provide technical support to individual projects and as a one-stop platform to enhance communication and collaboration with relevant departments.
4. In 2018, the Government allocated \$1 billion for setting up the Construction innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) and injected another \$1.2 billion in 2022 for the CITF's ongoing operation and implementation of enhanced measures. Through the CITF, we support and encourage the adoption of MiC by the construction industry to address the manpower shortage problem in the industry, shorten construction time, reduce the environmental impacts brought by construction works, etc.

In the past three years, CITF has been subsidised over 20 projects in both private and public sectors to adopt MiC, and the amount of subsidies granted to the industry under the CITF was \$132 million.

5. To further promote the adoption of high productivity construction methods such as MiC and Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP) in both private and public sectors to expedite housing supply, the DEVB has set up a dedicated team as a one-stop platform to provide technical support for the industry and enhance communication and collaboration with relevant departments so as to facilitate project approval.

As regards expenditure, the Government will earmark \$30 million for conducting a study on the construction of the first advanced construction industry building, carrying out planning and preliminary design work to provide space for operators to set up steel reinforcement bar prefabrication yards, advanced manufacturing yards and processing sites for high productivity construction methods such as MiMEP. To implement the

new initiatives announced in the 2022 Policy Address, the Government will also earmark \$15 million for studying and putting in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of the MiC modules. The scope of study will cover areas such as the manufacturing, transportation, storage and testing of MiC modules. We will also explore the provision of manufacturing and storage sites in the Northern Metropolis, and ways to enhance collaboration with the Greater Bay Area and optimise the MiC supply chain.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)018

(Question Serial No. 0262)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned in the Budget, \$15 million has been earmarked for studying and putting in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules, so as to implement the new initiatives announced in the 2022 Policy Address. Please inform this Committee of:

1. the breakdown of the \$15 million; and
2. the details of the estimated timetable for the study and implementation.

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. To enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, the Government has been actively promoting the adoption of "high productivity construction" methods such as Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) and Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP). As mentioned in the 2022 Policy Address, a cross-departmental steering committee has been established for coordinating the development of high productivity construction methods such as MiC and the streamlining of related approval processes to remove barriers for the industry, including making available land in the Northern Metropolis for manufacturing and storage by the industry, and fostering collaboration with the Greater Bay Area (GBA). In addition to expediting housing supply, these measures will strengthen the leading regional position of Hong Kong's construction industry in the adoption of MiC.

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

A cross-departmental steering committee to coordinate the development of high productivity construction methods was established by the Development Bureau in early January 2023. The steering committee will formulate measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain. The

estimated expenditure will be mainly spent on the study and implementation of new measures covering the following areas:

- the establishment of an accreditation scheme for MiC factories to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the GBA;
- exploring the reservation of suitable land in the Northern Metropolis for manufacturing and storage of MiC modules by the industry;
- the implementation of measures that can facilitate the logistics of MiC modules, including arrangements regarding cross-boundary tariffs;
- the setting up of a dedicated team to provide technical support to individual projects and as a one-stop platform to enhance communication and collaboration with relevant departments.

The steering committee expects to gradually implement new measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain from 2023 onwards. Reviews will be made at different stages to improve and enhance the effectiveness of the new measures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)019****(Question Serial No. 0265)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

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 continued efforts to carry out smart city proof-of-concept trials and share the experience and knowledge gained to facilitate wider application, and facilitate different sectors in using Kowloon East as a test bed to examine the feasibility of innovative ideas in real-life situations, please advise this Committee on:

1. the details of the smart city proof-of-concept currently carried out in Kowloon East as a test bed;
2. the estimated expenditure for the work detailed above; and
3. whether the expenditure will be increased in the coming year, and the planned ideas for the increase.

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

1&2. Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) has taken forward nine proof-of-concept trials in Kowloon East. Their progress and expenditures are as follows:

Proof-of-concept trial	Progress	Actual/estimated expenditure (\$'000)
(i) Smart Crowd Management System	completed	350 (actual)
(ii) Persona and Preference-based Way-finding for Pedestrians		1,350 (actual)
(iii) Energy Efficiency Data System		1,330 (actual)
(iv) Kerbside Loading/Unloading Bay Monitoring System		1,730 (actual)

Proof-of-concept trial	Progress	Actual/estimated expenditure (\$'000)
(v) Multi-purpose Lamp Post	completed	610 (actual)
(vi) Smart Recycling Bin System		480 (actual)
(vii) Illegal Parking Monitoring System		3,020 (actual)
(viii) Real-time Road Works Information		1,190 (actual)
(ix) Real-time Water Quality Monitoring System	underway	1,820 (estimated)

For details of the above proof-of-concept trials, please visit <https://www.ekeo.gov.hk/en/smart-green-resilient-cbd/smart-city-co-lab/proof-concept-trials/index.html>.

- EKEO will continue the above proof-of-concept trial on Real-time Water Quality Monitoring System. Besides, it will also continue to support universities, research institutes and government departments in developing innovative smart city solutions, including smart mobility tools for visually-impaired persons, smart recycling system and automatic charging robots, for on-site trial in Kowloon East, of which no expenditure incurred by EKEO is expected.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**(Question Serial No. 0594)**

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:

In October 2019, the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section of the Development Bureau established a dedicated Tree Risk Inspection Squad (Inspection Squad), tasked with randomly checking and auditing the tree inspection reports completed annually by the tree management departments, as well as proactively inspecting every year the trees located in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows (heavy traffic areas), and taking follow-up actions on problematic trees. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the expenditure and staff establishment of the Inspection Squad in the coming financial year;
2. of the following details of the tree inspection work conducted in busy areas each year since the establishment of the Inspection Squad: the respective numbers of (a) inspections conducted, (b) trees inspected, (c) problematic trees identified, and (d) trees with risks of failure removed;
3. of the respective numbers of tree failure incidents each year since the establishment of the Inspection Squad in which (a) casualties, (b) serious traffic jams and (c) damages to vehicles/facilities were caused;
4. of the respective numbers of cases of inadequacies in tree management work identified during random checking and auditing of tree inspection reports and tree inspections, as well as what recommendations on improvement measures were made to the relevant departments, by the Inspection Squad each year since its establishment; and
5. whether, in light of the occasional tree failure incidents in rural areas and the resultant casualties, it has assessed if the work undertaken by the Inspection Squad has been satisfactory and sufficient, and whether it will consider increasing the manpower for conducting inspections and the frequency of inspections?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

To strengthen tree inspection, the Tree Management Office (TMO) established the dedicated Inspection Squad in October 2019, which aims to adopt a systematic approach to randomly check and audit the tree inspection reports completed annually by the tree management departments to ensure that tree risk assessments are conducted in accordance with the “Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement” (Guidelines) in a professional manner. The Inspection Squad targets to randomly check 5% of the tree inspection reports annually. It also proactively inspects trees in not less than 100 spots of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow each year starting from 2020.

1. In 2023-24, the dedicated Inspection Squad comprises civil service posts of two Senior Field Officers, five Field Officers I and five Field Officers II. The total annual staff cost for the 12-strong dedicated Inspection Squad is estimated at \$6.26 million.

2&4. Before the onset of the wet season every year, tree management departments will conduct tree risk assessment in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow according to the Guidelines issued by the TMO of the Development Bureau (DEVB). The departments will take appropriate mitigation measures according to the results of the risk assessment, including crown pruning and removal of dead branches. If trees with risks of failure are identified, the departments will remove them as soon as possible to ensure public safety.

In the past three years, the number of tree inspections conducted by tree management departments in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow, the number of problematic trees identified and the number of trees handled or removed are given in the table below:

Year	Number of tree inspections (Generally, each inspection covers multiple trees)	Number of problematic trees identified	Number of trees handled	
			Mitigation measures implemented	Removed
2019-20	47 961	20 823	13 023	7 800
2020-21	43 386	18 529	12 313	6 216
2021-22	43 562	20 955	14 596	6 359

In the past three years, the Inspection Squad audited over 2 000 tree inspection reports each year. It also proactively inspects trees in not less than 100 spots of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow each year since 2020. The number of tree inspection reports audited and number of reports required follow-up actions by departments upon proactive inspections are as follow:

Year of audit Note	Number of tree inspection reports audited (Generally, each audited tree inspection report covers multiple trees, hence the	Number of reports on which departments are instructed to follow up
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	number of audited reports does not represent the number of audited trees.)	
2019-20	2 495	381
2020-21	2 258	362
2021-22	2 205	307

Note: Year of audit refers to the period from December each year to November of the following year, corresponding to the annual tree risk assessment and management cycle.

Year	Number of spots proactively inspected (Generally, each spot covers multiple road sections, and the number of spot does not represent the number of trees inspected)	Number of trees on which departments are instructed to follow up
2020	126	183
2021	135	101
2022	122	148

The random inspections and audits of the tree reports conducted by the Inspection Squad revealed that all departments have been maintaining trees and conducting tree risk assessment following the established mechanism and guidelines. In case a tree report is found to be problematic, the Inspection Squad will immediately request the relevant tree management department to take follow-up actions to ensure public safety. Cases where work is found to be improper are mainly tree reports with missing information. In this regard, the Development Bureau has enhanced the Tree Management Common Platform for use by departments to facilitate their filing and submission of tree risk assessment reports. At the same time, departments have been requested to enhance their internal audits with a view to improving the efficiency and quality of work.

- Proper tree maintenance and systematic tree risk assessment are effective means to reduce the risk of tree failure. However, like other living organisms, trees will go through stages of a life cycle, including growth, ageing, sickness and death. Numerous internal physiological and external environmental factors may interact and affect tree health and stability. Unforeseeable variables inevitably exist. Common causes of tree failure include inclement weather, poor tree health and structural conditions, ageing, and pests and diseases.

The reports of casualties and damage caused by tree accidents in the past three years are set out below:

Year	Casualties Note	Traffic obstruction Note	Damage to vehicles/facilities Note
2020	16	109	137
2021	13	92	127
2022	20	35	135

Note: An individual tree accident may result in more than one incident.

5. The dedicated Inspection Squad will proactively inspect trees in areas of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow each year, including rural areas. We will, from time to time, review the tree risk assessment, work of the Inspection Squad and manpower arrangement. To strengthen maintenance of trees on unleased and unallocated government land (UUGL), the Lands Department (LandsD) will, under the risk-based principle, arrange for contractors to conduct periodic inspections of trees on both sides of village roads not under the management of other government departments, focusing on those along village roads with higher pedestrian and/or vehicular flow. Since the UUGL constitutes about one-third of the land in Hong Kong, and there is no detailed record of the large number of trees thereon, the LandsD needs some time to identify the scope of work and resources required and is now reviewing the additional financial provision and manpower required, with a view to completing the cycle of inspection in a few years' time.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)021

(Question Serial No. 1393)

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 provision for Programme (5) in 2023-24 is \$130 million, which is 74.3% (\$55.5 million) higher than the revised estimate for 2022-23. The Government has explained that the increase is mainly due to the cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items and the net increase of two posts. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the details of the non-recurrent items and the breakdown of the expenditure; and
2. the rank, expenditure on emoluments and scope of work of the two new posts.

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

To cope with the challenges of manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. in Hong Kong's construction industry, the Development Bureau has been promoting "Construction 2.0" since 2018. Through innovation, professionalisation and revitalisation, it aims to enhance project performance in terms of quality, safety, environmental and cost management, as well as productivity, capability and sustainability of the construction industry. Moreover, Hong Kong people have always been proud of our infrastructure, which is one of the keys to maintaining the city's competitiveness. To further strengthen its advantages of our construction industry, we will promote the extensive application of advanced technologies.

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

1. As mentioned in paragraphs 155 to 157 of the 2023-24 Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary has earmarked a total of \$75 million for the following studies:
 - (i) Study on establishing the Building Testing and Research Institute and to carry out related planning and preliminary design. Apart from research and development (R&D) activities for innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, the centre will also devise standards, conduct testing and provide accreditation to

spearhead innovation in the construction industry and attract R&D talent to Hong Kong. The centre 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;

- (ii) Study on the construction of the first advanced construction industry building at a site of about three hectares in Tsing Yi, carrying out planning and preliminary design work as well as advising on its mode of operation. The conceptual idea is to provide space for operators to set up steel reinforcement bar prefabrication yards, processing sites for Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), and other advanced manufacturing yards in the multi-storey building; and
- (iii) Study and put in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules, for implementing the new initiatives announced in the 2022 Policy Address. The scope of study will cover areas such as the manufacturing, transportation, storage and accreditation of MiC modules. We will also explore the provision of manufacturing and storage sites in the Northern Metropolis, and ways to enhance collaboration with the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and optimise the MiC supply chain.

The increase of \$55.5 million for Programme (5) in 2023-24 over the revised estimate for 2022-23 is mainly due to the expenditure on the above studies.

2. According to the 2022 Policy Address, the Development Bureau has established a cross-departmental steering committee for co-ordinating the development of high productivity construction methods such as MiC, MiMEP, etc. The steering committee will formulate measures to facilitate the MiC supply chain, foster collaboration with the GBA, and to further promote the adoption of high productivity construction in both public and private sectors.

The two additional posts are time-limited non-directorate professional staff posts, mainly tasked to support the implementation of the above measures to strengthen the supply chain of the MiC modules, and the total expenditure involved in 2023-24 is around \$2.3 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)022

(Question Serial No. 2252)

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:

Frequent tree failure incidents in recent years have caused substantial property loss and casualties, and tree management is closely related to the personal safety of the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the annual numbers of trees planted and felled in Sha Tin and Tai Po districts in the past five years?
2. What were the numbers of times and intervals for roadside tree inspection and pruning in Sha Tin and Tai Po districts per year in the past five years?
3. What were the numbers of times and intervals for park tree inspection and pruning in Sha Tin and Tai Po districts per year in the past five years?
4. What were the number of tree complaints and the average handling time for such complaints in the past three years?
5. Please set out the number of tree failures and trees with abnormal condition (pests and diseases, leaning tree, fungal fruiting bodies, dead tree, decay in trunk, etc.) in the 18 districts in the past three years in tabular form?
6. What were the respective numbers of cases involving casualties and property loss due to tree failures/tree problems (e.g. tripping over tree roots/building structure affected by tree roots) and so on in the past three years? What is the total amount of compensation?
7. What are the departments currently responsible for tree management? What are the division of work among the departments, their staff deployment and expenditures? Will the Government further co-ordinate their work, for example, setting up a joint office for trees for work co-ordination? If so, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1&5. The annual number of trees planted in the past five years are set out in the table below:

Year	Number of trees planted by the Government ('000)
2018	415

Year	Number of trees planted by the Government ('000)
2019	352
2020	262
2021	333
2022	329

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	Number of problematic trees Note 1	Number of trees with risk mitigation measures implemented	Number of trees removed
2018-19	24 820	14 682	10 138
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 (as at 31 December 2022)	22 546	15 915	6 631

Note 1: Tree problems include pests and diseases, leaning tree, fungal fruiting bodies, dead tree, decay in trunk, etc.

We do not have district-based statistics in respect of Sha Tin and Tai Po districts.

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 (including the roadsides and parks in Sha Tin and Tai Po districts) 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 assessment, including crown pruning and removal of dead branches, etc. If any tree with risks of failure is identified, the departments will remove it as soon as possible to safeguard public safety.

4. The number of complaints and enquiries about tree management received by the core tree management departments via “1823” in the past three years are set out in the table below:

	Number of complaints and enquiries (Note 1, 2)		
	2020	2021	2022
Total	19 980	22 830	16 820

Note 1: The figures include the number of tree complaints and enquiries received via “1823”.

Note 2: Rounded to the nearest 10.

The complaints cover a number of areas such as blocking views, affecting streetlights, health and structural problems of trees, etc. Some complaints also involve a basket of issues relating to various departments, including illegal occupation of land, cleanliness and hygiene, noise, refuse accumulation in addition to tree complaints. “1823” will refer the complaints to responsible government departments for follow-up actions according to the content of complaints and the delineation of tree management on government land detailed in technical circulars. Since the content of complaints varies and the tree locations also affect work arrangement (e.g. the need to apply for temporary traffic arrangement for handling roadside trees or consult with people affected in surrounding areas), for general complaint cases, the completion time for a complaint received may range from a few days to a few months.

6. The annual number of tree incidents reported in the past three years are set out in the table below:

	2020	2021	2022
Number of tree incidents	358	295	271
Number of fallen trees after the issue of a Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above	1 041	2 065	1 322
Total number of trees involved	1 399	2 360	1 593
Number of tree incidents involving casualties	16	13	20
Number of cases involving damage of vehicles/buildings/facilities ^{Note 1}	137	127	135

Note 1: Individual tree accidents can result in more than one incident at the same time.

The total amount of compensation paid by the Government for casualties and property damage caused by tree failure in the past three years was about \$530,000.

7. The TMO co-ordinates departmental tree management work at the policy level through an “integrated approach”. 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 co-ordinate the relevant work having regard to their scope of work so as to carry out appropriate routine maintenance work for trees under their management effectively. Each tree management department manages trees through their internal staff and/or outsourced contracts. At present, the division of work among core tree management departments and the number of their tree management staff are set out in the table below:

Core tree management department	Scope of management	Number of tree management staff (Note 1) (as at 31 December 2022)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Trees in country parks	87

Core tree management department	Scope of management	Number of tree management staff (Note 1) (as at 31 December 2022)
Architectural Services Department	Trees on man-made slopes maintained by the department	5
Civil Engineering and Development Department	Trees within the sites of government works development projects	9
Drainage Services Department	Trees within the sites of drainage facilities	8
Highways Department	Trees on roadside man-made slopes/retaining walls and along expressways	64
Housing Department	Trees in public housing estates	62
Lands Department	Trees on unallocated government land not managed by any other departments	55
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Trees at the venues under the department and the landscape areas next to public roads (excluding expressways)	263
Water Supplies Department	Trees within the sites of water facilities	17

Note 1: The figures include only government staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude senior staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level). In addition to government staff, the departments have engaged contractors to assist in tree management. As at the end of 2022, the number of contractor staff is about 800.

Tree management is part of the overall work of the departments and the extent of involvement of staff in tree management works varies. Therefore, a breakdown of the staff cost of the departments is not available.

The Government has conducted a review of roadside tree planting and maintenance recently and adopted enhancement measures to manage trees properly through enhancement of tree management guidelines and implementation efforts, improvement of workflow of follow-up work, building up capacity of tree management personnel and more extensive use of technology, with a view to facilitating healthy tree growth while safeguarding public safety. At the same time, the TMO will strengthen its co-ordination work.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)023

(Question Serial No. 2255)

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 Register of Old and Valuable Trees of Hong Kong has recorded about 500 trees selected by the Government since 2004. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following in the past five years:

1. the staff deployment and expenditure involved in the conservation and assessment of old trees;
2. the number of old tree inspections conducted each year and the interval for inspections;
3. the number and species of trees included in the Register of Old and Valuable Trees each year;
4. the number of and reasons for trees removed from the Register of Old and Valuable Trees each year;
5. the condition of old trees with current health problems in tabular form; and
6. the health condition and conservation situation of old trees in Sha Tin and Tai Po districts?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1&2. Old and valuable trees (OVTs) are precious assets. The Development Bureau has issued technical circulars and guidelines on the registration, conservation, daily management, etc. of OVTs. Apart from daily management and monitoring of tree growth, the tree management departments will follow the Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement to conduct a detailed risk assessment of the trees recorded in the Register of OVTs under their purview every six months. If it is found that the OVTs are infected by brown root rot disease, the departments need to increase the frequency of detailed tree risk assessment to once every three months to ensure that their health condition are closely monitored, and implement mitigation measures when necessary to safeguard public safety. As management of OVTs is part of the overall tree management work of the relevant departments and the expenditure is

absorbed by the provision of operational expenses of the respective departments, a breakdown of their staff deployment and expenditures is not available.

3&4. In the past five years (2018 to 2022), some OVTs on the Register had to be removed due to serious structural and health problems or tree collapse during typhoon/strong wind. The details are as follows:

Year	Number of removal	Reason
2018	11	collapse during typhoon
2019	1	pest and disease infestation resulting in irrecoverable health problem
2020	2	1 due to collapse during typhoon and 1 due to pest and disease infestation resulting in irrecoverable health problem
2021	1	pest and disease infestation resulting in irrecoverable health problem
2022	5	3 due to collapse during typhoon or strong wind and 2 due to pest and disease infestation resulting in irrecoverable health problem

The assessment criteria for including a tree in the Register of OVTs include factors such as age, size, form, preciousness and rarity of species, health and physical condition and memorable significance. In the past five years, no new trees met the criteria for inclusion in the Register of OVTs.

5&6. Currently, five OVTs on the Register are found to have health problems. The details are as follows:

OVT registration number	Species	Location	Health problem and handling method
LCSD YTM/2	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i> L.f.	Park Lane Shopper's Boulevard in Tsim Sha Tsui	The health is deteriorating with structural problems. The department concerned will continue to maintain it with great care and monitor its condition closely.
LANDSD N3	<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> (L.) J. Presl	Wo Keng Shan in the northeast of the New Territories	The health is deteriorating with structural problems. The department concerned will continue to maintain it with great care and monitor its condition closely.

OVT registration number	Species	Location	Health problem and handling method
LCSD TW/6	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i> L.	Tak Wah Park in Tsuen Wan	The health has been deteriorating since 2018. It is confirmed that there is a potential risk of collapse upon recent on-site inspections. After consulting the Urban Forestry Advisory Panel (UFAP), the department concerned has decided to remove the tree.
HYD WCH/1	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i> L.f.	Slope next to Wah Yan College Hong Kong in Wan Chai	The health has been deteriorating since 2020. It is confirmed that there is a potential risk of collapse upon recent on-site inspections. After consulting the UFAP, the department concerned has decided to remove the tree.
LCSD YTM 69	<i>Celtis sinensis</i> Pers.	Kowloon Park in Tsim Sha Tsui	The health has been deteriorating since 2021. It is confirmed that there is a potential risk of collapse upon recent on-site inspections. After consulting the UFAP, the department concerned has decided to remove the tree.

No OVTs in Sha Tin and Tai Po districts are found to have health problems. The tree management departments concerned will maintain the trees properly in accordance with the relevant technical circulars and guidelines.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)024

(Question Serial No. 0684)

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 Development Bureau has recommended commissioning a consultancy study in 2023 to review holistically the criteria for determining suitability and sustainability of roadside trees, with reference to overseas experience. The study will include developing a scoring system, identifying problematic roadside trees at locations with high pedestrian and vehicular flow, and prioritising large roadside trees that require treatment. What are the progress of the work, the estimated expenditure and the implementation timetable?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

Regarding the consultancy study on the assessment of suitability and sustainability of large roadside trees, the Development Bureau is currently formulating the scope of the study. The estimated expenditure will be worked out after the scope is finalised. We plan to commission the study in mid-2023 to draw up the criteria for determining the suitability and sustainability of Hong Kong's roadside trees with reference to overseas experience. It is expected that the preliminary recommendations on scoring system and criteria will be available in 2024. The study will further identify existing roadside trees in locations of high pedestrian and vehicular flow with suitability and sustainability issues using the scoring system developed, and devise appropriate improvement measures, maintenance plans or treatment options for different scenarios. The relevant work is expected to be completed within 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)025****(Question Serial No. 0685)**

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 Task Force on Review of Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance put forward ten recommendations in January this year, including expanding the scope of tree risk assessment, enhancing reporting of tree failure cases and stepping up auditing of tree risk assessment reports, introducing suitability and sustainability assessment for roadside trees, etc. so as to reduce the risk of tree failure. What is the implementation progress of various recommendations at present? Given that the number of tree audits is expected to increase substantially, will the implementation of such recommendations involve recruiting additional manpower or engaging outsourced companies? If so, what are the details and the amount involved? According to the Government's assessment, can the additional workload be coped with having regard to the current manpower situation in the industry?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The Development Bureau recommended ten enhanced measures on roadside tree planting and maintenance at the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Development in January 2023. Their progress of implementation is as follows:

Recommendation	Implementation
1. Making clear the line of command concerning tree management	From 2023 onwards, tree management performance will be included in the duty lists and annual appraisal reports of heads of departments.
2. Expanding the scope of "tree basis" risk assessment	This recommendation will be implemented starting from the tree risk assessment and management cycle in 2023.
3. Arranging periodic inspections for trees along village roads on	To strengthen maintenance of trees on unleased and unallocated government land (UUGL), the Lands Department (LandsD) will, under the risk-based principle, arrange for contractors to conduct periodic

Recommendation	Implementation
unleased and unallocated government land	inspections of trees on both sides of village roads not under the management of other government departments, focusing on those along village roads with higher pedestrian and/or vehicular flow. Since the UUGL constitutes about one-third of the land in Hong Kong, and there is no detailed record of the large number of trees thereon, the LandsD needs some time to identify the scope of work and resources required and is now reviewing the additional financial provision and manpower required, with a view to completing the cycle of inspection within a few years.
4. Enhancing implementation of risk mitigation measures	Tree management departments are establishing an internal monitoring mechanism, which is expected to be put in place in mid-2023, to enable the senior management to monitor the progress of risk mitigation work. In addition, we have reached an agreement with the Transport Department and the Police Force on the application for temporary traffic arrangements required for roadside tree maintenance so as to shorten the time required for roadside tree maintenance arrangements.
5. Enhancing reporting of tree failure cases and stepping up auditing of tree risk assessment reports	We are refining the format of tree failure reports and updating the relevant electronic forms, which is expected to be completed before mid-2023. At present, the total number of forms (i.e. Form 2) of individual tree risk assessment conducted at locations with high pedestrian and vehicular flow in the territory by tree management departments is about 9 000 per year. It is estimated that after the expansion of the scope of individual tree risk assessment, the number of Form 2 will increase to about 45 000 per year (i.e. five times of the current number). The number of forms to be audited will also rise and is expected to increase from around 1 000 per year in the past to about 4 500 per year.
6. More extensive use of technology in tree management	We will update the tree risk assessment and management instructions, including those on the use of technology, in the first half of 2023. In addition, we have been proactively identifying emerging knowhow and co-operating with local institutions in trying out potential technology through research and development and pilots, and continue to share the experience and latest development with tree management departments.
7. Replacement of senescent pioneer species	At present, the Highways Department, Housing Department, Architectural Services Department and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department are implementing enhanced measures systematically or

Recommendation	Implementation
	replacing exotic pioneer species with native species to reduce risks and enhance biodiversity and sustainability. Other tree management departments will start to replace senescent pioneer species in a planned manner in 2023.
8. Formulating new guidelines for minimum soil volume and soil depth for tree planting	We are working out roadside tree planting instructions and requirements. It is expected to be completed within 2023.
9. Introducing suitability and sustainability assessment; devising suitable measures to improve site conditions or replacing trees which are no longer suitable for site in urban areas	We plan to commission a consultancy study in mid-2023 to draw up the criteria for determining the suitability and sustainability of Hong Kong's roadside trees with reference to overseas experience. We expect the preliminary recommendations on the scoring system and criteria will be available in 2024. The study will further identify existing roadside trees in locations of high pedestrian and vehicular flow with suitability and sustainability issues using the scoring system developed, and devise appropriate improvement measures, maintenance plans or treatment options for different scenarios. The relevant work is expected to be completed within 2025.
10. Building up capacity of tree management personnel	We will continue to attract more new entrants to join this industry and encourage in-service practitioners to further advance their arboricultural knowledge and competence, for example, through the Study Sponsorship Scheme and Trainee Programme under the Urban Forestry Support Fund. We will also increase the training quota for tree management staff at frontline, supervisory and managerial level within government to receive qualification-award training from 50 to around 100 annually with focus on the tree risk assessment qualification related training.

The departments will first consider internal deployment of suitable personnel to cope with the additional work. However, since the number of trees managed by various departments varies, in case insufficiency of internal resources is identified, the departments concerned will apply for additional resources according to the established procedures and more work may be outsourced to qualified contractors. The Government will, through enhanced training, facilitate its tree management staff to obtain professional qualifications in arboriculture, enabling them to apply professional knowledge to discharge their duties.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)026

(Question Serial No. 3115)

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

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

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government has been providing subventions to the Hong Kong Archaeological Society (HKAS) to help the organisation meet its operating expenses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the reasons for providing subventions to the HKAS? When did the Government start providing the subventions?
2. What were the respective amounts of subvention provided to the HKAS in each of the past three years?
3. How many archaeological excavations did the HKAS assist the Government to carry out in each of the past three years? What are the projects concerned in the respective years?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

1. The Hong Kong Archaeological Society (HKAS) was established in 1967 to promote archaeology and the study of excavated relics and remnants in Hong Kong. From the 1970s up to 2019-20, the HKAS proposed an archaeological excavation project to the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) every year. The AMO would assess the proposals from the professional archaeological perspectives, such as whether the proposed excavation sites had archaeological potential; whether the proposed teams possessed relevant field archaeological knowledge, skills and experience; whether the proposed excavation methods were appropriate; whether the proposed budgets were reasonable, etc. The AMO would assess and approve, in accordance with established procedures, subventions for one archaeological excavation project proposed by the HKAS each year, so as to support field archaeology and promote the study of archaeological finds in Hong Kong.

2&3. Over the past three years, the HKAS has not undertaken any archaeological excavation projects in Hong Kong and the AMO has not provided any subvention to the HKAS.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)027

(Question Serial No. 0589)

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:

In Hong Kong, there are quite a number of buildings and cultural heritage of historical value that need to be preserved and revitalised. Regarding the conservation of historic buildings and cultural heritage, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What was the expenditure on the conservation of historic buildings and cultural heritage in Hong Kong over the past two years? What are the details of the revitalisation work carried out and in progress?
2. Revitalising historic buildings and cultural heritage helps the public understand the historical value of monuments. Does the Government have any policy that helps prevent over-commercialisation after conservation and revitalisation?
3. In future, what is the Government's specific plan to facilitate the revitalisation of cultural heritage with distinctive features? Has the Government considered allocating more resources?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

1&2. The Government's heritage conservation policy is to strive to protect, conserve and revitalise as appropriate historical and heritage sites and buildings through appropriate and sustainable approaches. Over the past two years (i.e. 2021-22 and 2022-23), the Development Bureau's actual expenditure and revised estimate for historic buildings and cultural heritage conservation are \$256 million and \$306 million respectively.

With funding support from the Built Heritage Conservation Fund (BHCF), the Development Bureau continues to implement the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalisation Scheme), inviting non-profit-making charitable organisations to submit proposals on adaptive re-use of historic buildings in the form of social enterprises. The Revitalisation Scheme was launched in 2008 with six batches implemented so far, involving a total of 22 historic buildings and declared monuments. Among them, 11 projects are in operation, while another one is arranging

visits for groups and will commence operation in April 2023. For the three projects under Batch V, revitalisation works commenced successively in early 2022. As regards the five historic buildings under Batch VI, the assessment results of the first four projects, namely Tai Tam Tuk Raw Water Pumping Station Staff Quarters Compound, Homi Villa, King Yin Lei and Fong Yuen Study Hall, were announced on 14 June 2022. The assessment result of the fifth historic building, i.e. Former North Kowloon Magistracy, was also announced on 8 December 2022. These five projects are expected to complete their restoration works and commence operation in succession from 2025 onwards.

The objectives of the Revitalisation Scheme are to preserve and put historic buildings into good and innovative use; to revitalise historic buildings into unique cultural landmarks; to promote active public participation in the conservation of historic buildings; and to create job opportunities in particular at the district level. Selected non-profit-making organisations are required to operate the projects in the form of social enterprises and become self-sustainable after two years of operation, with all surplus generated ploughed back into the projects.

3. In the 2022-23 Budget, the Government announced the injection of an additional \$1 billion into the BHCF, including \$800 million earmarked for the capital costs of works projects under the Revitalisation Scheme and \$200 million for non-works initiatives in conservation and revitalisation of historic buildings, covering the Government's financial support for the operation of social enterprises under the Revitalisation Scheme (i.e. starting costs and operating deficits for a maximum of the first two years of operation). The Government is conducting an overall review of the Revitalisation Scheme with a view to further enhancing the Scheme and streamlining its procedures, which will be implemented after consultation with the Advisory Committee on Built Heritage Conservation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)028

(Question Serial No. 0590)

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:

Local tree failure incidents involving casualties in recent months have posed danger to the public. It is noted that trees are under the management of various departments which do not have any subordinate relationship with one another, and hence without any co-ordinated management. Regarding tree risk management, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the expenditures for tree management and the number of trees pruned or handled in the past two years;
2. the number of inspections conducted by the Tree Risk Inspection Squad in the past two years, and the number of problematic trees identified during the inspections;
3. the current staff establishment of the Government for tree risk management, and whether there will be any plans to allocate additional resources to co-ordinate tree management work?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1. The Tree Management Office (TMO) of the Development Bureau (DEVB) co-ordinates departmental tree management work at the policy level through an “integrated approach”. 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 carry out appropriate routine tree maintenance work effectively with their portfolio of duties integrating the work concerned.

Trees on government land and within government facilities are managed by respective tree management departments through in-house staff and/or outsourced contracts. In the past two years, the average annual total contract sum of the outsourced contracts of the nine core tree management departments (departments) is about \$450 million. As internal tree management is part of the overall work of the relevant departments and the

expenditure is absorbed by the provision for operating expenses of the respective departments, a breakdown is not available.

The number of inspections of trees conducted by the departments in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow and the number of trees handled or removed in the past two years are set out in the table below:

Year	Number of inspections (Generally, each inspection covers multiple trees, and the number of inspections does not represent the inspection efforts)	Number of trees handled	
		Pruning and risk mitigation measures	Removed
2020-21	43 386	12 313	6 216
2021-22	43 562	14 596	6 359

- In order to strengthen departmental tree inspections, the Inspection Squad of the DEVB has proactively inspected trees in no less than 100 locations with high pedestrian and vehicular flow every year since 2020. In case a problematic tree is identified, the Inspection Squad will immediately request the relevant tree management department to take follow-up actions to ensure public safety. The number of locations inspected and the number of trees on which departments are instructed to follow up in the past two years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of locations inspected (Generally, each inspection covers multiple road sections, and the number of locations does not represent the number of trees inspected)	Number of trees on which departments are instructed to follow up
2021	135	101
2022	122	148

- Over the years, the DEVB has put in much effort to train up government tree management staff to be professionally qualified in arboriculture and tree management. Back in 2009, some 80 staff members within the Government had professional arboriculture qualifications. The number of qualified staff has since then grown six-fold to around 500 in 2022. The DEVB has been actively arranging on-the-job training in arboriculture for the management and frontline staff of the government tree management departments. The training includes sponsoring the study of academic courses and attainment of professional qualifications, and arranging training courses, seminars or technical conferences to ensure that the relevant staff possess adequate professional and vocational skills for discharging various duties in tree management and maintenance in a proper manner and enhancing their academic levels and professional qualifications, with a view to building up the tree management competency of tree management departments. The DEVB will increase the training quota for tree management staff at frontline, supervisory and managerial level within government to

receive qualification-award training from 50 to around 100 annually with focus on the tree risk assessment qualification related training.

The DEVB will also enhance vocational/topical training and arrange and sponsor about 5 700 training places annually covering various tree management areas, including proper tree maintenance methods, pest and disease management, tree risk assessment and occupational safety and health, for staff of departments to keep them abreast of latest knowledge and best practices in tree management.

As at 31 December 2022, the number of tree management staff of the nine core tree management departments has increased gradually from about 470 in 2013 to about 570. The number of tree management staff provided by contractors is about 800.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)029

(Question Serial No. 2414)

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 underground space development in urban areas, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the Government's expenditures for the studies on underground space development in the past three years? What are the projects under study, underway 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?
2. Has the Government developed a central electronic record system of underground public utility facilities for water, electricity, town gas, optical fibre, drainage services, etc.? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons? What are the impacts on underground space development of having/not having such records?
3. What are the major expenditure items involved in underground space development in urban areas?
4. Regarding the Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas, the Government completed the Stage 2 Public Engagement in August 2019. What were the results of the public engagement and further work conducted?

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

Reply:

1, 3 and 4.

The Government has conducted a feasibility study entitled "Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas" (the Study) in recent years. The Study aimed to explore the formulation of potential and feasible conceptual schemes and priority for underground space development in strategic urban areas. After preliminary examination, we propose according priority to the Conceptual Scheme for underground space development at the Kowloon Park (the Conceptual Scheme) for mitigation of the surrounding overcrowded pedestrian environment and accommodation of more community facilities

required in the district. The expenditure of the Study is mainly for consultancy services and the expenditure in the past three years was \$15.64 million.

As if underground space will be developed further, apart from the expenditure on studies, expenses on geological investigation, project design and construction, building services, relocation of above-ground facilities and so on will be incurred. We are refining the Conceptual Scheme by making reference to the public views collected during the Stage 2 Public Engagement and the preliminary technical assessments completed earlier. The entire Study is expected to be completed within 2023. The estimates of expenditure saved or economic benefits created from underground space development can only be worked out after the development plan is drawn up for completion of detailed assessments.

2.

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 with a view to facilitating the construction industry to plan and conduct the underground works efficiently; reducing the potential risks due to a lack of reliable data on underground utilities (e.g. damaging underground power cables by mistake) to enhance construction safety; and shortening the time of road excavation works effectively. Since underground space development involves excavation works, the database is conducive to its implementation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)030

(Question Serial No. 2422)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

1. What are the estimates for the design and construction of the entire and the first stage of Tseung Kwan O Desalination Plant project? How much of the estimates is for improving the appearance of the plant and alleviating the impact on the surrounding environment?
2. To encourage consumers to convert to seawater for flushing when the seawater supply network is in place, the Water Supplies Department will waive the connection fee in accordance with the established conditions, and provide technical advice to consumers when necessary. Please advise on the total expenditure involved in waiving the connection fee for residents in Sai Kung, their application for and seeking of technical advice?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

1. The approved project estimate for the design and construction of the first stage of Tseung Kwan O Desalination Plant project is \$7.7275 billion, about \$94.7 million of which is for environmental impact mitigation measures and beautification of plant appearance and landscaping works, including vertical green walls and landscape greening works. Since the investigation study for the second stage of Tseung Kwan O Desalination Plant project has yet to commence, we are unable to provide the estimate for the relevant works.
2. To encourage consumers to convert to use seawater for flushing when the seawater supply network is in place, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) will proactively approach consumers to persuade and recommend them to employ a licensed plumber to inspect their flushing systems as soon as possible. It will also waive the connection fee in accordance with the established conditions, and provide technical advice to them when necessary. Between 2020 and 2022, the WSD did not receive any applications for waiver of connection fee from residents in Sai Kung. In addition, since processing

of waiver applications and provision of technical advice to consumers are part of the daily duties among others of the colleagues of the WSD, a breakdown of the expenditures on the above individual duties is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)031

(Question Serial No. 0052)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

According to the Government, \$30 million has been earmarked for the Development Bureau to conduct a study on establishing the Building Testing and Research Institute and to carry out related planning and preliminary design. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. When is the Institute expected to commence operation? Please advise on its establishment and annual expenditure.
2. Will the Government consider collaborating with the industry, so that the industry can participate in the design of the Institute and its future operation to ensure that it will meet the needs of the industry and market development?
3. Will the Government encourage the use of new construction technologies in future construction projects starting from the design stage, in order to reduce manpower requirements and enhance construction safety?
4. How will the Institute 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? What is the specific work involved?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

To cope with the huge construction volume in future and the challenges facing by the construction industry, we need to step up our efforts in promoting construction innovation with an aim to uplifting the productivity and capacity of the construction industry. We will conduct a study on establishing the Building Testing and Research Institute (BTRI). Apart from research and development (R&D) activities for innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, etc., the 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.

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

1. The study is expected to commence in mid-2023 and complete in 2024-25. The study scope includes the BTRI's operation model, establishment, operating expenditure, implementation schedule, etc. Based on the findings of the study, we will take forward the development of the BTRI and construction of the related facilities.
2. During the study, we will consult the relevant industry stakeholders on the design, establishment, operation, etc., of the BTRI to ensure that it meets the industry needs and market development.
3. We have been promoting applied R&D in public works since 2021. Through adopting innovative building materials and construction technologies in pilot projects of public works, these innovative materials and technologies can be put into real application; establishing references, enabling application in other public and private projects and benefiting the construction industry at large.

The BTRI will enhance the support in this area. Through R&D activities and introducing innovative building materials and construction technologies from the Mainland and overseas, as well as conducting testing and devising local standards and guidelines, wider adoption of innovations in the construction industry will be facilitated. We will also continue to encourage the industry to consider adopting innovative building materials and construction technologies at early stage of projects with an aim to reducing manpower requirements and enhancing site safety.

4. The construction industry in Hong Kong has been adopting the international construction standards (e.g. British Standards, European Standards, etc.) for many years with rich experience and expertise. Located in the Greater Bay Area, Hong Kong is also backed by the strong supply chain of the construction industry in the Mainland. Through applied R&D, the BTRI can align and bridge the national standards applied in the Mainland with the international standards, facilitating the construction materials and innovative technologies from the Mainland to be adopted in Hong Kong and overseas and providing a platform for our country's construction standards and related products to align with those in the international market.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)032

(Question Serial No. 0787)

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 Government has pointed out that it will strengthen the local construction industry's adoption of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) and prefabricated rebar products in the region. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the number of works projects adopting MiC in the past two years and how much time can be saved on average after the construction works are expedited;
2. of the number of works projects adopting prefabricated rebar products in the past two years, the percentage of prefabricated rebar products against the total usage of rebar products, and how much time can be saved on average after the works are expedited; and
3. whether the Government has promoted the adoption of other innovative technologies, in addition to the above construction method, to further enhance productivity?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. The Government has been actively promoting the adoption of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), prefabricated rebar products and advanced construction technologies to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness. Furthermore, the Government has been leading by example, piloting MiC in various types of public projects such as schools, dormitories and hospitals.

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 also started to adopt or pilot MiC. At present, MiC has been adopted in the construction works of over 70 public and private development projects.

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

1. Among the projects awarded by the Government through the Architectural Services Department and other government departments in the past two years, MiC has been adopted for the following projects:

	Project title
1.	Chinese Medicine Hospital in Tseung Kwan O
2.	Kwun Tong Composite Development Project
3.	Redevelopment of Western Police Married Quarters site
4.	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex
5.	Two special schools at Renfrew Road, Kowloon Tong
6.	Fire station-cum-ambulance depot with departmental quarters and facilities in Area 72, Tseung Kwan O
7.	A primary school and a kindergarten at Site E-1, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung
8.	A primary school at Lin Cheung Road, Sham Shui Po
9.	A primary school at Area 9, Tai Po
10.	A primary school in Tsuen Wan West Station (TW7) Development, Tsuen Wan
11.	A primary school at Site KT2c, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong
12.	A primary school at Au Pui Wan Street, Fo Tan, Sha Tin
13.	A primary school at Site 1B-4, Kai Tak Development
14.	A primary school at Site KT2a, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong

The nature of each project is different, and the extent to which it has applied MiC varies. However, 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 aspects than those using traditional construction methods.

2. In the past two years, more than 500 works projects adopted prefabricated rebar products, and the percentage of prefabricated rebar products against the total usage of rebar products was about 13%. Rebars are cut and bent in advance at prefabrication yards using automated technologies. The finished products are then sent directly to the construction site, saving the time needed to cut and bend rebars on-site, and relieving the demand for skilled workers on-site.
3. In 2018, the Government allocated \$1 billion for setting up the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF). In 2022, an additional \$1.2 billion was injected into the CITF for supporting its ongoing operation and implementation of enhancement measures. Through the CITF, we encourage and support the industry to adopt technologies (e.g. Building Information Modelling, MiC, Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), prefabricated rebar products and advanced construction technologies, etc.), with a view to promoting productivity, uplifting built quality, improving site safety and enhancing environmental performance. Moreover, in the 2023-24 Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary has announced that the Government will conduct a study on the construction of the first advanced construction industry building at a site in Tsing Yi, in order to provide space for operators to set up rebar prefabrication yards, processing sites for MiMEP, and other advanced manufacturing yards. The Government will also conduct a study on

establishing a local Building Testing and Research Institute to support innovation in the construction industry, devise standards, as well as conduct testing and accreditation, so as to further enhance the overall productivity and capacity of the construction industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)033

(Question Serial No. 0789)

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 has pointed out that it will complete the implementation of support measures for the construction sector under the Anti-epidemic Fund in 2023-24. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Since the implementation of the scheme, what are (a) the number of applications received, (b) the number of applications approved, (c) the number of individuals and enterprises benefitted, and the reasons for unsuccessful applications?
2. Through the audit and monitoring mechanism, how many cases of violation of the terms and conditions of the scheme have been identified? Please advise on the follow-up actions taken.
3. How does the Government expedite the processing of applications? When does the Government expect to finish processing all the applications?
4. Will the Government introduce other relief measures to facilitate the post-epidemic development of the construction industry?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1. Under the first and second rounds of the Anti-epidemic Fund ^{Note 1} (the Fund), the Development Bureau has launched a number of relief measures to support the construction sector ^{Note 2}, which mainly include providing subsidies to eligible registered construction workers and technical personnel; construction-related small- and medium-sized contractors, registered subcontractors, consultants, etc.; and construction sector employers employing casual employees on a long-term basis. They also include supporting enterprises such as contractors, registered subcontractors and consultants to meet the necessary operating expenses, e.g. office rental and equipment rental. Over 525 100 applications were received, of which about 517 400 applications were approved, benefitting about 500 000 workers and 22 700 enterprises. The main reasons for unsuccessful applications were that the applicants (individuals or

enterprises) did not meet the eligibility criteria or requirements of the relevant measures, and failure to submit applications before the deadline.

(Note 1: The financial impact of the measures will be absorbed by the Anti-epidemic Fund, which does not form part of the Appropriation Bill or the estimates on the General Revenue Account.

Note 2: Two rounds of the Employment Support Scheme have been launched under the Fund to provide extensive support to various sectors in Hong Kong, including the construction sector. It was co-ordinated and managed by the departments responsible for administering the Scheme.)

2. For the construction-related scheme under the Fund, after conducting the required checking, it was found that about 980 enterprise applicants had not continued employing during the subsidy period the specified number of workers as pledged under the scheme, or had not used the full amounts of the subsidies received to pay their workers' wages. The Government has sought to recover the subsidies disbursed from the enterprise applicants concerned pursuant to the terms of the scheme.
3. All applications for relief measures to support the construction sector under the Fund have been processed and the subsidies have been disbursed to all successful applicants.
4. The construction sector support measures under the Fund have brought about positive impact amid severe epidemic. With the improvement of the epidemic situation, the construction market has largely resumed normal. It is no longer necessary to introduce further support measures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)034

(Question Serial No. 1390)

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 Government established the Urban Forestry Support Fund in 2020 to encourage youngsters to join the arboriculture and horticulture industry, and to uplift the professional standards of practitioners through the Study Sponsorship Scheme and the Trainee Programme. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

1. of the respective numbers of beneficiaries and amounts of provision approved for the above scheme and programme in the past two years;
2. the number of participants and the expenditure expected for the above scheme and programme in 2023-24;
3. of the number of trainees receiving training allowance and having acquired recognised arborist or tree climber professional qualifications under the Trainee Programme;
4. whether the 5 700 participants expected for training organised by the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management (GLTM) Section in 2023-24 include staff with tree-related duties from other policy bureaux; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
5. the estimated staff establishment and expenditure for public education and community involvement activities organised by the GLTM Section in 2023-24, and the measures that will be implemented to encourage public participation.

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

1&2. The Study Sponsorship Scheme provides sponsorships and scholarships for eligible applicants to apply for when they take recognised arboriculture, tree management and tree works programmes. Successful applicants will receive the study sponsorships upon their completion of the programmes, whereas scholarships will be disbursed to successful applicants at the end of each academic year. The total number of successful applicants for the Study Sponsorship Scheme and the total amount disbursed in the past two years are tabulated below:

Table 1

Year	Number of applicants	Actual expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22	287	1.02
2022-23 (as at 31 December 2022)	142	2.25

The Trainee Programme encourages employers to engage and train arboriculture and tree management graduates to become quality arborists and tree climbers to support tree management and maintenance work in Hong Kong. The programme will provide a training allowance of about 30% of agreed monthly remuneration levels to the trainees through their employers, as well as a bonus of \$30,000 and \$20,000 upon their acquisition of recognised arborist or tree climber professional qualifications respectively. The number of participants in the Trainee Programme and the actual expenditure in the past two years are tabulated below:

Table 2

Year	Number of participants	Actual expenditure^{Note 1} (\$ million)
2021-22	54	3.85
2022-23 (as at 31 December 2022)	36	2.71

Note 1: The actual expenditure includes the training allowance provided under the programme, administrative costs, as well as the training costs and assessment costs of trainees.

The 2023-24 Study Sponsorship Scheme is expected to have about 150 participants at an expenditure of about \$2.7 million. The Trainee Programme is expected to have about 60 participants at an expenditure of about \$10 million. As the duration of training for arborist trainees and tree climber trainees lasts three years and 18 months respectively, in addition to the training allowance for the 60 new trainees estimated in the first year, the expenditure also includes the training allowance, training costs and assessment costs for arborist trainees in the second or third year and for tree climber trainees in the second year who have already joined the scheme and the programme, as well as the administrative costs of the Trainee Programme.

3. Table 2 above sets out the number of trainees receiving training allowance under the Trainee Programme as at 31 December 2022. As the duration of training for arborist trainees lasts three years, the first batch of arborist trainees will complete their training in the second half of 2023. As at mid-January 2023, there are already nine tree climber trainees who have completed training. They will take part in examinations to acquire the tree climber professional qualification gradually.
4. The Greening, Landscape and Tree Management (GLTM) Section of the Development Bureau has been actively arranging on-the-job training in greening, landscape and tree management for the staff of government departments. We expect to offer training to about 5 700 staff members in 2023, which includes sponsoring the study of academic programmes and attainment of professional qualifications, and arranging seminars or technical conferences to ensure that the relevant staff possess adequate professional and vocational skills for discharging various duties in greening, landscape and tree

management in a proper manner. The GLTM Section sponsors tree management and maintenance staff of government departments to attend tree management courses organised by local or overseas education and training institutions, including the preparatory courses for arborist organised by the International Society of Arboriculture. As for vocational skills training, it has been the GLTM Section's practice to arrange a number of training courses, seminars or technical conferences for the frontline and management staff of departments. The key areas include arboriculture and horticulture project administration and management; occupational safety and health for the arboriculture and horticulture industry; plant selection, cultivation and propagation; planting, caring and management of plants; diagnosis and treatment of pests and diseases; and survey, inspection and risk assessment.

5. To raise public awareness of tree maintenance and foster a culture of tree care, the GLTM Section organises various promotional and educational activities for the public and the industry every year, including school talks, public seminars, and roving exhibitions, as well as placing or broadcasting advertisements in different media on a number of greening, landscape and tree management topics. In 2023-24, apart from continuing to organise the above activities, the GLTM Section will participate in the landscape design project in the Hong Kong Flower Show and the Education and Careers Expo. We also plan to organise urban forestry guided tours for the public to experience first-hand quality green environment, with a view to enhancing their understanding of and interest in landscaping and trees. The manpower required for the public education and community involvement activities organised by the GLTM Section are either met by internal deployment or by outsourcing part of the work as necessary. As some activities are still under planning, the estimated expenditure is not yet available.

– End –

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)035

(Question Serial No. 1663)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under this Programme, the provision for 2022-23 has been revised with an increase by 36% from \$18.9 million to \$25.7 million. Will the Government inform this Committee of the reason for this 36% increase in provision?

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

Reply:

The increase in the revised estimate for 2022-23 under Programme (1) is contributed by the expenditure required for meeting the progress of the study and consultancy service items for enhancing water conservation, water loss control and drinking water safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)036****(Question Serial No. 1664)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

According to the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023–24, the Works Branch will “conduct negotiation with Guangdong authorities for renewal of the Supply Agreement for Dongjiang water to be expired by end 2023”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the actual quantity of annual supply of Dongjiang water in million cubic metres in the past three years; and
- (b) the actual annual expenditure under the prevailing agreement in the past three years?

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

Reply:

(a)&(b) The actual quantity of Dongjiang water supplied and the actual expenditure in the past three years are shown below:

Year	Actual quantity (million cubic metres)	Actual expenditure (\$ million)
2020	802	4,821.41
2021	811	4,821.41
2022	810	4,947.38

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)037

(Question Serial No. 1665)

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

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

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 2023-2024, the Government states that it will “continue to achieve better cost management and control throughout the delivery of capital works projects”. Meanwhile, the provision for 2023-24 under this Programme is \$130.2 million, which is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2022-23 by 74.3%. According to the Controlling Officer’s explanation, the change is “mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items and increased provision for a net increase of two posts”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the details of the non-recurrent items concerned under this Programme and the provision for the two posts concerned?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

To cope with the challenges of manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. in Hong Kong’s construction industry, the Development Bureau has been promoting “Construction 2.0” since 2018. Through its three pillars of innovation, professionalisation and revitalisation, it is aimed to enhance the project performance in terms of quality, safety, environmental and cost management, as well as the productivity, capability and sustainability of the construction industry. On the other hand, Hong Kong people have always been proud of our infrastructure, which is one of the keys to maintaining the city's competitiveness. To further strengthen its advantages of our construction industry, we will promote the extensive application of advanced technologies.

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

1. The increased provision in 2023-24 is mainly attributed from the following items as mentioned in the 2023-24 Budget Speech Paragraphs 155 to 157, with totalling amount of \$75 million being earmarked:

- (i) Study on establishing the Building Testing and Research Institute and to carry out related planning and preliminary design. Apart from research and development (R&D) activities for innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, the centre will also devise standards, conduct testing and provide accreditation to spearhead innovation in the construction industry and attract R&D talent to Hong Kong. The centre 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;
- (ii) Study on the construction of the first advanced construction industry building at a site of about three hectares in Tsing Yi, carrying out planning and preliminary design work as well as advising on its mode of operation. The conceptual idea is to provide space for operators to set up steel reinforcement bar prefabrication yards, processing sites for Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), and other advanced manufacturing yards in the multi-storey building.
- (iii) Study and put in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules, for implementing the new initiatives announced in the 2022 Policy Address. The scope of study will cover areas such as the manufacturing, transportation, storage and accreditation of MiC modules. We will also explore the provision of manufacturing and storage sites in the Northern Metropolis, and ways to enhance collaboration with the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and optimise the MiC supply chain.

2. According to the 2022 Policy Address, the Development Bureau has established a cross-departmental steering committee for co-ordinating the development of high productivity construction methods such as MiC, MiMEP, etc. The steering committee will formulate measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain, foster collaboration with the GBA, and to further promote the adoption of high productivity construction in both public and private sectors.

The concerned two additional posts are time-limited non-directorate professional staff posts, are to support the implementation of the above measures to strengthen the supply chain of the MiC modules, with a provision in 2023-24 of around \$2.3 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)038

(Question Serial No. 1666)

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

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

Programme: Programme (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned in the Budget Speech Paragraph 140, the Financial Secretary has stated that in order to meet the manpower requirement for future infrastructure development, the Government will work with tertiary institutions to offer a comprehensive study and career development pathway and launch a two-year pilot scheme to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes. It is estimated that a funding of about \$100 million will be incurred. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) information on the part-time construction-related degree programmes and number of places to be offered by each programme under this policy initiative; and
- (b) the amount of allowance to be provided for each trainee enrolled in these programmes?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

(a) & (b)

The proposed two-year pilot scheme serves to provide students undertaking construction related part-time degree programmes (covering engineering, architectural, surveying, planning and landscape architectural disciplines) with a total of \$90,000 on-the-job training allowance. The objective is to encourage graduates of higher diploma students to join the construction industry while continuing further degree study on a part-time basis, with a view to providing them with a comprehensive study and career development pathway and attracting new blood for the industry. Taking into account the administrative cost, a funding of about \$100 million will be incurred and expected to benefit about 1,000 students in total.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)039

(Question Serial No. 1667)

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

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

Programme: Programme (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned in the Budget Speech Paragraph 140, the Financial Secretary has stated that the Government will earmark \$7 million to partner with Hong Kong Institute of Construction to launch a two-year “First-hire-then-train” subsidy scheme, to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have chosen to enrol in Construction Safety Officer courses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) number of training places to be offered under this policy initiative; and
- (b) the amount of allowance to be provided for each trainee enrolled in these courses?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

Noting the substantial construction volume in the coming few years, we envisage an increasing demand for Safety Officers (SOs) in the construction industry. We therefore propose partnering with the Hong Kong Institute of Construction of the Construction Industry Council and rolling out a two-year pilot scheme (the Pilot Scheme) for offering on-the-job training with subsidies, by using the “First-Hire-Then-Train” arrangement, to groom new recruits (including young people) to become SOs for the construction industry.

The Pilot Scheme targets at graduates of Secondary Six or Diploma Yi Jin Programme. It is anticipated that about 300 new recruits would be trained under the Pilot Scheme with each trainee provided with a subsidy of \$20,000.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)040****(Question Serial No. 1440)**

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 set out in paragraph 12, the numbers of trees and shrubs planted both decreased in 2022, and the expenditure on greening works by the Government also dropped. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- of the numbers of trees and shrubs in the past five years set out in a table;
- of the reasons for the decrease in the numbers of trees and shrubs and whether such decrease is directly related to the drop in government expenditure on greening works; and
- of the details of the measures and objectives as it is mentioned in paragraph 13 that the Bureau will commence the implementation of enhancement measures proposed by the Task Force on Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- The numbers of trees and shrubs the Government planted in the past five years are as follows:

	Trees (thousands)	Shrubs (thousands)
2018	415	5 245
2019	352	6 166
2020	262	7 395
2021	333	4 817
2022	329	4 106

- The numbers of trees and shrubs newly planted each year vary depending on the type, scale and progress of greening works. Also, with the completion of some major infrastructural projects progressively, and the fact that country parks have been extensively vegetated over the years, the numbers of newly planted vegetation have relatively decreased in recent years. Affected by a basket of factors such as procurement approaches, prices of the plant species, design of works, the fluctuation of

expenditures for greening works is not necessarily directly related to the numbers of trees and shrubs planted.

- c) The Government has conducted a review of roadside tree planting and maintenance and proposed the following enhanced measures:
- i. making clear the line of command concerning tree management;
 - ii. expanding the scope of “tree basis” risk assessment;
 - iii. arranging periodic inspections for trees along village roads on unleased and unallocated government land;
 - iv. enhancing implementation of risk mitigation measures;
 - v. enhancing reporting of tree failure cases and stepping up auditing of tree risk assessment reports;
 - vi. more extensive use of technology in tree management;
 - vii. replacement of senescent pioneer species;
 - viii. formulating new guidelines for minimum soil volume and soil depth for tree planting;
 - ix. introducing suitability and sustainability assessment; devising suitable measures to improve site conditions or replacing trees which are no longer suitable for site in urban areas; and
 - x. building up capacity of tree management personnel.

Our objectives are to manage our trees properly for healthy tree growth while protecting public safety by enhancing tree management guidelines and implementation efforts, enhancing the workflow of follow-up actions, building up the capacity of management personnel, and making more extensive use of technology.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)041

(Question Serial No. 1083)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Development Bureau states that the Works Branch “oversaw the provision of round-the-clock water supply to the territory throughout the year” in 2022. However, it is noted that remote villages within the territory of Hong Kong such as Tung Ping Chau and Po Toi Island have not yet been supplied with treated water. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Up to now, in the whole territory, (a) which villages have not yet been supplied with treated water? (b) How many (i) households and (ii) residents are affected?
2. Has the Government estimated (a) the total cost and (b) the average cost to be borne by each household for laying a treated water supply network for all the above villages?
3. In addition to cost effectiveness, what are the criteria for the Government to decide whether a treated water supply network should be laid for a village, for example, whether local village representatives and the relevant rural committee will be consulted?
4. Regarding the above villages not yet supplied with treated water, (a) what initiatives will the Government put in place to ensure the supply of clean drinking water to local villagers? (b) In 2022-23, what are the (a) manpower involved, (b) expenditure on emoluments and (c) transportation expenditure incurred?
5. The estimated expenditure for 2023-24 provided by the bureau under Programme (1) Water Supply is \$18.8 million, representing a reduction of 26.8% in comparison with the revised estimate of \$25.7 million for 2022-23, and the original estimate for 2022-23 is \$18.9 million. Please advise on the respective reasons for (a) the significant increase in the revised estimate for 2022-23 over the original estimate, and (b) the significant decrease in the estimate for 2023-24 against the revised estimate for 2022-23?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1. There are currently 15 remote villages which have inhabitants but do not have the treated water supply. The estimated populations of these villages are as follows:

District	Village Name	Estimated Population in 2022 (Note 1)
Tai Po	Lai Chi Chong	3
	Tung Sam Kei	1
	Sham Chung	2
	Tung Ping Chau	10
Tsuen Wan	Luk Keng (Lantau)	8
	Tai Chuen (Northeast Lantau)	12
	Tso Wan (Northeast Lantau)	30
Islands	Tai Long (South Lantau)	30
	Po Toi Island	10
	Fan Lau (West Lantau)	30
	Nim Shue Wan	200
	Cheung Sha Lan	80
Tuen Mun	Tin Fu Tsai	40
Sai Kung	Tung Lung	22
North	Kap Tong	5

Note 1: The information on the villages and populations in 2022 is provided by the District Offices concerned.

- 2&3. Given the sparse population of these remote villages, if there is a need to extend the water supply system to these villages, initial estimation reveals that the per capita capital cost for construction of the system will be very high. However, in considering the extension of the treated water supply system to these remote villages, apart from cost-effectiveness and technical feasibility, whether water quality problems will arise from the stagnant water in the water mains due to low water consumption is also a critical factor. When formulating project plans, we will consult the locals, including local village representatives and the rural committees concerned, for their comments.
4. Currently, villages not yet supplied with treated water are equipped with facilities for supplying stream water, well water or for collecting rainwater which have been in use for many years. Most of these facilities are under the maintenance of the Home Affairs Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department regularly monitors the water quality to ensure the water from the above sources is suitable for potable consumption after boiling. In the event of depletion or insufficiency of the above water sources, the Government will provide timely assistance, including delivering potable water to meet the need of the villagers. Since the implementation of the above measures is part of the daily duties of the colleagues of the departments concerned, a breakdown of the expenditures on the above duties is not available.
5. As regards the expenditure under Programme (1) in 2022-23, the increase in the revised estimate over the original estimate is mainly for settling the expenditure on the studies and consultancy services for enhancing water conservation, water loss control and drinking water safety incurred according to their progress in the year. Since some of the above studies and consultancy services will be completed in 2023-24, the estimated expenditure in 2023-24 will decrease in comparison with that of 2022-23.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)042

(Question Serial No. 1086)

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:

With the gradual relaxation of anti-epidemic measures, it is unlikely that the community isolation facilities (CIFs) constructed with the support of the Central Government in 2022 will be re-opened. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the planned long-term use of the existing CIFs? (a) If they are for residential use, how many public and private residential units are expected to be provided? (b) If they are for commercial or industrial use, what is the estimated amount of gross floor area that can be provided?
2. Has the Government considered using the existing CIF sites for Light Public Housing? If so, what are the details?
3. Does the Government have any estimate on the (a) manpower, (b) expenditure on emoluments and (c) expenditure on equipment involved if the existing CIFs are to be demolished?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

Since early 2022, Hong Kong has been severely affected by the fifth wave of the epidemic. In order to deal with the huge demand for isolation and treatment, we need to urgently boost the capacity of isolation, treatment and related facilities. With the support of the Central Government, community isolation and treatment facilities were built at nine locations, including the Emergency Hospital and Mobile Cabin Facility in the Lok Ma Chau Loop, which were funded by the Central Government.

As the epidemic further subsides, the Chief Executive has appointed the Deputy Financial Secretary (DFS) to co-ordinate and assess the future arrangements for community isolation and treatment facilities. The relevant work has already commenced. The DFS, in conjunction with relevant bureaux and departments, will conduct thorough analyses and studies. Details and arrangements will be announced in due course when decisions are made.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)043

(Question Serial No. 2589)

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 implementation of the reclamation for building the 1 000-hectare Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI), will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The Study on the Artificial Islands in the Central Waters, commissioned by the Civil Engineering and Development Department and the Planning Department in June 2021, is expected to be completed by the end of 2024. What is the current progress?
2. Regarding the key infrastructure of the Artificial Islands, (a) what are the expected dates of completion and commissioning, and (b) what financing options will be proposed (set out in the table below)?

	(a) Date of completion and commissioning	(b) Proposed financing option
(i) Hong Kong Island West - Northeast Lantau Link		
(ii) Hong Kong Island West - Hung Shui Kiu Rail Link		
(iii) Green Mass Transit System		
(iv) Third central business district		
(v) Residential areas		
(vi) Cultural and recreational facilities		
...		

3. As mentioned in paragraph 216 of the Budget Speech, the Government has proposed to set up an Infrastructure Bond Scheme and consider offering it for public subscription, so as to meet the cashflow needs of major infrastructure projects. Does the Government have any preliminary plan on (a) the estimated scale of bond issuance for the KYCAI, and (b) the proportion of bonds available for subscription by individual investors?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

The Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters (the study) commenced in June 2021. The study mainly comprises a planning and engineering study on the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI) and a technical feasibility study on strategic road and rail connecting the artificial islands. We have drawn up preliminary proposals for four aspects, namely the reclamation extent, broad land use, strategic transport infrastructure and possible financing options, of the KYCAI and undertaken public engagement to collect and listen to public views. Taking into account the views received from public engagement, we will further develop the preliminary proposals, aiming to commence the statutory process of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the KYCAI and the strategic road connecting the artificial islands in 2023, to apply for funding in early 2024 to commence detailed design and ground investigation of the project, to proceed with the statutory procedures under the Foreshore and Sea-bed (Reclamations) Ordinance in the second half of 2024, and to complete the detailed design before mid-2025. We target to apply for funding for the reclamation works in the second half of 2025 and commence the reclamation works at the end of the same year. If all goes well, the first batch of residential developments could be completed in 2033 at the earliest.

On major works, our target is to provide about 300 hectares of developable land out of the 1 000 hectares under the KYCAI project in the next decade, and to complete the strategic road in 2033 to tie in with the first population intake at the same time. As the planning, design and construction of the strategic railway will take longer, we aim to commission it within the next few years after the first population intake to keep pace with the development across different parts of the artificial islands. In other words, we strive to commission the railway before full completion of the artificial islands. The initial supply of developable land will include residences, associated infrastructure, 100 hectares of developable land in the third central business district, and Government, Institution or Community (GIC) sites to meet the needs of residents. As for the Green Mass Transit System on the KYCAI, we will conduct a traffic impact assessment in the study based on the land use planning and layout as well as the actual development needs, with a view to formulating an appropriate traffic and transport plan.

As the project is still at the preliminary planning stage and the EIA, ground investigation, etc. are in progress, we need to wait for the completion of specific design work before we can have the basis to develop the phased implementation of the KYCAI project as well as the associated major infrastructure, and to provide a cost estimate according to a more detailed engineering design. After finalising more detailed planning and design concepts, the Government will examine the financing options (including bond issuance) and their economic benefits, in order to work out the appropriate financial arrangements for the KYCAI project.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)044

(Question Serial No. 0766)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance, (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 “in order to meet the manpower requirement for future infrastructure development, we will work with tertiary institutions to offer a comprehensive study and career development pathway and launch a two-year pilot scheme to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes. It is estimated that a funding of about \$100 million will be incurred. The Government will also earmark \$7 million to partner with Hong Kong Institute of Construction to launch a two-year ‘First-hire-then-train’ subsidy scheme, to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have chosen to enrol in Construction Safety Officer courses.”

Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a. Please provide the implementation details of the above schemes, their expected effectiveness, and the related expenditure and staff deployment.
- b. The Construction Industry Council (CIC) has earlier released the “Construction Manpower Forecast”, predicting that the construction industry will face various degrees of manpower shortage in the coming years. What is the Bureau's follow-up action in response to the forecast?
- c. In recent years, the construction industry has been attaching greater importance to the application of innovative technologies and techniques, such as the Common Data Environment (CDE), Building Information Modelling (BIM), Geographic Information System (GIS), etc., which can effectively enhance the construction efficiency of large-scale development projects; and Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), which can significantly reduce the number of site workers. What measures does the Bureau have to promote the application of technology and innovation in the construction industry?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Government will continue to invest in Hong Kong’s future infrastructure. It is estimated that the Government’s annual capital works expenditure will gradually increase to

\$100 billion in the next few years, and the annual total construction output of the public and private sectors will increase to about \$300 billion, providing excellent development prospect for the industry.

To meet the manpower demand of the construction industry, we adopt multi-pronged measures, including enhancing training and recruiting new entrants (including young people), promoting the application of advanced construction techniques and new technologies, etc., so as to uplift the overall productivity in the industry.

- (a) The target recipients of on-the-job training subsidy currently provided by the Government are mainly workers. To assist young people in joining the construction industry and seizing the development opportunities, we propose to extend the scope of on-the-job training subsidy to cover the training of technicians and professionals, so as to encourage young people to join the industry and at the same time enrol in part-time construction-related degree programmes. By enhancing the education and career ladder for young people, we can help them seize the opportunities brought about by future development of the construction industry for upward mobility. At the same time, the subsidy can help expand the source of manpower supply for training up construction industry talents, thereby helping to cope with the increase in manpower demand for future infrastructural development.

We propose to launch a two-year pilot scheme which target at graduates of advanced diploma programmes. The Vocational Training Council will be responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the scheme and providing administrative support. Each student working in the construction industry will receive on-the-job training subsidy totalling \$90,000 (\$24,000 for the first year, \$30,000 for the second year and \$36,000 for the third year) during the three-year part-time degree programme. Taking into account administrative expenses, it is estimated that a one-off funding totalling \$100 million will benefit about 1 000 students.

In addition, we propose to launch a two-year pilot scheme to provide on-the-job training subsidy to students of the construction safety officer courses, with courses and administrative support to be provided by the Hong Kong Institute of Construction under the Construction Industry Council (CIC). The scheme targets at graduates of Secondary Six or the Diploma Yi Jin Programme. The pilot scheme provides a subsidy of \$20,000 for each trainee who completes the training course (which lasts for about 10 months). The two-year pilot scheme is estimated to require a one-off funding of \$7 million and will benefit about 300 trainees.

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

- (b) The CIC released the latest “Construction Manpower Forecast” on 8 February 2023. We are making reference to the forecast data to assess how to enhance local manpower supply through a multi-pronged strategy, including leveraging local manpower resources, enhancing training and bringing in non-local resources as necessary, and reducing manpower needs through productivity uplifting measures. Our target is to present the assessment and a holistic strategy for addressing manpower needs of the construction sector by mid-2023.

The Development Bureau and the CIC have been addressing the manpower needs of the construction industry through a multi-pronged approach. Last year, the Government allocated \$1 billion to the CIC for training more talents, upskilling in-service workers, and providing more on-the-job training opportunities. To attract new entrants, we have also been working with the industry to implement the Hong Kong Construction Industry Joint Promotion Campaign to promote the professional image and development opportunities of the industry as well as its contribution to the building of the society.

In addition, the Government has injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund. We have also set up a cross-departmental steering committee to co-ordinate the development of high productivity construction methods such as Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), in order to continue to promote the use of innovative technologies in the industry to raise productivity and reduce manpower requirements.

- (c) To cope with the huge volume of construction output and the challenges facing by the industry in future, apart from requiring contractors to adopt innovative construction technologies such as MiC, Smart Site Safety System, Digital Works Supervision System and Building Information Modelling in public works contracts, we need to step up our efforts in promoting innovation in the construction industry to enhance its productivity and capability. We have been leading and co-ordinating the research efforts of the works departments through a task force, and collaborating regularly with universities and research institutions to identify research projects with considerable benefits in terms of enhancing productivity, reducing costs and speeding up construction in public works projects, and with wide application in other projects, for further application in public works projects.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)045

(Question Serial No. 0780)

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:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 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 on private worksites through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund, as well as organise promotional activities to enhance safety performance at construction sites”. Regarding the promotion of “smart site safety”, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- a. the expenditures, manpower deployment, specific situation and effectiveness of the promotion of “smart site safety” in the past three years;
- b. the expenditure, manpower deployment, specific work plan and implementation schedule of the promotion of “smart site safety” in the coming year; and
- c. its future work on promoting the adoption and research and development of “smart site safety” technologies by enterprises; whether it will consider including the requirement of using “smart site” products in the tender provisions of public works and whether private developers will be subsidised for application of innovation and technology products?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) attaches great importance to site safety of public works. We review the safety management system of public works projects regularly and adopt multi-pronged measures, including the adoption of Smart Site Safety System (SSSS), to uplift site safety performance.

In the 2022 Policy Address, the Chief Executive states that SSSS will be adopted in capital works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million from early 2023 onwards and private worksites will be subsidised to adopt SSSS through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) starting from the first half of 2023.

a&b.

The DEVB adopted SSSS in capital works contracts in phases in 2020. We have substantially completed the first phase implementation on the adoption of SSSS in eight capital works contracts of different nature (including building construction, tunnel, site formation, sewage treatment works, electrical and mechanical installation, etc.). Having consolidated the experience gained, we consider that SSSS is highly effective in uplifting site safety. Therefore, the DEVB issued a technical circular in February 2023 requiring the adoption of SSSS in capital works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million.

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. The adoption of SSSS depends on factors such as the size, type of works and site environment of a project, 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).

c.

The DEVB issued a technical circular in February 2023 setting out the specifications and contract provisions of SSSS for adoption in capital works contracts. Besides, we rolled out a new measure in April 2023 to subsidise private worksite contractors to purchase or rent SSSS through CITF so as to encourage wider adoption of SSSS in the industry. The Construction Industry Council will also step up publicity to provide the latest information of the relevant equipment and support, with a view to promoting the use of SSSS in the industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)046

(Question Serial No. 0651)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned in paragraph 157 of the Budget Speech, the Government has earmarked \$15 million for studying and putting in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules, so as to implement the new initiatives announced in the 2022 Policy Address. The scope of study will cover areas such as the manufacturing, transportation, storage and accreditation of MiC modules. The Government will also explore the provision of manufacturing and storage sites in the Northern Metropolis, and ways to enhance collaboration with the Greater Bay Area and optimise the MiC supply chain. Will the Government inform this Committee of the details of the related action plan and provide a breakdown of the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. To enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, the Government has been actively promoting the adoption of "high productivity construction" methods such as Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) and Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP). As mentioned in the 2022 Policy Address, a cross-departmental steering committee has been established for coordinating the development of high productivity construction methods such as MiC and the streamlining of related approval processes to remove barriers for the industry, including making available land in the Northern Metropolis for manufacturing and storage by the industry, and fostering collaboration with the Greater Bay Area (GBA). In addition to expediting housing supply, these measures will strengthen the leading regional position of Hong Kong's construction industry in the adoption of MiC.

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

A cross-departmental steering committee to coordinate the development of high productivity construction methods was established by the Development Bureau in early January 2023. The steering committee will formulate measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain. The estimated expenditure will be mainly spent on the study and implementation of new measures covering the following areas:

- the establishment of an accreditation scheme for MiC factories to enhance collaboration with the supply chain in the GBA;
- exploring the reservation of suitable land in the Northern Metropolis for manufacturing and storage of MiC modules by the industry;
- the implementation of measures that can facilitate the logistics of MiC modules, including arrangements regarding cross-boundary tariffs;
- the setting up of a dedicated team to provide technical support to individual projects and as a one-stop platform to enhance communication and collaboration with relevant departments.

The steering committee expects to gradually implement new measures to strengthen the MiC supply chain from 2023 onwards. Reviews will be made at different stages to improve and enhance the effectiveness of the new measures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)047

(Question Serial No. 1250)

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:

At present, Tuen Mun has a population of about 500 000. The residents living along the coastline from Tuen Mun South to Siu Lam have an urgent need for the fifth cross-harbour rail link for support. However, the latest alignment proposed by the Government has changed with Hung Shui Kiu as the starting point, meaning that Tuen Mun residents will hardly benefit from it. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

- (1) the estimated construction cost of the original alignment, i.e. from Tuen Mun South passing through Sam Shing, Gold Coast, Siu Lam, Sunny Bay and the artificial islands in the Central Waters to Hong Kong Island West;
- (2) the latest estimated construction cost of the alignment now proposed by the Government; and
- (3) the reasons why the original alignment is not incorporated into the project of the artificial islands in the Central Waters for construction?

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

Reply:

- (1) The Government made a rough estimate of the construction cost of the proposed priority rail link under the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI) project in the discussion paper submitted to the Legislative Council (LegCo) in 2019. The ballpark construction cost estimate of the alignment proposed connecting Hong Kong Island West, the KYCAI, Northeast Lantau and coastal areas of Tuen Mun, was \$172 billion (in September 2018 prices) at that time.
- (2) In the Study on the KYCAI commissioned by the Civil Engineering and Development Department and the Planning Department in June 2021, the preliminary proposed alignment of the strategic rail link has been revised to connect between Hong Kong Island West and Hung Shui Kiu in the Northern Metropolis. The change is to facilitate connection to the Hong Kong – Shenzhen Western Rail Link already under planning, which will also help strengthen the connection between the Harbour Metropolis and the

Northern Metropolis as well as the Greater Bay Area. As the strategic rail link is still at the preliminary planning stage, we can only have the basis to develop a more accurate cost estimate when the overall design work is completed.

- (3) Since the proposal on the rail link section between Tuen Mun East and Tuen Mun West put forth under the Lantau Tomorrow Vision in 2018 is related to the planning of Lung Kwu Tan and Tuen Mun West, the Government has included it in the Planning and Engineering Study for Lung Kwu Tan Reclamation and the Re-planning of Tuen Mun West Area, which will be launched this year, for consideration together. The Panel on Development of LegCo already had a discussion about the study on 28 February this year and supported the submission of the related funding proposal to the Public Works Sub-committee for consideration. The Government has also proposed reserving a connection point at Tuen Mun East Station of the strategic rail link on the KYCAI to facilitate connection with this section later.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)048

(Question Serial No. 0535)

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:

1. The Development Bureau will formulate a holistic strategy in addressing manpower needs of the construction industry by mid-2023. Will the strategy cover the supply and training of professionals from the architectural, surveying, planning, landscape architectural and other sectors in addition to grassroots workers and middle-level technical staff?
2. It is mentioned in paragraph 140 of the Budget Speech that about \$100 million will be allocated to launch a pilot scheme to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes. What are the details of the types of subsidised programmes, the number of places and the amount of allowance under the scheme? Will both degree and master's degree programmes be covered by the scheme?
3. Will the Government consider subsidising the private sector to provide training for the graduates and assistant professionals from the architectural, surveying, planning and landscape sectors with a view to assisting persons who have completed relevant degree programmes to obtain relevant professional qualifications through further studies and accumulation of work experience?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

The Government will continue to invest in Hong Kong's future infrastructure. It is estimated that the Government's annual capital works expenditure will gradually increase to \$100 billion in the next few years, and the annual total construction output of the public and private sectors will increase to about \$300 billion, providing excellent development prospect for the construction industry.

To meet the manpower demand of the construction industry, we adopt multi-pronged measures, including enhancing training and recruiting new entrants and promoting the

application of advanced construction techniques and new technologies, etc., so as to uplift the overall productivity in the industry.

1. The Construction Industry Council released the latest “Construction Manpower Forecast” on 8 February 2023, which covers the manpower situation of workers, technicians/supervisors and professionals of the industry including professionals from the architectural, surveying, planning and landscape architectural sectors. The Development Bureau is making reference to the forecast data to assess how to enhance manpower supply through a multi-pronged strategy, including leveraging local manpower resources, enhancing training and bringing in non-local resources as necessary, as well as reducing manpower needs through productivity uplifting measures. Our target is to present the assessment and a holistic strategy for addressing manpower needs of the construction sector by mid-2023.
2. The target recipients of on-the-job training subsidy currently provided by the Government are mainly workers. To assist young people in joining the construction industry and seizing the development opportunities, we propose to extend the scope of on-the-job training subsidy to cover the training of technicians and professionals, so as to encourage young people to join the industry and at the same time enrol in part-time construction-related degree programmes. By enhancing the education and career ladder for young people, we can help them seize the opportunities brought about by future development of the construction industry for upward mobility. At the same time, the subsidy can also help expand the source of manpower supply for training up construction industry talents, thereby helping to cope with the increase in manpower demand for future infrastructural development.

We propose to launch a two-year pilot scheme which targets at graduates of higher diploma programmes. The Vocational Training Council will be responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the scheme and providing administrative support. Each student working in the construction industry will receive on-the-job training subsidy totalling \$90,000 (\$24,000 for the first year, \$30,000 for the second year and \$36,000 for the third year) during the three-year part-time degree programme. Taking into account administrative expenses, it is estimated that a one-off funding totalling \$100 million will benefit about 1 000 students.

The pilot scheme covers locally-accredited self-financing part-time construction-related degree programmes with disciplines including engineering, architecture, surveying, planning and landscape architecture.

3. The Government had launched three rounds of temporary subsidy measures for “Support for Engineering, Architectural, Surveying, Town Planning and Landscape Architectural Sectors” under the Anti-epidemic Fund from 2020 to 2022 to provide a wage subsidy for graduates and assistant professionals of the relevant professional sectors working in private organisations, so that they could stay in employment and continue accumulating work experience during the epidemic. The measures have brought about positive impact amid severe epidemic. With the improvement of the epidemic situation, the construction market has largely resumed normal. Therefore, the above temporary subsidy measures will not be further extended.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)049

(Question Serial No. 0306)

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 will promote the extensive application of advanced technologies in the construction industry, and study and put in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) modules. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the impact of the extensive application of advanced technologies in the construction industry on manpower, working hours and occupational safety, and
2. the costs and relative advantages of manufacturing MiC modules in Hong Kong compared to the current practice of importing them?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

The Development Bureau has been promoting Construction 2.0 since 2018. Through innovation, professionalisation and revitalisation, it aims to enhance the project performance in terms of quality, safety, environmental and cost management, as well as the productivity, capability and sustainability of the construction industry. To cope with the challenges of manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction cost, etc. in Hong Kong's construction industry, the Government has been actively promoting the adoption of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) in building projects with a view to enhancing the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness. Furthermore, the Government has been leading by example, piloting MiC in public projects such as schools, dormitories and hospitals, with a view to leading the industry in this regard. Pilot projects adopting MiC, including the InnoCell in Hong Kong Science Park in Tai Po and the Disciplined Services Quarters for the Fire Services Department at Pak Shing Kok in Tseung Kwan O, have been consecutively completed.

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 also started to adopt or pilot MiC. At present, MiC has been or will be adopted in the construction works of over 70 projects in both private and public sectors.

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

1. With the aim of enhancing the construction industry in terms of productivity, sustainability and safety performance etc., the Government takes lead in the application of advanced technologies through innovation, professionalization and revitalisation. Being an example of advanced construction methods, MiC enables most of the labour-intensive and time-consuming processes to be accomplished in prefabrication yards, such that the construction productivity can be increased by the shortened construction period and reduced demand of workers on-site. Through working in a more comfortable factory environment with more regular working hours, the productivity of workers, quality of work, the environmental and occupational safety will also outperforms those with traditional construction methods.
2. Manufacturing MiC modules in Hong Kong can save the cost of transportation and the manpower required for cross-border or remote supervision. However, due to limited land resources in Hong Kong, the cost of local production is relatively high compared with importing the modules. If large scale automated production is being implemented in the factory, the cost of local production can be decreased. Nevertheless, the establishment of production plants in Hong Kong will increase employment opportunities for local construction workers, and will also attract more young people to join the construction industry since construction works are shifted from construction sites to factory environment.

In the 2023-24 Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary has also proposed to earmark \$15 million for studying and putting in place measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, covering areas such as the manufacturing, transportation, storage and accreditation of MiC modules. The Government will also explore the provision of manufacturing and storage sites in the Northern Metropolis, and ways to enhance collaboration with the Greater Bay Area and optimise the MiC supply chain.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)050

(Question Serial No. 1626)

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:

At present, there is an acute shortage of skilled workers in many trades in Hong Kong. Examples include electricians, plumbers, tilers and forklift operators. There is also an ageing problem in these trades. It is mentioned in the Budget that a funding of about \$100 million will be incurred to provide on-the-job training allowance to trainees in the construction industry. Also, the Government will earmark \$7 million for a “First-hire-then-train” subsidy scheme, which will provide allowance to trainees who enrol in Construction Safety Officer courses.

In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee which specialised trades will be covered by the on-the-job training allowance? How will the Government optimise the use of the funding to respond to the shortage of workers and the ageing problem?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

To address the demand for skilled workers in the construction industry and the ageing problem of practitioners, the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) have been implementing multi-pronged measures such as enhancing training and recruiting new entrants to the industry. In order to train more new blood and upskill in-service workers, the Government allocated \$1 billion funding to the CIC in 2022 for providing 27 000 training places over the next six years.

Moreover, with the support of the DEVB, the CIC has implemented the “First-hire-then-train” collaborative training for a total of 50 trades so far, including electrical and mechanical trades, plumbing and bricklaying. Accordingly, contractors and/or trade unions provides training and the CIC provides trainees with training subsidy.

The target recipients of on-the-job training subsidy currently provided by the Government are mainly workers. To assist young people in joining the construction industry and seizing the development opportunities, we propose to extend the scope of on-the-job training subsidy to

cover the training of technicians and professionals. We will launch a two-year pilot scheme to encourage young people to join the industry and enrol in part-time construction-related degree programmes. By enhancing the education and career ladder for young people, we can help them seize the opportunities brought about by future development of the construction industry for upward mobility. At the same time, the scheme will help expand the source of manpower supply for training up construction industry talents, thereby helping to cope with the increase in manpower demand for future infrastructural development. The subjects of the programmes cover engineering, architecture, surveying, planning, and landscape architecture. It is estimated that a one-off funding totalling \$100 million will benefit about 1 000 students.

The Government has also proposed to earmark \$7 million to launch a two-year “First-hire-then-train” subsidy scheme to provide on-the-job training subsidy to trainees who have chosen to enrol in construction safety officer courses. Participants in the scheme will first be employed as assistant safety officer or equivalent by contractors, and while in employment be arranged to enrol in part-time construction safety officer courses organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Construction under the CIC, so that they can acquire both theoretical knowledge and work experience at the same time. We expect the scheme will benefit about 300 trainees.

We will continue to work with the industry and various training institutes. To meet the manpower demand of the industry, we will also support the CIC to enhance their collaboration with trade unions and trade associations in training, so that more on-the-job training pathways will be available to attract more new entrants into the industry and to be trained as technicians.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)051

(Question Serial No. 1116)

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 for 2023-24, 2022-23 and 2021-22, as well as the projects related to publicity, promotion and education, and their expenditures.
2. Given that quite a number of highly aesthetic monuments, such as the Facade of the Old Mental Hospital at High Street, Fan Lau Fort on Lantau Island, Observation Post at Mau Wu Shan and Hindu Temple at Queen's Hill, have been abandoned or are just fenced off, what measures will the Government put in place to make good use of these monuments? What is the estimated expenditure?
3. What plans does the Government have to promote Hong Kong's antiquities and monuments to tourists? What is the estimated expenditure?
4. At present, some monuments are entirely closed to the public, while some provide docent services. However, travel agents are not allowed to make bookings for such services. What measures will the Government implement to encourage the occupiers of monuments to facilitate travel agents to make bookings for visits?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

1. The establishment and estimates of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 are set out in the table below:

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Establishment			
(a) Civil servant	129	129	129
(b) Non-civil service contract staff	18	18	17
(c) Post-retirement service contract staff	1	1	3

Financial provision#	\$158.6 million (actual)	\$172.9 million (revised)	\$192.5 million (estimate)

Inclusive of the AMO's staff costs, operational expenses, and plant, equipment and works expenses.

For projects related to publicity, promotion and education, the AMO has been strengthening its efforts in publicity and public education to promote diversity and innovation, so as to enhance public awareness of and interest in heritage conservation.

Taking 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years as examples, in terms of major exhibitions and activities, projects with the theme of district and Hong Kong's historic buildings included "Taking Strides in Tai Po – A Journey through the District's Heritage" exhibition, "Inseparable Ties: Cohesion as Told by Hong Kong Historic Buildings" exhibition and "Habits and Haberdashery – Uncovering History and Heritage in the Hidden Attic" exhibition. The "Light of Jinsha – The Ancient Shu Civilisation" exhibition on the theme of archaeology and pluralistic-integrative Chinese culture was also held. To promote social inclusion, the AMO organised "Art Unbound, Inclusion Absolute – Heritage for All Drawing Competition" Artwork Showcase.

For heritage education and community involvement, the AMO continued to expand its partnership network and collaborated with various sectors. For example, the AMO collaborated with a TV channel in 2021 to produce 12 TV episodes on historic buildings in Hong Kong. In June the same year, the AMO collaborated with the MTR Corporation Limited to launch the permanent exhibition on the "Treasures from Sacred Hill: Song-Yuan Archaeological Discoveries at Sung Wong Toi" at the newly opened Sung Wong Toi Station on Tuen Ma Line, showcasing some of the important relics unearthed in the archaeological site near Sung Wong Toi Station. In late 2021, collaborating with Bonham Road Government Primary School, which was recently declared a monument, the AMO held a heritage concert at the campus. In November 2022, in collaboration with The University of Hong Kong (HKU), the AMO introduced the "HKU Heritage Sights and Sites" audio guide in Cantonese, Putonghua and English to facilitate visitors' appreciation of the university. To promote district heritage tour routes and to encourage the integration of monument appreciation with sports, the AMO jointly organised City Heritage Runs with non-profit-making organisations (NPOs) in various districts. In November 2022, the first Greater Bay Area (GBA) Built Heritage Summit was held to foster exchange and collaboration among government departments of the GBA, academia, experts, industry practitioners and the public in the conservation, revitalisation and education of built heritage.

The AMO's publicity and public education efforts take various forms and involve collaboration with different sections. For example, education and publicity activities were held at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre and Ping Shan Tang Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre, which are venues managed by the AMO, and exhibitions were held at other outside venues including Sung Wong Toi Station. Activities such as guided tours, seminars and online summer courses for local students were also held. 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 Annual Estimates of the AMO. Breakdown of expenses for publicity, promotion and education has not been maintained.

2. At present, some government-owned historic buildings are used by policy bureaux and departments, and some are leased to non-government or commercial organisations. Where appropriate, these declared monuments and graded historic buildings will allow reasonable degree of public access or will be open for public use or visit after revitalisation of the buildings. Examples include the Hong Kong City Hall (declared monument), Façade of the Old Mental Hospital at High Street (declared monument), Tai Fu Tai Mansion in Yuen Long (declared monument), Old Tai Po Police Station (declared monument, now revitalised as Green Hub), Fan Lau Fort on Lantau Island (declared monument), Former Clubhouse of Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club, No. 12 Oil Street (Grade 2 Historic Building, now revitalised as Oi!), and Old Ping Shan Police Station, Ping Shan, Yuen Long (Grade 2 Historic Building, now Ping Shan Tang Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre). Some graded historic buildings are located on unallocated government land (such as the Observation Post at Mau Wu Shan (Grade 1 Historic Building) and Hindu Temple at Queen's Hill (Grade 3 Historic Building)) and have been fenced off by the Lands Department for protection. Generally speaking, the Government will identify users for government-owned graded buildings which have been left unused, while the AMO will continue to liaise with related government departments to provide technical advice from the heritage conservation perspective regarding the use or repairs and maintenance of these historic buildings. The Development Bureau (DEVB) will also consider including some suitable historic buildings in the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalisation Scheme) for revitalisation and re-use. Moreover, the AMO will regularly inspect the conditions of declared monuments and graded historic buildings, and contact relevant departments for appropriate maintenance. Also, the AMO will help install information panels at some of the declared monuments, historic buildings and government heritage sites (e.g. Fan Lau Fort and its facilities, and boundary stones) to give an account of the history and features of the sites. Regular weeding and cleaning are also arranged to ensure safety and cleanliness of the sites under the AMO's management for public visits. As for privately-owned graded historic buildings, with the agreement of owners, the AMO will select suitable locations for installation of information panels to provide the public with a brief account of the history and features of the buildings, taking into account the owners' proposals, site constraints, public safety and other relevant requirements.

Under the Revitalisation Scheme, NPOs are invited to submit proposals for the adaptive re-use of government-owned historic buildings. The selected NPOs will provide services or run business in these buildings in the form of social enterprise on a self-financing basis. So far, six batches of the Revitalisation Scheme have been implemented, involving a total of 22 government-owned historic buildings and declared monuments.

3. The DEVB has been committed to promoting historic buildings and monuments. Through heritage trails, organising guided tours, seminars and workshops, strengthening collaboration with community organisations, conservation groups and universities, thematic routes with different features have been designed and introduced to facilitate the public and tourists to understand and appreciate monuments. In November 2022,

in collaboration with HKU, the “HKU Heritage Sights and Sites” audio guide programme was launched to showcase the university campus and the declared monuments and graded historic buildings nearby. The tri-lingual audio guide has been uploaded onto the AMO’s webpage to facilitate the public and tourists to appreciate the monuments in HKU. In conjunction with NPOs, we organised City Heritage Run to integrate monument appreciation with running, promoting it to the public and tourists. The AMO also keeps enhancing the docent services at the three existing heritage trails, including Ping Shan Heritage Trail in Yuen Long, Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail in Fanling, and Central and Western Heritage Trail, so that tourists can easily understand and learn about Hong Kong’s heritage and monuments. The DEVB also maintains close liaison with the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the Hong Kong Tourism Board, providing them with assistance in promoting heritage and cultural tourism.

We will continue to make use of various media, such as television, radio, newspapers, social and streaming platforms, to promote Hong Kong’s antiquities and monuments to the public and tourists. We will also enhance our online audio guides on historic buildings and press ahead with a pilot project on virtual tours of historic buildings, to make it easier for the public and tourists to know more about Hong Kong’s monuments and history through different channels.

4. 11 Revitalisation Scheme projects that are in operation, PMQ which was revitalised from Former Married Police Quarters on Hollywood Road, and Tai Kwun – Centre for Heritage and Arts which was revitalised from Central Police Station Compound, are all open to the public at the weekends (including Saturdays and Sundays). They are also open to individual or group (including tour groups) visits. Members of the public and groups can make enquiries with the NPOs direct about their opening hours and visit matters. Cattle Depot Artist Village under the DEVB is also open to the public throughout the year. Members of the public and groups are free to visit the Cattle Depot without booking. Owners of privately-owned graded historic buildings and NPOs leasing government-owned declared monuments and graded historic buildings who are subsidised by the DEVB’s Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage have to allow a reasonable degree of public access to their buildings. The opening hours provided by these owners and organisations have been uploaded onto the website of the Commissioner for Heritage’s Office under the DEVB.

Moreover, a total of over 30 declared monuments and historic buildings managed by the AMO are open for public visits. They are all open at weekends and most are open six days a week. The AMO welcomes members of the public and groups to visit without booking. For group visits, venue staff will provide appropriate assistance.

As for declared monuments that are privately owned or managed, members of the public and groups can contact the respective managers and enquire about opening hours and visits.

The AMO has always encouraged owners of declared monuments and graded historic buildings to open their buildings for public visits. The AMO will carry out restoration and maintenance for private monuments on the condition that the owners agree to accept public access to their buildings.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)052

(Question Serial No. 1215)

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:

In 2017, the Government promulgated the overarching principle of “Development in the North; Conservation for the South” for Lantau. Regarding Lantau development, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please list out the work, estimated expenditure and time required for taking forward the conservation of Lantau this year.
2. Does the Government have any measures in place this year to develop sustainable leisure in Lantau and enhance the recreational facilities on the island, such as road improvement, designation of camp sites and rural facilities, and so on? If so, what are the relevant work, estimated expenditure and time required?
3. As Hong Kong's society returns to normality, has the Government assessed Lantau's capacity to receive visitors and enhanced the supporting facilities, in order to achieve sustainable tourism development? If so, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1&2.

Through the Lantau Conservation Fund (LCF), the Government continues to promote and implement conservation work on Lantau and to carry out minor local improvement works in villages and communities in support of conservation initiatives. In the first two rounds of applications from 2020 to 2022, a total of about \$88 million has been approved to support 31 projects. The funded projects commenced successively in 2021 and are in progress. The third round of applications under the LCF is being vetted, and the results are expected to be announced in the early fourth quarter of 2023. For minor local improvement works, nine projects have been funded in three batches since December 2020, involving a total amount of approximately \$69 million, and commenced successively in 2021, among which three projects have been completed while the rest are still in progress. The estimated expenditure of the LCF for this year is \$43.79 million.

The Sustainable Lantau Office (SLO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) is conducting an ecological study covering San Tau to Sham Wat, Yi O and Shap Long, and cultural and historical studies on villages in Southeast Lantau to explore suitable and feasible conservation and revitalisation options for the villages. The two studies are expected to be completed in June 2023. In 2020, the CEDD also commenced a study on the application of technological devices for identifying vehicles without valid closed road permits entering the Lantau closed roads. The on-site installation of the devices is expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2023 and a trial run will follow. The CEDD will continue to collaborate with other government departments and non-government organisations to promote public education and engagement activities on Lantau, with a view to raising public awareness of Lantau conservation. The estimated expenditure for the above conservation work this year is \$3.28 million.

The CEDD is conducting studies and works in phases based on the Lantau Conservation and Recreation Masterplan (the Masterplan) formulated in 2020 and the Lantau Trails and Recreation Plan. The “Sustainable Leisure and Recreation Initiatives in Shek Pik and Adjoining Areas – Investigation” and “Initiatives for South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor – Investigation” commenced in 2021, aiming to explore sustainable recreational recommendations with less environmental impact, feasibility of ecological recreation and different management options to add vibrancy and diversity to the area. In addition, the CEDD is working on the detailed design of the remaining phases of works for the mountain bike trail networks in south Lantau and the improvement works for the remaining sections of the Round-the-Lantau Route, which are expected to be completed by the end of 2023 to link up about 100 km of the Round-the-Lantau Route, and will commence the detailed design and study of the supporting facilities for the Round-the-Lantau Route in 2024. In March 2023, the CEDD commenced a feasibility study on the enhancement of the north-south road connection network on Lantau Island. The study options include, for east Lantau, the construction of a new road tunnel connecting Mui Wo in the south and the existing road/tunnel at Discovery Bay in the further north, or a new road tunnel directly connecting Mui Wo to Siu Ho Wan in the north; and for west Lantau, the construction of a new road tunnel connecting Shek Pik in the south and Tai O in the north, and/or the provision of a viaduct to improve parts of Keung Shan Road with lots of bends and are relatively steep in gradient and narrow, so as to improve the connection from the south to Tai O. The study is expected to be completed in 2025. The estimated expenditure for the above work this year is \$57.31 million.

3.

In June 2022, the CEDD completed the “Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau” (the Study). The Study examined the conditions of the relevant facilities in Lantau’s tourist destinations from various perspectives, the satisfaction levels of visitors, local residents and businesses, etc. The findings of the Study indicated that Lantau’s tourist destinations and transport infrastructure were generally able to cope with the needs of visitors, and visitor satisfaction was also high. However, some locations were overcrowded with visitors at peak hours during weekends and holidays. To further enhance visitors’ travel experience, the Study recommended implementing mitigation measures, such as improving public transport services and supporting facilities, enhancing the provision of information on public transport services, and exploring the provision of diversified sustainable leisure and recreational facilities at different locations in Lantau so as to help divert visitors to different locations.

The CEDD is reviewing and following up with relevant departments on the subsequent work relating to the recommendations on transport services, and is also conducting studies and works in phases based on the Masterplan formulated in 2020 and the Lantau Trails and Recreation Plan, which include implementing the Round-the-Lantau Route and supporting facilities, studying the provision of sustainable recreational facilities in South Lantau, etc., in order to connect as many heritage, ecological and recreational hotspots as possible, providing a diversified leisure and recreational experience.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)053

(Question Serial No. 2408)

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:

Please advise on the following:

- 1) the increase in training quota, subsidies and training places since the Development Bureau's allocation of \$1 billion to the Construction Industry Council;
- 2) the number of people trained by the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders since its establishment in 2019 and the distribution of trainees by sectors; and
- 3) how the \$1.2 billion funding to the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund proposed in the 2022-23 Budget is allocated and its details.

Please state the reasons if information is not available.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

1. The funding of \$1 billion in 2022-23 is to support the Construction Industry Council (CIC) to increase the number of training places and the amount of subsidy of its existing training schemes, with a view to attracting and training more new blood to join the construction industry, and upskilling and retaining in-service workers. The funding is expected to support about 27 000 training places at the Hong Kong Institute of Construction under the CIC in the coming six years starting from 2022, including about 20 000 training places for new entrants/job changers to become semi-skilled workers and about 7 000 training places for semi-skilled workers to become skilled workers.

Training schemes supported by the above funding are as follows:

- (i) Enhanced Construction Manpower Training Scheme aims at training new entrants to become semi-skilled workers. With the above government funding, the monthly training allowance for each trainee has increased from \$7,650 to \$10,000. In addition, a new on-the-job skill consolidation subsidy of \$2,500 per month for a maximum of nine months has been introduced to employers hiring the trainees

graduated from the scheme, if they pay the graduates a monthly wage of no less than \$15,000 during the employment period, so as to attract new entrants, particularly job changers.

- (ii) Through “first-hire-then-train” method, Approved Technical Talents Training Programme aims at training workers graduated from full-time semi-skilled worker training programmes of the CIC into skilled workers . Depending on the option and trade of the training programme a trainee selects, he will receive a subsidy ranging from \$20,000 to \$24,000 after passing the mid-term assessment for the first year training, and another \$30,000 upon completion of the second year training. During the period of on-the-job training, a monthly training allowance, from \$3,500 to \$6,000 will be provided to the employer to cover the training expenses such as materials, tools and equipment etc. while the employer will provide the trainee with a monthly wage of no less than \$14,000 to \$26,500 (depending on trades).
- (iii) Skills Enhancement Courses aim at upskilling in-service semi-skilled workers to become skilled workers. With the above-mentioned government funding, the one-off subsidy for trainees has increased from \$8,000 to \$16,000 upon their completion of the course and passing the test to become skilled workers.

Starting from September 2022, the CIC has used the \$1 billion funding to increase the number of training places and the amount of allowance of its programmes. As at January 2023, more than 1 900 training places have been approved.

The Development Bureau and the CIC will continue to monitor the enrolment of the training programmes supported by the funding, as well as the progress and effectiveness of various measures in the course of implementation, and will allocate training places to different measures and trades flexibly (including adjusting the trades covered according to needs) in light of market demand, so as to meet the industry’s manpower demand.

- 2. A total of about 150 participants from the Government and Major Public Clients have completed the development programmes since the establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders (the Centre) in 2019. With the support and the \$30 million earmarked in the 2022-23 budget from the Financial Secretary, the training of the Centre has been extended, since this year, to stakeholders outside the Government, including senior management of major public organisations as well as those working for consultants and contractors engaged in public works projects
- 3. In 2022, the Government injected an additional \$1.2 billion into the CITF (taking into account the \$1 billion allocated upon its establishment in 2018, the fund has a total of \$2.2 billion), to encourage wider use of innovative construction methods and technologies in the industry, and various types of training in technology adoption.

As at end January 2023, the CITF has approved subsidies totalling about \$800 million. A breakdown of the subsidies approved in different areas of technology adoption is as follows:

	Breakdown of subsidies approved
1. Technology adoption	
• Building Information Modelling (including related training)	\$130 million
• Advanced construction technologies	\$390 million
• Modular Integrated Construction	\$140 million
• Prefabricated steel rebar	\$130 million
2. Manpower development	\$14 million
Total	About \$800 million

We will closely monitor the approval situation of the CITF, and make appropriate adjustments to the measures under the fund and estimates of subsidies for various technology adoption areas and manpower development in response to the needs of the industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)054

(Question Serial No. 2409)

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:

Regarding the cost of the Artificial Islands in the Central Waters and the different financing options to be adopted, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

What is the estimated expenditure for the infrastructure on the islands, including public housing, community facilities, roads, etc., to be borne by the Government?

What are the respective percentages of the \$580 billion construction cost to be (i) paid by public funds and (ii) financed?

When is the entire project expected to break even?

What is the Government's expenditure on public engagement for the Artificial Islands in the Central Waters? Please provide a detailed breakdown if available.

Regarding the public engagement activities for the Artificial Islands in the Central Waters, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

For Stage 1 public engagement activities (29 December 2022 - 31 March 2023), including but not limited to the dedicated website, exhibitions at eight exhibition venues, related publicity, etc., please list the details of the expenditure for each item and the number of visits.

For Stage 2 public engagement activities, including but not limited to public forums, exhibitions, etc., please list the details of each budget item and key performance indicators (e.g. number of participants), and the expected commencement date.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

We made a ballpark estimate of about \$500 billion in 2019 (at September 2018 price) for the construction cost of the reclamation of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI), the associated infrastructures (including water supply, sewerage, drainage system, etc.) and the strategic transport infrastructure works on the KYCAI. If that estimate is adjusted solely based on civil engineering-related indexes, the construction cost of the project is roughly estimated to be about \$580 billion (at second quarter 2022 prices). However, the KYCAI project is still at the preliminary planning stage, and the ecological survey, geological

investigation and other work are in progress. Only after the completion of the overall design work, we will have the basis for making a cost estimate with reference to a more detailed engineering design.

Nevertheless, the KYCAI project will undoubtedly bring substantial social and economic benefits to Hong Kong. Upon full development of the KYCAI, the associated economic activities will generate around \$200 billion of added value for Hong Kong each year, amounting to about 7% of the Gross Domestic Product. Furthermore, we consider it unnecessary to rely solely on public expenditure to take forward the project. Apart from funding through the Capital Works Reserve Fund, we may also consider introducing one or more financing options to make appropriate use of market forces.

We have put forth preliminary proposals on the scope of reclamation, land use, transport infrastructure network and financial arrangements regarding the KYCAI, and have commenced public engagement activities. Upon finalisation of a more detailed planning and design concept, the Government will examine various financing options and their economic benefits, and work out the appropriate financial arrangements for the project.

The public engagement activities for the KYCAI are still under way. As at 2 March this year, a total of about 9 000 visitors have visited the exhibitions at the Tung Chung Community Liaison Centre and the City Gallery in Central as well as four roving exhibitions, and over 7 000 visits have been made to the dedicated website. After this public engagement exercise, we will carry on with the continuous public involvement approach in the next stage of the study.

As we have not yet completed the final account of the public engagement activities, we are unable to provide the expenditure in this regard.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3184)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Facilities Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services (Edward TSE Cheong-wo)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

What were the numbers, locations and costs of unisex toilets newly constructed and refurbished by the Government in the past 5 years?

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 70)

Reply:

Of the new public toilet projects undertaken by the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) in the past 5 years, a total of 13 unisex toilets were constructed, including 3 in the North District, 2 in Tai Po District, 2 in Tuen Mun District, 2 in the Eastern District, 1 in the Southern District and 3 in the Islands District. During the same period, a total of 167 unisex toilets, located in various districts on Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, the New Territories and outlying islands, were refurbished by the ArchSD.

As the above works for unisex toilets were only a part of the construction or refurbishment projects on public toilets, in which works for other toilets or related facilities were involved, the ArchSD does not have a separate breakdown of costs for the newly constructed or refurbished unisex toilets.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)056

(Question Serial No. 2594)

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 “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24” that the Planning Department takes forward the detailed planning of Tung Chung New Town Extension, including provision of planning input to the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Lands Department to facilitate timely implementation of the New Town Extension. Will the Government inform:

1) given that last year, the Government put forward the proposal to construct “two tunnels and one viaduct” on Lantau Island to connect Mui Wo with Siu Ho Wan and to connect Shek Pik with Tai O Road, etc., whether the Government will commence the detailed planning (including the aforesaid proposal) this year; if yes, the schedule, as well as the manpower and expenditure involved.

2) whether the Government will construct a traffic and transport network linking North and South Lantau and looping around Lantau Island, with Tung Chung as the centre; if yes, the manpower and expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1)
The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) completed the “Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau” (T&T Study) in June 2022 to review the traffic needs for road connection within Lantau and recommend improvement options under the overarching principle of “Development in the North; Conservation for the South”.

The T&T Study recommended strengthening the traffic infrastructure in East and West Lantau respectively to improve the connection between North and South Lantau. The recommendations include:

East Lantau

- (i) construct a new road tunnel connecting Mui Wo in the south and the existing road/tunnel of Discovery Bay in the further north; or
- (ii) construct a new road tunnel directly connecting Mui Wo in the south and Siu Ho Wan in the north.

West Lantau

- (i) construct a new road tunnel connecting Shek Pik in the south and Tai O in the north; and/or
- (ii) provide a viaduct for improving parts of Keung Shan Road with lots of bends and are relatively steep in gradient and narrow, improving the connection between South Lantau and Tai O.

The T&T Study also recommended exploring the reuse and improvement of Old Tung Chung Road, which is in the middle part of Lantau.

The CEDD commenced the feasibility study on road network enhancement in Lantau in March this year to further explore the feasibility of the above recommendations and to select and prioritise the most suitable combination of options, with a view to taking forward the project as soon as possible. The study is expected to be completed in mid-2025. The Government has earmarked about \$24.88 million in the Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations for the expenditure of this study.

Currently, this feasibility study is being overseen by the CEDD's departmental staff, as part of their overall duties. As such, we do not have a separate breakdown of the manpower and the remuneration of the staff involved solely for this work.

2)

Most of the southern part of Lantau is of nature conservation value and with road network of rural design. To conserve the tranquil environment of the southern part of Lantau and consider the road capacity of Lantau, roads in South Lantau (including Tung Chung Road, South Lantau Road and Keung Shan Road) are designated as closed roads at present. Access to these roads with vehicles requires a valid "Lantau Closed Road Permit".

Currently, the annual average daily traffic of roads in South Lantau are less than half of their design capacities. Considering that there being quite an extent of spare road capacities and the overarching planning principles of "Development in the North; Conservation for the South" of Lantau, there is insufficient justification for the time being from the traffic flow perspective to support constructing transport infrastructure other than the connection options between North and South Lantau as mentioned above or a road network round the island of Lantau.

Nonetheless, it is expected that the recommended options mentioned in Part (1) can considerably improve the connection between North and South Lantau. Therefore, we shall accord priority to the exploration and selection of a feasible and the most suitable combination of options at this stage with a view to taking them forward as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)057

(Question Serial No. 0168)

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 three years (2020-21 to 2022-23), 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 three 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.: 6)

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
2020	About 0.65 million m ³	About 2.77 million m ³	Lamma Power Station Navigation Channel Improvement and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels
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 0.2 million m ³	About 0.94 million m ³	Central Kowloon Route and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels

- (b) The 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 2.47 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 44.5 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 2032.

- (c) Based on the capacity, we anticipate that the existing contaminated sediment disposal facility located to the east of Sha Chau may operate until 2027. We are currently planning the provision of a new disposal facility in the waters to the west of Lamma Island, in a bid to continue to provide a facility for contaminated sediment disposal to meet the demand upon the exhaustion of the capacity of the only existing disposal facility.
- (d) Based on the current information, we anticipate that the annual sediment disposal volume will average about 0.5 million m³ for contaminated sediment and about 0.35 million m³ for uncontaminated sediment in the coming 3 years (from 2023 to 2025). 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 capacity to meet the demand.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)058

(Question Serial No. 0173)

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 three years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) whether the Government has imposed any penalties on the responsible parties for the marine pollution incidents caused by marine works over the past three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) 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 three years (2020-21 to 2022-23)?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

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 submission of an Environmental Management Plan and deployment of Competent Person to supervise the implementation of 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. 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 (2020-21 to 2022-23), there was no marine pollution incidents caused by marine works under the CEDD's purview.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)059****(Question Serial No. 0983)**Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational ExpensesProgramme: Not specifiedControlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development (Michael H S FONG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for DevelopmentQuestion:

The establishment ceiling 2023-24 rises from 2 023 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2023 to 2 047 posts as at 31 March 2024, representing an increase of 24 posts. Will the Government inform this committee of the anticipated increase of establishment and expenditure in 2023-24?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)Reply:

In 2023-24, 46 new non-directorate posts will be created in the Civil Engineering and Development Department, while 22 non-directorate posts will be deleted or lapsed in the same year. Therefore, the net increase of non-directorate posts in 2023-24 is 24.

A breakdown of the 46 new non-directorate posts to be created in 2023-24 by their rank and number of post is tabulated below-

Rank	Number of Post
Senior Engineer	12
Senior Geotechnical Engineer	1
Engineer/Assistant Engineer	17
Geotechnical Engineer/Assistant Geotechnical Engineer	3
Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Assistant Electrical and Mechanical Engineer	2
Building Services Engineer/Assistant Building Services Engineer	1
Landscape Architect/Assistant Landscape Architect	1
Field Officer I	1

Senior Technical Officer	1
Technical Officer/Technical Officer Trainee	2
Survey Officer/Survey Officer Trainee	1
Senior Executive Officer	1
Executive Officer I	1
Personal Secretary II	1
Assistant Clerical Officer	1
Total:	46

The annual staff cost for the net increase of the 24 posts is \$37.27 million in terms of notional annual mid-point salary value.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)060

(Question Serial No. 0266)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision and Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the continuous monitoring of the implementation of conservation and development initiatives and projects set out in the Sustainable Lantau Blueprint and the Lantau Tomorrow Vision, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. the details of the conservation and development initiatives and projects implemented over the past three years, including the plans and expenditures incurred;
2. the details of the conservation and development initiatives and projects to be implemented in the coming year, including the plans and estimated expenditure;
3. the establishment, plan implementation and estimated expenditure of the Sustainable Lantau Office since its establishment and in the coming year;
4. the details of the implementation of the initiatives and projects of the Lantau Conservation Fund over the past three years, including the plans and expenditures incurred;
5. the details of the implementation of the initiatives and projects of the Lantau Conservation Fund in the coming year, including the plans and estimated expenditure.

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

1, 2, 4 and 5

The Sustainable Lantau Office (SLO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) is implementing the conservation and development initiatives and projects set out in the Sustainable Lantau Blueprint and the Lantau Tomorrow Vision in a well-prioritised manner. The development and conservation (including the Lantau Conservation Fund) work undertaken by the SLO over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and in the coming year (2023-24) are tabulated as below:

Development Projects

Tung Chung New Town Extension

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	We are implementing the Tung Chung New Town Extension project in phases. The progress of the Tung Chung East reclamation works is good and the works will be substantially completed in the first quarter of 2023. The first phase of the site formation and infrastructure works, including Ma Wan Chung improvement works, first phase of River Park construction, and various smart, green and resilient measures, have commenced in phases since mid-2021.	9,910.864
In the Coming Year	We will continue with the first phase of the site formation and infrastructure works. For the remaining phase, the detailed design is in progress and is expected to be completed in the coming year at the earliest.	1,875.641

Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI)

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	The Study on the Artificial Islands in the Central Waters commenced in June 2021. It mainly comprises a planning and engineering study on the KYCAI and a technical feasibility study on strategic road and rail links connecting the artificial islands. We have formulated preliminary proposals for the KYCAI on 4 aspects, i.e. reclamation extent, broad land use, strategic transport infrastructure and possible financing options, and we are conducting public engagement activities to collect and listen to public views.	249.472
In the Coming Year	We will further develop the preliminary proposals. We aim to commence the statutory process of environmental impact assessment in 2023 and apply for funding for detailed design and ground investigation in early 2024.	142.369

Engineering Study on Road P1 (Tai Ho – Sunny Bay Section)

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	The engineering study for Road P1 (Tai Ho - Sunny Bay Section) commenced in June 2021.	55.755
In the Coming Year	The study is anticipated to be completed by end 2023.	13.594

Study related to Sunny Bay Reclamation

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	We are reviewing the timetable for the planning and engineering study.	-
In the Coming Year	Under the preliminary proposals for the KYCAI announced in late 2022, part of the Sunny Bay reclamation area will be reserved for the depot of the proposed Hong Kong Island West - Hung Shui Kiu Rail Link. In order to facilitate the early commissioning of the railway, we plan to commence the engineering feasibility study on Sunny Bay reclamation in the second quarter of 2023.	24.090 Note 2

Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	We completed the “Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau” (T&T Study) in June 2022.	1.221
In the Coming Year	-	-

Feasibility Study on Road Network Enhancement to South Lantau

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	The T&T Study recommended strengthening the traffic infrastructure in East and West Lantau respectively to improve the connection between North and South Lantau. We commenced the feasibility study on road network enhancement to South Lantau in March 2023, to further explore the feasibility of the above recommendations and to select and prioritise the most suitable combination of options with a view to taking forward the project as soon as possible.	-
In the Coming Year	We will continue to conduct the above feasibility study and target to complete the study in mid-2025.	11.740 Note 2

Conservation Initiatives

Lantau Conservation Fund

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	<p>The Government set up the \$1 billion Lantau Conservation Fund (LCF) and the LCF Advisory Committee in 2020 to promote and implement conservation work of Lantau and to carry out Minor Local Improvement Works (MLIW) in villages and communities to support conservation initiatives. Half of the LCF (\$500 million) is dedicated to providing financial support to eligible non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charitable organisations, tertiary education institutions, etc. to collaborate with local communities and landowners to take forward 3 types of “conservation and related projects” in Lantau, including “Research Project”, “Education & Engagement Project” and “Conservation Management Agreement Project”. The other half of the fund (\$500 million) is dedicated to MLIWs on government land in Lantau to support conservation.</p> <p>For the 2 rounds of applications in year 2020-21 and 2021-22, the LCF approved a total of 31 conservation projects (including 19 Research Projects, 9 Education & Engagement Projects and 3 Conservation Management Agreement Projects), involving a total amount of about \$88 million. The approved projects have been progressively commenced since 2021.</p> <p>The third round of applications for “Research Project” and “Education & Engagement Project” for year 2022-23 closed on 28 February 2023, while the application for "Conservation Management Agreement Project" closed on 31 March 2023.</p> <p>Since December 2020, a total of 9 projects of MLIWs from 3 batches have been funded, involving a total amount of about \$69 million. The approved projects have commenced since 2021, of which 3 projects have been completed while the rest are still in progress.</p>	36.538
In the Coming Year	We expect to announce the results of the third round LCF applications in the early 4th quarter of 2023.	43.793

Other Conservation Initiatives

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	<p>We completed the Ecological Study for Pui O, Shui Hau, Tai O and Neighbouring Areas in 2021 and the cultural and historical studies of Northwest Lantau in December 2022.</p> <p>In 2020, we commenced a study on the application of technology for identifying vehicles without valid closed road permits entering the Lantau closed roads. The on-site installation of the devices started in May 2022.</p> <p>We collaborate with other government departments and NGOs to promote public education and engagement activities to raise public awareness of the conservation of Lantau.</p>	12.790
In the Coming Year	<p>We anticipate to complete the “Ecological Surveys and Studies for San Tau to Sham Wat, Yi O and Shap Long - Feasibility Study” and the cultural and historical studies of Southeast Lantau in June 2023.</p> <p>We anticipate the on-site installation of the devices identifying vehicles without valid closed road permits will be completed in the second quarter of 2023, followed by a field trial for at least 1 year.</p> <p>We will continue to collaborate with other government departments and NGOs to promote public education and engagement activities to raise public awareness of the conservation of Lantau.</p>	3.275

Recreation Initiatives

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	We have been taking forward the sustainable leisure and recreation initiatives under the Lantau Trails and Recreation Plan. The 2 investigation studies for the provision of eco-recreation and conservation measures in South Lantau commenced in late 2021. The second phase of works for Mountain Bike Trail Networks in South Lantau, trails improvement at the section between Po Chue Tam and Fu Shan in Tai O, and Ngong Ping hiking trail as well as supporting facilities were substantially completed in the end of 2022.	58.685
In the Coming Year	We anticipate that the 2 investigation studies for the provision of eco-recreation and conservation measures in South Lantau will be completed by end 2023. The associated detailed design will commence in 2024. We anticipate that the detailed design for the remaining phase of works for Mountain Bike Trail Networks in South Lantau and the improvement works for the remaining sections of the Round-the-Lantau Route will be completed by end 2023 for completing the connection of the 100-kilometre long Round-the-Lantau Route. The detailed design and study for the provision of supporting facilities along the Round-the-Lantau Route will commence in 2024.	45.571

Local Improvement Works

Improvement Works at Mui Wo

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	We have completed the detailed design of Phase 2 Stage 2 works and are seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council.	13.995
In the Coming Year	Phase 2 Stage 2 works are expected to commence in mid-2023.	54.277 Note 2

Improvement Works at Tai O

	Programme / Progress	Expenditure Incurred / Estimated Expenditure (million) Note 1
Over the Past 3 Years	We have completed the detailed design of Phase 2 Stage 2 works. The relevant funding application for the works was approved by the Finance Committee on 17 March 2023.	4.038
In the Coming Year	Phase 2 Stage 2 works are expected to commence in the second quarter of 2023. We are carrying out the design of Phase 3 works.	93.347

Note 1 : Expenditure Incurred was the actual expenditure over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23). Estimated expenditure is the forecast estimate for the coming year (2023-24).

Note 2 : Subject to funding approval of the Finance Committee

3. As of end March 2023, the establishment of the SLO comprises 8 directorate staff (including 6 supernumerary directorate posts up to 31 March 2025), 73 professional staff with the support of 55 technical grade and general grade staff of the CEDD. In 2023-24, there are no new posts for creation in the SLO and the expenditure forecast of the personal emoluments of the office in-house staff is about \$127 million. We will review the arrangement for these posts in due course, taking into account the progress of the relevant projects and initiatives as well as the latest situation and development needs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)061

(Question Serial No. 2411)

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:

Regarding the “preparation of the engineering study for Ma Liu Shui reclamation”, will the Government advise on the following:

1. the estimated expenditure for the abovementioned study and its percentage of the total expenditure of the project;
2. whether the Government has conducted further assessment on the potential impact of reclamation on the environment, ecology, landscape and visual, drainage, hydraulic performance of Shing Mun River, traffic and transport infrastructure, etc, after the completion of the “Study on Technical Issues Related to Potential Reclamation Site at Ma Liu Shui” in 2017. If yes, the details and the schedule; if not, the reasons;
3. the expenditure and budget involved in improving the ancillary transport facilities in the vicinity of the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project in accordance with the infrastructure-led principle;
4. whether local groups and the public will be consulted on the abovementioned works. If yes, the details and the estimated expenditure; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned the “Engineering Study for Ma Liu Shui Reclamation” (the Study) in July 2022. The Study mainly covers the preliminary design of the reclamation works, studies on the environment, marine ecology and marine traffic, etc, as well as preliminary site investigation works, and will take into account the relevant information in the “Study on Technical Issues Related to Potential Reclamation Site at Ma Liu Shui” completed in 2017. The approved project estimate for the Study is about \$41.75 million.

In the meantime, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has engaged the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to carry out the “Preliminary Planning

Study for Land Development and Preliminary Engineering Feasibility Study” in early 2023, covering the study of the site development and supporting infrastructure, including preliminary traffic impact assessment, of the land released by the Ma Liu Shui Reclamation Project and the Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to Caverns.

The two studies are expected to be completed within 2024 and will formulate recommendations on the required infrastructure will be made at that time.

The Government will, based on the findings of the two studies, carry out consultation in due course. The relevant costs have been included in the consultancy agreements and we are unable to provide the required figures as there is no separate breakdown of such costs under the consultancy agreements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)062

(Question Serial No. 2413)

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:

Regarding the pilot planning and engineering study on development of selected Strategic Cavern Areas, will the Government advise on the following:

1. the progress and the expenditure involved in the development of the 48 Strategic Cavern Areas (SCVAs) in the territory which are available for development; the projects among which that have significant achievement; the total amount of expenditure saved or revenue generated for the Government;
2. the land uses of the various development plans and the area of land that can be developed;
3. the estimated expenditure and cost effectiveness of the various development plans;
4. whether the Government will regularly review or assess other potential cavern areas, and the budget involved.

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

(1), (2) & (3)

The Cavern Master Plan (CMP) promulgated by the Government in 2017 identified 48 potential sites for cavern development (namely Strategic Cavern Areas (SCVAs)) in Hong Kong. The CMP provides a broad strategic planning framework for the reference of government departments and public and private organisations to identify suitable SCVAs for accommodating their facilities in pursuing their projects.

The Government is proactively taking forward a number of projects for relocating/accommodating suitable public facilities into caverns, with a view to releasing land for housing and other beneficial uses. Located in 6 SCVAs, these facilities include sewage treatment works, fresh water/salt water service reservoirs, store, material testing laboratory and archives centre, etc. Apart from creating additional space and opening up land resources by releasing existing sites of the facilities, cavern development also brings other benefits to the community, such as improving the urban setting and community environment through

relocating facilities that are incompatible with the surrounding land uses. Such benefits to the environment and community, development cost and other factors will be taken into account when assessing the benefits of cavern development.

The latest progress, land use and land area, and estimated expenditure of the cavern development projects are tabulated as follows:

Relocation / Accommodation Projects of Public Facilities into Caverns	Project Details and Estimated Expenditure	Latest Progress, Land Use and Land Area of the Released Land
(1) Projects under construction		
Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works	<p>Relocation of the sewage treatment works to the caverns at Nui Po Shan, A Kung Kok, Sha Tin (SCVA No. 20)</p> <p>The approved project estimate of Stage 1 works, including site preparation and tunnel construction works, is \$2.0775 billion (in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices).</p> <p>The approved project estimate of Stage 2 works, including main caverns construction and upstream sewerage works, is \$14.0765 billion (in MOD prices).</p>	<p>The construction works are being carried out in phases. Stage 1 works commenced in 2019 and were completed in 2022 as scheduled. Stage 2 works have been commenced progressively since July 2021.</p> <p>The construction works in the next stage involves the ancillary buildings of the sewage treatment works and works of the cavern ventilation system. We plan to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee in 2023 to commence the works. We will continue to take forward the construction works of the remaining stages and seek funding approval from the Finance Committee for relevant works in a timely manner. The target is to release the existing site of 28 hectares for innovation and technology development.</p>
Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs	Relocation of the service reservoirs to the caverns to the south of Lion Rock (SCVA No. 26)	The works commenced in December 2022, with a target to release the existing site of about 4 hectares in the second half of 2027 for development of housing and community facilities.

Relocation / Accommodation Projects of Public Facilities into Caverns	Project Details and Estimated Expenditure	Latest Progress, Land Use and Land Area of the Released Land
	The approved project estimate is \$2.3342 billion (in MOD prices).	
(2) Project seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council		
Victoria Public Mortuary	<p>Relocation of the public mortuary to the site at the western end of Victoria Road, and provision of ancillary facilities for the Department of Health at the existing cavern to the southeast of the site for storage of emergency supplies and personal protective equipment (SCVA No. 41)</p> <p>The estimated cost of the proposed project is \$890 million (in MOD prices).</p>	The Panel on Health Services was consulted on 13 May 2022. The works are targeted to commence in 2023.
(3) Project under investigation and design		
Public Works Central Laboratory	<p>Relocation of the laboratory to the caverns at Anderson Road Quarry (SCVA No. 28)</p> <p>The consultancy fee for the investigation, design and construction of the Public Works Central Laboratory and Archives Centre is \$60 million in total.</p>	<p>The investigation and design have been substantially completed. The project cost is being estimated. It is targeted to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council in 2023 for commencement of the works.</p> <p>The existing site and the adjoining land of about 0.8 hectares in total will be released after the construction works for housing and recreational facilities.</p>
Archives Centre	Accommodation of the Archives Centre inside the caverns at Anderson	The investigation and design have been substantially completed. The project cost is

Relocation / Accommodation Projects of Public Facilities into Caverns	Project Details and Estimated Expenditure	Latest Progress, Land Use and Land Area of the Released Land
	<p>Road Quarry (SCVA No. 28) for storage of archives.</p> <p>The consultancy fee for the investigation, design and construction of the Public Works Central Laboratory and the Archives Centre is \$60 million in total.</p>	<p>being estimated. It is targeted to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council in 2023 for commencement of the works.</p>
<p>Tsuen Wan No. 2 Fresh Water Service Reservoir</p>	<p>Relocation of the service reservoir to the caverns at Smugglers' Ridge, Kwai Chung (SCVA No. 16).</p> <p>The consultancy fee for the investigation, design and construction is \$23.86 million.</p>	<p>The investigation, design and cost estimation of the project commenced in June 2022.</p> <p>The existing site and the adjoining land of about 6.4 hectares in total will be released after the construction works for housing and community facilities.</p>
<p>Yau Tong Group Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs</p>	<p>Relocation of the service reservoirs to the caverns at Chiu Keng Wan Shan, Yau Tong (SCVA No. 30)</p> <p>The consultancy fee for the investigation, design and construction is \$23.8 million.</p>	<p>The investigation, design and cost estimation of the project commenced in June 2022.</p> <p>The existing site and the adjoining land of about 6 hectares in total will be released after the construction works for housing and community facilities.</p>

(4)

We are currently conducting the “Pilot Planning and Engineering Study on Development of Selected Strategic Cavern Areas” which includes an assessment of relocating/accommodating various kinds of facilities within selected SCVAs, as well as a review of the existing CMP and the planning of new SCVAs to facilitate the long-term development of Hong Kong. The consultancy fee of the study is about \$20.8 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)063

(Question Serial No. 1649)

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:

According to the key performance measures relating to management of construction and demolition materials, the public fill delivered to the Mainland for beneficial reuse will be increased from 1.9 million tonnes in 2022 to 7 million tonnes in 2023. Will the Government inform this Committee of the reason for this 268% increase?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The local construction industry annually generates a large quantity of public fill. While part of the public fill is transferred to the local construction sites as appropriate for direct reuse, the rest is delivered to public fill reception facilities (including 2 temporary fill banks) for interim storage and future reuse in reclamation or earth filling projects. As local reuse 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 Government has been delivering part of the surplus public fill to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal since 2007 under the bilateral co-operation agreement.

In 2022, 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, and the quantity of surplus public fill delivered to the Mainland was about 1.9 million tonnes. In 2023, taking into account that the local reclamation projects would gradually be completed and the local reclamation projects under planning (including the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands) will only commence progressively from end 2025 the earliest, the estimated quantity of surplus public fill to be delivered to the Mainland will be increased to about 7 million tonnes.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)064

(Question Serial No. 1650)

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:

Under this Programme, the provision for 2023-24 is 1,333.9 million, which is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2022-23 by 68.1%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the percentage change is "due to the increased provision for filling of vacancies, salary increments and handling of surplus public fill". In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the breakdown of items under this Programme, the respective revised provision for 2022-23 and provision for 2023-24 of each item, and the reason for the significant increase in provision?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The financial provision for Programme (7) mainly includes the operation and maintenance costs of public fill reception facilities, costs for the delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland and 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 at disposal sites. As the delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland and the supply of the public fill stockpiled in fill banks to local projects for reuse are both undertaken by a single contractor, there is no breakdown of the costs for individual operations in the contract. The increase of the financial provision for 2023-24 from the revised provision for 2022-23 by 68.1% is mainly due to the increase in the estimated quantity of surplus public fill to be delivered to the Mainland.

In 2022, 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, and the quantity of surplus public fill delivered to the Mainland was about 1.9 million tonnes. In 2023, taking into account that the local reclamation projects would gradually be completed and the local

reclamation projects under planning (including the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands) will only commence progressively from end 2025 the earliest, the estimated quantity of surplus public fill to be delivered to the Mainland will be increased to about 7 million tonnes.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)065

(Question Serial No. 0564)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure,
(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:

1. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) states that it will capitalise on the tourism strength of the Lei Yue Mun area and continue the construction of a public landing facility and related marine works in the area. Does it include the revitalisation of the ex-Lei Yue Mun Quarry site and the improvement of the wave facilities near Ma Wan Tsuen at Lei Yue Mun Hoi Pong Road East? If not, what are the reasons?
2. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) estimates that the amount of public fill to be delivered to the Mainland for beneficial reuse in 2023 will be 7 million tonnes, which is 7 times of the amount in 2021. What are the reasons and the relevant expenditure?
3. It is estimated that the expenditure for "Management of Construction and Demolition Materials" in 2023-24 will be 1.33 billion, representing an increase of 68% over the revised estimate for 2022-23. Is it mainly due to the substantial increase in both the amount of public fill to be delivered to the Mainland and the relevant expenditure? Does the Department anticipate that the relevant expenditure will remain at a relatively high level in the coming years, or even increase further?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

1.
The Government has been pursuing the Lei Yue Mun (LYM) Waterfront Enhancement Project (the Project) with a view to further improving the facilities along the LYM waterfront and its connectivity to enhance the attractiveness of LYM as a popular tourist attraction. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Architectural Services Department are commissioned by the Tourism Commission to implement the Project in which CEDD is responsible for the construction of a public landing facility, a breakwater to reduce wave impact to the berthing vessels at the landing facility and the improvement works to an

existing viewing platform and a lookout point. The scope of the Project does not include the ex-Lei Yue Mun quarry site which is more than 500m away from the public landing facility.

In addition, the consultants appointed by the CEDD identified 26 coastal low-lying or windy residential areas with higher risks, including Ma Wan Tsuen, Lei Yue Mun, for implementation of improvement works and management measures in the “Study of Coastal Hazards under Climate Change and Extreme Weather and Formulation of Improvement Measures - Feasibility Study” (the Study). Considering factors including the geography condition of Ma Wan Tsuen, site constraints, cost-effectiveness, impact on navigation channels, environment and society, etc, the Study concluded that more pragmatic options including installation of flood barriers at suitable places behind the coastline to cut off water pathway towards inland and installation of demountable flood barriers at buildings frontages, together with management measures such as early alert system and opening of temporary shelters, shall be adopted to safeguard public safety.

2. and 3.

The local construction industry annually generates a large quantity of public fill. While part of the public fill is transferred to the construction sites as appropriate for direct reuse, the rest is delivered to the temporary public fill reception facilities (including 2 temporary fill banks) for interim storage and future reuse in reclamation or earth filling projects. As local reuse could not absorb all the public fill generated in Hong Kong, coupled with the fact that the capacities of temporary fill banks are limited, the Government has been delivering surplus public fill to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal since 2007 under the bilateral co-operation agreement.

In 2021, 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 a large quantity of public fill. Hence, only about 1 million tonnes of public fill was delivered to the Mainland in 2021. However, in 2023, as these reclamation projects would gradually be completed, the estimated quantity of surplus public fill to be delivered to the Mainland will be about 7 million tonnes. Since the local reclamation projects under planning (including the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands) will only commence progressively from end 2025 the earliest, it is anticipated that we will have to deliver more public fill to the Mainland in the next few years and the estimated expenditure will also be higher.

The Government’s expenditure on the management of public fill mainly includes the operation and maintenance costs of public fill reception facilities, cost 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 at disposal sites.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)066

(Question Serial No. 2312)

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:

For the sustainable development of Lantau Island, please provide in tabular form the Government's proposed implementation schedule (by year and quarter) for items 1-3 below. If there is no such schedule for individual items, please explain why.

	Commencement and completion time of consultancy studies to be commenced/commenced	Estimated time of the Government's announcement to the public and the Legislative Council	Estimated time of Government funding and statutory procedures
1) Implementation of sustainable leisure and recreation initiatives in Shek Pik and adjoining areas			
2) Implementation of South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor initiatives			
3) Development of about 1 000 hectares of the "green belt" sites in the southern part of Lantau for eco-tourism or recreation			

Reply:

	Commencement and completion time of consultancy studies to be commenced/commenced	Estimated time of the Government's announcement to the public and the Legislative Council	Estimated time of Government funding and statutory procedures
1) Implementation of sustainable leisure and recreation initiatives in Shek Pik and adjoining areas	The Sustainable Lantau Office (SLO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department formulated the Lantau Conservation and Recreation Masterplan and the Lantau Trails and Recreation Plan in 2020, and has been carrying out studies and implementing the proposals in phases.	It is anticipated that public consultation with relevant stakeholders on the preliminary proposals from the “Sustainable Leisure and Recreation Initiatives in Shek Pik and Adjoining Areas – Investigation” and the “Initiatives for South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor – Investigation” will be conducted in the second half of 2023 with a view to enhancing the proposals and formulating the implementation schedule (including timetable for funding application and relevant statutory procedures).	
2) Implementation of South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor initiatives	<p>The SLO commenced the “Sustainable Leisure and Recreation Initiatives in Shek Pik and Adjoining Areas – Investigation” and the “Initiatives for South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor – Investigation” in August 2021 and November 2021 respectively, covering about 300 hectares of “Green Belt” sites of South Lantau, to explore the feasibility of providing leisure, recreational and eco-education facilities which are sustainable and with less environmental impact, with a view to enhancing vibrancy and diversity of the area.</p> <p>The above two studies also explore suitable sites in Lantau, including the use of “Green Belt” sites for camping, caravans and</p>	Besides, the SLO has been regularly reporting the progress to the Legislative Council Panel on Development since 2017 and will keep reporting the progress of the above projects in the upcoming reports.	
3) Development of about 1 000 hectares of the “green belt” sites in the southern part of Lantau for eco-tourism or recreation			

	<p>glamping, so as to allow visitors to enjoy and appreciate the natural and cultural resources in Lantau. It is anticipated that the two studies will be completed in the end of 2023.</p> <p>In addition, the SLO will continue to review the feasibility of using the remaining 700 hectares of “Green Belt” sites in other locations in South Lantau (including Mui Wo, Pui O Au, Tai O, Yi O, Ngong Ping, Luk Wu and Keung Shan) to provide sustainable leisure and recreational facilities and promote eco-tourism. The programmes will be implemented as and when ready.</p>	
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- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)067

(Question Serial No. 2134)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (Alice PANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Systematic Drainage in the New Territories

Regarding systematic drainage in rural areas in the New Territories, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. whether the information on the proposed systematic drainage works in the New Territories can be provided in table form by district;
2. of the number of systematic drainage works completed in the New Territories for the past 5 years; and
3. whether there are any measures and timetables for improvement to those villages without any satisfactory drainage systems?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

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

1. The information on the drainage improvement works currently being carried out by the Drainage Services Department (DSD) for the New Territories is tabulated below:

Public Works Project	District
1. Drainage Improvement Works at Yuen Long – Stage 2	Yuen Long
2. Drainage Improvement Works at Yuen Long (Remaining Works)	
3. Drainage Improvement in Northern New Territories - Drainage Improvement Works in San Tin - Remaining Works	North
4. Drainage Improvement Works at North District - Phase 1	

Public Works Project	District
5. Drainage Improvement Works at North District - Remaining Works	
6. Drainage Improvement Works in Ta Kwu Ling	
7. Drainage Improvement Works in Sha Tin and Sai Kung	Sha Tin and Sai Kung
8. Drainage Improvement Works in Tai Po	Tai Po
9. Drainage Improvement Works in Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing	Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing
10. Drainage Improvement Works in Tuen Mun	Tuen Mun
11. Drainage Improvement Works in Mui Wo	Islands

2. The information on the drainage improvement works completed by the DSD for the New Territories in the past 5 years is tabulated below:

Public Works Project	District	Completion Date
1. Drainage Improvement in Northern New Territories - Package B (Remaining Works)	North	2022 Q4
2. Drainage Improvement Works at Yuen Long – Stage 1	Yuen Long	2023 Q1

3. 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. Upon completion of the above flood protection works, the villages have benefited from the improved flood prevention capacity and experienced no more extensive flooding ever since. At present, the DSD is implementing in phases a series of drainage improvement works (see the first part of the reply) to reduce the flood risk of the rural areas concerned.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)068

(Question Serial No. 2797)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (Alice PANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Infrastructure Standards for Northern Metropolis

According to a Public Works Subcommittee paper, funding approval is being sought from the Legislative Council for the design planning, advance works, etc of various development zones in the Northern Metropolis. Regarding the infrastructure standards for the metropolis serving as a new core of development, would the Government inform this Committee of the following?

1. Take drainage works for example - according to government officials' reply, the flood protection standard for works related to Yuen Long Nullah is 1-in-200-year return period while the one for Project No. 4173CD in the North District is a mere 1-in-10-year return period, even though the area around Yuen Long Nullah has a population of 170 000 while the site concerned in the North District will have 6 MTR stations and a projected population of at least 300 000. Why are infrastructure standards in the Metropolis inconsistent? And why is a lower flood protection standard of 1-in-10-year return period is set for a district expected to have a huge population in the future?
2. According to government officials, the Special Administrative Region is deeply concerned about climate change and will update its drainage works standards from time to time in line with the United Nations' standards. That being the case, will the infrastructure standards in the Northern Metropolis be made consistent? In general, how often will the technical guidelines for the infrastructure concerned be updated?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Generally speaking, the design of drainage system for public works projects (including those related to the Northern Metropolis) shall be in compliance with the standards set out in the Stormwater Drainage Manual published by the Drainage Services Department (DSD). According to the Manual, trunk drains in new development zones are designed to withstand floods with a return period of 1 in 200 years, while branch drains are designed to withstand

floods with a return period of 1 in 50 years. Further, the DSD has been keeping a close watch on the impact of climate change, as well as reviewing and updating the design requirements for stormwater drainage systems having regard to the latest assessment reports published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the United Nations. In 2022, the DSD updated the Stormwater Drainage Manual in line with the latest sixth assessment report published by the IPCC.

Regarding Project No. 4173CD “Drainage Improvement Works in Ta Kwu Ling”, the proposed system is designed in accordance with the latest Stormwater Drainage Manual to withstand floods with a return period of 1 in 50 years. Upon completion of the project, the flood prevention capacity for the areas in and around Ta Kwu Ling will be greatly enhanced.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)069

(Question Serial No. 2412)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Sewage Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (Alice PANG)

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 manpower for and expenditure on the management, maintenance and repair of the existing Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works;
4. of the measures taken to ensure the sewage treatment works relocated to caverns can meet the future development needs arising from the population growth in Sha Tin and Ma On Shan;
5. whether there are any studies on the future use of the vacant site after relocation; if so, of the details and the estimated expenditure involved; if not, of the reason?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. The construction works for the relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to caverns are underway by stages. 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 progressively since July 2021. Regarding Stage 3 works (including provision of ancillary buildings to the sewage treatment works and installation of a cavern ventilation system), we plan to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee for commencement of works in 2023. We will continue to press ahead with the works in each stage and seek funding approval

from the Finance Committee for the relevant works in a timely and orderly manner, 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.
3. The annual expenditure on the management, operation, maintenance and repair of the existing Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works is about \$150 million (excluding the salary for DSD staff members). As the work mentioned above is part of DSD staff members' overall duties, there is no breakdown of the manpower and salary expenditure involved in this regard.
4. The design sewage treatment capacity of the Sha Tin Cavern Sewage Treatment Works is 340 000 cubic metres per day, with the future development needs of Sha Tin and Ma On Shan being taken into account in design.
5. For the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project, most of the 88 hectares (ha) of land, which is to be provided by the reclamation project and the relocation of the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to caverns, will be reserved for innovation and technology (I&T). While the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation has been commissioned by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau to conduct the Preliminary Planning Study for Land Development and Preliminary Engineering Feasibility Study, the Civil Engineering and Development Department has also commenced the Ma Liu Shui Reclamation Study. Upon the scheduled completion of the two studies in 2024, more information on the implementation programme and project estimate will be available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)070

(Question Serial No. 2418)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (Alice PANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding stormwater drainage in the South East New Territories, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the progress of, expenditure on and estimates for the drainage master plan in Tseung Kwan O;
2. the progress of and expenditure on the drainage improvement works for Sha Tin and Sai Kung; and
3. the number of flooding reports received in the above-mentioned districts for the past 3 years, with the locations involved and corresponding measures taken?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1. The "Review of Drainage Master Plan in Tseung Kwan O - Feasibility Study" commenced in December 2022 and is scheduled for completion in 2024. The expenditure on the study is estimated to be \$12 million (in money-of-the-day prices).
2. The investigation of the drainage improvement works for Sha Tin and Sai Kung is largely completed, with detailed design work currently being carried out. Subject to the progress of the detailed design and other relevant preparatory work (e.g. processing land matters and conducting district consultation), the Drainage Services Department (DSD) will submit funding applications to the Legislative Council so as to commence the relevant works as soon as possible. The estimated expenditure on the investigation and detailed design work is about \$37 million (in money-of-the-day prices).
3. For the past 3 years, the DSD has received 22 flooding reports from the above-mentioned districts, i.e. 8 from Tseung Kwan O, 3 from Sha Tin and 11 from Sai Kung.

Most of the flooding cases in the above-mentioned districts arose because drains were blocked by litters, fallen leaves, etc carried down by surface runoff during heavy rain. Upon receipt of flooding reports, the DSD took swift action to accomplish the urgent

clearance work required and provide additional gullies at locations more susceptible to accumulation of rubbish, with a view to reducing flood risk.

Moreover, in view of some flooding cases involving low-lying areas, the DSD has taken drainage improvement measures such as construction of flood walls and installation of check valves at suitable locations to reduce the flood risk of the areas concerned.

Before the rainy season, the DSD will conduct inspections of the drainage facilities and carry out desilting work. During the rainy season, the DSD will deploy more staff and arrange for emergency response teams to handle flooding incidents in addition to stationing at locations prone to flooding, with a view to clearing blocked drains promptly and reducing flood risk as far as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)071

(Question Serial No. 0503)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (Alice PANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

What measures has the Government implemented to take forward the development of "Sponge City"? What is the expenditure and manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon Elizabeth QUAT (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

"Sponge City" or "Blue-Green Infrastructure" is the concept of modern stormwater management, under which a simulated natural water cycle that "follows the nature with resilience" is established in a city to facilitate rainwater infiltration, storage and purification on rainy days, and the release of stored rainwater for use when the need arises before discharge of rainwater. This stormwater management approach helps reduce not only the load on flood relief facilities but also flood risk. The design elements involved include storage tanks, retention lakes, river revitalisation and stormwater harvesting facilities.

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) has applied the design concept of "Blue-Green Infrastructure" to the river improvement works and the underground stormwater storage schemes which it has completed. Take for example the recently completed revitalisation project at the Jordan Valley Channel – its design elements include greening features within and along the channel as well as a stable waterbody to create a better ecological environment and enhance the ecological value of the channel. The DSD has also built a "River Garden" above the Jordan Valley Channel to provide the public with more open green space. We will continue to promote wider application of the concept of "Blue-Green Infrastructure" to drainage improvement works and new development areas, so as to reduce flood risk and improve the living environment.

As the "Blue-Green Infrastructure" concept normally forms part of drainage infrastructure design for flood prevention purposes, no breakdown of the expenditure and manpower in this regard is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)072

(Question Serial No. 1506)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (Alice PANG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government has been carrying out revitalisation and improvement works at a number of drainage channels in and around Kowloon East, including the now completed projects at the Kai Tak River and the Jordan Valley Channel. There is also the Tsui Ping River improvement project now underway. Would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the total expenditure and annual recurrent expenditure on the completed projects at the Kai Tak River and the Jordan Valley Channel; and
2. the estimated total expenditure on the Tsui Ping River Revitalisation Project?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. The total expenditures on the Kai Tak River Improvement Works and the Jordan Valley Channel project are about \$1.77 billion and \$30 million respectively. The annual recurrent expenditures on the Kai Tak River and the Jordan Valley Channel are about \$1.6 million and \$200,000 respectively.
2. The total expenditure on the Tsui Ping River Revitalisation Project is estimated to be \$1.34 billion.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)073****(Question Serial No. 1354)**

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 (PANG Yiu-hung)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Provision for 2023-24 (\$915.2 million) is \$19.6 million (+2.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2022-23. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow required for the non-recurrent item for the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme. However, the provision for 2023-24 is \$167.1 million, or 22.3%, higher than the actual expenditure for 2021-22 (\$748.1 million).

In this regard, would the Government advise the Committee of the following:

- (1) The reasons for the increase of 22.3%;
- (2) The cash flow required for the non-recurrent item for the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme in 2023-24 and the subsequent two years.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

(1) Since 2019, the Government has implemented the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS) in partnership with the Urban Renewal Authority 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 actual/estimated expenditures on the LIMSS and Programme (2) for the period from 2021-22 to 2023-24 are tabulated as follows:

Financial Year	Actual/Estimated Expenditure on the LIMSS (\$ million)	Actual/Estimated Expenditure on Programme (2) (\$ million)
2021-22	577.8	748.1
2022-23	727.8	895.6
2023-24	747.7	915.2

As shown in the table above, the expenditure on the LIMSS constitutes a major part of the expenditure on Programme (2). As the projects under the LIMSS gradually enter their peak, the expenditure involved will increase from \$577.8 million in 2021-22 to \$747.7 million in

2023-24, an increase of 29.4%. Accordingly, there will be a similar rate of increase in the expenditure on Programme (2) over the same period.

(2) The estimated expenditure on the LIMSS for 2023-24 is \$747.7 million. There is no estimated expenditure for 2024-25 and 2025-26 at present, but it is expected that the expenditure will increase as the projects progress.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)074****(Question Serial No. 2701)**

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

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

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

Controlling Officer: Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (PANG Yiu-hung)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance, while the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund (EMSTF) is responsible for the repair and maintenance of government lifts. In this regard, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the respective numbers of lifts and escalators under the repair and maintenance of the EMSTF as entrusted by various government departments in each of the past three years?
2. What were the respective expenditures involved in the repair and maintenance of lifts and escalators entrusted to the EMSTF by various government departments in each of the past three years?
3. What were the respective numbers of incidents involving failures of lifts and escalators under the repair and maintenance of the EMSTF in each of the past three years?
4. In recent years, lift and escalator projects relating to the Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems and the Universal Accessibility Programme have been gradually completed. Will the repair and maintenance of these lifts and escalators be also entrusted to the EMSTF? Will there be a corresponding increase in the expenditure to be paid to the EMSTF?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

1. The numbers of lifts and escalators with repair and maintenance arranged by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund (EMSTF) as entrusted by various government departments in each of the past three years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of Lifts	Number of Escalators	Total
2020	3 255	801	4 056
2021	3 305	806	4 111
2022	3 387	829	4 216

2. In general, government departments entrust the EMSTF to provide comprehensive repair and maintenance services for the electrical and mechanical (E&M) equipment of their venues and facilities through a service level agreement (SLA), and pay an annual fee to the EMSTF in accordance with the SLA. The annual fee covers the overall repair and maintenance of the E&M equipment, including electrical, mechanical, air-conditioning, building services, electronic systems, lift and escalator installations, etc. As the repair and maintenance of lift and escalators is part of the SLA, there is no separate breakdown of the expenditure involved.

3. The numbers of incidents involving major component failures of government lifts and escalators with repair and maintenance arranged by the EMSTF in each of the past three years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of Incidents Involving Major Component Failures ^{Note}		Total
	Lift	Escalator	
2020	1	0	1
2021	1	0	1
2022	0	0	0

Note: According to the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance, registered contractors are required to report incidents involving major component failures of lifts or escalators to the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), but for other minor component failures such as that caused by improper use of lifts or escalators by passengers or due to external factors, registered contractors will record the incidents in their log-books without reporting them to the EMSD.

4. Regarding the lifts and escalators under the Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems and the Universal Accessibility Programme, the relevant government departments will, in general, entrust the EMSTF to arrange the necessary repair and maintenance, and the amount of fees to be paid to the EMSTF will be adjusted based on the number of new lifts and escalators entrusted.

– End –

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)075

(Question Serial No. 1403)

Head: (118) Planning Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Territorial Planning

Controlling Officer: Director of Planning (Ivan CHUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 that the Planning Department will, in collaboration with the Civil Engineering and Development Department, continue to manage the consultancy studies to take forward the detailed planning and development of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands. In this respect, the Government has set up the Task Force on Planning and Design of Proposed Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (Task Force) with six professional institutes. Would the Government inform this Committee of the number of government representatives in the Task Force, and how will the views of the Task Force be incorporated into the development proposal of Kau Yi Chau.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Task Force on Planning and Design of Proposed Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (the Task Force) is a communication platform established by the government study team in collaboration with six professional institutes. The Task Force is co-chaired by the Head of the Sustainable Lantau Office of the Civil Engineering and Development Department and the Deputy Director of Planning, with two representatives from each professional institute viz., The Hong Kong Institute of Architects, The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects, The Hong Kong Institute of Planners, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and The Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design.

The main role of the Task Force is to provide professional advice to the government study team on the planning and design-related issues of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. The Government will carefully consider the recommendations submitted by the Task Force together with other relevant factors in deciding how to take forward them.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)076

(Question Serial No. 2827)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As stated in the Programme, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) will continue to step up prosecution and joint inspections with the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) against overcharging for water at subdivided units (SDUs). In addition, as announced in the Budget, water fee deposit and charge for providing separate water meter installed in eligible SDUs will be waived. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide the number of inspections against overcharging of water tariff, the numbers of complaint cases received and prosecutions instituted, as well as the number of cases successfully prosecuted since the amendments to the Waterworks Regulations came into operation, with a breakdown by year set out in table form.
2. The WSD stated that it would continue to step up prosecution and joint inspections with the RVD. Please provide the details of the operations.
3. As SDU owners or landlords will take the lead to install water meters, how many SDU households are expected to be benefited from the waiver? What measures will the Government take to advise owners or landlords to accept the waiver?
4. What is the estimated saving of expenditure for each SDU household under the waiver?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent (LegCo internal reference no.: 58)

Reply:

1. Since the Waterworks (Waterworks Regulations) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 came into effect in May 2021 up to the end of February this year, the relevant information on the numbers of subdivided units (SDUs) visited, complaint cases and prosecution cases instituted by year are as follows:

Year	Number of SDUs visited	Number of complaint cases	Number of prosecution cases instituted
2021 (after May)	about 200	22	0
2022	about 3 200	47	6
2023 (as at the end of February)	about 600	5	1

The above 7 prosecution cases of overcharging SDU tenants for water were successfully convicted with fines ranged from \$1,000 to \$5,000. For the other 67 complaint cases, 7 cases are still under investigation while the remaining cases could not be followed up as the persons involved are unwilling to provide information or testify.

2. The WSD will, according to existing legislation, continue to investigate and prosecute landlords who overcharge water tariff, including to step up proactive inspections to enhance the deterrent effect. Moreover, since the end of July 2022, the WSD has conducted inter-departmental joint operations with the RVD to visit SDUs, in order to step up inspection of overcharging for water and publicise the relevant statutory requirements. The two departments have also set relevant performance indicators with a target to conduct joint visits to about 4 000 SDUs by the end of 2023-24. As at the end of February this year, about 3 400 SDUs were visited.
3. The Government proposes to waive the water fee deposit and the charge for providing a meter for each separate water meter installed under the Scheme for Installation of Separate Water Meters for Subdivided Units. This would reduce the cost of installing water meters for SDU owners and provide financial incentives for them to join the scheme. In addition, the WSD has further enhanced the application procedures of the scheme, including by setting up a dedicated team to expedite processing of applications for installing separate water meters, and simplifying the documentation requirements. The WSD expects the implementation of the measures, coupled with relevant publicity and promotional activities, would encourage more SDU owners to join the scheme.
4. Upon installation of the WSD's separate water meters in SDUs, every such water meter account will have a separate water bill for paying water charge, and the first 12 cubic metres of water consumed for every 4-month period will be free of charge. The actual saving of expenditure for each SDU varies depending on the water consumed. The estimated saving for each 4-month period ranges from about tens of dollars to over \$200.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)077

(Question Serial No. 2103)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

From the launch of the Scheme for Installation of Separate Water Meters for Subdivided Units in June 2021 to the end of February 2022, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) had received only 14 installation applications for subdivided unit (SDU) tenants.

- (1) How many applications have been received by the WSD so far since March 2022?
- (2) Regarding the stepping up of prosecution and joint inspections with the Rating and Valuation Department against overcharging for water at SDUs, what are the numbers of inspections conducted, warnings issued and prosecution cases?
- (3) Incentive measures for installing separate water meters in SDUs will be enhanced this year. The deposit and the charge for providing a meter will be waived, and the first 12 cubic metres of water consumed for each 4-month period will be free of charge. These seem to offer benefits and protection for SDU tenants to install separate water meters, but still the incentives for landlords are inadequate. What are the expected effectiveness and the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- (1) From March 2022 to the end of February 2023, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) had received 65 applications eligible for the Scheme for Installation of Separate Water Meters for Subdivided Units.
- (2) The WSD has conducted joint operations with the Rating and Valuation Department since the end of July 2022. As at the end of February 2023, about 3 400 subdivided units (SDUs) were visited, among which 6 suspected cases involving overcharging of water tariffs were found and are under investigation.

Apart from the above joint operations, the WSD has also visited about 600 SDUs on its own since the Waterworks (Waterworks Regulations) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (the Ordinance) came into operation in May 2021. The WSD has prosecuted 7 cases against overcharging SDU tenants for water, all of which were successfully convicted with fines ranged from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

- (3) The Government waives the water fee deposit and the charge for providing a meter for each separate water meter installed under the Scheme for Installation of Separate Water Meters for Subdivided Units. This would reduce the cost of installing water meters for SDU owners and provide financial incentives for them to join the scheme. According to the Ordinance, overcharging SDU tenants for water is subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000. Therefore, joining the scheme and installing separate water meter for each SDU helps preventing SDU owners from breaking the law inadvertently. In addition, the WSD has further enhanced the application procedures of the scheme, including by setting up a dedicated team to expedite processing of applications for installing separate water meters, and simplifying the documentation requirements. The WSD expects the implementation of the measures, coupled with relevant publicity and promotional activities, would encourage more SDU owners to join the scheme.

As the implementation of the above measures is part of the regular duties of the WSD, there are no separate statistics on the expenditure of the above initiatives.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)078

(Question Serial No. 1970)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the leakage of water mains, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. What were the total supply quantities (in cubic metre) of fresh water lost due to water main leaks each year in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 District Council districts?
2. The estimated leakage rate of water mains in 2023 further dropped by 0.2% from last year to 14.2%, while the Government's target is to reduce to below 10% by 2030. How will the Government evaluate the current progress? Is the Government confident in meeting the target on schedule? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
3. The Government indicated last year that 1 550 District Metering Areas have been established as at the end of 2021. In this regard, what is the target for the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) this year? Can the entire WIN be established in 2024? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
4. Apart from the WIN, has the Government explored ways to further reduce the precious fresh water wasted due to water main leaks and the loss of public money thus incurred? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The leakage rates of government water mains in 2020, 2021 and 2022 were 14.8%, 14.6% and 14.4% respectively. As leakage rate is calculated based on the overall water supply network, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) does not maintain statistics on the leakage rate of each district.

The WSD is fully committed to 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 as well as speedy repair of water main leaks, etc. with a view to maintaining the healthiness of the network. Owing to the impact of the epidemic in recent years, most works for establishing DMAs which require suspension of fresh water supply were put on hold to ensure the public is supplied with fresh water to maintain environmental hygiene. As at the end of 2022, about 1 750 DMAs have been established. With the easing of the epidemic situation, the establishment of the WIN and the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains will proceed in full swing. The remaining DMAs are expected for completion in the first quarter of 2025.

Besides, we will assess the risk of water main bursts or leaks taking into account various factors including the impacts arising from bursts or leaks, ages and materials of the water mains, records of bursts or leaks, surrounding environment, etc. so as to formulate and implement the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains including replacement or rehabilitation of the water mains at high risk.

All in all, through the implementation of the WIN and the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains, we successfully identified the leakage areas and conducted speedy repair of water main leaks, thereby reducing the number of leak cases. The measures are gradually taking effect. Over the past 5 years, the number of leak cases of government fresh water mains dropped from about 6 800 in 2018 to about 5 700 in 2022. The overall leakage rate reduced from about 15.2% to 14.4%, while the number of burst cases of government fresh water mains decreased from about 50 in 2018 to about 20 in 2022. Moreover, we are further improving our data analytics capability to more effectively identify the leakage areas and conduct speedy repair of water main leaks with a view to enhancing the overall effectiveness of the WIN. With the continuous development of the WIN and the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains, we strive to achieve the target of reducing leakage rate of water mains to below 10% by 2030.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)079

(Question Serial No. 0241)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The leakage rate of water mains in Hong Kong was high at 14.4% in 2022-23, which is way higher than that in Japan and Singapore. Would the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) What were the annual expenditures of the Government on handling water main leaks (including replacement and rehabilitation arrangement) in the past 5 years?
- (b) The Water Supplies Department has set a target in 2018 to reduce the leakage rate of water mains to below 10% by 2030. Can the target be achieved as expected? What major measures will be taken to reduce the leakage rate in the next few years?
- (c) How effective is the Government in launching the Water Intelligent Network (WIN), a smart system for water monitoring? What is the current coverage rate of the WIN and when is it expected to cover the whole territory?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (a) Measures taken by the Water Supplies Department (WSD) to handle water main leaks include the establishment of the Water Intelligent Network (WIN), replacement and rehabilitation of water mains, and urgent repair of water mains. The total expenditures on the above works in 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 were about \$440 million, \$770 million, \$1.06 billion, \$1.37 billion and \$1.15 billion respectively.
- (b) & (c) The WSD is now progressively 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 as well as speedy repair of water main leaks, etc. with a view to

maintaining the healthiness of the network. As at the end of 2022, about 1 750 DMAs have been established. The remaining DMAs are scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2025.

Besides, we will assess the risk of water main bursts or leaks taking into account various factors including the impacts arising from bursts or leaks, ages and materials of the water mains, records of bursts or leaks, surrounding environment, etc. so as to formulate and implement the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains including replacement or rehabilitation of the water mains at high risk.

All in all, through the implementation of the WIN and the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains, we successfully identified the leakage areas and conducted speedy repair of water main leaks, thereby reducing the number of leak cases. The measures are gradually taking effect. Over the past 5 years, the leakage rate of government fresh water mains has dropped from about 15.2% to 14.4%. We strive to achieve the target of reducing leakage rate to below 10% by 2030 along this direction.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)080

(Question Serial No. 0541)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified
Programme: (3) Customer Services
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

1. Regarding the Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir (Ex-SSPSR), commonly known as Mission Hill Service Reservoir, please provide the number of guided tours completed, the number of participants and the relevant expenditure on operation and maintenance.
2. Will the Administration collaborate with other government departments, non-profit-making organisations, travel agents and other private organisations to link up the Ex-SSPSR with other tourist attractions and facilities in the district, with a view to elevating the experience of the public and visitors?
3. Does the Administration have any concrete work plan and preliminary idea on the long-term revitalisation plan of the Ex-SSPSR?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. Since December 2021, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has begun to offer guided tours to Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir (Ex-SSPSR) for the public. Self-guided tours were subsequently launched in the fourth quarter of 2022. As at 30 January 2023, over 1 050 guided tours were held (including about 790 guided tours and 260 self-guided tours), with a total of about 25 500 participants. The relevant expenditure on operation and maintenance is about \$450,000 each month.
2. The Development Bureau (DEVB) and the WSD have invited different government departments, the Hong Kong Tourism Board, non-profit-making organisations and professional bodies to visit the Ex-SSPSR, so as to listen to their views and suggestions on the use and future revitalisation arrangement of the Ex-SSPSR, as well as its linkage with other tourist attractions and facilities in the district. The DEVB will work with the WSD to consider and study the feasibility of different proposals.

3. The DEVB is examining the Ex-SSPSR's long-term conservation and revitalisation plan, including by making reference to the views of the participants of the public guided tours. Plans receiving wider support include preserving the original features and to be opened as a waterworks history museum, providing a public space for free activities, or transforming into a venue and facility for art and cultural events, etc. We will look for a new use most suited for the Ex-SSPSR and consider including it in the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme, with a view to enabling the public to better enjoy the place.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)081

(Question Serial No. 3485)

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:

In connection with the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, please inform this Committee of:

- (a) the opportunities that the works are expected to create for the agriculture and fisheries industry; and
- (b) the expected impact on the agriculture and fisheries industry, and the measures to be put in place to mitigate the impact?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

(a) and (b)

As regards the fisheries industry, we are conducting a fisheries impact assessment of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI) in accordance with the environmental impact assessment mechanism and will formulate appropriate mitigation measures to reduce the potential impacts of reclamation on the industry. The preliminary findings of the fisheries survey show that the proposed reclamation works will not cause insurmountable impacts on the fisheries. Regarding the impacts of the reclamation works on fishermen, we intend to offer assistance in four ways, including (i) considering the development of a fisherman's wharf and facilities for water sports and yacht on KYCAI and in the surrounding waters to support the upgrading and transformation of the industry; (ii) reviewing the mechanism for granting ex-gratia allowances to the affected fishermen; (iii) enhancing the overall competitiveness of the industry through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund; and (iv) giving consideration to the affected fishermen to operate in a sustainable manner in other waters of Hong Kong (e.g. developing leisure fishing).

Since the preliminary proposed KYCAI is situated in the Central Waters, the project will not affect the agricultural industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)082

(Question Serial No. 3535)

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:

Regarding the voices in the community saying that reclamation projects were “against State policy”, the Development Bureau subsequently clarified that reclamation is not prohibited under the “國務院關於加強濱海濕地保護-嚴格管控圍填海的通知” published by the State Council in 2018, but a more stringent system for approving reclamation projects is established instead. Please provide the estimated expenditure and manpower to disseminate and explain correct information to the public during the development of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

In 2018, the State Council issued the “國務院關於加強濱海濕地保護-嚴格管控圍填海的通知” (the Notice) to provinces, autonomous regions, municipality governments, State Council ministries and organisations directly under State Council. Although the Notice does not cover the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), we would like to point out that the Notice does not prohibit reclamation, but to establish a more stringent approval system for reclamation projects and allow major national strategic projects to carry out reclamation works. Since the Notice has come into effect, there are reclamation projects in the Mainland that have been undergone stringent review and approved. In other words, the claim that Kau Yi Chau reclamation project’s “against State’s policy” is not substantiated. In fact, the HKSAR Government has been reporting the development of Hong Kong to the Central Government from time to time, including the progress of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. This project is to be carried out within Hong Kong territory, and the HKSAR Government is responsible for the relevant planning, assessment and implementation arrangements. Both local and overseas experts have been invited to give advice during the process.

We will continue to disseminate information to the public regarding the development of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands and clarify in a timely manner inaccurate or incomplete information circulating in the community. This is part of the overall duties of the relevant government officers and the study team. Therefore, we are unable to provide a breakdown of the related expenditures and manpower arrangements involved in this area of work.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)083

(Question Serial No. 3555)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding Water Save Dave, mascot of the Water Supplies Department, would the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the expenditures for the design, publicity and promotion and operation of the mascot;
- (2) of the number of publicity materials produced using the mascot image and the number of promotional activities in the past 5 years; and
- (3) whether it has assessed the public awareness of the mascot; if yes, of the criteria, method, cycle and result of the assessment; if no, of the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

(1) & (2) To enhance promotion to the public on cherishing water resources and water conservation, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) introduced its mascot "Water Save Dave" in March 2016. Water Save Dave shares knowledge about water resources and water conservation with the public in a casual way through various publicity channels, including its social media page, public education programmes, publications and publicity materials. Besides, the WSD often arranges for Water Save Dave to attend large-scale community events and environmental activities, such as the "Cherish Water Campus" Integrated Education Programme Award Ceremony and Water Treatment Works Open Day, etc., to publicise the WSD's work and promote the cherishing of water resources and water conservation. The WSD introduces Water Save Dave via different channels and means to disseminate the messages to the public. Therefore, there are no separate statistics on the cost and the number of usage of Water Save Dave.

(3) The WSD did not conduct separate survey on the public awareness of Water Save Dave. The publicity work with Water Save Dave as the mascot has proven effective. At present, the social media page of Water Save Dave has over 36 000 followers.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)084

(Question Serial No. 3481)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department
Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified
Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
Controlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

What are the measures taken by the Government to promote water conservation? What are the financial resources and manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) is committed to promoting water conservation through various measures. These include implementation of the Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme to encourage the public to use water-saving devices and mandate the use of registered plumbing fixtures and water-consuming devices in new public and private development projects; progressive introduction of smart water meters and automatic meter reading system in new developments to provide customers with the latest water consumption data so as to motivate them to develop water-saving habits; launching of the “Cherish Water Campus” Integrated Education Programme in primary schools and kindergartens with teaching kits and interesting interactive activities to develop the water-saving culture among students; implementation of the “Cherish Water Ambassador Scheme” by recruiting secondary and tertiary school students to be Cherish Water Ambassadors to assist in promoting the message of water conservation in the community; operation of the Water Resources Public Education Centre named “H₂OPE Centre” in Tin Shui Wai to provide the public with information about water resources and water conservation; distribution of flow controllers for water faucets to households joining the “Let’s Save 10L Water” Campaign and using e-Bill service; and installation of flow controllers in some public and private housing estates and schools.

The estimated expenditure of the WSD for promoting water conservation in 2023-24 is about \$14 million. The related manpower includes 5 professionals and 7 supporting staff.

- End -