

- **Replies to written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05**

**Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05**

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

ETWB(ET)001

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

0916

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What criteria does the Government use in deciding the amount of annual subvention to subsidized organizations? What procedures are involved in the allocation? In 2004-05, no subvention is provided to the World Wide Fund for Nature (Hong Kong). What is the reason for this?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

The granting of the subvention in question is based on the specific work proposal submitted by the non-governmental organizations (NGO) concerned including the nature and amount of work to be carried out in the financial year. The NGOs are required to submit a funding application setting out proposals on the work to be done. In processing each application, AFCD will consider, discuss and agree the objectives and scope of the work, the expenditure involved, its management with the NGO concerned.

In 2004-05, a subvention of about \$1.3 million will be provided to WWF/HK for habitat management in the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve under the item "Subventions to conservation and management of Ramsar site". The subvention of \$192,000 for WWF/HK to run education programmes at the Island House Conservation Study Centre will however cease because similar programmes will be provided by AFCD and other organizations.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)002

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Subhead : 600 – Item 351 Development of a morning walkers garden in Ma On Shan Country Park

0917

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In Item 351 under Subhead 600, the Government is developing a morning walkers garden in Ma On Shan Country Park. What facilities will be provided in the garden? What is its maximum capacity? When will it be completed?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

The facilities to be provided at the morning walkers garden in Ma On Shan Country Park include shelters, fitness equipment, benches, tables, exercise areas and a toilet. The garden will be suitable for all age groups for exercises and relaxation. The designed maximum capacity of the garden is about 150 persons. The garden will be ready for public use in late 2005.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)003

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Subhead : 700 – Item 556 Promotion of the community's awareness of, and interest in the conservation of Chinese White Dolphins

0918

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In Item 556 under Subhead 700, what has been done by the Government in promoting the community's awareness of, and interest in, the conservation of Chinese White Dolphins? Has assessment on the effectiveness of such work been made? If yes, what is the assessment result?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

In the past years, we have been organizing a number of educational and publicity activities to arouse public awareness of and interest in dolphin conservation. The activities include seminars, exhibitions and school competitions. A wide variety of educational and publicity materials including booklets, leaflets, posters, interactive compact discs and calendars have been produced and distributed to students and the general public. A special website has been set up to provide information on local cetaceans including the Chinese White Dolphins.

Although we have not conducted any quantitative assessment on the effectiveness of these activities, they received good patronage and there was positive feedback from the public. In 2003, over 25 000 citizens took part in these activities and some 52 000 copies of educational materials were distributed to the public and schools.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)004

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

0451

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Does the Government know how many trees were destroyed by hill fires annually in the past 2 years? In prevention of hill fires, is there any special plan for the coming year? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

In 2002, 20 900 trees in country parks were destroyed by hill fires. This figure dropped to 8 600 in 2003.

To protect country parks from hill fires, AFCD has established an effective fire control system comprising a central Fire Control Centre, 11 fire lookouts to detect hill fires and fire crews on overnight duties during the fire season from September to April. In addition, fire breaks are created at strategic locations to try to slow down the spread of hill fires when they occur and water tanks have been constructed at strategic points to provide a ready supply of water to tackle hill fires.

In the coming year, AFCD will continue to work closely with other government departments in fighting and preventing hill fires. Publicity programmes will be launched to sustain public awareness in this respect. Special law enforcement teams will be deployed to patrol hill fire black spots during periods of high fire risk such as Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals.

The existing fire fighting plans have been effective and will continue for the coming year. They will be implemented within existing resources.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)005

Question Serial No.

0452

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this programme, the number of seedlings planted for the coming year will be further reduced to 780 000. Will the Government give reasons for this reduction? For seedling production and planting in 2003 and the coming year, what is the amount and estimated amount of total expenditure involved as well as the average cost for each seedling respectively?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

The reduction in the number of seedlings to be planted in 2004 is mainly due to the need to achieve efficiency savings. We will reduce the scope of tree planting carried out by contractors.

In the past five years, a total of 4 153 000 trees have been planted by AFCD. About 28% of the country parks is currently covered by forests. Hence, the saving measure will not have any significant impact on country parks.

For those seedling produced by AFCD, the expenditure incurred was about \$3.8M in 2003. The average cost was around \$6.7 per seedling. The cost will be similar in the coming year.

For seedling planting, the expenditure incurred was about \$10.1M in 2003 and will be \$9.0M in 2004. The average cost for planting a seedling is about \$11.5 for both years. However, the planting cost can vary from \$4.0 to \$20 per seedling depending on locations and the planting requirements.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

THOMAS C Y CHAN

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)006

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

0461

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this programme, the enhancement of biodiversity in country parks and special areas is one of the matters for special attention in 2004-05. What plans does the Government have in implementing this task? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

In 2004-05, we will continue our work in enhancing biodiversity in country parks and special areas by means of habitat enhancement and active conservation management.

We will propagate native and uncommon tree species in AFCD nursery. Some 400,000 native tree seedlings of over 40 species will be planted in country parks to diversify the floristic composition. A total of 500 nesting boxes will be maintained to provide breeding grounds for birds. We will create and maintain more wetlands to attract species such as dragonflies. Suitable plant species will be planted for supporting uncommon butterflies. We will also continue to actively protect country parks and special areas from hill fires and other damages.

The above work would be implemented within existing resources. No additional resources are required.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)007

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

0462

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Has the Government earmarked funds for the promotion of the nature conservation policy that is under consultation? If yes, what is the amount of funds? What is the specific work plan?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

We are analyzing the comments received in the three-month public consultation exercise on nature conservation policy conducted in late 2003. The main target is to get a consensus on the priority sites for enhanced conservation and the measures to be adopted for the conservation of these sites. We aim to draw up a more comprehensive nature conservation policy and an implementation plan around the middle of this year.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)008

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

0015

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this programme, it is mentioned that in 2004-05, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will give emphasis to the implementation of a territory-wide survey programme to collect information required for establishing an ecological database. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of:-

- (1) the details of this task; and
- (2) the number of staff and expenditure involved in this task?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

We are surveying and collecting information on the biodiversity of Hong Kong with a view to establishing a comprehensive ecological database in phases by 2005. The survey programme covers different habitats; the location, status and composition of about 100 plant communities; and the distribution and abundance of about 1,000 animal species, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, freshwater fish, dragonflies and butterflies. So far, we have made a number of new findings, including new records of butterfly, dragonfly and bird species for Hong Kong.

The provision in 2004-05 for this task is \$3.826 million, and one professional officer and one field officer posts were created in 2002-03 for implementing this task.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)009

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

1175

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this programme, the estimated indicators for seedlings planted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department continue to decline. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the reason for the declining trend of the indicators and the savings so obtained?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

In 2003, 880 000 tree seedlings were planted in country parks. In 2004, the estimated number of tree seedlings to be planted is 780 000. The reduction is mainly due to the need to achieve efficiency savings. The overall savings will be about \$1 million.

In the past five years, a total of 4 153 000 trees have been planted by AFCD. About 28% of the country parks is covered by forest. Hence, the saving measure will not have any significant impact on country parks.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)010

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

1210

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this programme, it is mentioned that in 2004-05, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will give emphasis to the maintenance of government slopes in country parks. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:-

- (1) of the details of this work area, estimated number of staff and expenditure involved; and
- (2) whether such work was carried out in the past 3 years; if yes, the details?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

- (1) In 2004-05, we will conduct engineering inspection on some 500 slopes and will carry out maintenance works on about 250 slopes in various country parks. A recurrent provision of \$6.4 million will be allocated for these slope works. Of this provision, \$1.9 million is staff cost. The Slope Maintenance Section consists of 7 staff including 1 Geotechnical Engineer, 1 Senior Technical Officer (Geotechnical), 2 Technical Officers (Geotechnical), 1 Assistant Inspector of Works and 2 Site Supervisors. They are responsible for all works relating to slope maintenance, repairing, updating of slope inventory, and contract management in country parks.

- (2) Similar slope works were carried out over the past 3 years, details as below:

Year	No. of Slopes Inspected	No. of Slopes Maintained	Expenditure involved
2001-02	827	343	\$5.7M
2002-03	861	348	\$5.9M
2003-04	546	253	\$6.6M

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

THOMAS C Y CHAN

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)011

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

0042

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The revised expenditure for 2003-04 is 11.1% higher than the original estimate.
What is the reason for this?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Wong-fat

Reply :

The original provision under Programme Area 2 on "Nature Conservation and Country Parks" in 2003-04 was \$435.3M and the revised estimate was \$483.8M. There is an increase of \$48.5M or about 11.1%. This is mainly due to the Administration's effort to enhance employment opportunities by providing more temporary jobs after SARS in August 2003. With the approval of the Finance Committee, AFCD was provided with additional resources to create some 500 temporary posts for "promoting natural environment" and 967 posts to provide "additional cleansing and maintenance service to country parks and other AFCD venues" for a period of 6 months. A sum of \$46M has been spent on these projects which have not been included in the Original Estimates for 2003-04.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)012

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Subhead : 700 – Item 546 Consultancy study on wetland compensation

1412

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Item 546 “Consultancy study on wetland compensation” was originally scheduled for completion in 2001. Your department later estimated that the Study would be completed in 2002-03 instead due to the unexpectedly high number of wetland sites in Hong Kong. However, according to the current Subhead “General non-recurrent”, the Study will not be completed in 2004-05. What is the reason for this delay? What is the current progress? When will the Study be completed?

Asked by : Hon. LAW Chi-kwong

Reply :

The Study cannot be completed earlier because it takes a longer time than expected to conduct the field trials in the light of the complexity of the issues involved including the choice of sites and plant species. The actual ground work and the analysis of the field trials were completed in August and December 2003 respectively. The Consultancy Study Report including a proposed wetland compensation strategy is being finalized and is expected to be completed by mid-2004.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)013

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Subhead : 844 Minor conservation projects and studies (block vote)

1400

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the projects and studies to be carried out in 2004-05 under the Minor Conservation Projects and Studies Block Vote of \$6.47 million? What are the estimated costs, implementation and completion timetables of these projects and studies? Please provide information on the details of minor conservation projects and studies carried out by the Government in the past two years, the expenditure required, breakdown and completion date.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply :

Projects and studies to be carried out in 2004-05 are tabulated below :

Minor conservation projects and studies	Estimated Cost \$	Estimated Commencement Date	Estimated Completion Date
Ramsar Site Baseline Ecological Monitoring Project	1,300,000	Continuing programme	
Gei-wai and reed bed management in Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve	150,000	Apr 2004	Oct 2004
Water bird monitoring programme for the Deep Bay Area	450,000	Continuing programme	
Mapping and surveying of ecological habitats inside the Ramsar Site	400,000	Oct 2004	Feb 2005
Satellite tracking and other conservation programmes for green turtles in Hong Kong	220,000	Continuing programme	
Control of nuisance from monkey and other wild animals	350,000	Continuing programme	
Ecological survey of herpetofauna distribution in Hong Kong	250,000	Apr 2004	Mar 2005
Upgrading of Ramsar Site Geographic Information System	350,000	Apr 2004	Mar 2005

Wetland Day Education Programme	500,000	Nov 2004	Mar 2005
Black-faced Spoonbill monitoring programme	350,000	Oct 2004	Mar 2005
Monitoring of cetaceans in Hong Kong waters	1,650,000	April 2004	Mar 2005
Publicity projects related to the conservation of marine mammals and other marine habitats/species of concern	300,000	April 2004	Mar 2005
Hong Kong Reef Check	200,000	April 2004	Dec 2004
Total for 2004-05	<u>6,470,000</u>		

Projects and studies carried out in 2003-04 are tabulated below :

Minor conservation projects and studies	Total Cost \$	Completion Date
Conservation programme for terns	250,000	Mar 2004
Control of nuisance from monkey and other wild animals	500,000	Continuing programme
Field Trails on Pond Wiring to Reduce Cormorant Predation in Commercial Fishponds	950,000	Jun 2004
Mapping and surveying of ecological habitats inside the Ramsar Site	320,000	Continuing programme
Ramsar Site Baseline Ecological Monitoring Project	1,250,000	Continuing programme
Satellite image analysis of the Ramsar Site	150,000	Continuing programme
Satellite tracking and other conservation programme for green turtles in Hong Kong	150,000	Continuing programme
Study of Seagrass and Associated Communities	250,000	Feb 2004
Wetland Day Education Programme	500,000	Mar 2004
Monitoring of cetaceans in Hong Kong waters	1,600,000	Mar 2004
Study on fishery bycatch of cetaceans	100,000	Jul 2003
Hong Kong Reef Check	200,000	Dec 2003
Publicity projects related to the conservation of marine mammals and other marine habitats/species of concern	250,000	Mar 2004
Total for 2003-04	<u>6,470,000</u>	

Projects and studies carried out in 2002-03 are tabulated below ;

Minor conservation projects and studies	Total Cost \$	<u>Completion date</u>
Control of nuisance from monkey and other wild animals	200,000	Continuing programme
Field study of the wintering ecology of Anatidae species (ducks) in the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Area	300,000	Mar 2003
Field study on Muntjac on Hong Kong and Lantau Islands	350,000	Jun 2003
Management of exotic mangrove	50,000	Mar 2003
Monitoring of breeding tern population and field trial of artificial shelters for terns.	150,000	Mar 2003
Pond wiring to reduce cormorant predation on commercial fish pond	900,000	Continuing programme
Radio-tracking of Black-faced Spoonbill in Mai Po	550,000	Mar 2003
Ramsar Site Baseline Ecological Monitoring Project	1,250,000	Continuing programme
Satellite image analysis of the Ramsar Site	146,000	Continuing programme
Satellite tracking and other conservation programme for green turtles in Hong Kong	170,000	Continuing programme
Wetland Day education programme	250,000	Mar 2003
Monitoring of cetaceans in Hong Kong waters	1,600,000	Mar 2003
Study on fishery bycatch of cetaceans	100,000	Continuing programme
Hong Kong Reef Check	200,000	Dec 2002
Publicity projects related to the conservation of marine mammals and other marine habitats/species of concern	250,000	Mar 2003
Total for 2002-03	<u>6,466,000</u>	

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)014

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

1401

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The financial provision for Nature Conservation and Country Parks in 2004-05 is 18.2% lower than the revised estimate for 2003-04. This Council would like to raise these questions:-

- (1) The subventions to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong) and to the conservation and management of Ramsar site will be reduced by \$280,000 (23.6%) and \$1 million (32%) respectively. Will the service and operation of the subsidized organizations be affected as a result? If yes, how will they be affected? What measures will the Government take in assisting the subsidized organizations to cope with the funding cut?
- (2) Why is there no estimated figure of subvention to the World Wide Fund for Nature (Hong Kong) in the 2004-05 Estimate?
- (3) What are the ranks and job content of the 28 posts to be deleted under Programme (2)? In what way will these posts be deleted?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply :

- (1)(a) Since August 2002, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong) (SPCA) has adopted a "no kill" policy, whereby they have stopped receiving surrendered dogs from public, and will not destroy any surrendered dogs. With the reduction in the number of dogs handled as a result of their "no kill" policy, the subvention to the SPCA has been reduced to reflect this change.
- (b) The purpose of the subvention for the conservation and management of the Ramsar site is to engage non-governmental organizations (NGO) including green groups to work in partnership with Government in conserving the Ramsar site. The reduction in the subventions is an efficiency savings measure. AFCD will engage the NGOs in carrying out the required conservation and management work in the Ramsar site through service contracts which would be the more cost-effective way to implement the work.

(2) The subvention in question refers to subvention provided to the World Wide Fund for Nature (Hong Kong) to run educational programmes at the Island House Conservation Studies Centre. The subvention will cease with effect from 2004-05 because similar programmes will be provided by AFCD and other organizations.

(3) Details of the posts to be deleted are:

- (a) 4 Field Assistants, 5 Artisans, 6 Workmen I and 3 Workmen II; their main duties are related to management and protection of country parks.
- (b) 2 Senior Field Assistants and 6 Forest Guards; their main duties are to provide visitor service and patrol in country parks.
- (c) 1 Works Supervisor I, 1 Works Supervisor II and 1 Workman II; their main duties are to provide building and road maintenance services to country parks.
- (d) 1 Senior Clerical Officer whose duty is to provide administrative support in headquarters.

Two new posts, namely 1 System Manager and 1 Analyst Programmer I, will be created to cater for the information technology enhancement needs of the department.

On balance, a net 28 posts will be deleted. This will be achieved through normal retirement and voluntary retirement.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>THOMAS C Y CHAN</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation</u>
Date	<u>25 March 2004</u>

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

ETWB(ET)015

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

1402

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is estimated that the number of visitors to country parks will increase by 2.5% from 12.2 million to 12.5 million. Based on this estimate, why does the Government expect that the number of participants in educational activities will decrease from 250 000 in 2003 to 200 000 in 2004? Will the Government carry out any educational activities this year? If yes, please set out the details, timetable and expenditure involved. If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply : The educational activities in question are activities organized directly by AFCD. In view of the reduction in manpower and anticipated increase of visitors to country parks, we will deploy more resources to visitor services and patrolling in the coming year and hence less educational activities will be conducted by the department direct. We will, however, enhance our websites and publication of books to continue to promote countryside education and will carry out the following major educational activities in 2004-05:

- (a) School visiting programme for primary schools and kindergartens;
- (b) Nature appreciation activities with guided walks and video shows for schools and the public;
- (c) Volunteer work in country parks for organized groups;
- (d) Public lectures and seminars for teachers, students and the public; and
- (e) Mobile exhibitions at shopping malls, schools and public venues.

All the above activities will be carried out throughout the year. The expenditure incurred including staff cost is about \$7 million.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

THOMAS C Y CHAN

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)016

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

1403

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Why is the number of seedlings planted on the decline every year since 2002? In 2004, why is it estimated that the number will continue to drop to 780 000? Will the Government carry out any tree planting plans this year? If yes, please set out the details, timetable and expenditure involved. If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply : The number of tree seedlings planted in 2002 was 1 015 000. This consists of 899 000 seedlings planted in country parks and 116 000 planted outside country parks. In 2003, AFCD put the focus on country parks and 880 000 tree seedlings were planted.

In 2004, the estimated number of tree seedlings to be planted is 780 000. The reduction is mainly due to the need to achieve efficiency savings. The scope of planting by contractors will be reduced. However, we will encourage more private sector participation in tree planting in 2004.

Planting programmes of AFCD in 2004 are listed below:

	Time	Programme	No. of seedlings to be planted	Estimated Expenditure
1	April to June	Afforestation in country parks	655 000	\$7.8 million
2	April to June	Planting at the proposed Lantau North (Extension) Country Park	125 000	\$1.2 million
Total			780 000	\$9.0 million

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

THOMAS C Y CHAN

Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

25 March 2004

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

ETWB(ET)017

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Subhead : 000 Operational Expenses

0344

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this subhead, subventions to conservation and management of Ramsar site are substantially reduced by more than 30%. What are the reasons for the reduction? What measures will be taken to maintain effective management of the site despite the substantial reduction of subventions?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The purpose of the subventions is to engage non-government organizations (NGO) including green groups to work in partnership with Government for the conservation and management of the Ramsar site. The reduction in the subventions is an efficiency savings measure. AFCD will engage NGOs in carrying out the requested conservation and management work in the Ramsar site through service contracts, which would be more cost-effective.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)018

Head : 39 - Drainage Services Department Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

1064

Programme : (2) Sewage Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Drainage Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The financial provision for Programme (2) for 2004-2005 increases by 5.9%.
In what aspects will the above increase in financial provision be reflected?
Will the increase in provision bring relief to the problem of lacking of sewage
treatment systems in rural areas?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply : The increased provision is required mainly for operating new sewage treatment
plants, enhancing the level of treatment at Sha Tin and Siu Ho Wan treatment
plants, maintaining the growing length of sewers, and replacing equipment due
to ageing of sewage treatment facilities. Part of the increase is for operating
and maintaining new sewers and pumping stations to be completed in 2004-05
to serve about 35 no. of villages in the rural areas of Sha Tin, Tai Po, Yuen
Long, Sheung Shui and Ta Kwu Ling.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ R.T.K. CHEUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Drainage Services

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)019

Head : 39 - Drainage Services Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Sewage Services

1556

Controlling Officer : Director of Drainage Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The provision for 2004-05 increases by 5.9% as compared with last year, while the values of contracts for projects under detailed design and construction decrease by 8.2% and 22.8% respectively. The authority claims that the increase in expenses is due to the need to maintain the growing length of sewers and the ageing sewage facilities.

1. Please provide the contract values of new works contracts and maintenance contracts for the past three years.
2. "Continue to operate and maintain sewage treatment facilities in a cost effective manner" is included in the matters requiring special attention for the coming year. What measures will be taken by the Department to lower the cost and how much expenditure is expected to be saved in order to reduce the trade effluent surcharge paid by the trades according to the "Polluter Pays Principle"?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply : Only part of the increased provision is required for maintaining the growing length of sewers, and replacing equipment due to ageing of sewage treatment facilities. The increase in provision will also be required for operating new sewage treatment plants, as well as enhancing the level of treatment at Shatin and Siu Ho Wan treatment plants.

The estimated value of projects under detailed design in 2004-05 is at about the same level as 2003-04 whereas the 22.8% decrease in the value of contracts under construction is mainly due to the completion of several major capital projects.

The response to parts 1 and 2 of the question is given below :-

1. The value of new works contracts and maintenance contracts under Sewage Services Programme for the past three years is as follows :-

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
	\$M	\$M	\$M
Value of new works contracts awarded	1,393	1,238	297
Value of maintenance contracts awarded	164	244	190

2. The Department has taken the following measures to lower the operating costs in 2004-05:-
 - a) Reduction of civil service posts in parallel with streamlining operations and enhancing productivity through re-prioritization, re-engineering, re-organization and expanding the scope of outsourcing of maintenance work;
 - b) Optimization of the operation and maintenance of sewerage network and equipment in sewage treatment facilities;
 - c) Reduction of general administration expenses in various aspects, such as overtime and job-related allowances, overseas duty visits, and transport and traveling.

The savings in expenditure from the above measures, together with the civil service pay cut in 2004 and 2005, amounted to around \$66M. Such savings have already been reflected in the financial provision of \$1,268.1M for 2004-05.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ R.T.K. CHEUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Drainage Services

Date _____ 24 March 2004

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)020

Head : 39 - Drainage Services Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Sewage Services

1557

Controlling Officer : Director of Drainage Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please provide a breakdown by types of trade and content of enquiries on trade effluent surcharge received by the Drainage Services Department in 2002-03 and 2003-04.

The present performance "target" requires the Department to reply to enquiries within 1 month. Please explain in detail why it takes so long and why 5% of the enquiries could not be replied within 1 month in 2002-03 and 2003-04.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply : A breakdown of written enquiries by types of their content received in 2002-03 and 2003-04 is given below. A breakdown by trade type is not available but the majority are from the restaurant trade.

Content classification	2002-03 (1.4.2002 to 31.3.2003)	2003-04 (11 months) (1.4.2003 to 29.2.2004)
Chemical Oxygen Demand reassessment	713	854
Newly identified account	402	484
Sewer connection status	203	347
Business reclassification	166	163
Discharge factor review	49	118
Payment matters	549	784
Others	216	348
Total	2298	3098

Different types of enquiries require different ways of handling and the time required varies. Based on past experience, about half of the enquiries could be handled within 10 working days but the other half would need about one month. A small number of complicated cases would take a longer time to investigate. For instance, it may take more than a month to handle an enquiry on newly identified account because it involves the collection of business registration information and on-site inspections. For those that require us a longer time to investigate and give a substantive reply, an interim reply will be given.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ R.T.K. CHEUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Drainage Services

Date _____ 24 March 2004

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)021

Question Serial No.

0667

Head : 39 -Drainage Services Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Sewage Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Drainage Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With the deletion of 27 posts and the civil service pay cut, the provision for Programme 3902 for 2004-05 still increases by \$70.7 million (5.9%) as compared with 2003-2004. But the targets in respect of sewage services have not been enhanced accordingly and the levels of the indicators are generally lower than those for 2002-2003. Please specify which area of services could be enhanced with the increase of provision. What plans does the Administration have to enhance the service targets for 2004-05?

Asked by : Hon. WU King-cheong, Henry

Reply : All performance indicators relating to the operation and maintenance of sewage facilities are at a higher level compared with 2003; the only indicators showing a lower level are those relating to the value of capital projects.

The performance targets in respect of sewage services are the pledges of the department for handling the consumers' complaints and enquiries. The department has undertaken to maintain the same level of service with an increase of 1.9% in the number of consumers paying sewage charge.

The increased provision is required not only for coping with an overall increase in the volume of sewage treated but also for operating new plants (the number of installations will increase by 8.1%), for higher maintenance cost to cope with the growing length of sewers, and for equipment replacement due to ageing of sewage treatment facilities. The expenditure is necessary to ensure that a reliable sewage treatment service is maintained.

The increased provision will also be used for enhancing the treatment level of sewage collected and hence improving the quality of the effluent. Examples are the upgrading of Siu Ho Wan screening plant to chemically enhanced primary treatment plant, and upgrading the nutrient removal capacity of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Plant.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ R.T.K. CHEUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Drainage Services

Date _____ 25 March 2004

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)022

Question Serial No.

0450

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 3 - Energy efficiency and air quality

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this programme, the energy saving in the Government is added as a new target of the key performance measures and a 1.5% saving is planned. What measures will be taken by the Government to achieve this target? If the target is achieved, how many units of energy and how much electricity cost can be saved? What will be long-term benefits in respect of costs and the environment?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : To assist Government Bureaux and Departments (B/Ds) to achieve the target of 1.5% reduction of electricity consumption, EMSD has launched an energy saving promotion campaign within B/Ds. Initiatives of this campaign include:

- (i) promoting energy saving measures to B/Ds through briefing sessions;
- (ii) performing energy audits to identify energy saving opportunities;
- (iii) promoting housekeeping measures and assisting B/Ds in the implementation – examples include raising air-conditioning temperature setting, reducing operating hours of air-conditioning, and switching off equipment when not in use;
- (iv) carrying out energy saving retrofits – examples include replacing electromagnetic ballast with electronic ballast for fluorescent tubes, installing evaporative cooling system for central air-conditioning units etc;
- (v) publishing an “Energy Saving Tips” guide book on energy saving measures;
- (vi) promoting energy saving through the “EnergyLand” (an EMSD educational website available through the Internet) and “Green Management Corner” (an information portal available through the Government Intranet – Cyber Central Government Office);
- (vii) developing a web-based energy management and reporting system to enable better monitoring of electricity consumption of venues by B/Ds,

and a “Green Talk” on-line discussion forum to facilitate experience sharing in energy saving; and

- (viii) launching an energy saving competition, titled “Hong Kong Awards for Energy Efficiency & Conservation in Government” between October 2003 and September 2004 to provide the momentum for continuous improvement in energy saving within Government B/Ds.

If the target of 1.5% reduction in electricity consumption is met, there will be an approximate saving of 34 GWh/annum, which converts to a saving in electricity cost of about \$29 million a year for the whole Government.

In the long term, the reduction in electricity consumption will not only help reduce government expenditure, but will also benefit the environment by reducing the demand in electricity generation and consequently the pollution and green house gas emission from the electricity plants. It is also hoped that the energy saving exercise in the Government will help raise the awareness of the general public in saving energy.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title _____ Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)023

Question Serial No.

1117

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 3 – Energy efficiency and air quality

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In 2004-05, the administration will be responsible for the coordination work regarding the use of renewable energy in buildings. Please detail the manpower and expenditure involved in this respect.

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : In 2004-05, the Energy Efficiency Office of EMSD will continue to give professional support and advice to both government bureaux/departments and private sectors on the development and implementation of renewable energy (RE) projects.

This aspect of work is undertaken by a Senior Engineer who undertakes RE research and development work for both building-related projects, e.g. the Building Integrated Photovoltaic (BIPV) system, and other non-building RE work, such as the wide-scale application of RE technologies for power generation, e.g. wind turbines.

Expenditure in 2004-05 for the research, development and promotion of both building-related and non building-related RE technologies will amount to \$1.63M funded by a non-recurrent project and our recurrent expenses for the publication of promotional materials, remaining consultancy work for the BIPV project at Wan Chai Tower and territory-wide wind measurement programme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date 24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

ETWB(ET)024

Question Serial No.

1207

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 3 - Energy efficiency and air quality

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What work has EMSD carried out in the implementation of energy saving programmes for government departments in 2003-04. What is the expenditure involved? What achievements have been made? (Please state the saving in electricity cost.) What are the work plan and the estimated expenditure for 2004-05 financial year?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : EMSD has launched an energy saving promotion campaign within Government Bureaux and Departments (B/Ds) to assist them in saving energy. Initiatives of this campaign in 2003-04 include:

- (ix) promoting energy saving measures to B/Ds through briefing sessions;
- (x) performing energy audits in a number of venues to identify energy saving opportunities;
- (xi) promoting housekeeping measures and assisting B/Ds in the implementation – examples include raising air-conditioning temperature setting, reducing operating hours of air-conditioning, and switching off equipment when not in use;
- (xii) carrying out energy saving retrofits in a number of venues – examples include replacing electromagnetic ballast with electronic ballast for fluorescent tubes, installing evaporative cooling system for central air-conditioning units etc;
- (xiii) publishing an “Energy Saving Tips” guide book on energy saving measures;
- (xiv) promoting energy saving through the “EnergyLand”, an EMSD

educational website, and “Green Management Corner”, an information portal available through the Government Intranet;

- (xv) developing a web-based energy management and reporting system to enable better monitoring of electricity consumption of venues by B/Ds, and a “Green Talk” on-line discussion forum to facilitate experience sharing in energy saving; and
- (xvi) launching an energy saving competition, titled “Hong Kong Awards for Energy Efficiency & Conservation in Government” between October 2003 and September 2004 to provide the momentum for continuous improvement in energy saving within Government B/Ds.

The development and administration of the above schemes were undertaken by existing staff of EMSD. Other expenditure in association with implementing the schemes amounted to approximately \$0.72M, for the development of the web-based energy management and reporting system and promotional activities, such as briefing sessions, publications and updating of “EnergyLand” web site.

The energy saving promotion campaign has raised the awareness among Government B/Ds of the need to improve energy efficiency and conserve electricity. Improved housekeeping measures are now commonly practised throughout the Government. In terms of the electricity cost, a reduction of \$23 million, equivalent to 1.6% has been registered for the first nine months (April to December) of the 2003-04 compared to the same period in 2002-03.

In 2004-05 we will continue implementing the above energy saving measures and planning an experience sharing session to allow exchange of energy saving ideas among B/Ds. The budget for the energy saving promotion campaign for 2004-05 will be around \$0.5 M, mainly for promotional events, publications etc. The administration & implementation will continue to be undertaken by existing EMSD staff.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date 24 March 2004

Reply Serial No.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

ETWB(ET)027

Question Serial No.

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) :

0666

Programme : 3 – Energy efficiency and air quality

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : As regards the performance targets for energy efficiency under Programme (3) of Head 42, there are some new indicators in 2004. Please state the differences between the new and original indicators and the reasons for introducing the new indicators.

Asked by : Hon. WU King-cheong, Henry

Reply : There are three revised indicators related to the Energy Efficiency Labelling Schemes, one each for electrical appliance, vehicle and gas appliance. Each revised indicator, i.e. “new scheme being developed”, is formed by merging two previous indicators, viz. “types of products/vehicles under investigation” and “testing procedures being developed”. These two indicators, as past experience has shown, reflect two very close steps in the development of the labelling scheme in question, and thus for the simplicity reason the two indicators are merged into a single indicator.

Another revision is made to indicators related to the Energy Code. The new arrangement is just to indicate “cumulative no. of building energy codes implemented”, instead of having two separate indicators giving “no. of building energy codes being developed” and “cumulative no. of building energy codes implemented”.

There is one new indicator regarding Renewable Energy, i.e. “no. of performance monitoring projects completed”. It is to reflect the work progress in monitoring the performance of the Building Integrated Photovoltaic System at Wanchai Tower, a pilot project on renewable energy system.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)028

Question Serial No.

0454

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: In 2003-04, the temporary recycling facility in Tuen Mun has produced about 200,000 tonnes of recycled inert hard construction and demolition materials. What is its operating cost in 2003-04 and 2004-05? What is the maximum daily output and whether it has reached its maximum design output?

Asked by: Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply: The operating cost of the temporary recycling facility is about \$12.33 m in 2003-04 funded under Capital Works Project Vote. As the current contract of this facility will expire in October 2004, the operating cost is \$7.2 m for 7 months in 2004-05. The plant has a design daily output of 1 200 tonnes. However, due to the fluctuation in the purity and quantity of the incoming construction and demolition materials, the facility has yet to reach its design capacity.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ T K TSAO _____

Post Title _____ Director of Civil Engineering _____

Date _____ 24 March 2004 _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)029

Question Serial No.

0455

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Are all recycled inert hard construction and demolition materials supplied for use in all government construction projects? If yes, what is the saving in procurement of natural aggregates by the government?

Asked by: Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply: Apart from a small quantity supplied for use in research and development, the recycled aggregates from the Tuen Mun recycling plant are mainly supplied for use in government construction projects. Based on the statistical data in 2003-04, the natural aggregate costs about \$40 per tonne. As such, the saving in procurement in 2003-04 is about \$8.0 m.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ T K TSAO

Post Title _____ Director of Civil Engineering

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)030

Question Serial No.

1399

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: In 2004-05, the provision for the management of construction and demolition materials is \$145 m, which is \$8.7 m (6.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2003-04. This is mainly due to increased operating expenses for the operation of fill banks at Tseung Kwan O and Tuen Mun. In this regard, could the Administration please reply to the following:

- 1) a breakdown of the financial provision on this programme;
- 2) the operating costs and their breakdowns of the fill banks in the last and the coming years;
- 3) the reason for increased operating expenses for the fill banks;
- 4) the amount of fill handled by the fill banks in the last and the coming years.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply: 1) The breakdown of the financial provisions on this programme is as follows:

Item	2004-05 Estimates (\$ m)
Fill banks at Tseung Kwan O and Tuen Mun	100.8
Public filling barging points at Kai Tak, Quarry Bay and Sai Ying Pun	26.3
Public filling planning and co-ordination	18.5
Total	145.6

- 2) The operating costs and their breakdowns of the fill banks in the last and the coming year are as follows:

Item	2003-04 Expenditure (\$ m)	2004-05 Estimates (\$ m)
Contract costs for operating the fill banks	67.7	89.8
Administrative and supervisory costs of the department	8.3	11.0

- 3) The reason for increased operating expenses for the fill banks is that we expect a greater quantity of inert construction and demolition materials in the coming year.
- 4) The amount of inert construction and demolition materials handled by the fill banks in the last year is 4.1 million m³. We expect to handle 6.1 million m³ in the coming year.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ T K TSAO _____

Post Title _____ Director of Civil Engineering _____

Date _____ 25 March 2004 _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)031

Question Serial No.

1421

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Site Formation and Reclamation

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The Administration will continue the Stage 2 environmental improvement works of the Shing Mun River. What is the estimated cost of the Stage 2 works? What are the details of the works?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply: The contract sum of the Stage 2 environmental improvement of Shing Mun River is \$39.9 m. This includes the use of \$27.9 m under the Capital Works Reserve Fund for environmental improvement of Shing Mun River and another \$12 m funded by recurrent account for maintenance dredging of the river under a 3-year contract period. The contract works mainly utilize insitu bioremediation treatment technique to tackle the odour problem of the river. The works also comprise the monitoring of the sediment and water quality after bioremediation treatment for both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 works. The Stage 2 environmental improvement works commenced in May 2003 for completion by about July 2006.

Signature _____

Name in block letters T K TSAO _____

Post Title Director of Civil Engineering _____

Date 25 March 2004 _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)032

Question Serial No.

1524

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: In 2004-05, how much resources have been reserved by the Administration for the temporary construction and demolition materials recycling facility at Kai Tak? When will this facility be commissioned? What is the estimated period of its operation?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply: The Administration plans to let a short-term tenancy for a private enterprise to build and operate the temporary construction and demolition materials recycling facility at Kai Tak. Hence, it is not necessary to reserve any financial resources for the purpose. Subject to successful engagement of a private operator, this facility will be put into operation by early 2005. Its operation is estimated to last for 5 years.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ T K TSAO

Post Title _____ Director of Civil Engineering

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)033

Question Serial No.

0153

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05 that the government will "continue to implement measures to further promote waste separation and recovery". What are the details of the plan involved? What are the staff resources and expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : In 2004-05, a team of 8 professional staff and 8 technical staff will continue to be involved in more than 15 waste separation and recovery programmes at a total cost of about \$15 million. These programmes include the extension of the dry and wet waste separation trial in housing estates in the Eastern District, promotion on recovery of wastes which are difficult to manage (e.g. waste tyres, electrical & electronic appliances) as well as recovery of glass bottles, plastic bottles and plastic bags.

To further enhance the public's awareness on waste separation and recovery, we would continue to implement various community awareness and education programmes among different target groups in 2004-05 at an estimated total cost of \$6.65 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)034

Question Serial No.

0154

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Has any provision been allowed for in the Budget for staff resources required for the preparation and implementation of the vehicle tyre tax? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : We are still examining various options for introducing a mandatory product responsibility scheme for waste vehicle tyres, including imposition of a levy scheme for vehicle tyre. The staff resources required for the preparation of the levy scheme are already provided for in the current establishment of the Environmental Protection Department.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)035

Question Serial No.

0155

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Why does the number of asbestos abatement plans processed increase significantly from 157 in 2003 to an estimated no. of 300 in 2004?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The estimated increase is due to a school asbestos survey programme under which the Architectural Services Department and Housing Department will, according to their current plans, conduct 150 asbestos surveys for schools in 2004. Hence, we estimate that the Environmental Protection Department will receive a total of around 300 asbestos abatement plans in 2004.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)036

Question Serial No.

0156

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is estimated that the work in handling smoky vehicles will reduce by about 10% in 2004 as compared to 2003 (based on the relevant indicator(s)). Will there be any corresponding re-deployment of staff resources? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : We regularly review the workload of the different areas of the department and adjust the deployment of our resources as appropriate, having regard to changing priorities and workload demand. In December 2003 a new Air Pollution (Emission Reduction Devices for Vehicles) Regulation came into effect. Since then staff resources equivalent to 0.5 inspectorate and 0.5 clerical staff under the smoky vehicle programme have been re-deployed to assist with some of the work arising from this new regulation. This work involves conducting on-road inspections of emission reduction devices as well as associated legislative enforcement and follow up work.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)037

Question Serial No.

0196

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Will the work to be carried out in 2004-05 in seeking to maintain satisfactory air quality cover measures to improve indoor air quality? If yes, what are the details and the departmental staff resources and expenditure involved? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The work under the Air Programme includes programmes for promoting and improving indoor air quality. In 2004-05, EPD will continue to:

- (a) manage an Indoor Air Quality Information Centre to promote the importance of good indoor air quality and disseminate relevant information to the public as well as professionals; and
- (b) coordinate an Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme that has commenced since September 2003. Under the Scheme, office buildings and public places meeting "good" and "excellent" levels can be issued a corresponding certificate by qualified personnel.

The budget for the above work in 2004-05 is \$0.725 million. The work is managed by and shared among 3 professional staff.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title _____

Director of Environmental Protection

Date _____

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)039

Question Serial No.

0456

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Subhead (No. & title): 700
 Department General non-recurrent

Programme : (7) Community Relations

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under this Subhead 700, Item 567 is to enhance education and community involvement in waste reduction. What is included in this programme? Will it overlap with the projects supported by the Environment and Conservation Fund?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : This programme started in financial year 2002-03. A series of publicity, outreach and environmental education programmes have been organized to enhance public education and community involvement in waste recycling and recovery, including:

- (1) publicity programmes such as TV productions, development of education materials for the general public and cartoons for children;
- (2) outreach programmes using the Mobile Environmental Resource Centre;
- (3) production of environmental education kits to supplement school curricula for primary and secondary schools; and
- (4) provision of support to community groups in organizing waste recovery schemes.

The activities under this programme are mainly environmental awareness and education programmes which are different from those projects funded by the Environment and Conservation Fund, through which community groups carry out community waste recovery projects themselves.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)040

Question Serial No.

0457

Head : 44 Environmental Protection

Subhead (No. & title):

Department

Programme : (6) Environmental Assessment and Planning

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the major mechanisms for the cross-boundary co-operation between the HKSAR Government and the Mainland Government in environmental impact assessment and planning at present? What are the establishment and expenditure involved? What are the specific items for co-operation in the coming year 2004-05?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The major mechanism for cross-boundary co-operation between the HKSAR and the Mainland Government in environmental impact assessment (EIA) and planning is the Mirs Bay and Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay) Areas Environmental Management Special Panel set up under the Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection. The Special Panel is co-chaired by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) of the Hong Kong SAR Government and the Shenzhen Environmental Protection Bureau. The Joint Working Group is co-chaired by the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works of the HKSAR Government and the Director of the Environmental Protection Bureau of the Guangdong Provincial Government. In addition, the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and EPD have arranged exchanges with the State Environmental Protection Administration on EIA matter since this year.

The staff establishment in the EPD directly involved in cross-boundary EIA and planning works is 1 Senior Environmental Protection Officer, 2 Environmental Protection Officers and 1 Environmental Protection Inspector. The corresponding expenditure including both staff costs and operating expenses for the Financial Year 2004-05 is about \$ 2.24 million.

The specific items for cooperation on cross-boundary EIA and planning in 2004-5 are:

- to examine and exchange information on the findings of the environmental impact assessment studies, and any related design submissions, of cross-boundary projects, including the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge Hong Kong Section and North Lantau Highway Connection, Tonggu Channel of Shenzhen Port, Submarine Gas Pipeline from Cheng Tou Jiao Liquefied Natural Gas Receiving Terminal in Shenzhen to Tai Po Gas Production Plant in Hong Kong and Shenzhen Western Corridor;
- to conduct half-yearly regular audits on the implementation of action plans for the protection of Mirs Bay and Deep Bay environment; and
- to enhance the sharing of experiences, knowledge and practice with the State Environmental Protection Administration on EIA matters and co-operate on EIA training activities.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)041

Question Serial No.

0458

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Has provision been made in 2004-05 for the implementation of the landfill charging scheme for construction and demolition waste? If yes, what is the estimated expenditure? Will it involve additional staffing requirement? If so, what is the implication on the establishment?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The Environmental Protection Department is considering a proposal to upgrade the weighbridge computer systems and other associated infrastructures for the existing three landfills that are necessary for the implementation of the construction waste disposal charging scheme. The estimated cost is in the order of \$20 million. The department will re-deploy existing staff resources to implement the charging scheme and no additional staff resources are required.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)042

Question Serial No.

0459

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (4) Waste

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With regard to the number of prosecutions for illegal deposit of waste offences, there is a considerable difference between the actual figure of 87 in 2002 and the estimated figure of 25 in 2004-05, please give the main reason for the decrease. What is the establishment solely involved in the inspection and prosecution of illegal deposit of waste? Is there any decrease in manpower as compared with that in 2002?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The number of prosecutions for flytipping in 2004 is an estimated figure based on the actual figure in 2003. The decrease in 2003 is due to the fact that continual anti-flytipping surveillance and ambushes at blackspots in the past years have significantly deterred the illegal act and eliminated some of the blackspots. The Fixed Penalty system launched in 2002 also contributed partly to this reduction.

EPD pollution control staff are organized on a geographical basis to carry out multi-functional enforcement. As such, our control staff are constantly on the lookout for illegal dumping activities while going about other field duties. This arrangement is necessary as we need to catch the flytippers on the spot before we could initiate prosecution action. It is therefore not possible to quote a precise staff resource allocation to this function but there has not been any reduction in enforcement efforts in flytipping control as compared to 2002.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)043

Question Serial No.

0463

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the progress of the study on emissions trading jointly carried out with the Guangdong authorities? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The Hong Kong SAR Government and Guangdong Provincial Government have agreed to study the feasibility of an emissions trading pilot scheme among some power stations in Hong Kong and in the Pearl River Delta Region. Under the Hong Kong - Guangdong Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection, a Special Panel on Pearl River Delta Air Quality Management and Monitoring has been set up, among other things, to study the feasibility of the emissions trading pilot scheme. Our target is to have the system under which the pilot scheme will run set up by 2006-07.

We have earmarked \$0.5 million to support the study through hiring of services and so far we have used \$0.15 million of it.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)044

Question Serial No.

0464

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the expenditure in 2004-05 for implementation of the policy to improve indoor air quality? What are the major plans?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : A budget of \$0.725 million has been earmarked in 2004-05 for promoting and improving indoor air quality. It will cover the following:

- (a) manage an Indoor Air Quality Information Centre to promote the importance of good indoor air quality and disseminate relevant information to the public as well as professionals; and
- (b) coordinate an Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme that has commenced since September 2003. Under the Scheme, office buildings and public places meeting "good" and "excellent" levels can be issued with a corresponding certificate by qualified personnel.

Further to the above, in 2004-05, this department will study the feasibility of controlling certain building materials and furnishing products that may affect indoor air quality. We will also work on a proposal to control the emission of volatile organic compounds from paints, printing ink and selected consumer products. This proposal will also help to improve indoor air quality.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)045

Question Serial No.

0465

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The expenditure under Programme 1 for 2004-05 is 7% higher as compared to 2003-04, mainly due to the increase in payments for waste treatment arising from the increase in waste quantity with a likely improvement in the economy of Hong Kong as predicted by the Government. However, from the figures provided by the Government, it indicates that there will only be a slight increase in the quantity of waste treated at landfills and the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre. As such, would the Government explain in detail the reasons for the 7% increase in estimated expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : Apart from the projected increase in waste intake due to an expected improved economy in 2004-05, the estimated increase of 7% in the expenditure under Programme 1 is mainly attributable to the inclusion of a contingency fund having regard to the many uncertainties in the estimation of waste quantities.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)046

Question Serial No.

0466

Head : 44 Environmental Protection

Subhead (No. & title):

Department

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please inform this Council the quantity of various types of chemical wastes treated by the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre (CWTC) in Tsing Yi for the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05. How much do they account for the annual total handling capacity of the whole treatment centre? What is the amount of subsidies provided by the Government for each type of waste (please give a breakdown)? Does the Government have any plan to raise the handling charge for chemical wastes?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The breakdown of waste intake by category at the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre in the past two years and the projection for the coming year is as follows:

Waste Type	2002 (tonnes)	2003 (tonnes)	2004 (estimate) (tonnes)
Spent etchants (Ammoniacal)	1650	2110	2280
Spent etchants (Non-Ammoniacal)	7700	1790	2020
Acids	2650	2640	2970
Toxic metal solutions	1250	1570	1770
Alkalis	1500	1280	1440
Solvents	2700	2770	3120
Land based waste oil	7150	6280	7050
MARPOL waste	27500	24070	27010
Others	350	290	340
Total	52450	42800	48000

As the design capacity of the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre is 100,000 tonnes per year, the chemical waste intake for the past 2 years accounted for 52.5% and 43% of the design capacity respectively, the intake for 2004 is expected to be about 48%.

It is not possible to give a breakdown of the subsidies for the different types of chemical waste because the costs and subsidies vary depending on the chemical composition and treatment system used and these variables can change with each consignment of waste. In 2003-04, the overall subsidy to chemical waste producers for treating chemical waste at the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre was about \$107 million. In line with the polluter pays principle, the Government is planning to gradually increase the charge of treating chemical waste at the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre so as to recover the full variable operation cost in the coming years.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)047

Question Serial No.

0467

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : How does the annual maximum handling capacity compare with the actual quantity of waste handled in the refuse transfer stations for 2003-04? At present, are the charges for handling wastes sent to refuse handling stations calculated on cost recovery principle? Does the Government need to provide any subsidies? If yes, what is the rate of subsidies in percentage?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : The total design capacity of the refuse transfer stations is about 3.6 million tonnes a year. In 2003, the total quantity of waste handled in the refuse transfer stations was about 2.1 million tonnes.

In the early stages of refuse transfer development in Hong Kong, the refuse transfer stations only handled waste delivered by refuse collection vehicles of the former municipal councils. With the development of more refuse transfer stations, some refuse transfer stations have been opened to receive waste delivered by private waste collectors since 1998. The refuse transfer station charge rates are set to recover the full additional cost for providing waste transfer service to these private waste collectors.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)048

Question Serial No.

0897

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The estimated expenditure on waste facilities of the Environmental Protection Department in 2004-05 is \$1,376.4 million, which represents a significant increase of 7.1% as compared to \$1,284.6 million in 2003-04. However, when compared to 2002, the quantities of all categories of wastes treated in 2003 were on the decline. Why is it still necessary to increase the expenditure by 7.1%? Out of the total estimated expenditure of \$1,376.4 million, how much will be used to promote waste reduction and recycling?

Asked by : Hon. CHU Yu-lin, David

Reply : Apart from the projected increase in waste intake due to an expected improved economy in 2004-05, the estimated increase of 7.1% in the expenditure under Programme 1 is mainly attributable to the inclusion of a contingency having regard to the many uncertainties in the estimation of waste quantities.

In 2004-05, it is estimated that a total of about \$6 million will be allocated for more than 15 programmes to promote waste reduction and waste recovery/recycling activities. These programmes include the extension of the dry and wet waste separation trial in housing estates in the Eastern District, recovery of wastes which are difficult to handle such as vehicle tyres and electrical & electronic appliances as well as trials on various new waste recovery systems.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)049

Question Serial No.

0898

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Subhead (No. & title):
 Department

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05 that feasibility studies will be commissioned on extension schemes for existing landfills. Will these studies include assessment of the costs and environmental impacts arising from acquisition of private land or expansion of the original reclamation scheme? If yes, what are the expenditure involved and staff resources deployed?

Asked by : Hon. CHU Yu-lin, David

Reply : In 2004-05, the Environmental Protection Department will commission feasibility and environmental impact assessment studies on the extension schemes for the three existing landfills. These studies will also provide detailed plans for land resumption and include the necessary site investigations for the development of the extension schemes. However, there is no reclamation requirement for any of the extension schemes proposed. An estimate of \$16.5 million has been included in the 2004-05 Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocation Subhead 5101DX for carrying out these studies. The department will re-deploy existing staff resources to manage the studies and no additional staff resources are required.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)050

Question Serial No.

0899

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05 that the Environmental Protection Department will enhance partnerships with district councils, green groups and community organisations to further promote waste reduction and recycling, and will involve the business community more in waste prevention and recovery through product responsibility schemes. How much staff resources and provision will be allocated for such work? Will community groups and organisations be given a certain amount of subsidies for joint promotion of related activities? If yes, what is the amount involved? Will a certain amount of the provision be reserved to support or encourage the business community to carry out waste reduction and recovery work? If yes, what is the amount involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHU Yu-lin, David

Reply : In 2004-05, a team of 8 professional staff and 8 technical staff (staff resources of \$8.5 million) will be deployed to work with district councils, environmental groups and community organisations to implement waste recovery projects including the extension of the dry and wet waste separation trial in the Eastern District and recovery of glass bottles, plastic bottles, plastic bags, rechargeable batteries as well as electrical and electronic appliances. The team will also work with various business sectors to examine means to implement product responsibility schemes for waste tyres and other products. The estimated expenditure for these programmes is about \$3 million.

To further enhance the public's awareness on waste recycling and reduction, we will continue to implement various publicity and education programmes targeting different stakeholders in the community. The total amount to be incurred on these programmes in financial year 2004-05 is estimated at \$6.65 million.

Community groups and non-profit-making organizations can apply to the Environment and Conservation Fund for grants to implement waste recovery schemes in the community. The amount of grant varies according to the nature and scope of each application.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)051

Question Serial No.

0264

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What was the work carried out in 2003-04 to promote the waste separation and recovery scheme, its progress and the expenditure involved? How would the Environmental Protection Department assess the effectiveness of the scheme? Please provide the details and estimated expenditure of the scheme in 2004-05.

Asked by : Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply : In 2003-04, a team of 8 professional staff and 8 technical staff was involved in 16 waste separation and recovery programmes at a total cost of \$14.5 million (staff costs of about \$8.5 million and programme costs of about \$6 million). These programmes included the dry and wet waste separation trial in housing estates in the Eastern District, promotion on recovery of wastes which are difficult to manage (e.g. waste tyres, electrical and electronic appliances) as well as recovery of glass bottles, plastic bottles and plastic bags. To enhance the public's awareness on waste separation and recovery, we also implemented various community education programmes at a total cost of about \$7.42 million.

As regards effectiveness, the overall municipal waste recovery rate rose from 36% in 2002 to 41% in 2003. Also, the amount of plastic bottles, plastic bags, electrical and electronic appliances recovered all registered significant increases since the launch of the respective programmes.

It is estimated that the expenditure by the government on waste separation and recovery in 2004-05 would remain about the same as in 2003-04. Expenditure on education programmes would be reduced slightly to \$6.65 million due to a reduction in the frequency of direct outreaching activities and the provision of more technical advice and support for schools and community groups to organize their own activities on waste separation and recovery. We will also enhance the dissemination of waste reduction messages through the internet.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)052

Question Serial No.

0266

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (7) Community Relations

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With regard to the Visitors Centre and three Environmental Resource Centres of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), please list out the patronage, usage of various services provided and the expenditure of each centre in 2003-04. Does the EPD have any plan to set up more of such centres? If yes, please provide the details and list out their estimated expenditure.

Asked by : Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply : The patronage, usage of services and expenditure of the Visitors Centre and the three Environmental Resource Centres (ERC) are provided below. The Visitors Centre provides information on Government's environmental protection work and programmes while the ERCs provide environmental education for the general public. We have no plans to set up new centres in the near future.

Item	Visitors Centre	Wan Chai ERC	Tsuen Wan ERC(1)	Fanling ERC(2)
Patronage in 2003	1,153 visitors	21,423 visitors	10,486 visitors	24,066 visitors from mid-Aug to Dec 03 (i.e. 64,176 visitors in full year as projected)
No. of education programmes/ guided visits organized in 2003	45	323	197	218 from mid-Aug to Dec 03 (i.e. 581 in full year as projected)
Annual Recurrent Expenditure (\$)M	\$0.06M	\$0.656M	\$1.029M	\$1.668M

Notes:

(1)The operation of the Tsuen Wan ERC from April 03 to March 05 has been contracted out to Green Power with funding from the Environment and Conservation Fund.

(2)The Fanling ERC has commenced operation since mid-August 03.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)053

Question Serial No.

0270

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05 that the department will complete the study on the treatment of animal carcasses. What are the details of the study and the estimated expenditure on the area concerned?

Asked by : Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply : The study is to find out the appropriate facilities to be provided for treatment of animal carcasses. The estimated expenditure is \$6.4 million.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)054

Question Serial No.

0518

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The financial provision for waste facilities in 2004-05 is \$1,376.4 million. Out of this provision, how much is estimated to be used in research work and what are the details of respective research projects?

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply : In 2004-05, about \$4 million will be allocated for consultancy studies to develop the Recovery Park in Tuen Mun Area 38 and to examine the recovery and recycling of wastes that are difficult to handle (e.g. waste tyres, electrical and electronic appliances) as well as means to further promote waste reduction and recovery.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)055

Question Serial No.

1605

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Subhead (No. & title):
 Department

Programme : (7) Community Relations

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the effectiveness of the waste separation and recovery programmes for 2003-04? What are the details of the estimated development of the programmes in 2004-05? What is the estimated expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily

Reply : Overall, the recovery rate for municipal solid waste in Hong Kong has risen from 36% in 2002 to 41% in 2003. The increase is mainly attributed to a surge in metal recovery in 2003 as a result of a strong demand for waste metals in the Mainland as well as increased Government efforts in promoting waste recycling. The amount of plastic bottles, plastic bags, electrical and electronic appliances recovered also registered significant increases in 2003.

In 2004-05, it is estimated that a total of about \$6 million will be allocated to more than 15 programmes to promote waste separation and recovery. These include the extension of the dry and wet waste separation trial in the Eastern District, continuation of programmes to recover wastes which are difficult to handle (e.g. plastic bottles, plastic bags, electrical & electronic appliances) and trials on various new waste recovery systems.

In support of the Government's programmes, the waste recycling campaign in housing estates organized by the Environmental Campaign Committee has now reached over 1,300 public and private housing estates covering some 5 million people. The amount of waste paper and aluminium cans collected under this programme in 2003 was 31% and 69% higher respectively than that collected in 2002, although there was a slight drop in the amount of plastic bottles recovered. The Environmental Campaign Committee will continue to support the Government's efforts in promoting waste reduction and recycling in financial year 2004-05. Funding for community groups to conduct waste reduction and recycling programmes will also continue to be made available through the Environmental and Conservation Fund. The amount to be made available will depend on the nature of individual applications.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)056

Question Serial No.

1606

Head : 44 Environmental Protection

Subhead (No. & title):

Department

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05:

1. It is mentioned that the government will "continue to implement measures to further promote waste separation and recovery". What are the details? What is the expenditure involved? How is it different from the "waste separation and recovery programmes" under Programme (7)?
2. What are the details for implementing the product responsibility schemes?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily

- Reply : 1. In 2004-05, it is estimated that a total of \$6 million will be allocated to more than 15 programmes to further promote waste separation and recovery. These include the extension of the dry and wet waste separation trial in the Eastern District, continuation of programmes to recover wastes that are difficult to handle (e.g. plastic bottles, plastic bags, electrical & electronic appliances) and trials on various new waste recovery systems. These initiatives under Programme 1 are measures to promote waste reduction, separation and recovery under the Waste Reduction Framework Plan while the programmes on waste separation and recovery under Programme 7 aim to educate the general public and increase community awareness on waste reduction and recovery.
2. The Government is exploring how product responsibility schemes may be employed to manage wastes that are not commercially attractive for recycling such as vehicle tyres, batteries, electrical & electronic appliances and beverage containers. The Environmental Protection Department has been discussing with the relevant business sectors on possible means to implement product responsibility schemes in Hong Kong.

Concurrently, the Government is carrying out a series of regulatory impact assessments to examine the costs, benefits and impacts on stakeholders for different product responsibility options with a view to identifying preferred options. Stakeholders are consulted in the process. The first product being examined is waste tyres and the findings of the regulatory impact assessment would be available in mid 2004.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)057

Question Serial No.

1391

Head : 44 Environmental Protection

Subhead (No. & title):

Department

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Provision for fees for operation of waste facilities in 2004-05 is \$1,237,970,000, representing an increase of 8.9% over the revised estimate for 2003-04. Would the Administration provide:

- 1) a breakdown of the financial provision for this Subhead;
- 2) the quantity of wastes handled by individual waste facilities in the past two years and their estimated quantity in 2004-05 as well as their respective percentages of the annual handling capacity of individual wastes facilities;
- 3) Since the estimated quantity of wastes to be handled by strategic landfills and refuse transfer stations in 2004 will not have significant increase as compared to 2003, please explain why there is an increase of 8.9% in the estimated expenditure for fees for operation of waste facilities in 2004-05.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply : **For 1) and 2)**

The estimated expenditure for the operation of the waste facilities in 2004-05 and the quantities of wastes handled in the past two years and the coming financial year 2004-05 are as follows:

	Chemical Waste Treatment Centre	Refuse Transfer Stations	Landfills	Livestock waste composting service	Contingency	Total
1. Breakdown of 2004-05 financial provision for the Subhead on Fees for Operation of Waste Facilities (\$M)	345	375	430	14	74	1,238
2(a) Quantity of wastes handled (tonnage) :						
2002	52,400	2,128,397	7,722,647	7,744		
2003	42,800	2,102,523	6,481,394	7,425		
2004 (Plan)	48,000	2,100,000	6,500,000	8,000		
2(b) % of annual handling capacity of individual waste facilities :						
2002	52.4%	59%	N/A*	106%		
2003	42.8%	58%	N/A*	102%		
2004 (Plan)	48%	58%	N/A*	N/A		

* There is no design annual throughput capacity for landfills and therefore no comparison figure could be provided.

For 3)

Apart from the projected increase in waste intake due to an expected improved economy in 2004-05, the estimated increase of 8.9% in the expenditure for the operation of waste facilities is also attributable to the inclusion of a contingency having regard to the many uncertainties in the estimation of waste quantities.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)058

Question Serial No.

1011

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Subhead (No. & title):

Department

Programme : (6) Environmental Assessment and Planning

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The aim of this Programme is to "pre-empt environmental problems associated with projects, plans, policies and strategies by assessing their environmental implications and ensuring that effective preventive and mitigatory measures are implemented where potential problems are identified."

Does the scope of work of the Environmental Protection Department include the review of existing policies / strategies / regulations / guidelines etc. adopted by the Government and various departments to see if there are any underlying adverse implications or constraints on the environment, and the provision of solutions? If yes, please provide details of the review, the amount of provision set aside for this purpose and the staff resources required in 2004-05? If no, please give the reasons.

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, Sophie

Reply : The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) is not charged with the responsibility of independently reviewing or auditing existing government policies / strategies / regulations / guidelines, etc. The department does, however, have a role to play in advising on the potential environmental implications of proposed new policies, strategic plans, regulations, etc. when they are being formulated. The staff establishment in the EPD directly involved in strategic environmental assessment studies comprises 1 Senior Environmental Protection Officer and 2 Environmental Protection Officers. The corresponding expenditure including both staff costs and operating expenses for the Financial Year 2004-05 is about \$ 2.02 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 25 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)059

Question Serial No.

1545

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Waste Facilities

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question :

1. What is the estimated unit cost for handling one tonne of solid waste in landfills in 2004-05? Is there any increase or decrease as compared to that in 2003-04?
2. What is the proportion of the administration fee in the existing costs for waste treatment?
3. What is the current rate of waste recovery?
4. What was the amount of wastes recovered for recycling or reuse in the last financial year through recovery programmes jointly organised by the Government, district councils and community organisations? What is the amount of savings in waste treatment?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

1. The estimated unit cost for handling one tonne of solid waste in landfills in 2004-05 is about \$129 (including administrative cost) per tonne which is similar to that in 2003-04.
2. The administration fee in the existing cost for landfilling of waste is about 3%.
3. The overall recovery rate for municipal solid waste increased from 36% in 2002 to 41% in 2003. This increase of 5% was mainly attributed to a strong demand for waste metals in the Mainland and increased Government efforts in promoting waste recycling.
4. In 2003-04, a total of about 1300 tonnes of wastes (including paper, plastic bottles, clothes, aluminium and tin cans, electrical & electronic appliances, expanded polystyrene, plastic bags etc) were recovered through partnership programmes with District Councils and non-government organisations. If we use a landfill disposal cost of \$125 per tonne as basis, then there is a saving of some \$162,500.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 25 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)060

Question Serial No.

0403

Head : 44 Environmental Protection Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (7) Community Relations

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The provision under Programme 7 for 2004-05 is \$5.8M lower than the revised estimate for 2003-04, amounting to 14%, mainly due to the effect of reduced operating expenses and non-recurrent expenditure, but with only one post deleted. Please provide details of the expenditure cut and its impact on services and performance indicators concerned.

Asked by : Hon. WU king-cheong, Henry

Reply : The reduction of \$5.8 million is mainly due to the effect of the 2004-05 civil service pay cut (\$0.6 million), deletion of one Chief Environmental Protection Inspector post as a result of the Second Voluntary Retirement Scheme (\$0.4 million), reduced operating expenses on community relations activities (\$2.0 million), and a reduced requirement for non-recurrent expenditure on projects which have been completed or are nearly completed (\$2.2 million).

The reduction in spending on community relations activities will entail a reduction in the frequency of some outreaching activities, but this will be compensated by providing more technical advice for schools and community groups to organize their own environmental activities. We will also strengthen our lending service of environmental education materials and enhance the dissemination of updated environmental information through the internet.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)061

Head : 48 – Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title) Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Advisory and Investigative Services

1636

Controlling Officer : Government Chemist

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question :

The number of tests performed on air monitoring samples will be reduced from 119 551 (actual) in 2003-04 to 95 000 (estimate) in 2004-05. Would the Government inform us in detail:

- the reasons for the substantial deduction in the number of tests?
- whether other monitoring methods will be used to test the air quality?

Asked by : Hon. MAK Kwok-fung, Michael

Reply :

- The 119 551 tests conducted in 2003 included 13 051 tests done for ad hoc projects which are now near completion. The estimate for 2004 has not included such tests. Also, in 2003, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) requested for around 12 000 tests to be carried out for elemental analysis of total suspended particulates (TSP). EPD has estimated that in 2004 only 509 tests will be required because the elemental information required for TSP has been compiled. Updating the information base will not require the same amount of analytical work. Due to these two factors, the estimated number of tests for 2004 is 95 000.
- The reduction in the estimated number of tests will not result in less information about air quality. It is not necessary to replace them with other monitoring methods.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr D.G. Clarke

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 24.3.2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)062

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0113

Programme : (1) Capital Projects

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the Highways Department will proceed with the investigation study of the Hong Kong Section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and North Lantau Highway Connection. What is the estimated provision of the study and how will the provision be used?

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply : The Finance Committee approved upgrading of the project for investigation and preliminary design (I&PD) of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Section and North Lantau Highway Connection to Category A on 5.12.2003 with an approved project estimate of \$58.90 million in money-of-the-day prices. The estimate comprises consultancy fees of \$29.20 million, site investigation cost of \$25.74 million, and contingencies of \$3.96 million. The I&PD study has commenced in March 2004. Our estimated expenditure for the fiscal year 2004-05 is about \$48 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of Highways** _____

Date _____ **24 March 2004** _____

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)063

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) Question Serial No.

1739

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : According to the information provided by the department, the planning study of the Regional Express Line is being finalized. What are the details of the planning and the construction schedule? What is the anticipated date of commissioning?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The Regional Express Line contemplated in the Railway Development Strategy 2000 now becomes the Hong Kong section of the proposed Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link. The Environment, Transport and Works Bureau of the HKSAR and the Ministry of Railways have set up a Joint Expert Group on the express rail link to take forward the strategic planning for the proposed infrastructure. The Joint Expert Group embarked on a joint investigative study on the feasibility of the express rail link, and has completed the first stage of the study which, among other things, confirmed the strategic value of the rail link. The findings were reported to the Mainland/HKSAR Conference on the Coordination of Major Infrastructure Projects (Coordination Conference) in September 2002. The Joint Expert Group has subsequently embarked on the second stage of the study, which examines issues such as rail technology, crossing points, economic and financial performance of the rail link. We will discuss with the Mainland authorities the best way to proceed with the proposed rail link upon finalisation of the feasibility study.

The Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link is a strategic cross-boundary infrastructure project. The Joint Expert Group has to consider a broad range of issues, including the town planning and transportation development on both sides. We hope to be able to complete the study as soon as possible.

As the study is still on-going, the implementation programme of the project has not yet been decided.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG**

Post Title _____ **Director of Highways**

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)064

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

1740

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the current planning schedules of the Shatin to Central Link, MTRCL West Hong Kong Island Line and South Hong Kong Island Line?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : Railway Development Strategy 2000 envisaged the completion of the Shatin to Central Link by end 2011. This remains our working target.

MTRCL will submit a proposal on West Island Line and South Island Line to Government by the second quarter of 2004 for consideration. The Administration would then examine the proposal, negotiate with MTRCL and consult the public as soon as practicable.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title _____ Director of Highways

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)065

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) Question Serial No.

1741

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the transport and planning studies with railway planning input provided by the Highways Department or consultants, please provide the contents and findings of the studies implemented/to be implemented in 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The details of the consultancies commissioned by Highways Department on railway planning in the calendar years 2002 to 2004 are as follows:

Study title	Scope	Present progress	Study recommendations
(1) Provision of technical assistance and advice on transport policy issues in relation to the feasibility study on MTRCL/KCRC merger	To provide transport technical data in respect of the design and operation of railway systems both locally and overseas	Substantially completed	As the Study only involves provision of technical data, the Consultant is not required to make any conclusion/recommendations.
(2) Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link – Technical and Institutional Study (Joint study with the Ministry of Railways)	To carry out preliminary study on the technical and institutional aspects of the Express Rail Link	In progress	As the Study is still on-going, its conclusion/recommendations have yet to be finalized.

Reply Serial No.

Question Serial No.

In order not to lose sight of railway planning issues and for better co-ordination of railway interfaces, we also provide railway planning input to other Government departments in respect of their transport and planning studies.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)066

Head :
60 – Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0409

Programme : (1) Capital Projects

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the traffic noise mitigation measures, could the Government provide the details of projects to be commenced shortly and under construction. Besides, what are the total construction costs of the said measures and the average construction cost per item? Please provide a detailed breakdown of the locations and construction costs of the projects.

Asked by : Hon. Lau Kong-wah

Reply : In November 2000, the Government introduced administrative measures to address the noise impact of existing roads on residents in their neighbourhood by way of retrofitting of noise barriers and resurfacing with low noise material where practicable. We have identified 32 noisy road sections for the retrofitting programme and 72 local noisy road sections for resurfacing with low noise materials. The details of projects to commence shortly are tabulated as below -

1. Retrofitting of noise barriers

	Location	Estimated Commencement Date	Estimated Completion Date	Cost of Work (\$M)
1	Fanling Highway near Choi Yuen Estate	Aug. 2004	Dec. 2005	108
2.	Fanling Highway near Fanling Centre	Aug. 2004	Dec. 2005	67
3.	Cheung Pei Shan Road	mid 2005	mid 2007	245
4.	Ma On Shan Road	mid 2005	mid 2007	51
5.	Tuen Mun Road	end 2005	2011	383
Total :				854

As for the other retrofitting projects, the implementation programme and estimates of cost are currently under review.

2. The low noise resurfacing works for the 72 road sections costing about \$78 million either are under planning or has commenced. Of these, three road sections in Public Square Street, Embankment Road and Yim Po Fong Street were completed in 2003. It is expected that another 15 road sections shown below will be completed in 2004. The remaining road sections are under review.

Resurfacing works to be completed in 2004	Cost Estimate (\$M)
Hing Wah Street	0.71
Sai Yee Street	0.79
Fa Yuen Street	0.58
Mong Kok Road	1.05
Tonkin Street	0.84
Un Chau Street between Hing Wah Street and Tonkin Street	1.40
Un Chau Street between Tonkin Street and Yen Chow Street	0.60
Cox's Road	0.62
Oak Street	0.66
Whitty Street	0.27
Wong Nai Chung Road	0.70
Johnston Road	0.71
Queen's Road West between Western Street and Pok Fu Lam Road	0.50
Kingston Street	0.53
Queen's Road West between Des Voeux Road and Hill Road	0.73
Total :	10.69

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)067

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0410

Programme : (1) Capital Projects

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the number of projects to be carried out by in-house staff is estimated to be 90, representing a total cost of \$8,550 million and an average cost of \$95 million per item. However, the total cost of the 192 capital projects under design and construction by consultants is \$115,000 million, representing an average cost of \$598 million per item. The average cost incurred by the consultants is much higher than that by the in-house staff. Please specify:

- a. the reason for the higher average construction cost incurred by the consultants than the in-house staff;
- b. the breakdown of the projects to be carried out by consultants and their company names.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : (a) Consultants are usually engaged for large scale and complex/specialized projects which inevitably incur higher construction costs than those being undertaken by in-house staff.

- (b) The following are some of the major assignments undertaken by consultants in 2004-05-

Consultancy Title	Consultants
Kam Tin Bypass - design and construction	Black & Veatch H.K. Ltd.
Castle Peak Road Improvement between Area 2 and Ka Loon Tsuen, Tsuen Wan design and construction	Mouchel / Halcrow Joint Venture
Central - Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link - design and construction	Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd.
Route 9 between Tsing Yi and Cheung Sha Wan - Stonecutter Bridge - design and construction	Ove Arup & Partners HK Ltd.
Route 9 between Tsing Yi and Cheung Sha Wan - design and construction	Ove Arup & Partners HK Ltd.
Route 9 between Cheung Shan Wan and Sha Tin - design and construction	Maunsell Hyder Joint Venture

Consultancy Title	Consultants
Improvement to Tung Chung Road between Lung Tseng Tau and Cheung Sha - design and construction	Mott Connell Ltd.
Widening of Yuen Long Highway between Lam Tei and Shap Pat Heung Interchange - design and construction	Scott Wilson Ltd.
Tender and Construction of Improvement to Castle Peak Road between Ka Loon Tsuen and Siu Lam – tender and construction	Ove Arup & Partners HK Ltd.
Deep Bay Link - design and construction	Ove Arup & Partners HK Ltd.
Reconstruction and Improvement of Tuen Mun Road - investigation and preliminary design	Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd.
Further Study on Reconstruction and Improvement of Tuen Mun Road – investigation	Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd.
Shenzhen Western Corridor -design and construction	Ove Arup & Partners HK Ltd.
Improvements to San Tin Interchange – investigation	Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd.
Improvements to San Tin Interchange - design and construction	Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd.
Improvements to Island Eastern Corridor section between North Point Interchange and Sai Wan Ho - design and construction	Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd.
Hong Kong - Zhuhai - Macao Bridge Hong Kong Section and the North Lantau Highway Connection Ecological Baseline Survey	Mouchel Asia Ltd.

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Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)068

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0411

Programme : (1) Capital Projects

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the current progress of the construction of Kam Tin Bypass and New Boundary Bridge between Lok Ma Chau and Huanggang? In which quarter of 2004-05 will the remaining works be expected to complete? Besides, what is the actual expenditure of the construction?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : Works for the New Boundary Bridge between Lok Ma Chau and Huanggang are in progress and the bridge is targeted for commissioning in December 2004. The latest project cost is estimated to be \$300 million.

The construction works of Kam Tin Bypass is scheduled for completion in June 2004. The latest project cost is estimated to be \$181 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)069

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0412

Programme : (1) Capital Projects

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the details of the investigation study of the Hong Kong Section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and North Lantau Highway Connection to be carried out in 2004-05? What is the expected completion date of the study?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : The Investigation and Preliminary Design Study for the Hong Kong Section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and the North Lantau Highway Connection (NLHC) has commenced in March 2004 for completion by end 2004. The scope of the study comprises an examination of alignment and design options, impact assessments in respect of, for example, the environmental, traffic, marine and aviation aspects, conceptual design of the Hong Kong Section of HZMB, preliminary design of the NLHC, and the associated site investigation.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG**

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)070

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0414

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the Highways Department will assist in implementing road improvement works which are essential to the commissioning of the Ma On Shan to Tai Wai Rail Link and the East Rail Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui. What are the current progress and the estimated expenditure of these projects?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : To facilitate the commissioning of the Ma On Shan (MOS) Rail, four subways at Tai Wai Station, Che Kung Temple Station, Tai Shui Hang Station and Heng On Station, one footbridge at City One Station and two public transport interchanges (PTIs) at Tai Wai Station and Wu Kai Sha Station are being built.

The subway at Tai Wai Station has been completed and opened to public on 24.12.2003. Structural works of the remaining three subways and the footbridge have been substantially completed, and architectural builders' works and finishes are in progress. As for the two PTIs at Tai Wai Station and Wu Kai Sha Station, they are about 62% and 52% complete respectively. All works are scheduled for completion by end 2004 to tie in with the commissioning of the MOS Rail.

In addition to the above, we are also implementing the enhancement of pedestrian road crossing facilities and erection of traffic signs near MOS Rail stations. These works will be in place to tie in with the commissioning of MOS Rail.

The cost of these subways/footbridge and the two PTIs (under PWP Item Nos. 49TR and 47TR) are \$117.9M and \$92.1M respectively. The other improvement works are estimated to cost about \$2M.

A total of \$77 M has already been spent and the estimated expenditure for the

financial year 2004-05 is about \$17M.

Regarding the Tsim Sha Tsui Extension (TST), a subway network under Mody Road, Hanoi Road, Blenheim Avenue, Signal Hill and Middle Road is being built to connect the new KCR East Tsim Sha Tsui (ETS) Station to the existing MTR TST Station. Structural works for these subways have been completed. E&M, architectural and building finishing works, and the related road reinstatement works are now in progress. All works are scheduled for completion before end 2004 to tie in with the opening of the new KCR ETS Station.

The estimated construction cost of these subways funded under PWP Item No.48TR is about \$1.1B. A total of \$ 652 M has already been spent and the estimated expenditure for the financial year 2004-05 for these subway works is about \$0.2B.

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Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)071

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) Question Serial No.

0415

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the Highways Department will assist in implementing pedestrian scheme. What are the details and the level of estimated expenditure? Has the Administration carried out consultation on the scheme?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : The pedestrian scheme aims to turn part or whole of a street into a pedestrian area. Related works carried out by the Highways Department include laying of clay pavers, renovation of pedestrian railings, improvement to the street lightings and provision of greenery. The total estimated cost is about \$15 million for 2004-05, covering 12 streets in 5 districts, viz Central, Causeway Bay, Wanchai, Yaumatei and Shamshuipo. We will consult District Councils on large scale schemes prior to commencing works.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

Post Title _____ Director of Highways _____

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)072

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0416

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the employing of methods of automating data collection on road surface conditions to improve the cost effectiveness and efficiency of highway maintenance, what are the details and the level of expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : Automated data collection methods on road surface conditions include employing data capture device, video survey and ground penetration radar. These methods of pavement condition survey help enhance the prioritization of road maintenance works thereby optimizing the use of maintenance funds. The total estimated expenditure on these surveys is about \$15 million.

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Name in block letters _____ MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title _____ Director of Highways

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)073

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0417

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In 2000, the Administration promulgated the Railway Development Strategy 2000. During 2004-05, the Highways Department will assist in updating the rail expansion plan and carry out any necessary studies on new railway proposals. Since the study on MTRCL/KCRC merger is underway, there are changes in population growth and town planning in Hong Kong. Will the Highways Department review the Railway Development Strategy 2000 to give the public a picture of the future railway development in the territory?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : The Railway Development Strategy 2000 provides a strategic framework for the further expansion of Hong Kong's rail network. We monitor and review the need for, and timing of individual rail projects closely as and when more updated planning information are available. The review will take account of the changes in socio-economic and demographic data in the society including assumptions on population growth, employment, economic changes and future landuse planning. It is through this continuous monitoring and planning process that we determine the best network expansion plan that will bring the most benefit to the community as a whole. The latest progress of individual rail projects will be regularly reported to Members.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

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Date _____ **24 March 2004** _____

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)074

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0418

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the Administration will receive and assess proposal on the West Hong Kong Island Line Phase 1 and South Hong Kong Island Line. What is the schedule of promulgating the study details of the two projects?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : MTRCL will submit the proposal on the two projects to Government for consideration by the second quarter of this year. The Administration would then examine the proposal and consult the public as soon as practicable.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)075

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0419

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the Administration will co-ordinate with the Mainland authorities on cross-boundary infrastructure development. What are the details? Will the Administration meet the relevant Mainland authorities on a regular basis to study the development?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : During the planning and construction of cross-boundary infrastructural projects, the Administration maintains regular liaison with the Mainland authorities. In the context of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor and the New Boundary Bridge between Lok Ma Chau and Huanggang, joint working groups and technical subgroups have been set up to discuss overall coordination of the projects as well as design and construction matters including standards, appearance and interfacing issues. Construction of both projects has started and the sub-groups have been meeting regularly to discuss technical and interfacing issues and monitor works progress.

In accordance with the approval of the State Council, the governments of Guangdong, HKSAR and Macao SAR have established a Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Advance Work Co-ordination Group (Co-ordination Group) to take forward the advance work for the HZMB. The Co-ordination Group has recently commissioned a design institute to undertake the feasibility study for the Bridge. It will also set up a project office in Guangzhou shortly to undertake advance planning work for the Bridge. The three governments will continue to liaise closely with each other in the context of the Co-ordination Group to discuss issues related to the implementation of the HZMB.

In the context of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, a Joint Expert Group with the Mainland side has been formed to conduct a joint investigative study on the feasibility of the express rail link. Under this Joint Expert Group, a Technical Group has been set up to study the technical issues.

The Joint Expert Group has completed the first stage of the study, and findings were reported to the Mainland/HKSAR Conference on the Co-ordination of Major Infrastructure Projects (Co-ordination Conference) in September 2002. The Joint Expert Group has embarked on the second stage of study which examines issues such as rail technology, crossing points, economic and financial performance of the rail link. We will discuss with the Mainland authorities the best way to proceed with the proposed rail link upon finalization of the feasibility study.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

Date 25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)076

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0420

Programme : (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In 2002 and 2003, the numbers of landscape submissions checked were 1 000 and 1 085 respectively, while the numbers of landscape cases designed/implemented were 2 400 and 2 052 respectively. Please account for the substantial decrease of the landscape submissions checked and landscape cases designed/implemented to 850 and 1 350 respectively this year. What will be the amount of savings achieved as a result?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : While we anticipate that landscape submissions from private developers in 2004 will remain steady, Highways Department (HyD) plans to handover to the Civil Engineering Department the design/implementation of the latter's landscaping projects which were previously undertaken by the Department.

The estimated savings, which is mainly staff costs, from a reduction in landscaping works to be undertaken by HyD is insignificant and will be redeployed for other work within the Unit.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of Highways** _____

Date _____ **25 March 2004** _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)077

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0421

Programme : (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : During 2004-05, the Administration will continue to adopt new technologies with a view to reducing public lighting maintenance cost. What are the details and the percentage of the maintenance cost reduced as a result of the adoption of the new technologies?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : In 2004-05, Highways Department will continue to replace the obsolete lanterns with modern lanterns which are dust-tight and water proof. The modern lanterns will require less frequent cleaning. We plan to replace all the obsolete lanterns in the next three financial years, which will reduce the cost of cleaning by about 10%.

Highways Department will also continue to replace less efficient lamps by modern lamps with lower lamp failure rate and longer service life. The modern lamps will require less frequent replacement. We plan to replace all the obsolete lamps in the next three financial years, which will reduce the cost of replacement of unlit lamps by about 10% and lamp failure cases will be reduced by about 2 500 annually.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title _____ Director of Highways

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)078

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :
272 Electricity for public lighting

Question Serial No.

0422

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The provision for electricity expenses for public lighting will be increased from \$150 million in 2003-04 to some \$180 million in 2004-05. As the provision for the expenses continued to rise, please specify:

- a. has the Administration reviewed the existing energy saving measures of public lighting?
- b. does the Administration pay all the electricity expenses for the ventilation equipment and lighting systems at bus termini? If so, will the Administration consider sharing the expenses with the operators of these bus termini?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : a. The Administration has reviewed constantly the existing energy saving measures of public lighting and the following measures have been implemented:

- i) to replace less efficient lamps and the associated obsolete lanterns with more efficient lamps and modern lanterns for conventional road lighting;
- ii) to replace electromagnetic ballast by electronic ballast to reduce energy loss for fluorescent lights used in footbridges, subways, etc.; and
- iii) to switch off the perimeter lighting for some Public Transport Interchanges (PTIs) during daytime.

- b. Currently, the Administration is responsible for the operation and maintenance, including both the electricity expenses for the ventilation equipment and lighting systems, of all the Government-owned PTIs. Since such PTIs are provided to meet the transport needs of the community and are used by passengers of different public transport operators and private car users, the Government does not have plans to ask the public transport operators to share the electricity expenses of the PTIs.

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Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)079

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

1581

Programme : (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the “adoption of new technologies with a view to reducing public lighting maintenance cost”, please specify—

- (a) the details of the work, the new technologies to be adopted and the amount of estimated expenditure;
- (b) the costs saved as a result and the amount of savings achieved.

Asked by : Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply : (a) In 2004-05, Highways Department will continue to replace the obsolete street lightings with modern lamps and lanterns which are more efficient, durable, water proof and require less frequent cleaning. We plan to replace 10 000 obsolete street lightings in the next three financial years at an estimated cost of \$15 million.

- (b) Replacement of all the obsolete street lightings in the next three financial years will reduce the cost of cleaning by about \$500,000 annually and the annual lamp failure cases by about 2 500, representing an estimated annual savings of \$250,000.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)080

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

0815

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In improving the cost effectiveness of highway maintenance, please specify:

- (a) in 2003-04:
 - (i) the kinds of materials used to pave footpaths;
 - (ii) the area (in square metre) of footpaths paved;
 - (iii) the three materials most frequently used, their costs and service lives.
- (b) has the department planned to use recycled materials to pave footpaths? If not, what is the reason?
- (c) what are the cost and service life of recycled materials used as paving materials in footpaths?

Asked by : Hon. TANG Siu-tong

- Reply : (a) (i) Materials for footpath paving usually consist of concrete and paving blocks.
- (ii) In 2003-04, the total area of footpath paved is about 335 000 m².
- (iii) The costs and expected service lives of the three most frequently used materials are:

<u>Material</u>	<u>Unit Cost</u> <u>(\$/m²)</u>	<u>Expected</u> <u>Service Life</u>
Concrete	60-150	15-20 Years
Precast paving blocks	230	10 Years
High quality paving blocks	390	15 Years

- (b) Highways Department is keen to use recycled materials to pave footpaths. A trial on laying of concrete block pavers made with aggregates recycled from construction and demolition waste materials has been carried out on a section of footpath at Cheung Sha Wan Road and the results were satisfactory. We will continue to promote the wider use of recycled materials.
- (c) Concrete block paver made with recycled aggregates is a relatively new material and we only have limited practical experience with it. Based on our trial results and information gathered from the market, the cost and service life of concrete block pavers made with recycled aggregates should be similar to those made with virgin aggregates, which are 10 years at \$230 per square metre.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

Date 24 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)081

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

1414

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the road drains,

- (a) how many exclusive road drains are designated as black spots? Please set out their exact locations. Besides, how does the Administration tackle these black spots?
- (b) what is the level of expenditure required for each inspection/cleaning of these black spots?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

- Reply : (a) There are 226 road drainage blackspots in the territory of which 79 are located on the Hong Kong Island, 85 in Kowloon and 62 in the New Territories. The department would install additional gullies as appropriate to relieve the flooding problem. Additional inspection and cleaning, on top of the regular scheduled ones, at the blackspots will be conducted prior to the onset of the rainy season. The department would also inspect these spots after heavy rain and carry out urgent cleaning work if necessary.
- (b) The average cost for inspecting/cleaning of road drainage blackspots is about \$3,000 to \$4,500 per location.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of Highways** _____

Date _____ **25 March 2004** _____

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)082

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

1415

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration anticipates that the estimated expenditure on highways maintenance in 2004 will be substantially higher than that in 2003. What is the reason?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply : The increase in estimated expenditure on highways maintenance in 2004 is for the maintenance of newly completed highways and bus termini, including the widening of the Tolo Highway between Island House interchange and Ma Liu Shui interchange and eight newly completed public transport interchanges.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

Post Title _____ Director of Highways _____

Date _____ 24 March 2004 _____

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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)083

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

1416

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration anticipates that the estimated expenditure on roadside slope works in 2004 will be substantially higher than that in 2003. What is the reason? Besides, how many roadside slope will be incorporated into the project scope in 2004?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply : The estimated increase in expenditure on roadside slope works in 2004 is for the implementation of a programme to enhance slope maintenance and a programme to provide safe access on slopes to facilitate inspection and maintenance to comply with the construction safety legislation. 90 slopes will be included in the former programme while 1 400 slopes will be included in the latter programme in 2004. These are new slopes on top of the 13 000 roadside slopes that Highways Department is currently maintaining.

Signature _____

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Post Title _____ Director of Highways _____

Date _____ 25 March 2004 _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)084

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.

1418

Programme : (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the planning study, please set out –

- (a) the planning studies carried out by consultants in 2004 and the consultant fees for each study;
- (b) the titles of the transport and planning studies with railway planning input provided by the Highways Department in 2004 and their estimated expenditure.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply : (a) The fees of consultancies commissioned by Highways Department on railway planning, with cashflow requirement in 2004, are as follows:

	Consultancy fees
Provision of technical assistance and advice on transport policy issues in relation to the feasibility study on MTRCL/KCRC merger	\$0.8m
Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link – Technical and Institutional Study	\$1.25m
Total	\$2.05m

- (b) Highways Department also provides railway planning input to other Government departments in respect of their transport and planning studies.

Our railway planning advisory services to other Government departments are undertaken by our in-house staff. No extra funding is required.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MAK CHAI KWONG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Highways _____

Date _____ 24 March 2004 _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)085

Head :
60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

1419

Programme : (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration indicates that it will adopt new technologies with a view to reducing public lighting maintenance cost. What are the details of these new technologies? What is the percentage of the estimated cost reduced?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply : In 2004-05, Highways Department will continue to replace the obsolete lanterns with modern lanterns which are dust-tight and water proof. The modern lanterns will require less frequent cleaning. We plan to replace all the obsolete lanterns in the next three financial years, which will reduce the cost of cleaning by about 10%.

Highways Department will also continue to replace less efficient lamps by modern lamps with lower lamp failure rate and longer service life. The modern lamps will require less frequent replacement. We plan to replace all the obsolete lamps in the next three financial years, which will reduce the cost of replacement of unlit lamps by about 10% and lamp failure cases will be reduced by about 2 500 annually.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MAK CHAI KWONG** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of Highways** _____

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)086

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

1751

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the progress related to the planning of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge as well as the breakdown of the expenditure thereof?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kwok-keung

Reply :

In accordance with the approval of the State Council, the governments of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao set up a Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Advance Work Co-ordination Group (Co-ordination Group) in August 2003 to take forward the advance work for the Bridge.

The Co-ordination Group has recently commissioned a design institute to undertake the feasibility study for the Bridge. We expect that the study will be completed by end 2004 and the Co-ordination Group will submit the study report to the National Development and Reform Commission to seek approval for creation of a project item. The Co-ordination Group will set up a project office in Guangzhou shortly to undertake advance planning work for the Bridge.

The total cost of the feasibility study is to be equally shared among the three governments. HKSAR's share of the cost will be below HK\$15 million. Detailed arrangement for the project office in Guangzhou is being worked out by the Co-ordination Group. The cost to be incurred by the project office will be shared equally amongst the three governments.

Reply Serial No.

Question Serial No.

In parallel, HKSAR has commenced in March an Investigation and Preliminary Design (I&PD) study for the Hong Kong Section of the Bridge and its connecting infrastructure within the boundary of Hong Kong. The study is scheduled for completion by end 2004. The Finance Committee approved the upgrading of the I&PD study to Category A on 5 December 2003 with an approved project estimate of \$58.9 million in money-of-the-day prices.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and
Works (Environment and
Transport) (Ag.)

Date 25 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)087

Question Serial No.

1752

Head: 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title):
Environment, Transport and
Works Bureau (Environment
and Transport Branch)

Programme: (2) Transport

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Please provide the list of franchised bus companies working jointly with the Administration for the deployment of environmentally-friendly buses. Does this involve any subsidies or financial support to the bus companies?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kwok-keung

Reply: We have been working with franchised bus companies with bus routes operating along busy corridors for the deployment of more environmentally-friendly buses in such corridors. These franchised bus companies include the Kowloon Motor Bus (1933) Company Limited, Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited. The deployment of environmentally-friendly buses is made by the aforesaid franchised bus companies, and such arrangement does not involve provision of any subsidy or financial support to the bus companies.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and
Works (Environment and
Transport) (Ag.)

Date 25 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)088

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment & Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

1753

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the manpower and expenditure involved in the detailed planning and design of the Shatin to Central Link as well as the Kowloon Southern Link? Is there a need to contract out the work?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kwok-keung

Reply : KCRC is fully responsible for the detailed planning and design of the Shatin to Central Link and Kowloon Southern Link at its own cost. We deploy internal resources to oversee the planning.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and
Works (Environment and
Transport) (Ag.)

Date _____ 25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)089

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

0914

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration will work jointly with the Mainland authorities on the development of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link. What is the estimated expenditure for 2004-05 in this regard? When will the study be expected to complete?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

The Environment, Transport and Works Bureau of the HKSAR and the Ministry of Railways have set up a Joint Expert Group on the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link to take forward the strategic planning for the proposed infrastructure. The Joint Expert Group has embarked on a joint investigative study on the feasibility of the express rail link, and has completed the first stage of the study which, among other things, confirmed the strategic value of the rail link. The findings were reported to the Mainland/HKSAR Conference on the Coordination of Major Infrastructure Projects (Coordination Conference) in September 2002. The Joint Expert Group has subsequently embarked on the second stage of study which examines issues such as rail technology, crossing points, economic and financial performance of the rail link. We will discuss with the Mainland authorities on the best way to proceed with the proposed rail link upon finalisation of the feasibility study. The work involved will be absorbed by the Railway Development Office of Highways Department.

The Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link is a strategic cross-boundary infrastructure project. The Joint Expert Group has to consider a broad range of issues, including the town planning and transportation development on both sides. We hope to be able to complete the study as soon as possible.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and
Works (Environment and
Transport) (Ag.)

Date 25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)090

Question Serial No.

0915

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :700
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : For the traffic consultancy on road harbour crossings and the ticketing system for taxi access to Lok Ma Chau Control Point during the extended hours, when will they be expected to complete?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : The consultancy study on road harbour crossings will be completed in 2004.

The review of the trial scheme of allowing Green Mini-buses and taxis to operate at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point during the extended hours (12:00 midnight to 6:30 a.m.) will be completed in 2004.

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Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and
Works (Environment and
Transport) (Ag.)

Date 25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)091

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

0265

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is mentioned in “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05” that the branch will formulate an objective and transparent fare adjustment mechanism for public transport services. What are the details of this mechanism and the timetable for its formulation? What is the estimated expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply :

The proposed fare adjustment mechanism is based on a price-cap model. It would allow transport fares to go up or down in light of relevant factors including consumer price index and transport operators' input price changes in accordance with a specified formula.

We are now discussing details of the proposed mechanism with the relevant public transport operators with a view to achieving a mutually acceptable proposal. The formulation of the fare adjustment mechanism will entail consideration of possible impact of the mechanism on the economic benefits and operating costs of public transport operators, competition environment, interests of the passengers, the existing fare mechanism, etc. We have to examine the issues carefully in order to balance the interests of all relevant parties.

We have also specified the adoption of a more objective and transparent fare adjustment mechanism as a parameter for the negotiations by the two railway corporations on a possible merger.

Development of the fare adjustment mechanism is being handled by existing resources.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and
Works (Environment and
Transport) (Ag.)

Date 24 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)092

Question Serial No.

0075

Head: 158 Government Secretariat:
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)
22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Department
42 Electrical and Mechanical Services
Department
43 Civil Engineering Department
44 Environmental Protection Department
60 Highways Department
100 Marine Department
118 Planning Department
186 Transport Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Environmental Protection and Conservation
(2) Transport

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

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

(1) Please provide the following details on the consultancy studies for which financial provision has been allocated respectively in 2003-04:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees (\$)	Progress on consultancy Studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made (if available)	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.

(2) Has financial provision been allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2004-05? If yes, please provide the following details :

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees (\$)	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	Whether study reports scheduled for completion in 2004-05 will be publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply:

(1) The Environment, Transport and Works Bureau (Environment and Transport Branch) (ETWB(E&T)), Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and Highways Department (HyD) commissioned consultancy studies for policy making and assessment in 2003-04. Details are as follows:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
Wilbur Smith Associates Limited	The study serves to collect data and conduct researches on Mainland and overseas experience in operating and managing tunnel and tolled roads with a view to exploring ways to optimise the utilization of road harbour	\$3.400M	Largely completed	The findings of the study have been reported to LegCo Panel on Transport in April 2003.	N.A.

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
	crossings. (ETWB(E&T))				
Hong Kong Productivity Council	Study on development of energy consumption indicators & benchmarks for Hospitals, Clinics, Universities, Schools, Hotels, Medium and Heavy Goods Vehicles (EMSD)	\$1.200M	Completed	The study has just been completed in March 2004 and the recommendations are being reviewed.	Uploading of the indicators and benchmarks onto the EMSD website for public access is being arranged.
Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd.	Study on life cycle energy analysis of building construction (EMSD)	\$7.000M	In progress	The inter-departmental steering committee monitoring the progress and deliverables of the consultancy study, has recently endorsed the research report. The development work of the study is on schedule.	N.A.
Camp Dresser & McKee International Inc	Study on the potential application of renewable energy in Hong Kong (EMSD)	\$4.900M	In progress	Stage 1 study completed. The consultant's findings and recommendations are being reviewed. Stage 2 of the study is in progress.	Full stage 1 study report has been uploaded onto the EMSD website for public access since February 2002

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
				Technical data will be collected until mid 2004.	2003.
Parsons Brinckerhoff (Asia) Limited	Implementation study for water-cooled Air-conditioning systems at Wan Chai and Causeway Bay – Investigation (EMSD)	\$3.800M	In progress	N.A.	N.A.
Parsons Brinckerhoff (Asia) Limited	Territory-wide implementation study for water-cooled air conditioning systems in Hong Kong (EMSD)	\$11.126M	Completed	The study was completed in April 2003. The findings and recommendations were presented to the LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs in July 2003 and supported in principle by the Panel. The administration will formulate an implementation plan for the wider use of water-cooled air-conditioning	The executive summary was posted onto the EMSD website in August 2003 for public consultation. Major stakeholders were also invited by letters to comment on the study findings.

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
				systems.	
Crow Maunsell Management Consultants	Regulatory Impact Assessment on Product Responsibility Schemes for Vehicle Tyres and Batteries (EPD)	\$0.898M	In progress (started in October 2003)	N.A.	N.A.
MVA Hong Kong Ltd	Provision of technical assistance and advice on transport policy issues in relation to the Feasibility Study on MTRCL/KCRC Merger (HyD)	\$0.800M	Substantially completed	Invited MTRCL and KCRC to commence negotiation on a possible merger.	The consultant's advice on the pros and cons of a merger has been incorporated in the concerned LegCo Brief issued on 24.2.2004.
Mott Connell Limited	Feasibility study for contracting out road maintenance to private sector in the form of Public Private Partnership and drafting	\$0.800M	Largely completed	Some proposals from the consultant have been incorporated into the recent maintenance contracts on a trial basis.	N.A.

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
	standard Public Private Partnership contract (HyD)				

For other departments, there have been no provisions for conducting such consultancy studies in 2003-04.

- (2) Proposed provisions have been included in the Estimates for continuing three studies by EMSD, one study by EPD and one study by HyD in 2004-05. Details are as follows:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	Whether study reports scheduled for completion in 2004-05 will be publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd.	Study on life cycle energy analysis of building construction (EMSD)	\$7.000M	In progress	The study results will be uploaded onto the EMSD website. Briefings and seminars will also be organized for the professional institutions.

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	Whether study reports scheduled for completion in 2004-05 will be publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
Camp Dresser & McKee International Inc	Study on the potential application of renewable energy in Hong Kong (EMSD)	\$4.900M	In progress	Full study report will be released to the community for information.
Parsons Brinckerhoff (Asia) Limited	Implementation study for water-cooled air-conditioning systems at Wan Chai and Causeway Bay – Investigation (EMSD)	\$3.800M	The study is near completion. The administration will consult the public in due course.	The executive summary will be posted onto the EMSD website for public consultation. Major stakeholders will be invited by letters to comment on the Study findings.
Crow Maunsell Management Consultants	Regulatory Impact Assessment on Product Responsibility Schemes for Vehicle Tyres and Batteries (EPD)	\$0.898M	In progress	The stakeholders will be consulted on the recommendations of the study through seminars and briefings.

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	Whether study reports scheduled for completion in 2004-05 will be publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
MVA Hong Kong Ltd	Provision of technical assistance and advice on transport policy issues in relation to the Feasibility Study on MTRCL/KCRC Merger (HyD)	\$0.800M	Substantially completed	The consultant's advice on the pros and cons of a merger has been incorporated in the concerned LegCo Brief issued on 24.2.2004.

For other departments, there have been no provisions for conducting such consultancy studies in 2004-05.

Signature _____
Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG
Post Title Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport) (Ag.)
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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)093

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat : Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

1078

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Concerning the formulation of an objective and transparent fare adjustment mechanism for public transport services, what is the progress so far? What specific work had been carried out by the Government in 2003-04? According to the progress at present, when will the mechanism be finalized and implemented?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply :

The proposed fare adjustment mechanism is based on a price-cap model. It would allow transport fares to go up or down in light of the relevant factors including consumer price index and transport operators' input price changes in accordance with a specified formula. We briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Transport on this proposal on 1 August 2003.

We are now discussing details of the proposed mechanism with the relevant public transport operators with a view to achieving a mutually acceptable proposal. The formulation of the fare adjustment mechanism will entail consideration of possible impact of the mechanism on the economic benefits and operating costs of public transport operators, competition environment, interests of the passengers, the existing fare mechanism, etc. We will continue our efforts to examine the issues carefully in order to balance the interests of all relevant parties.

We have also specified the adoption of a more objective and transparent fare adjustment mechanism as a parameter for the negotiations by the two railway corporations on a possible merger.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)094

Question Serial No.

1079

Head :158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title): 700 General non-recurrent
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding 007 – “Traffic consultancy on optimizing the utilisation of road
harbour crossings” under Subhead 700, what is the progress of it? What
results have been achieved so far? When will the entire study be expected to
complete?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The study on optimising utilisation of road harbour crossings is largely completed.
We have collected information on the management of toll roads in the Mainland and in
other countries. The study will be completed in 2004.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)095

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

0807

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration will review the current regulatory system for cross-boundary traffic in 2004-05. What are the details? What benefits does it have in terms of economic interest and public expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-ye, Miriam

Reply :

The cross-boundary vehicle quota system, which is jointly administered by the HKSARG and the Mainland authorities, aims to regulate cross-boundary traffic to ensure that our land crossings are not overloaded, and to facilitate smooth cross-boundary freight traffic flow, which is vital to Hong Kong's economy. Under this system, except for goods vehicles, all cross-boundary vehicles are subject to quota control.

There has been significant growth in cross-boundary traffic in the past few years. To cope with the growing demand, the Government has been continuously upgrading facilities at our control points and streamlining clearance procedures to improve clearance capacity. Together with the Mainland authorities, we are reviewing the quota system on a regular basis and will grant additional quotas having regard to the handling capacity of our control points and the traffic demand.

The completion of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor will improve our capacity in handling cross-boundary traffic and provide room for relaxing the present quota system. We are examining the possible options and will discuss the issue with the Mainland authorities.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)096

Head :158 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) : Question Serial No.
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

0423

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer :Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question :The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor will be commissioned in 2005 and the Administration will continue to oversee the progress of the project in 2004-05. What is the progress at present?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

Construction of the Hong Kong – Shenzhen Western Corridor commenced in August 2003 and is progressing on schedule. As at February 2004, about 23% of the works has been completed.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)097

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

0424

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : For the development of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, what is the progress of the discussion with the Mainland authorities? Will the Administration consult the public on the development of the railway project?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : The Environment, Transport and Works Bureau of the HKSAR and the Ministry of Railways have set up a Joint Expert Group on the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link to take forward the strategic planning for the proposed infrastructure. The Joint Expert Group has embarked on a joint investigative study on the feasibility of the express rail link, and has completed the first stage of the study which, among other things, confirmed the strategic value of the rail link. The findings were reported to the Mainland/HKSAR Conference on the Coordination of Major Infrastructure Projects (Coordination Conference) in September 2002. The Joint Expert Group has subsequently embarked on the second stage of the study which examines issues such as rail technology, crossing points, economic and financial performance of the rail link. We will discuss with the Mainland authorities on the best way to proceed with the proposed rail link upon finalisation of the feasibility study. We will report to the Legislative Council after the study has been completed and confirmed by the Coordination Conference.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)098

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

0425

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Advance preparatory work for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is in progress. What are the details? Will the Administration consult the public on the work and make it more transparent?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

In accordance with the approval of the State Council, the governments of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao set up a Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Advance Work Co-ordination Group (Co-ordination Group) in August 2003 to take forward the advance work for the Bridge.

The Co-ordination Group has recently commissioned a design institute to undertake the feasibility study for the Bridge. We expect that the study will be completed by end 2004 and the Co-ordination Group will submit the study report to the National Development and Reform Commission to seek approval for creation of a project item. The Co-ordination Group will set up a project office in Guangzhou shortly to undertake advance planning work for the Bridge.

In parallel, we will conduct an Investigation and Preliminary Design study for the Hong Kong Section of the Bridge and its connecting infrastructure within the boundary of Hong Kong. The study has commenced in March for completion by end 2004.

Since August 2003, we have consulted the Legislative Council, the Advisory Council on the Environment and the Transport Advisory Committee on the Bridge project on several occasions. We will continue to do so at suitable junctures in the future.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and Works
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Date _____ 24 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)099

Question Serial No.

0426

Head 158 – Government Secretariat:
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The provision for general departmental expenses in 2003-04 was \$11,057,000. However, in 2004-05, it will be \$13,800,000, which is 24.8% higher than that of 2003-04. Please advise the reasons for the increase and the expenditure components.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The increase of 24.8% or \$2.7 million is mainly to meet the projected increase in operating expenditure arising from a number of projects such as public opinion survey on environmental responsibility, Construction Waste Disposal Charging Bill, Road Safety Campaign and possible merger of Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation and MTR Corporation Limited. The expenditure includes advertising and publicity, hire of services, copying and printing, etc.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

MISS MARGARET FONG

Post Title _____

Permanent Secretary for the
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Date _____

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)100

Question Serial No.

0904

Head: 158 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Environment, Transport and title):
Works Bureau (Environment and
Transport Branch)

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question:

Regarding policy research projects and the expenditure involved, please provide detailed information on the policy research projects commenced or being conducted by the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau (Environment and Transport Branch) itself or with the funding of the Branch in 2003-04, including

- 1) project title, objective and subject matter;
- 2) expenses;
- 3) latest progress;
- 4) whether the Administration has followed up on the research results.

Also, is there any provision earmarked for policy research in 2004-05? If yes, what is the amount? What are the objectives and subject matters of the respective projects?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply: Our major task is to formulate and co-ordinate policies in respect of areas under our purview. To achieve this, we carry out extensive and intensive research into these areas using as far as possible information available and with inhouse resources. In view of the wide range and the large amount of such research work, it is impossible to list each and every task. If consultants are used, we have prepared a breakdown in response to a separate question on that particular subject. Details of the more important items for ongoing work and new initiatives are listed in the Policy Agenda accompanying the CE's policy addresses and highlighted in the Controlling Officer's report. It is impossible to give a breakdown on expenditure for each of these items as we have not conducted detailed costing work

for each of them. However, we have provided an indication of the expenditure involved in each of our programmes in the Controlling Officer's report. If after research, consultation and deliberation, a new policy should be introduced, we shall consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Permanent Secretary for the
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)101

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

0008

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration indicates that it will work jointly with franchised bus companies for the deployment of environmentally-friendly buses along busy corridors. Is there any financial provision for the deployment? If there is, what is the amount?

Asked by : Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply : We have been working with franchised bus companies to deploy more environmentally-friendly buses to operate in busy corridors. As deployment of environmentally-friendly buses is made by franchised bus companies and our work with the companies is undertaken by existing staff, there is no financial provision for the Government for such deployment.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)102

Question Serial No.

0836

Head 158 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Environment
and Transport Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question:

Please list the revised estimate for duty visits outside Hong Kong in 2003-04 for the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport), with particulars of : (1) the purposes and details of the visits; (2) the main means of public transport and related expenses for the visits; (3) board and lodging expenses for the visits. What is the corresponding estimated expenditure for 2004-05? Has the Administration laid down a ceiling on the amount of allowances that can be granted and a set of criteria for approving such allowances?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply:

There is no breakdown of expenditure on duty visits outside Hong Kong for the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (SETW) and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport) (PSET) since both of them from time to time went on the same visits or with other officials. The purposes of the visits varied, which included meetings with other Government officials on general or specific issues, and participation in conferences. Transportation would depend on the distance and mode of transport available. The revised estimate for travelling and board and lodging expenses for duty visits outside Hong Kong in which SETW and PSET participated in 2003-04 is \$100,000.

It is estimated that the travelling and board and lodging expenses for duty visits outside Hong Kong in which SETW and PSET will participate in 2004-05 will be at about the same level as in the current year.

Under the current policy, an officer who is on duty outside Hong Kong may be granted a subsistence allowance at specified daily rates to cover the cost of the appropriate standard of accommodation and meals, laundry charges, gratuities, travelling expenses within town and all minor incidental out-of-pocket expenses. The rates of the subsistence allowance differ from country to country to take into account the different costs in different countries. The amount of allowance paid is abated in case of sponsorship of hotel accommodation or in cash.

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)103

Question Serial No.

0838

Head 158 – Government Secretariat:
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of the provision for entertainment expenses to be incurred by the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport), such as hosting receptions, in the revised estimate for 2003-04 and the estimate for 2004-05. Has the Government set an upper limit for such expenses? Are there any objective criteria for approving such expenses?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply:

There is no breakdown of the entertainment expenses for the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport) since both of them would have attended the same functions together and with other officers on a number of occasions. An estimate for the Environment and Transport Branch can however be provided. The revised estimate for official entertainment of the Environment and Transport Branch in 2003-04 is approximately \$150,000. It is estimated that the official entertainment of the Environment and Transport Branch in 2004-05 will be at about the same level as in the current year.

Under the current policy, expenditure on entertainment may be charged to public funds only when it is directly related to the discharge of an officer's duties or is a necessary part of making or maintaining contacts in his official capacity, and is in the public interest. All such expenditure must be approved by the head or deputy head of the bureau or department personally, or by a directorate officer duly authorised by the head of department.

There are Civil Service Regulations and general guidelines issued by the Director of Administration governing the charging of the entertainment expenses to public funds.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MISS MARGARET FONG _____

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for the
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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)104

Question Serial No.

1298

Head: 158 Government Subhead (No. &
Secretariat: Environment, title):
Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport
Branch)

Programme:

Controlling Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
Officer: (Environment and Transport)

Director of Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
Bureau:

Question:

The 2004 Policy Address has mentioned about the need to raise the standard of policy research undertaken by the Government:

“To improve our governance, we must raise the level of sophistication with which both the Government and the community handle policy issues. We need to do more public policy research, particularly from a macro and long-term perspective. Objective and concrete public policy research will help us better realise the objectives of effective governance. It will help us avoid sweeping, politicised and emotional policy debates, thus making it easier for the Government and various sectors of the community to reach a consensus on public issues. This will ensure that our policies are implemented more effectively and better able to serve the long-term development needs of Hong Kong.”

Please advise whether provision has been made or resources deployed in the 2004-05 Estimates to take forward a stated commitment of the Policy Address that public policy matters will be pursued with a higher standard. If yes, please give a detailed account of the projects funded. If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply:

We have all along been undertaking policy studies internally in an objective, impartial and comprehensive manner which meets the objective set by CE even though funds have not been earmarked for this specifically.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS MARGARET FONG

Permanent Secretary for the
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)105

Head : 158 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Environment and Transport Branch)

Question Serial No.

1721

Programme : (2) Transport

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment and Transport)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question :

What is the specific arrangement for the study regarding the development of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link carried out jointly with the relevant Mainland Authority? How much is the planned provisions?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The Environment, Transport and Works Bureau of the HKSAR and the Ministry of Railways have set up a Joint Expert Group on the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link to take forward the strategic planning for the proposed infrastructure. The Joint Expert Group has embarked on a joint investigative study on the feasibility of the express rail link, and has completed the first stage of the study which, among other things, confirmed the strategic value of the rail link. The findings were reported to the Mainland/HKSAR Conference on the Coordination of Major Infrastructure Projects (Coordination Conference) in September 2002. The Joint Expert Group has subsequently embarked on the second stage of study which examines issues such as rail technology, crossing points, economic and financial performance of the rail link. We will discuss with the Mainland authorities on the best way to proceed with the proposed rail link upon finalisation of the feasibility study. The work involved will be absorbed by the Railway Development Office of Highways Department.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MISS MARGARET FONG

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Transport) (Ag.)

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- (b) No resources were set aside for the scheme in the Approved Estimates 2003-04 as the decision to implement the scheme was taken after the Draft Estimates were prepared. The actual expenditure for the scheme in 2003-04 was \$0.8 million, of which \$0.32 million was funded under item 011. The rest was funded through savings in other areas and by the Transport Department. We have included a provision of \$0.78 million for 2004-05.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	_____ MISS MARGARET FONG _____
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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

ETWB(ET)107

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

1113

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : How many staff members are involved and what are the expenses for the issuance of Group 1 (Private Car and Light Goods Vehicle) Private Driving Instructors' Licence? What are the detailed arrangements of the exercise?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kwok-keung

Reply : The exercise to issue 173 Group 1 Private Driving Instructors' (PDI) licences commenced in December 2002. Four contract staff were deployed for one year at a cost of about \$0.4 million. This staff cost and other administrative costs were absorbed by the Transport Department.

Under the exercise, eligible applicants were invited to take the Group 1 PDI test according to their balloted priority number. The test is divided into two parts: written test and road test. Applicants who pass both parts would be issued with a Group 1 PDI licence. The exercise would stop when all the 173 licences are issued. Up to 20 March 2004, 170 licences have been issued.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT FOOTMAN

Post Title Commissioner for Transport

Date 24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

ETWB(ET)108

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

1114

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the implementation details of the seat belt legislation for public light bus and the expenditure items for implementation?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kwok-keung

Reply : In view of the relatively high accident rate and the rear seat casualty rate of public light buses (PLB) compared to other types of vehicles, new safety measures are considered necessary to further protect PLB passengers. Two amendment Regulations, viz. Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2002 and Road Traffic (Safety Equipment) (Amendment) Regulation 2002, which set out the safety standards required for the installation of passenger protection equipment on new PLBs including seat belts and impact energy absorption high back seats, were passed by the Legislative Council in November 2002. The new amendment Regulations will take effect on 1 August 2004 so as to give the vehicle manufacturers sufficient lead-time to develop the new safety equipment. New PLBs registered on or after 1 August 2004 must comply with the new legislation.

No additional expenditure is required for implementation of the new legislation.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT FOOTMAN

Post Title Commissioner for Transport

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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

ETWB(ET)109

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1339

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In relation to Programme (1), the number of licences estimated to be granted or extended for licensed ferry services in 2004 is 86, which compares less with the past. What is the reason?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : Since the validity period of ferry service licences may vary and the expiry dates of the licences differ, the number of licences estimated to be extended in different years may not be the same. Although the number of licences to be extended in 2004 is smaller than the actual figure in 2003, the total number of valid ferry licences as at March 2004 is 108, which is the same as in 2003.

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ETWB(ET)110

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1340

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : According to Programme (1), the number of bus-bus interchange (BBI) schemes to be implemented in 2004 is 23, which is less than that in 2002. What are the reasons? What are the details of the 23 BBI schemes?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : As at end 2003, there were 120 BBI schemes in operation involving 373 bus routes. The Government encourages the bus companies to formulate more BBI schemes in order to improve bus network efficiency and to improve traffic and environment in busy corridors. In formulating the BBI schemes, the bus companies take into account factors such as scope of a scheme to improve network coverage and efficiency, operational and financial implications and suggestions from the public. Owing to variations of these factors, the number of BBI schemes planned for each year may differ.

— The 23 BBI schemes planned for 2004 involve 83 routes with fare discounts ranging from \$2.7 to \$5.1.

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ETWB(ET)111

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1341

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under Programme (1), the Government has indicated to continue to facilitate the conversion of diesel public light buses (PLBs) to environmentally-friendly models. In 2003, what was the percentage of environmentally-friendly PLBs in terms of the total fleet?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

As at end 2003, there were 642 liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) PLBs, representing about 15% of the total PLB fleet size of 4 350.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)112

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

1342

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Government is upgrading the VALID system to a web-based VALID IV. Has Government estimated the life span of VALID IV?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : We expect VALID IV to have a life span of at least ten years.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)113

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

1343

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : To ease traffic congestion in the Central Business District, the Administration will implement additional traffic improvement proposals in 2004-05. Please provide details.

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : The following traffic improvement schemes for the Central Business District will be implemented in 2004-05:

- (a) To enhance the ground-level traffic flow to Sheung Wan, the westbound carriageway of Connaught Road Central near its junction with Gilman Street will be widened to provide an additional traffic lane. Works are scheduled for completion in mid-2004.
- (b) An additional northbound traffic lane will be provided on Cotton Tree Drive outside Bank of America Tower to enhance the traffic flow to eastbound Harcourt Road. Works are scheduled to be completed in mid-2004.
- (c) Traffic signals will be installed at the junction of Man Kat Street and the eastbound downramp of Rumsey Street Flyover in order to reduce weaving / conflicting movements of vehicles and enhance the traffic flow on eastbound Connaught Road Central. Works are scheduled to be completed in mid-2004.
- (d) To relieve the traffic pressure on Jackson Road and to provide an additional access for the vehicles on Chater Road / Lambeth Walk to Connaught Road Central, the traffic along Murray Road between Connaught Road Central and Chater Road will be re-routed from southbound to northbound. Related works are scheduled to be completed in late 2004.
- (e) The bus bay on Connaught Road Central eastbound outside Jardine House will be widened. This would provide more road space for stacking buses waiting to observe the bus stop thereat and release the nearside lane for other traffic. Works are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2004.

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ETWB(ET)114

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

1344

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : On provision of off-street terminal facilities for cross-boundary coaches, will the Administration advise on the locations of these planned facilities and whether the costs are included in this Estimates of Expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : We plan to allocate some loading and unloading bays for cross-boundary coaches at the existing public transport interchanges (PTIs) at Discovery Park in Tsuen Wan and West Rail Kam Sheung Road Station in Yuen Long in 2004-05. As these two PTIs are existing facilities, no additional capital or recurrent cost is needed.

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ETWB(ET)115

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (4) Management of Transport Services

1345

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the annual breakdown figures for on-street parking meters in the past three years? What is the operating cost for the parking meters ? What are the measures implemented to reduce cost?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

- (a) The annual breakdown statistics for on-street parking meters in 2001, 2002 and 2003 were around 34 000, 38 000 and 18 000 respectively. The significant improvement in 2003 was mainly attributed to the replacement of the liquid crystal display board on e-Park card meters (which had been the main cause of complaints during the rainy season) at the own cost of the management contractor, and the installation of the new Octopus-card operated meters since June 2003.
- (b) The operating cost for the parking meters is about \$35 million per annum, including contractor management fee and e-Park card production and distribution fees.
- (c) As the existing e-Park card meters approach the end of their serviceable life, the Administration has started to replace them with Octopus card meters. The replacement programme has started since June 2003 and is due for completion by end 2004. It is expected that, after all e-Park card meters have been replaced, Government could achieve a saving of about \$8.4 million per annum, mainly through the saving of costs in the production and distribution of e-Park cards.

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ETWB(ET)116

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (4) Management of Transport Services

1346

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : According to Programme (4), the Administration will improve the physical environment of ten public transport interchanges (PTIs). Please list out the locations of the ten PTIs, the costs for improvement of each PTI and the improvement measures involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : The locations of the ten PTIs and estimated costs for the respective improvement works are as follows:

Locations of the PTI	Estimated cost (\$M)
1. Cheung Sha Wan Plaza	5.9
2. Lok Fu	11.7
3. Tsuen Wan MTR Station	8.3
4. Admiralty (East)	7.7
5. Yen Chow Street	4.6
6. Exchange Square	A total sum of \$60 million are earmarked for improvement works for these five PTIs. Breakdown of project cost for each PTI will be available upon completion of detailed design.
7. Sai Lau Kok (Tsuen Wan)	
8. South Horizons	
9. Tuen Mun Town Centre	
10. Whampoa Garden	

Improvement measures generally include repainting ceiling and ventilation ductworks, resurfacing walls and columns with low maintenance materials, resurfacing passenger platforms and pedestrian-ways with paving blocks, provision of facilities for people with disability such as ramps and tactile guide paths, and replacing galvanized steel railings with stainless steel railings.

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ETWB(ET)117

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :
700 – General non-recurrent

Question Serial No.

1347

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding Subhead 700 Item 558, when will the feasibility study on introducing trolley bus system in Hong Kong be completed?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : The study on the feasibility of using trolley bus system in Hong Kong has been completed and the findings were presented to Legislative Council Panel on Transport in June 2001. We may need to examine the possibility of introducing trolley buses, amongst other environmentally-friendly transport modes, in South East Kowloon Development (SEKD) depending on the progress of SEKD and the choice of major mode of transport to serve the development.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)118

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0460

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the noise nuisance caused by public transport carriers to their passengers and staff, has the Administration got any plan to address such problem in 2004-05? If yes, what are the detailed plan and the associated cost? If not, why?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply : It is the Government's on-going task to ensure that public transport operators would implement appropriate measures to improve the travelling environment and comfort for their passengers and drivers. Normally traffic noise generated by public transport can be mitigated through regular inspection, proper maintenance and improved design of the vehicles. Further, promulgation of good driving practice, e.g. to apply the brake properly, or to slow down while negotiating bends, would also help reduce traffic noise and hence improve the comfort for both passengers and drivers.

With regard to the sound from audio-visual broadcasting on buses, Transport Department has been working closely with the relevant bus operators to put in place measures to address some passengers' concern about broadcasting volume, such as designation of quiet zone on buses. All relevant measures are implemented by the transport operators at their costs and monitored by the Government using existing resources.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)119

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1736

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the difference of the details (including the route groups involved) of those bus-bus interchange (BBI) schemes in operation in 2003 and those to be implemented in 2004? What is the estimated number of passengers using these BBIs and estimated fare savings?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The BBI schemes in operation in 2003 and those planned for 2004 are different in terms of bus routes involved and fare discounts offered.

As at end 2003, there were 120 BBI schemes in operation. They were introduced by franchised bus operators progressively over the past years. They involve 373 bus routes in the New Territories, Kowloon, Hong Kong Island, Lantau Island and the airport. The fare discounts offered range from \$0.1 to \$20.7. The 23 BBI schemes planned for 2004 will involve 83 routes in the New Territories, Kowloon and Hong Kong Island, with fare discounts ranging from \$2.7 to \$5.1.

On average, about 110 000 passengers used the BBI schemes each day as at end 2003. The BBI schemes planned for 2004 are expected to be used by an addition of 6 000 passengers daily.

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ETWB(ET)120

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :
700 – General non-recurrent

Question Serial No.

1737

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding Item 570 “Restructuring and Enhancement of the Third Comprehensive Transport Model”, what are the details and programme?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) Model was developed in late 1999 and is used for assessing and evaluating transport projects and changes in transport policies. Since 1999, the model has been regularly updated to ensure accuracy in forecasting future traffic flows. It is now the appropriate time to enhance the model in order to guarantee its continued performance in the future. The proposed consultancy study “Restructuring and Enhancement of the Third Comprehensive Transport Model” will involve the comprehensive restructuring of the Model using the latest modelling methodology, travel characteristics survey data, and computer software packages. It is planned to commence the proposed study in late 2004 for completion in late 2006.

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ETWB(ET)121

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :
700 – General non-recurrent

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

1738

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding Item 571 “Preparatory work prior to the opening of Ma On Shan Railway and East Rail Extension and subsequent coordination work”, please provide details about the scope and nature of works to be involved.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply :

An amount of \$1.75 million has been provided for the preparatory work prior to the opening of Ma On Shan Railway (MOSR) and East Rail Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui (TSTE) in late 2004 and the subsequent coordination work. These include the following activities:

- (a) conducting traffic and transport surveys before and after the commissioning of MOSR and TSTE to facilitate planning for the re-organisation of various public transport services in the area concerned and subsequent monitoring of the actual changes of the passenger demand of the public transport services after the opening of the MOSR and TSTE; and
- (b) producing publicity materials on the changes in the public transport services in connection with commissioning of MOSR and TSTE. The publicity will include advertisements in newspapers, and booklets and posters with details of the changes. The publicity booklets will be distributed to households in Sha Tin District before the commissioning of MOSR.

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ETWB(ET)122

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

0798

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the details of 'Quality Driving Instructor Course' which will be launched in 2004-05?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-yee, Miriam

Reply :

The Quality Driving Instructor Course is at the planning stage. It aims at enhancing the instruction skills of driving instructors. Participation in the course will be voluntary. The Vocational Training Council (VTC) and the Institute of Advanced Motorists Hong Kong (IAM) have been invited to jointly develop the course. We are working closely with the VTC and the IAM on the development of the course content. We will consult the trade concerned before finalisation.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)123

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme :

0799

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the savings after the business process reengineering of the licensing services?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-yee, Miriam

Reply :

The business process reengineering initiatives on licensing services are part of the VALID IV project. It is envisaged that 32 posts at an annual staff cost of \$10 million can be deleted after the implementation of the VALID IV system, as a result of the business process reengineering initiatives.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)124

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0800

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Why are the 2003 average vehicular speeds in the urban areas and New Territories higher than the target speeds?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-ye, Miriam

Reply :

The target speed provides an indicator of a reasonable level of vehicle mobility at morning peak hours on major roads in the territory. The fact that the measured speed is slightly higher than the target speed is an indication that the conditions on our road network in 2003 are generally acceptable.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)125

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0801

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please provide details of the additional traffic improvement proposals to be implemented for the Central Business District in 2004-05.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-ye, Miriam

Reply : The following traffic improvement schemes for the Central Business District will be implemented in 2004-05:

- (f) To enhance the ground-level traffic flow to Sheung Wan, the westbound carriageway of Connaught Road Central near its junction with Gilman Street will be widened to provide an additional traffic lane. Works are scheduled for completion in mid-2004.
- (g) An additional northbound traffic lane will be provided on Cotton Tree Drive outside Bank of America Tower to enhance the traffic flow to eastbound Harcourt Road. Works are scheduled to be completed in mid-2004.
- (h) Traffic signals will be installed at the junction of Man Kat Street and the eastbound downramp of Rumsey Street Flyover in order to reduce weaving / conflicting movements of vehicles and enhance the traffic flow on eastbound Connaught Road Central. Works are scheduled to be completed in mid-2004.
- (i) To relieve the traffic pressure on Jackson Road and to provide an additional access for the vehicles on Chater Road / Lambeth Walk to Connaught Road Central, the traffic along Murray Road between Connaught Road Central and Chater Road will be re-routed from southbound to northbound. Related works are scheduled to be completed in late 2004.
- (j) The bus bay on Connaught Road Central eastbound outside Jardine House will be widened. This would provide more road space for stacking buses waiting to observe the bus stop thereat and release the nearside lane for other traffic. Works are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2004.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)126

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0803

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In respect of provision of off-street terminal facilities for cross-boundary coaches, will the Administration advise on the details of the planned facilities in 2004-05?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-ye, Miriam

Reply : We plan to provide off-street terminal facilities for cross-boundary coaches at the public transport interchanges (PTIs) at Discovery Park in Tsuen Wan and at West Rail Kam Sheung Road Station in 2004-05. Cross-boundary passengers can interchange to and from other transport modes at the two PTIs.

The Transport Department will invite applications from all existing cross-boundary coach operators for using the above new cross-boundary terminal facilities. Details of the application arrangements are being worked out.

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ETWB(ET)127

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

0548

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the implementation of ‘Driver Improvement Scheme’ and ‘Quality Driving Instructor Course’, would the Administration advise:

- (a) What are the course contents of the above courses?
- (b) Before the implementation of the above courses, have the departments concerned consulted the members of the trade? If yes, what was the result? If no, why no consultation was conducted?
- (c) The expenditure estimated for the implementation of the above courses? Besides, what is the actual expenditure in 2003-04 and the estimated expenditure for 2004-05?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

- (a) The Driver Improvement Scheme (DIS) has been implemented since September 2002. The course is divided into two sessions with seven modules lasting up to eight hours. The course covers the driving offence points system, defensive driving, accident prevention, proper and safe driving techniques, drink/drug/impaired/aggressive driving and proper driving behaviour.

The Quality Driving Instructor Course is at the planning stage. It aims at enhancing the instruction skills of driving instructors. Participation in the course will be voluntary. The Vocational Training Council (VTC) and the Institute of Advanced Motorists Hong Kong (IAM) have been invited to jointly develop the course. We are working closely with the VTC and the IAM on the development of the course content.

- (b) Before the implementation of the DIS, the transport trades concerned were consulted. They all supported the introduction of the scheme. As regards the Quality Driving Instructor Course, we will consult the trade concerned before finalisation of the course details.
- (c) The actual expenditure for the implementation of the DIS in 2003-04 was \$0.12 million and the estimated expenditure for 2004-05 is \$0.441 million.

In the light of the small number of candidates involved (about 1 000), the expense for promotion of the Quality Driving Instructor Course and other administrative expenses are expected to be minimal.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)128

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

0549

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration indicated that the annual target for franchised bus spot check inspection is 14 buses per day. Please elaborate:

- (a) What are the criteria and procedures for the daily spot checks on franchised buses? What is the annual expenditure?
- (b) In the past year, has the Administration taken any follow-up action on the buses which have been spot checked? If yes, what proportion out of the chosen buses required follow up action? And what are the details of the follow-ups?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong Wah

Reply :

- (a) Transport Department's Motor Vehicle Examiners go to the bus companies' depots to carry out spot check inspections according to a list of bus registration numbers randomly selected by computer. Those which have recently been complained upon (e.g. smoky or noisy buses) will also be checked. Selected buses are required to return to the bus depots for examination. In addition to the spot checks at the depots, Motor Vehicle Examiners also carry out random spot checks on buses at bus termini to ensure their roadworthiness. The estimated cost for carrying out spot checks in 2003 was approximately \$2.4 million.
- (b) If defects are found on a bus during spot checks, the bus companies are required to rectify them immediately and to the satisfaction of Transport Department's Motor Vehicle Examiners before the bus can be released for normal service. In 2003, about 64% of the buses that had undergone spot checks required some remedial actions. Over 98% of the defects found were minor in nature, such as lamp defective, single loose bolt or minor oil leakage. Serious safety defects will be prosecuted and there were a total of nine prosecutions in 2003. Transport Department holds quarterly meetings with bus companies to discuss the defects found during spot checks and review improvement action plan of the company.

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ETWB(ET)129

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0550

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Concerning the development of new tourist attractions in Lantau, at present only the New Lantau Bus Co. Ltd. provides the main public transport service in the area. Would the Administration advise whether:

- (a) it would consider allocating additional resources to provide supporting transport facilities to match with the new tourism development in Lantau; and
- (b) it would consider allocating additional resources to facilitate discussion, after commissioning of the Hong Kong Disney Theme Park and the Cable Car Link, with the New Lantau Bus Co. (1973) Ltd. (NLB) to encourage the company to provide fare concessions to reduce the transport cost of passengers visiting these recreational facilities?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : (a) A new public transport terminal will be provided at Ngong Ping by Government under the Tung Chung Cable Car project. It will be about 9 000 m² in size, consisting of a bus terminal, taxi stand, parking spaces for tourist coaches and parking spaces for private cars. The construction of the new public transport terminal has just started for completion around end 2004.

(b) It is Government's on-going task to encourage bus operators to provide fare concessions taking account of their own operating conditions to alleviate the burden of the traveling public. As such discussion work is undertaken by existing staff, no additional resources are allocated for this purpose.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)130

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

0551

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With regard to continuing efforts to assist conversion of diesel public light buses (PLBs) to environmentally-friendly vehicles, would the Administration advise on:

- (a) the number of diesel PLBs converted to environmentally-friendly vehicles each year since the launching of the scheme;
- (b) the amount of financial subsidy granted each year under the scheme;
- (c) the number of diesel PLBs and its percentage in terms of overall PLB fleet size that have not been converted to environmentally friendly vehicles up till now; and
- (d) any estimate on the timetable for full conversion of all PLBs to environmentally-friendly vehicles?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

- (a) An incentive scheme to promote the replacement of diesel PLBs with LPG or electric PLBs was introduced on 27 August 2002. Up to 18 March 2004, a total of 732 diesel PLBs have been replaced by LPG PLBs under the scheme. This consisted of 414 and 318 LPG PLBs for 2002-03 and 2003-04 (up to 18 March 2004) respectively.
- (b) A total of \$42.54 million in cash financial assistance has been granted to the applicants under the scheme: \$24.18 million in 2002-03 and \$18.36 million in 2003-04 (up to 18 March 2004).
- (c) As at 18 March 2004, there were 3 620 diesel PLBs accounting for about 83% of the total PLB fleet.
- (d) The incentive scheme is a voluntary scheme and replacement is not mandatory. Owners of diesel PLBs can take into account factors affecting their operation in deciding whether to switch to LPG PLBs. Only those who switch to LPG PLBs are eligible to apply for the incentive. The incentive scheme will end in December 2005. The Administration will continue to work closely with the PLB trade to expedite replacement of old diesel PLBs by environmentally-friendly ones.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)131

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

0552

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The number of summons for disqualification resulting from the driving offence points system is 2 500 and 3 029 for the years 2002 and 2003 respectively. The estimated number for 2004 is 3 000. Would the Administration advise:
(a) the distribution of the causes of disqualification over the past two years;
(b) whether it has reviewed and investigated the situation and will conduct any remedial measures to improve the quality of the drivers? If yes, what is the result of the review and its detail?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

- (a) The major cause of disqualification resulting from the driving offence points system in both 2002 and 2003 was speeding, which accounted for about 60% of the offences committed by the disqualified drivers. This was followed by careless driving (15%), failing to obey a direction of a police officer/comply with traffic signals (13%) and crossing double white lines (11%).
- (b) We have launched a Driver Improvement Scheme since September 2002 to enhance the driving manners and attitudes of the motorists. Drivers may attend the Driving Improvement Course (DIC) voluntarily, or under court orders if they are convicted of traffic offences incurring five or more driving-offence points. We are currently examining the feasibility of making it mandatory for repeated traffic offenders to attend the DIC.

A new Skills Upgrading Scheme (SUS) which aims to improve professional drivers' skills and attitudes will be implemented in mid 2004. The DIC will be included as part of the SUS.

In addition, we have worked in collaboration with the Road Safety Council to step up publicity of road safety messages via the media, printed materials and the Internet. Campaigns and competitions are also held to arouse public awareness of the importance of road safety. We shall continue our education and publicity efforts so as to foster a culture of safe and considerate driving in Hong Kong.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)132

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

0553

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration indicated that it would continue to encourage franchised bus companies to retrofit their buses with emission reduction devices in 2004-05. Will the Administration advise:

- (a) the number of buses installed with the above devices by each franchised bus company at present; and
- (b) whether it has evaluated and reviewed the improvement in air quality in busy corridors, including Causeway Bay and Nathan Road, brought about by the retrofitting of the above devices by the franchised bus companies? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

(a) As at 31 January 2004, a total of 3 246 franchised buses have been retrofitted with emission reduction devices, with details as given below :

- KMB – 2 443
- Citybus – 398
- New World First Bus – 358
- New Lantao Bus – 38
- Long Win – 9

(b) The air quality in busy corridors, which include Causeway Bay and Mong Kok, has improved after implementation of the retrofitting of emission reduction devices and other measures. The respirable suspended particulates and nitrogen oxides concentration measured in busy corridors in 2003 reduced by 13% and 23% respectively when compared with those in 1999. The improvement could have been due partly to the retrofit programme.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)133

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0554

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : For the regulation and monitoring of public transport operation, the Administration indicated that it would keep close contact with public transport operators and the concerned trade representatives. Please provide:

- (a) details of meetings with the public transport operators and trade associations in the past year and the achievements; and
- (b) name of the public transport operators and trade representatives which attended such meetings.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

- (a) In the past year, Transport Department held a total of over 700 meetings with the operators and/or trade representatives of the railways, franchised buses, public light buses, taxis, non-franchised buses, ferries, tramways, peak tram and rehabuses. These meetings were held to discuss various matters relating to the planning, regulation, monitoring and management of public transport services, such as transport contingency arrangements, opening of the West Rail and Tin Shui Wai extension of the Light Rail Transit, fare concession/reduction schemes for rail, bus and ferry services, bus-bus/bus-rail/bus-green minibus interchange schemes, provision of public transport passenger facilities, road safety, improvement of public transport interchanges, green minibus operators selection exercise, green minibus trial scheme for operation on Route 3, quality taxi and public light bus services, non-franchised bus operation, improvement of the Lok Ma Chau Control Point, provision of cross-boundary coach terminating facilities, pier tenancy agreement, ferry service arrangements, taxi operation and rehabus services. These meetings generally achieved the intended results.
- (b) The public transport operators and trade representatives who attended these meetings included MTRCL, KCRC, the franchised bus companies, Hong Kong Tramways Limited, Peak Tramways Company Limited, 121 green minibus operators, two green minibus associations, 17 red minibus associations, 26 urban taxi associations, 15 NT taxi associations, one Lantau taxi association, Public Omnibus Operators Association, Hong Kong Guangdong Boundary Crossing Bus Association Limited, Motor Transport Workers General Union, School Buses Operators Association Limited, Private Hire Car for Young Children Association Limited, licensed ferry operators, kaito operators and Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation.

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ETWB(ET)134

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

0555

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : On provision of off-street terminal facilities for cross-boundary coaches in this financial year, would the Administration advise on :

- (a) the locations of these planned facilities and their resources implications;
- (b) the management and operation arrangements for these off-street facilities;
- (c) the current patronage of the cross-boundary coach routes;
- (d) the operation details of these cross-boundary coaches;
- (e) the complaints on the existing operators over the past two years and their details; and
- (f) any plan to allow more coach operators to increase the competitiveness of the services?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply :

- (a) We plan to allocate some loading and unloading bays for cross-boundary coaches at the existing public transport interchanges (PTIs) at Discovery Park in Tsuen Wan and West Rail Kam Sheung Road Station in Yuen Long in 2004-05. As these two PTIs are existing facilities, no additional capital or recurrent cost would be required.
- (b) The cross-boundary coach operators will be invited to apply for the use of the above loading and unloading facilities. The selected operators will be required to submit service timetables for the Transport Department's approval. They will have to operate their coach services according to the approved service timetables and ensure smooth operation of their services without unduly affecting other users of the PTIs.
- (c) & (d) There are presently 86 operators operating some 240 cross-boundary coach routes from various destinations in Hong Kong to the Mainland, mostly to cities in the Pearl River Delta Region. They consist of about 90 routes from the Airport and the New Territories, 120 routes from Kowloon and 30 routes from Hong Kong Island. In 2003, some operators introduced short shuttle routes that terminate at or near the control points on the Mainland side. The cross-boundary buses carried about 38 000 passengers daily via the three land crossings in 2003.
- (e) In the past two years, the Transport Department received some 60 complaints about cross-boundary coaches, mostly about driver behaviour, non-adherence to service schedules and coaches causing traffic obstruction and noise nuisance to the nearby residents.

- (f) Cross-boundary coach services are operated under a cross-boundary quota system jointly administered by the Hong Kong and the Mainland authorities because of the limited handling capacities of the land control points. The authorities regularly review the quota. There is currently no plan to allow more operators to provide cross-boundary coach services.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)135

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :
661- Minor plant, vehicles and equipment
(block vote)

Question Serial No.

0557

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Provision of \$3,100,000 under Subhead 661 – Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote) represents an increase of 195.8% over the revised estimate for 2003-04. Please provide details of the new equipment and equipment due for replacement.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : The provision of \$3,100,000 covers capital expenditure on the following new and replacement equipment:-

	Description	\$
(a)	Replacement of emergency standby generator set in the Cross-Harbour Tunnel	1,100,000
(b)	Installation of Vehicle Appointment Booking Control Backup System	2,000,000
	Total	<u>3,100,000</u>

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)136

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1300

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : According to the information provided by the Administration, the number of ferry services licences granted or extended in 2002 and 2003 was 98 and 91 respectively. In 2004, the estimated number is 86 only which is less than 2002 by 12. What is the reason? Please list the names of the companies for which licences will not be extended and their operating condition in the past.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : Since the validity period of ferry service licences may vary and the expiry dates of the licences differ, the number of licences estimated to be extended in different years may not be the same. Although the number of licences to be extended in 2004 is smaller than the actual figure in 2002 and 2003, the total number of valid ferry licences as at March 2004 is 108, which is the same as in 2003 and similar to 107 in 2002. Each application for extension of ferry service licence will need to be considered on its own merits, taking into account the performance of the licensee. Information on whether any and which ferry service licence will not be extended in 2004-05 is not available.

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ETWB(ET)137

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1301

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for TransportDirector of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Administration indicated that in 2004-05, it would continue to consider measures to further improve the quality and efficiency of public bus services through rationalisation and bus-bus interchange (BBI) schemes. Will the Administration provide details on :

- (a) the existing BBI schemes operated by the various bus companies, and their effect on patronage and revenue in the past year;
- (b) the BBI schemes to be implemented in the coming year; and
- (c) the bus rationalisation packages under study and current progress.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wahReply :

- (a) As at end 2003, there were 120 BBI schemes in operation involving 373 bus routes. About 110 000 passengers per day used these BBI schemes and enjoyed fare discounts ranging from \$0.1 to \$20.7. Information on the effect of existing BBI schemes on franchised bus companies' revenue is commercially sensitive and is not available.
- (b) A total of 23 BBI schemes is planned for implementation in 2004. These 23 planned BBI schemes involve 83 routes with fare discounts ranging from \$2.7 to \$5.1.
- (c) A total of about 70 bus route rationalisation packages are planned for implementation in 2004 to enhance bus network efficiency and improve traffic and environment on busy corridors. These packages include proposals for route cancellation, vehicle reduction, route truncation / amalgamation, re-routing, frequency reduction, terminal change, conversion to peak-only service and conversion to weekend / holiday service only. The relevant District Councils are being consulted on these route rationalisation packages.

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ETWB(ET)138

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and development

1302

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the programme to continue the planning and design of new public transport interchanges (PTIs) and related transport facilities to tie in with the opening of new railways, will the Administration give details on:

- (a) the number of PTIs and related transport facilities in the territory at present; and
- (b) the management arrangement and recurrent operating costs for the above-said PTIs and related transport facilities in the recent three years?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : (a) At present, there are 285 PTIs and related transport facilities in Hong Kong, of which 233 are owned by government, 48 by the Housing Authority and four by private developers.

(b) The routine management, maintenance and cleansing works for the above government-owned PTIs are the responsibility of relevant government departments, including Highways Department, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and Architectural Services Department, or management contractors appointed by Transport Department. Over the past three years, the total cost borne by TD for the above government-owned PTIs was about \$50 million, including the cost of appointing management contractors.

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ETWB(ET)139

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1303

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With regard to the travel characteristics survey commissioned by Government, will consideration be given to publicise the relevant collected data? If yes, what is the programme? If no, what is the reason?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : The Travel Characteristic Survey 2002 conducted by Transport Department has been completed in early March 2004. The English and Chinese version of the final report of the study will be uploaded onto Transport Department's Homepage on the Internet by late March 2004 for reference by the public.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)140

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :
700 – General non-recurrent
843 – Minor consultancies for traffic
and transport studies (block vote)

Question Serial No.

1586

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Is the study on “professional drivers’ working time as one of the causes of accident involving professional drivers” included as an item under Subhead 700 or 843? If yes, how much had been spent and what were the details? If no, what are the reasons? Has the Administration considered conducting the study before; and whether it would consider carrying out a study in the future?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Fu-wah

Reply : We are aware that excessive working time could cause professional drivers to experience drowsiness. Therefore, although we have not carried out any separate study on this particular factor, we have been monitoring the trend of various driver contributory factors to traffic accidents including the one described as drivers found to be “asleep or drowsy”. In the past three years, 0.4% of the number of professional drivers involved in accidents were found to be ‘asleep or drowsy’ at the time of the accident. We will closely monitor the traffic accident statistics and consider conducting a separate study, should the situation warrant it.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)141

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :
700 – General non-recurrent

Question Serial No.

1650

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

- Question :
- (a) Regarding Item 533 “Tuen Mun and Yuen Long district traffic study” under Subhead 700, please advise on the work progress and result last year. In 2004-05, what will be the focus and estimated cost?
 - (b) Is there any consultancy study for the pedestrian schemes in the coming financial year? What will be the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply : (a) The Tuen Mun and Yuen Long district traffic study was completed in 2002. It has recommended a number of improvement measures and we are now implementing these measures.

In 2003-04, we completed the improvements of pedestrian crossing facilities along Castle Peak Road (Yuen Long section) and Yuen Long On Ning Road, the junctions of Tuen Mun Heung Sze Wui Road/Hoi Chu Road and Kau Yuk Road/Yuen Long Tai Yuk Road and two bus bays in Tin Shui Wai. We also started the works for the widening of the bridge between Long Tin Road and Shan Ha Road and a one-way gyratory system on Fung Cheung Road, which are scheduled to be completed in mid 2005 and early 2005 respectively. The total expenditure of these works amounts to \$2.5 million.

In the coming financial year, we shall start the works for improving the junctions of Kau Yuk Road/Tai Tong Road and Castle Peak Road /Yuen Long Tai Yuk Road, providing a footbridge across the nullah at Wang Tat Road/Ma Wang Road, adding a cycle track along Hung Tin Road, and extending/providing bus bays at six locations. The estimated cost of the works involved is about \$11 million. These engineering works are funded under the respective capital works item.

- (b) TD is carrying out an “Area Improvement Study for Tsim Sha Tsui” jointly with Planning Department. The scope includes urban design, pedestrianisation schemes, and landscape enhancement. TD’s expenditure on the study in the coming financial year is \$1 million.

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ETWB(ET)142

Question Serial No.

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1723

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please list out the non-recurrent items in the Programme “Planning and Development” for 2004-05. What is the estimated expenditure for each item?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply : In 2004-05, there are 12 non-recurrent items in the Programme “Planning and Development”. The estimated expenditure for each item is shown as follows:-

Description	HK\$'000
1. Hong Kong Island North and Kowloon West district traffic study	200
2. Tuen Mun and Yuen Long district traffic study	600
3. Studies on co-ordination of other public transport services with new railways	60
4. Consultancy for Base District Traffic Models	1,500
5. Survey and demand analysis on Intelligent Transport Systems in Hong Kong	750
6. Consultancy to update the Parking Demand Study	324
7. Feasibility study on introducing trolley bus system in Hong Kong	1,200
8. Travel Characteristics Survey 2002	991
9. Surveys on ferry services	742
10. Survey on Goods Vehicle Trip Characteristics 2003	350
11. Restructuring and enhancement of the Third Comprehensive Transport Study Model	2,000
12. Minor consultancies for traffic and transport studies	3,700
Total	<u>12,417</u>

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ETWB(ET)143

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1724

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for TransportDirector of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the locations of the bus-bus interchange (BBI) schemes planned for 2004?
 What are the resources required?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chungReply :

A total of 23 BBI schemes have been planned for implementation in 2004. These BBI schemes are located at :

Hong Kong Island

1. Shau Kei Wan Road

Kowloon

2. Lung Cheung Road

4. Prince Edward Road East

6. Ma Tau Chung Road

3. Kwun Tong Road

5. Choi Hung Estate Bus Terminus

7. Ma Tau Wai Road

New Territories

8. Castle Peak Road

10. Hing Fong Road

12. Tai Wo Bus Terminus

14. Sheung Shui Landmark North

16. Sheung Shui Bus Terminus

18. Tai Ho Road

20. New Town Plaza Bus Terminus

22. Yuen Wo Road

9. Kwai Chung Road

11. Tsing Yi Airport Railway Station Bus Terminus

13. Luen Wo Hui

15. Pak Wo Road

17. Bayview Garden Bus Terminus

19. Cheong Wing Road

21. Hung Mui Kuk Road

23. Tai Chung Kiu Road

These BBI schemes will be provided by the franchised bus companies concerned and will require no additional resources from the Government.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)144

Question Serial No.

1725

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : How many new public transport interchanges will be planned and designed in 2004-05 and what are the resources involved?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply : Four new public transport interchanges (PTIs) will be at an advanced stage of planning and design in 2004-05. TD's input to the planning and design of these PTIs will be provided through existing resources.

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ETWB(ET)145

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (1) Planning and Development

1726

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In assisting the replacement of diesel public light buses (PLBs) with environmentally-friendly models, what is the target expenditure for this financial year?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

Under the incentive scheme to encourage early replacement of diesel PLBs with environmentally cleaner models, cash grants of \$60,000 and \$80,000 per vehicle are provided to PLB owners for replacement of diesel PLBs that run on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or electric models respectively. \$261 million has been reserved to fund the replacement of the entire fleet of 4 350 PLBs. Up to 18 March 2004, a total of 732 diesel PLBs have been replaced by LPG PLBs involving a total cash grant of \$43.9 million.

We do not have a year-by-year replacement plan for the scheme. The incentive scheme is a voluntary scheme which will end on 31 December 2005, and replacement is not mandatory. There are other factors apart from the cash grant which affect the PLB operators' decision on vehicle replacement. The Administration will continue to work closely with the PLB trade to expedite replacement of old diesel PLBs by environmentally cleaner ones.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)146

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

1727

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The number of planned items of the route development programme for franchised bus services in 2004 is 132, which is 43% higher than the number of items implemented for 2003. In what major districts will those items be implemented?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply : About 80% of the route development items are for various districts in the New Territories. These include rationalisation of bus services in connection with the opening of West Rail in late 2003, improvement of bus services to meet additional demand arising from population intake to new residential developments in Tung Chung new town and redevelopment of housing estates in Tsuen Wan and Kwai Chung, and service upgrading and rationalisation for network efficiency in various parts of the New Territories. The remaining 20% mainly include service improvement items to cater for population growth on Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, e.g. Cyberport, Western District, West Kowloon, Yau Tong and Hung Hom Bay.

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ETWB(ET)147

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

1728

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for TransportDirector of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and WorksQuestion : Transport Department will process 70 bus route rationalization packages in 2004.
What are the major districts that these rationalisation packages will effect?Asked by : Hon TAM Yiu-chungReply : Transport Department will process about 70 bus route rationalisation packages in 2004 to enhance bus network efficiency and to improve traffic and environment in busy corridors. Many of these rationalisation proposals arise from the opening of new transport infrastructure such as the West Rail, or from synergy achievable following the corporate restructuring of Citybus and New World First Bus. Accordingly, districts in Northwest New Territories as well as Hong Kong Island have more rationalisation proposals, while individual rationalisation proposals are also proposed for most of the other districts to improve network efficiency as well as traffic and environmental conditions.

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ETWB(ET)148

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) District Traffic and Transport Services

1729

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What districts will be served by the seven green minibus (GMB) routes planned for introduction in 2004?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The terminal points of the seven proposed GMB routes including four routes in Kowloon and three routes in the New Territories are listed below:

1. Parc Palais - Jordan MTR
2. Sham Shui Po (Site 10) - Mei Foo MTR
3. Beacon Heights - Kowloon Tong MTR (Circular)
4. Dynasty Heights - Kowloon Tong MTR (Circular)
5. Yuen Long (Yoho Town) - Sun Yuen Long Centre (Circular)
6. Shatin - Tai Po KCR Station
7. Belvedere Garden - Tsing Yi Airport Railway Station

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ETWB(ET)149

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead(No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Licensing of Vehicles and Drivers

0817

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In 2001 and 2002, the average waiting time for driving tests was 63 days. What was the average waiting time for driving test in 2003? Besides, will Transport Department consider adjusting the associated performance measure from 85 days to 65 days or lower? If not, why? What is the anticipated average waiting time in 2004-05?

Asked by : Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply :

The average waiting time for driving tests in 2003 was 72 days. We will try our best to shorten the average waiting time as far as possible.

We do not propose to adjust our performance measure at this stage because:

- (a) the majority of our driving test centres are on short term tenancy. We may not be able to secure extension of all these sites or find replacement sites;
- (b) with the recovery of the economy, the number of driving test candidates may increase resulting in longer waiting times.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT FOOTMAN

Post Title Commissioner for Transport

Date 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)150

Head : CWRP Head 704 - Drainage Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme :

1427

Controlling Officer : Director of Drainage Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please list out in details the projects in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts under the block allocation Subhead 4100DX "Drainage works, studies and investigations for items in Category D of the Public Works Programme".

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : The items under Subhead 4100DX that involve works in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts in 2004-05 are -

1. Installation of an improved odour control system at Kwun Tong preliminary treatment works;
2. Construction of a new sewer from Wong Tai Sin Temple to Shatin Pass Road;
3. Detailed design and investigation works for drainage improvement works in East Kowloon; and
4. Improvement work to access openings of stormwater drainage culverts in Kowloon Bay.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ R.T.K. CHEUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Drainage Services

Date _____ 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)151

Question Serial No.

1765

Head : 705 Civil Engineering

Subhead (No. & title): 5101DX

Environmental works, studies
and investigations for items in
Category D of the Public Works
Programme

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With regard to the projects under CWRF block allocation Subhead 5101DX "Environmental works, studies and investigations for items in Category D of the Public Works Programme", please list out in detail the projects in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : Among items under Subhead 5101DX, part of the "Feasibility study on the environmental review of urban landfills and Tseung Kwan O landfills" is in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts.

Signature _____

Name in block letters ROBERT J. S. LAW

Post Title Director of Environmental Protection

Date 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)152

Head : Subhead (No. & title) :
Head 706 - Highways Capital Works Reserve Fund 6100TX

Question Serial No.

1430

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the block allocation Subhead 6100TX "Highway works, studies and investigations for items in Category D of the Public Works Programme", please set out in details the items in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : There are five items under Subhead 6100TX being implemented in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts in 2004-05 -

- (a) Reconstruction of Tung Yuen Street and Yan Yue Wai;
- (b) Upgrading of Lok Fu public transport interchange;
- (c) Reconstruction of footways and run-ins at Ngau Tau Kok Road (East bound) between On Shin Road and Hong Ning Road;
- (d) Provision of lifts to the footbridges across Kwun Tong Road near Choi Shek Lane; and
- (e) Provision of lifts at the footbridges across Kwun Tong Road near Block 8 of Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

Date 25 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)153

Question Serial No.

1062

Head: 707 - New Towns and Urban Area Development Subhead (No. & title): 7771TH

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Territory Development

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Subhead 7771TH shows that the Administration has planned to apportion \$200,000 for the Tsuen Wan Road upgrading - site investigation and preliminary design. When will the upgrading works of Tsuen Wan Road commence?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply: We commenced an investigation study for upgrading of Tsuen Wan Road under Subhead 7771TH in July 2002. We plan to complete the study by the end of 2004. The implementation programme of the upgrading works will be reviewed under the study.

Signature _____

Name in block letters John S. V. CHAI

Post Title Director of Territory Development

Date 24 March 2004

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

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(ET)154

Question Serial No.

1431

Head: 707 - New Towns and Urban Area Development

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: New Territories East Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Territory Development

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Has the Item 7584TH "Tseung Kwan O development, Phase III – Western Coast Road", which was included as a Category B project in the 1999-2000 Budget, been deleted? Or is it still under study? If feasibility study of the project is being carried out, what is the progress of the study? When is it expected to be submitted to this Committee for consideration? When are the works expected to commence and complete?

Asked by: Hon LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply: The original proposed coastal alignment of Western Coast Road (WCR) under Item 7584TH met with strong public objection. We have subsequently included under Item 7683CL entitled "Feasibility Study for Further Development of Tseung Kwan O" the alignment review, feasibility study and preliminary design for WCR. After a comprehensive review on various alternative alignments, we have recommended a tunnel alignment for WCR that has received general public support. Under the Feasibility Study, we are now carrying out detailed engineering and environmental impact assessments on the recommended alignment to ascertain its feasibility. The study also includes detailed traffic impact assessment for further development of Tseung Kwan O for formulation of an implementation programme for infrastructure development which will include WCR. We have scheduled completion of the Feasibility Study by the end of 2004.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ John S. V. CHAI

Post Title _____ Director of Territory Development

Date _____ 24 March, 2004

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-ETWB(ET)001

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

S041

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : How much resources have been earmarked for inspection of marine parks and marine reserves? What measures will be taken to prevent the intrusion of non-local vessels into these parks and reserves?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

In year 2004-05, an amount of \$16.7 million has been reserved for the protection and management of marine parks under recurrent expenditure.

Marine park wardens patrol the marine parks and marine reserve on a daily basis in irregular hours, including night patrols to combat illegal activities. Enforcement actions are taken against vessels fishing in the marine parks and marine reserve without a valid permit. To prevent Mainland vessels from fishing in the marine parks and marine reserve, AFCD has been working closely with the Marine Police including conducting joint enforcement actions and enhancing prosecution actions against Mainlanders found illegal fishing in these areas where appropriate. AFCD also maintains close contact with the Mainland Authorities on the issue and provides them with information on Mainland fishermen and vessels intruding into the marine parks and marine reserve for illegal fishing with a view to increasing the deterrent effect.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	THOMAS C Y CHAN
Post Title	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Date	7 April 2004

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(ET)002

Head : CWRP Head 704 - Drainage Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme :

SV001

Controlling Officer : Director of Drainage Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The number of villages which have not been provided with sewage connections to the central sewage treatment facilities and the plans to implement them. (Reply Serial No. ETWB(ET)018).

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply : About 95% of our population is at present served by public sewerage. The 5% not provided with public sewerage are mostly residents in the rural areas of NT, the majority of them are served by private sewage treatment facilities such as septic tanks. Under the village sewerage programme, 52 villages have been provided with public sewerage, and construction of sewerage for a further 57 villages are underway for completion by 2006. We are reviewing the strategy and programme of providing sewerage to some 370 villages which have previously been identified for possible connection.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ R.T.K. CHEUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Drainage Services

Date _____ 7 April 2004

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

Reply Serial No.
ETWB(W)001
Question Serial No.
0006

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)
Programme: (3) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The approved commitment of consultancy study on benchmark comparison on construction cost and establishment of performance indicators is \$1,300,000. The balance is now at \$100,000. What is the estimated cost of the remaining work? How does the Administration ensure that the remaining work would not be run out of the budget?

Asked by: Hon. Abraham SHEK

Reply: The study is substantially completed. The 2004-05 provision is to pay for the finalisation and submission of the Final Report. The estimated final cost of the study is \$1,241,500, which is within the approved commitment of \$1,300,000. Therefore, the study will not run out of budget.

Signature
Name in block letters

Post Title
Date

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

22 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)002

Question Serial
No.

0094

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
 Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)
 Head 42 – Electrical and Mechanical Services Department
 Head 43 – Civil Engineering Department
 Head 194 – Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No.& title):

Programme: (2) Water Supply
 (3) Intra-Governmental Services
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

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

(1) Please provide the following details on the consultancy studies for which financial provision has been allocated in 2003-04:

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees (\$)	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made (if available)	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.

(2) Has financial provision been allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2004-05? If yes, please provide the following details :

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees (\$)	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	Whether study reports scheduled for completion in 2004-05 will be publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.	Name of consultants (if available)

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply: A number of consultancy studies have been or will be commissioned by the Works Branch (WB) of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and Water Supplies Department (WSD) for the purpose of policy making or policy assessment in 2003-04 and 2004-05. Details of the studies for which financial provision has been allocated in 2003-04 and 2004-05 are -

Studies with provision in 2003-04

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees (\$)	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ progress/ completed)	The Administration's follow-up action on the study reports and the progress made (if available)	Whether study reports completed are publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
Davis Langdon & Seah Hong Kong Ltd.	Consultancy study on benchmark comparison on construction cost and establishment of performance indicators (WB)	716,000	In progress	Not applicable	Not applicable
AON Hong Kong Ltd	Consultancy study on construction related insurance (WB)	95,000	Substantially completed	Report recommendations being considered for formulation of general guidelines on the procurement of construction related insurance.	The stakeholders of the construction industry have been consulted throughout the consultancy study.
Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd.	Consultancy study on contract price fluctuation system for public works contracts^ (WB)	385,000	To be completed in mid 2004	Not applicable	As the study is related only to the contractual arrangements in the public works and the industry stakeholders will be consulted, the study report is not intended to be publicized.
CH2M - IDC (Hong Kong) Limited	Pilot plant study on development of desalination facilities in Hong Kong - investigation (WSD)	776,000	In progress	Not applicable	Not applicable
IBM China/Hong Kong Limited	Developing and implementing Public Private Partnership for reprovisioning of Sha Tin Water Treatment Works (WSD)	944,500	To be completed by end of March 2004	The Administration is now considering the way forward in the light of the findings of this feasibility study.	Not applicable

^ The funding for the study was only initiated in 2003-04.

For other departments, there have been no provision for conducting such consultancy studies in 2003-04. Studies with provision in 2004-05

Name of consultants (if available)	Description	Consultancy Fees (\$)	Progress on consultancy studies (planning/ in progress/ completed)	Whether study reports scheduled for completion in 2004-05 will be publicized; if yes, their channels and if not, the reasons.
Davis Langdon & Seah Hong Kong Ltd.	Consultancy study on benchmark comparison on construction cost and establishment of performance indicators# (WB)	100,000	In progress	The construction industry stakeholders will be consulted through established channels, e.g. advisory bodies, professional institutions, trade associations etc.
CH2M – IDC (Hong Kong) Limited	Pilot plant study on development of desalination facilities in Hong Kong – investigation# (WSD)	482,000	In progress	Not applicable (The study will not be completed in 2004-05)

The study has started since 2003-04

For other departments, there have been no provision for conducting such consultancy studies in 2004-05.

Signature
Name in block letters

Post Title
Date

Y C Lo

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)003

Question Serial No.

0819

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title):

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The Bureau estimated an increase of 17.2% or \$1.1 million in the expenses in 2004-05 to meet the remuneration of 2 Technical Advisers. What are the justifications for the creation of such posts, the actual expenses required, terms of appointment and the respective duties of the 2 Technical Advisers?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply: The two Technical Advisers are required to assist the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works for the planning, co-ordination and conduct of researches on matters relating to policy areas under the portfolio of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau. The provision reserved in 2004-05 is estimated to be \$1.36 million and the advisors are appointed on non-civil service contract terms. Major duties include research and analysis on international experience regarding policies and practices, as well as compilation of research reports.

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C L O

Post Title

Date

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)004

Question Serial No.

0821

Head: 159- Government Secretariat: Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Works Branch) Subhead(No. & title):
Programme: (3) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question:

Please provide the following information in connection with the Works Branch's "Resources Management in Public Works Programme" for 2002-03 and 2003-04:

- a) the number of projects managed by the Branch;
- b) the titles and project numbers of works items which have an overspending of 5% or more and the reasons for such overspending;
- c) the titles and project numbers of works items which have an underspending of 5% or more and the reasons for such underspending; and
- b) the titles and project numbers of delayed projects and the reasons for such delays.

Asked by: Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply:

The Works Branch is responsible for the management of the Public Works Programme (PWP) (Heads 702 to 707, 709 and 711), which includes monitoring the progress and spending of the projects therein. In 2002-03 and 2003-04, the Works Branch managed 1 350 and 1 250 projects respectively.

In each year, Government will derive an estimated expenditure for each works project in the coming year based on a predicted cost of works or actual tender price, and having regard to the contract period and anticipated progress of works. Due to the nature of civil engineering and building works, the progress of works is often affected by weather, actual performance of contractors, works site ground conditions, underground utilities and other unforeseen factors. Some deviations between actual spending and the original estimated expenditure of projects are therefore inevitable.

In 2002-03, the number of public works projects with actual spending higher than the original estimate by 5% or more was about 320. The number of projects with actual spending lower than the original estimate by 5% or more was about 305. In 2003-04, these corresponding numbers were 300 and 245.

As the titles and numbers of individual projects involve substantial information, it is not practicable to list them one by one in this reply. However, the same information is already shown in the "Capital Works Reserve Fund" account in the Budget. In general, higher actual spending in some of the projects compared with their original estimates can be mainly attributed to a faster progress of works than the original programmes which had the effect of bringing forward some of the expenditures. As regards the titles, numbers and the reasons for those projects suffering delay, the information is available in the

Quarterly Reports on Public Works Programme which Works Branch submits to the LegCo Public Works Sub-committee for Members' reference.

In 2002-03 and 2003-04, the progress and expenditure of the overall PWP was in fact good. In 2002-03, the total actual spending under the PWP was \$25.3 billion, about 7% higher than the original estimates of \$23.6 billion. In 2003-04, the total revised estimate under the PWP was \$26.8 billion, about 6% higher than the original estimates of \$25.3 billion. These total expenditure figures indicate that the actual progress of most projects in the PWP has achieved or exceeded the original spending targets.

	Signature	_____
Name in block letters		Y C LO
Post Title		Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Date		24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)005

Question Serial No.

0822

Head: 159- Government Secretariat: Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
(Works Branch) Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Intra-Governmental Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question:

What achievements have been attained in your effort to shorten the leadtime for public works in 2003-04?
What do you expect for 2004-05?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply:

In October 2001, the Works Branch completed a review of the procedures for the delivery of public works and implemented a series of measures. These measures include simplifying the preliminary feasibility studies of works projects, allowing parallel actions between the statutory gazettal of projects and environmental impact assessments, expediting the administration procedures for land resumption and allowing works departments to invite tenders before funding for the works is secured. As a result of these measures, the pre-construction leadtime of an average civil engineering project has been reduced from six years to less than four years. In the past two years, the Works Branch has continued to expedite the delivery of works. In April 2003, the Works Branch promulgated a set of administrative procedures requiring works departments to enhance the consultation and notification of projects and expedite the resolution of public objections to roads, sewerage and reclamation projects under gazettals so as to speed up the completion of statutory procedures for the proposed projects. In October 2003, we also promulgated a new technical circular to enhance the control of proposed changes by policy bureaux and works departments to the original projects so as to minimize delay to the programme caused by changes that might not be strictly essential.

Through the implementation of these measures, the pre-construction leadtime of an average civil engineering project from inception to the commencement of construction has been reduced to a little more than three years. This will be conducive to the smooth delivery of the overall Public Works Programme (PWP).

Looking ahead, we are currently upgrading the existing computer system for the monitoring of public works projects and expect to commission a new Public Works Programme Information System by end 2004. The new system will provide works departments and policy bureaux with more up-to-date project information so as to enhance the monitoring of the progress of projects. We expect to smoothen thereby the delivery of the overall PWP.

	Signature	_____
Name in block letters		Y C LO
Post Title		Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Date		24 March 2004

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)006

Question Serial No.

0837

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
 Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
 Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Regarding the estimated expenditure of Director of Bureau's Office for 2004-05, please provide a detailed breakdown of the expenditure by (1) purposes (including the planning, co-ordination and implementation of all arrangements for the Secretary's public, media and community functions, etc.), and (2) expenditure items (salaries and establishment, allowances, job-related allowances and departmental expenses).

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply: The financial provisions of the Director of Bureau's Office in 2004-05 amount to \$7.5M, which include the salaries and allowances of the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (SETW) and staff in her office. The staff in SETW's office provide her with support to discharge the full range of duties under her policy portfolio. It will not be possible to analyze the provisions by nature of jobs. A breakdown of the financial provisions by expenditure items and establishment is shown as follows:

	\$ million
Salary for Director of Bureau	3.2
Salaries and allowances for staff in Director of Bureau's Office (comprising Administrative Assistant 2 Technical Advisors Personal Assistant Chauffeur Personal Secretary I Personal Secretary II Clerical Assistant)	4.3
Total	7.5

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the
 Environment, Transport and Works
 (Works)

Post Title

Date

24 March 2004

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)007

Question Serial No.

1163

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Please list the revised estimate for duty visits outside Hong Kong in 2003-04 for the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works), with particulars of: (1) the purposes and details of the visits; (2) the main means of public transport and related expenses for the visits; (3) board and lodging expenses for the visits. What is the corresponding estimated expenditure for 2004-05? Has the Administration laid down a ceiling on the amount of allowances that can be granted and a set of criteria for approving such allowances?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply: There is no breakdown of expenditure on duty visits outside Hong Kong for the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) since they would have attended the visits with other officers. The purposes of the visits varied, which included direct personal communication with other Government officials on general or specific issues, and participation in conferences for promotion of business for Hong Kong. Transportation would be by air or land transport as appropriate. The revised estimate for travelling and board and lodging expenses for duty visits outside Hong Kong in respect of the Works Branch in 2003-04 is \$270,000.

It is estimated that the travelling and board and lodging expenses for duty visits outside Hong Kong in respect of the Works Branch in 2004-05 will be at about the same level as in the current year.

Under the current policy, an officer who is on duty outside Hong Kong may be granted a subsistence allowance at specified daily rates to cover the cost of the appropriate standard of accommodation and meals, laundry charges, gratuities, travelling expenses within town and all minor incidental out-of-pocket expenses. The rates of the subsistence allowance differ from country to country to take into account the different costs in different countries. The amount of allowance paid is abated in case of sponsorship of hotel accommodation or in cash.

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

Date

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)008

Question Serial No.

1164

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Please provide a breakdown of the provision for entertainment expenses to be incurred by the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works), such as hosting receptions, in the revised estimate for 2003-04 and the estimate for 2004-05. Has the Government set an upper limit for such expenses? Are there any objective criteria for approving such expenses?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply: There is no breakdown of the entertainment expenses as to the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) individually since they would have attended the same functions such as meetings with the media and the Mainland officials with other officers. An estimate for the Works Branch can however be provided. The revised estimate for official entertainment of the Works Branch in 2003-04 is approximately \$100,000. As there is no fixed plan at the moment for the coming year, it is estimated that the official entertainment of the Works Branch in 2004-05 will be at about the same level as in current year.

Under the current policy, expenditure on entertainment may be charged to public funds only when it is directly related to the discharge of an officer's duties or is a necessary part of making or maintaining contacts in his official capacity, and is in the public interest. All such expenditure must be approved by the head or deputy head of the bureau or department personally, or by a directorate officer duly authorised by the head of department.

There are Civil Service Regulations and general guidelines issued by the Director of Administration governing the charging of the entertainment expenses to public funds.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)009

Question Serial No.

1167

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Regarding policy research projects and the expenditure involved, please provide detailed information on the policy research projects commenced or being conducted by the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau itself or with the funding of the Bureau in 2003-04, including

- 1) project title, objective and subject matter;
- 2) expenses;
- 3) latest progress;
- 4) whether the Administration has followed up on the research results.

Also, is there any provision earmarked for policy research in 2004-05? If yes, what is the amount? What are the objectives and subject matters of the respective projects?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply: Our major task is to formulate and co-ordinate policies in respect of areas under our purview. To achieve this, we carry out extensive and intensive research into these areas using as far as possible information available and with in-house resources. In view of the wide range and the large amount of such research work, it is impossible to list each and every task. If consultants are used, we have prepared a breakdown in response to a separate question on that particular subject. Details of the more important items for ongoing work and new initiatives are listed in the Policy Agenda accompanying the CE's policy addresses and highlighted in the Controlling Officer's report. It is impossible to give a breakdown on expenditure for each of these items as we have not conducted detailed costing work for each of them. However, we have provided an indication of the expenditure involved in each of our programmes in the Controlling Officer's report. If after research, consultation and deliberation, a new policy should be introduced, we shall consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council.

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

Post Title

Date

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)010

Question Serial No.

1266

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title):

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The estimated expenditure of Director of Bureau's Office under Programme (1) for 2004-05 is 17.2 % or \$1.1 million higher than the revised estimate for 2003-04. According to the Estimates, this is mainly due to the provision for the remuneration of two technical advisors to the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works. In this connection, may the Administration inform this Council of the following:

- (a) What are the duties of the two technical advisors and what policy areas are they involved in?
- (b) Are the posts of the two technical advisors permanent ones? If those are supernumerary posts, how long will they last? Please provide the terms and conditions of employment and other details.

Asked by: Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply: (a) The major duties of the two Technical Advisors include research and analysis on international experience regarding policies and practices, as well as compilation of research reports. They are required to assist the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works on matters relating to policy areas under the portfolio of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau.

- (b) The two posts are not permanent establishment. The two Technical Advisors are appointed on non-civil service contract terms for two years.

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and Works
(Works)

Post Title

Date

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)011

Question Serial No.

1648

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)
Programme: (3) Intra-Governmental Services

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05:

What arrangements will there be in 2004-05 to explore ways to further enhance the cost-effectiveness of slope works? How much is the provision?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply: The maintenance of government slopes adjacent to public housing estates is funded by Head 159.

In order to further enhance the cost-effectiveness of slope maintenance works, the technical standards for slope maintenance have been reviewed and optimized in 2003. We will continue to explore ways to optimize the cost-effectiveness of slope works in 2004-05.

The provision for 2004-05 under Head 159 is \$3 million.

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and Works
(Works)

Post Title

Date

25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)012

Question Serial No.

1649

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title): 000
Operational Expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05:

What arrangements will there be in 2004-05 to promote local professional services in the construction industry to the Mainland? How much is the provision?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply: In 2004-05, we have reserved an amount of about \$0.7M for the following activities to promote our construction related professional services in the Mainland -

- organize jointly with the Ministry of Construction a large scale conference and study mission in the Mainland;
- organize jointly with the Ministry of Construction a CEPA briefing seminar in Hong Kong;
- organize jointly with the Chongqing Municipal Construction Commission a topical seminar for the construction industry during the Chongqing – Hong Kong Week; and
- continue the facilitation of the negotiation of mutual recognition of professional qualifications between the local professional bodies and their Mainland counterparts.

Signature

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Permanent Secretary for the
Environment, Transport and Works
(Works)

Post Title

Date

25 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)013

Question Serial No.

1763

Head 159 – Government Secretariat: Environment,
Transport and Works Bureau (Works Branch)

Subhead (No.& title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The 2004 Policy Address has mentioned about the need to raise the standard of policy research undertaken by the Government:

“To improve our governance, we must raise the level of sophistication with which both the Government and the community handle policy issues. We need to do more public policy research, particularly from a macro and long-term perspective. Objective and concrete public policy research will help us better realize the objectives of effective governance. It will help us avoid sweeping, politicised and emotional policy debates, thus making it easier for the Government and various sectors of the community to reach a consensus on public issues. This will ensure that our policies are implemented more effectively and better able to serve the long-term development needs of Hong Kong.”

Please advise whether provision has been made or resources deployed in the 2004-05 Estimates to take forward a stated commitment of the Policy Address that public policy matters will be pursued with a higher standard. If yes, please give a detailed account of the projects funded. If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

Reply: Despite no specific funding has been earmarked for the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau for this purpose, it is understood that since the publication of the 2004 Policy Address, Central Policy Unit (CPU) has been exploring ways to promote research on public policy issues and develop the human resources required. CPU is formulating an agenda for policy research so as to take forward research on priority issues. To meet this objective, CPU will carry out relevant research work using in-house resource as far as possible.

Name in block letters

Y C LO

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works)

Date

25 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)014

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Question Serial No.

0171

Head : 25 – Architectural Services Department Subhead :

Programme : (3) – Facilities Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What are the details of the deletion of 69 posts in 2004-05 under this Programme ? How many of them belong to the professional grades ? The number of projects completed in 2002 and 2003 were 78 and 92 respectively while the number planned to be completed in 2004 is 108, what are the Administration's plans for the completion of more projects with less manpower ?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Ping-cheung

Reply : Of the 69 posts we are planning to delete in 2004-05 under this Programme, 11 of them belong to the professional grades. Please see the attached list for detailed breakdown.

The Department's plans for the completion of more projects with less manpower are to increase progressively the outsourcing of the professional and technical services for the delivery of projects.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

**Breakdown of the 69 posts to be deleted
under Programme (3) - Facilities Development**

Rank	No. of posts to be deleted
Chief Architect	1*
Architect/Assistant Architect	2*
Structural Engineer/ Assistant Structural Engineer	4*
Building Services Engineer/ Assistant Building Services Engineer	4*
Principal Technical Officer (Architectural)	2
Principal Technical Officer (Building Services)	1
Senior Technical Officer (Architectural)	2
Senior Technical Officer (Building Services)	6
Senior Technical Officer (Structural)	1
Principal Survey Officer (Quantity)	2
Senior Survey Officer (Quantity)	4
Survey Officer (Quantity)	1
Technical Officer (Architectural)	3
Technical Officer (Building Services)	1
Technical Officer (Structural)	1
Senior Building Services Inspector	1
Building Services Inspector	2
Assistant Building Services Inspector	2
Clerk of Works	5
Assistant Clerk of Works	2
Works Supervisor I (Building)	5
Works Supervisor I (Building Services)	4
Works Supervisor II (Building)	2
Works Supervisor II (Building Services)	3
Assistant Clerical Officer	1
Clerical Assistant	3
Personal Secretary II	2
Photoprinter I	1
Photoprinter II	1
Total :	69

*Professional grade post

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Head : 25 – Architectural Services DepartmentSubhead :

Programme : (1) – Monitoring and Advisory Services
 (2) – Facilities Upkeep
 (3) – Facilities Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (For Programmes (1) and (3))
 Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (For Programme (2))

Question : The department estimates that 93 permanent posts will be deleted in 2004-05. Will the Administration provide information on the ranks, complement, terms of appointment and ways of deletion of these posts? Is the deletion related to outsourcing of specific types of work? If yes, what are the ranks, staff complement, terms of appointment and types of works involved and what is the timetable for outsourcing? How is the manpower cut going to affect the department's monitoring and advisory services as well as the maintenance and development of facilities? What will the department do to ensure that the morale of its staff will not be affected by the downsizing? How will the department effectively monitor outsourcing and ensure the workers concerned will not be exploited in terms of remuneration and benefits?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Fu-wahReply : Details of the 93 permanent posts which will be deleted in 2004-05 are shown in the Appendix.

To achieve Government's target on the reduction of civil service establishment, posts are deleted when vacancies arise from natural wastage, Second Voluntary Retirement Scheme, expiry of time lapse posts, and end of contract agreement. The outsourcing arrangement may, to a certain extent, facilitate manpower reduction.

The Architectural Services Department (Arch S D) has progressively outsourced the professional, technical and site supervisory services for project delivery and devolved some of the maintenance works to subvented organisations and government departments. The outsourcing initiative and the related manpower reduction will not in any way undermine the maintenance and development of facilities as ArchSD has also enhanced its monitoring and advisory roles by enforcing its building authority role for government premises, and promoting best practices in the construction industry. We have achieved the outsourcing of professional and technical services for the delivery of projects as follows :

As at Feb 2001	35% (baseline)
End 2002/03	54% (achieved)
End 2003/04	60% (achieved)

The Department has set up a dedicated Staff Relations Unit to enhance the communication between the management and staff. Through regular meetings and informal exchanges of views, staff are well aware of the objectives and development of the Department's Re-engineering Programme. The management will take appropriate measures to address staff concern such as reshuffling the duties of the serving staff where necessary in the light of the progress of the Re-engineering Programme to ensure a fair distribution of workload. With such measures, we are confident that the staff morale will not be affected by the deletion of the 93 posts.

There are already well established mechanism in monitoring performance of consultants for outsourced projects. Up to now, we have not received complaints from consultants' employees on wage disputes.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

**The breakdown of the 93 permanent posts to be deleted
in 2004/05 is as follows:**

Rank	No. of posts to be deleted
Senior Architect	1
Architect/Assistant Architect	2
Senior Structural Engineer	1
Structural Engineer/Assistant Structural Engineer	4
Senior Quantity Surveyor	2
Assistant Maintenance Surveyor	3
Building Services Engineer/Assistant Building Services Engineer	4
Principal Survey Officer (Quantity)	2
Senior Survey Officer (Quantity)	4
Survey Officer/Survey Officer Trainee (Quantity)	1
Principal Technical Officer (Architectural)	2
Senior Technical Officer (Architectural)	2
Technical Officer/Technical Officer Trainee (Architectural)	4
Senior Technical Officer (Structural)	1
Technical Officer/Technical Officer Trainee (Structural)	1
Principal Technical Officer (Building Services)	1
Senior Technical Officer (Building Services)	6
Technical Officer/Technical Officer Trainee (Building Services)	1
Chief Technical Officer (Building)	1
Senior Clerk of Works	1
Clerk of Works	8
Assistant Clerk of Works	5
Senior Building Services Inspector	1
Building Services Inspector	2
Assistant Building Services Inspector	2
Works Supervisor I (Building)	8
Works Supervisor II (Building)	2
Works Supervisor I (Building Services)	4
Works Supervisor II (Building Services)	3
Assistant Clerical Officer	2
Clerical Assistant	4
Office Assistant	1
Personal Secretary II	2
Senior Typist	1
Artisan	1
Workman II	1
Photoprinter I	1
Photoprinter II	1
Total :	93

The 93 posts will be deleted through existing vacancies, natural wastage and wastage arising from the Second Voluntary Retirement Scheme.

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)016

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05

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

Question Serial No.

0818

Head : 25 – Architectural Services Department Subhead :

Programme : (1) – Monitoring and Advisory Services
 (2) – Facilities Upkeep
 (3) – Facilities Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(For Programmes (1) and (3))
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
(For Programme (2))

Question : Over the past three years, how many posts on establishment have been deleted, and how many posts on contract terms created ?

How many temporary contract posts will be retained or created by the department in 2004-05 ?

Asked by : Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply : Arch SD has achieved a net total deletion of 178 posts in 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 while the number of non-civil service contract staff has increased by only 1 from 27 to 28.

Arch SD will retain the services of the 28 non-civil service contract staff in 2004-05.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)017

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Question Serial No.

0832

Head : 25 – Architectural Services Department Subhead :

Programme : (3) – Facilities Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding Programme (3), provision for 2004-05 is 3.9% lower than the revised estimate for 2003-04, which is mainly due to the effect of reduced operating expenses and deletion of 69 posts. In this regard, please advise :

- (1) How can the operating expenses be reduced by ways other than civil service pay cut ? What is the total estimated reduction in expenditure ?
- (2) How many of the 69 deleted posts belong to the engineer category ? How much savings in expenditure can be achieved as a result of the post deletion ?

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply : We hope to reduce the operating expenses by about \$3.6 million. This is mainly due to the reduced expenses in non-project related consultancies and general departmental expenses.

Of the 69 posts to be deleted, eight of them belong to the engineer grades. We anticipate to achieve savings of about \$5.7 million from deletion of posts under Programme (3).

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)018

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Question Serial No.

1443

Head : 25 – Architectural Services Department Subhead :

Programme : (3) – Facilities Development

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under Programme (3) Facilities Development, the provision for 2004-05 is 3.9% lower than the revised estimate for 2003-04. This is mainly due to the effect of civil service pay cut, consequent reduced operating expenses and deletion of 69 posts in 2004-05. Please list out the ranks of the 69 posts, and indicate whether the department will outsource the work of the posts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : For the rank of the 69 posts which will be deleted in 2004-05, please refer to the Annex.

The Department will continue to outsource progressively the professional, technical and site supervisory services for the delivery of projects.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

**Breakdown of the 69 posts to be deleted
under Programme (3) - Facilities Development**

Rank	No. of posts to be deleted
Chief Architect	1
Architect/Assistant Architect	2
Structural Engineer/ Assistant Structural Engineer	4
Building Services Engineer/ Assistant Building Services Engineer	4
Principal Technical Officer (Architectural)	2
Principal Technical Officer (Building Services)	1
Senior Technical Officer (Architectural)	2
Senior Technical Officer (Building Services)	6
Senior Technical Officer (Structural)	1
Principal Survey Officer (Quantity)	2
Senior Survey Officer (Quantity)	4
Survey Officer (Quantity)	1
Technical Officer (Architectural)	3
Technical Officer (Building Services)	1
Technical Officer (Structural)	1
Senior Building Services Inspector	1
Building Services Inspector	2
Assistant Building Services Inspector	2
Clerk of Works	5
Assistant Clerk of Works	2
Works Supervisor I (Building)	5
Works Supervisor I (Building Services)	4
Works Supervisor II (Building)	2
Works Supervisor II (Building Services)	3
Assistant Clerical Officer	1
Clerical Assistant	3
Personal Secretary II	2
Photoprinter I	1
Photoprinter II	1
Total :	69

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)019

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05

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

Question Serial No.

1444

Head : 25 – Architectural Services Department Subhead :

Programme : (1) – Monitoring and Advisory Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Under Programme (1) Monitoring and Advisory Services, one of the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05 is that the department will further enhance its building authority role for government buildings, resulting from more outsourcing of new projects. However, it is shown in the Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision that 5 posts will be deleted under Programme (1) in 2004-05. Please list out the ranks of the 5 posts, and give reason(s) for the deletion and indicate the ways to ensure that the monitoring role of the department will not be affected.

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : To achieve Government's target on the reduction of civil services establishment, posts are deleted when vacancies arise from natural wastage, 2nd voluntary retirement, expiry of time-limited posts, and end of contract agreement. Under the Second Voluntary Retirement Scheme, the following 5 posts will be deleted under Programme (1) -

<u>Rank</u>	<u>No.</u>
Senior Architect	1
Senior Quantity Surveyor	2
Senior Structural Engineer	1
Office Assistant	1
Total :	<u>5</u>

The Department has critically reviewed its monitoring and advisory roles, streamlined the working procedures, re-organised its structure and re-distributed its resources. Through this re-engineering exercise, the Department has enhanced its monitoring and advisory roles with less staff.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

Reply Serial No.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

ETWB(W)020

Question Serial No.

1475

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational expenses

Programme : 4 – Centralised services and special support

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please provide the following information on Programme (4) Centralised services and special support:

The total salary savings in the 2004-05 Estimates due to the two civil service pay cuts.

The 6 posts to be deleted in 2004-05 and the savings arising from the deletion of these posts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : In Programme (4) Centralised services and special support,

- (1) the total salary savings in the 2004-05 Estimates due to the two civil service pay cut is \$1.19M.
- (2) the posts identified for deletion in 2004-05 are 2 Chief Technical Officers, 1 Electrical and Mechanical Engineer, 1 Senior Executive Officer, 1 Clerical Officer and 1 Assistant Clerical Officer. The total savings from the deletion of these 6 posts is \$2.29M.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Roger S. H. LAI

Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

ETWB(W)021

Question Serial No.

1476

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) : 000 – Operational expenses

Programme : 1 – Energy supply; electrical, gas and nuclear safety
 2 – Mechanical engineering installations safety
 3 – Energy efficiency and air quality
 4 – Centralised services and special support

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : For the allowances under personal emoluments, please list the various allowances for 2004-05 (Estimate) and 2003-04 (Revised).

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : The various allowances under personal emoluments are :

<u>Allowances</u>	<u>2003-04</u> (Revised) \$'000	<u>2004-05</u> (Estimate) \$'000
Overtime	825	850
Acting	1,695	2,250
Shift duty	110	110
On-call duty	40	40
	-----	-----
	2,670	3,250
	=====	=====

The additional provision for acting allowance in 2004-05 is to cater for increasing number of officers on pre-retirement leave in 2004-05 and hence more officers are required to take up posts vacated by officers on pre-retirement leave by acting appointment.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Roger S. H. LAI
Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

24 March 2004

**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)022

Question Serial No.

1477

Head : 42 – EMSD Subhead (No. & title) : 000 – Operational expenses

Programme : 4 – Centralised services and special support

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In 2004-05, the estimated expenditure on Technical Services Agreement (TSA) is \$11,753,000, which is higher than the revised estimate for 2003-04 (\$11,234,000). Please explain why. What is the difference between the content of the Technical Services Agreement in 2004-05 and that in 2003-04?

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : EMSD manages and provides funding for the Simultaneous Interpretation Systems (SIS) operated by departments under the TSA. In 2003-04, EMSD works closely with the services provider for better utilization of staff resources and adjustment of shift patterns. As a result, a total savings of \$1M is achieved. The provision for 2004-05 is \$0.519M higher than the revised estimate for 2003-04. This is mainly due to additional provision for increasing operating hours required by user departments and additional contribution to the retirement scheme for the staff of the contractor.

There is no change in the terms and conditions under the TSA in 2004-05 in comparison with that in 2003-04.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Roger S. H. LAI
Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

24 March 2004

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)023

Question Serial No.

0979

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport & Works

Question: Under the Indicator for Programme 4304, the number of slopes and retaining walls to be registered in 2004 is 500, which is much lower than the numbers of 1 303 and 4 013 in 2002 and 2003 respectively. What is the reason for such large decrease? How many slopes and retaining walls have not been registered yet? How long will it take to complete all the registration?

Asked by : Hon. WU King-cheong, Henry

Reply: In response to the recommendations in the Director of Audit Report No. 38 - Chapter 10, a special 2-year cataloguing exercise commenced in 2002 to identify and register 'missed' existing slopes meeting the registration criteria.

After completion of the special exercise by late 2003, some 4000 slopes have been identified and registered. Following this exercise, the estimated number of slopes to be registered in 2004 will return to the normal average level of 500.

Slope registration is an on-going long-term exercise as there are new slopes formed every year in public and private development projects and small existing slopes occasionally found as part of our slope safety work.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

T K TSAO

Director of Civil Engineering

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)024

Question Serial No.

1510

Head: 43 – Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (6) Supervision of Mining, Quarrying and Explosives

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works

Question: The Government will improve the targets for three applications in 2004 : a Licence to Manufacture Explosives will be issued within two days of an application, where pre-licensing requirements have been satisfied; a Licence to Use Explosives will be issued within three days where pre-licensing requirements have been satisfied; a Mine Blasting Certificate will be issued within one day of an application passing an examination.

For the above applications, the targets will be reduced by 10% after shortening the processing time. Would the Government please explain the reason for reducing the targets?

Asked by : Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply: Based on past records, the target level of the three government services concerned have been 100% (i.e. the processing time of issuing the licence/certificate concerned are three days, four days and two days respectively). With a view to further promoting efficiency, we have set out higher targets by shortening the processing time to two days, three days and one day respectively. Based on our new targets, we estimate that the initial target level will be just about 90%. We will, from time to time, review the processes involved. After further enhancing our efficiency, the target level will be raised to 100% gradually in the coming two to three years having regard to the actual circumstances.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

T K TSAO

Director of Civil Engineering

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)025

Question Serial No.

1511

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport & Works

- Question: (a) The Government carried out a special slope cataloguing task to register 3 700 slopes into the Catalogue of Slopes in 2003. However, the estimated number of newly registered slopes and retaining walls in 2004 is 500. Please explain the details of these two tasks and why there is such difference?
- (b) In 2003, the actual number of slopes registered in the Catalogue of Slopes is 4 013. The estimated number for this year is substantially reduced to 500. What is the reason for such difference ?

Asked by: Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply: (a) In response to the recommendations in the Director of Audit Report No. 38 - Chapter 10, a special 2-year slope cataloguing exercise commenced in 2002 to identify and register 'missed' existing slopes meeting the registration criteria. A total of some 4 000 slopes were identified. About 3 700 were registered in 2003 and the remaining in 2002.

Slope registration is an on-going long-term exercise as there are new slopes formed every year in public and private development projects. Also, small existing slopes may occasionally be found as part of our slope safety work. We estimate that about 500 new slopes will be registered in 2004.

(b) After completion of the special exercise by late 2003, the estimated number of slopes to be registered in 2004 returns to the normal average level of 500.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

T K TSAO

Director of Civil Engineering

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)026

Question Serial No.

1512

Head: 43 – Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title): 5001BX –
Landslip preventive measure

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: (a) The Government will improve the appearance of the slopes to be upgraded under the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme in 2004-05. What landscape methods will be employed and what will be the associated expenditure?

(b) Is putting up advertisements on slopes one of the methods to improve slope appearance?

Asked by : Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply: (a) In 2004-05, 250 slopes and retaining walls will be landscaped under the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme managed by the Civil Engineering Department. The methods adopted include soft landscaping or hard landscaping, or a combination of both. Some examples of soft landscaping works are (i) hydroseeding, (ii) seedling planting, and (iii) planting trees, shrubs and creeping plants. Examples of hard landscaping are (i) planter walls, (ii) tree rings to preserve existing trees and shrubs, (iii) plant holes for creepers, (iv) masonry dressed block, and (v) colouring to sprayed concrete.

The total expenditure on landscaping under the CWRP will be about \$60 million, out of which about \$43 million will be spent on greening.

(b) Putting up advertisements on slopes is not one of our methods of enhancing slope appearance.

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)027

Question Serial No.

1519

Head: 43 – Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment Transport and Works

Question: It is stated in the Brief Description that safety screening studies of 320 private slopes were completed in 2003:

- (a) How many of these slopes are located in the Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts? Please list their locations. Which slopes require repair or upgrading works?
- (b) Of the 320 private slopes that will be subject to safety screening studies in the coming year, how many are located in the Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts? If possible, please list their locations.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

- (a) Of the 320 private slopes with safety screening studies completed in 2003, 4 are located in Kwun Tong district and 1 in the Wong Tai Sin district. The findings of these studies are –

District	Slope No.	Slope Location	Findings of Safety Screening Study
Kwun Tong	11NE-C/CR88	Hong Lee Road	Maintenance works required
	11NE-D/C358	Yuet Wah Street	Maintenance works required
	11NE-D/C359	Yuet Wah Street	Investigation and possible upgrading works required
	11NE-D/CR877	Yuet Wah Street	Maintenance works required
Wong Tai Sin	11NE-A/C14	Po Kong Village Road	Maintenance works required

- (b) We plan to complete safety screening studies on 320 private slopes in 2004. 21 of these are located in Kwun Tong district and 6 in Wong Tai Sin district. The locations of these slopes are as follows:

District	Slope No.	Slope Location
Kwun Tong	11NE-D/C65	Fuk Ning Road
	11NE-C/C32	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/C34	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/C67	Hong Lee Road
	11NE-C/C68	Hong Lee Road
	11NE-C/C75	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/C76	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/CR33	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/CR35	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/CR36	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/CR37	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/CR39	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/CR248	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-D/C53	Hip Wo Street
	11NE-D/CR48	Tsui Ping Road
	11SE-B/C165	Ko Chiu Road
	11NE-D/C67	Hip Wo Street
	11NE-D/R49	Hip Wo Street
	11NE-D/F15	Wo Hong Path
	11NE-C/FR81	Hong Lee Road
11NE-C/C71	Kung Lok Road	
Wong Tai Sin	11NE-A/C58	Ngau Chi Wan Street
	11NE-A/C224	Shatin Pass Road
	11NE-A/R14	Sheung Fung Street
	11NE-A/FR324	Shatin Pass Road
	11NE-A/R95	Pui Man Street
	11NE-A/CR624	Pui Man Street

Information on the above slopes can be obtained from the Hong Kong Slope Safety website (<http://hkss.ced.gov.hk>)

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)028

Question Serial No.

1520

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport & Works

Question: (a) What are the changes in staff resources in 2004-05 when compared with the previous two years?

(b) As compared with 2003-04, a decrease of 4.7% of financial provision for Programme (4) is envisaged in the Estimate in the coming year. What effects will have on the advisory service to private slope owners on slope maintenance and improvement works?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply: (a) Compared with 2002-03, three staff were redeployed to this programme area in 2003-04 and six posts are planned for deletion in 2004-05.

(b) As part of our strategy to promote slope safety, we will continue to give high priority to providing assistance and advice to private slope owners to help them maintain their slopes. The Community Advisory Unit of this department, which provides direct community advisory service to private slope owners, will continue to improve its service level with the financial provision in the coming year.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)029

Question Serial No.

1525

Head: 43 - Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Geotechnical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: How many environmental and ecological studies will CED carry out in 2004-05 to determine the effect of mud dredging and marine disposal on the marine ecology? What is the estimated expenditure for these studies?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply: CED is undertaking eight environmental and ecological assessments and studies related to mud dredging and marine disposal in 2004-05. This is to ensure that the effect of mud dredging and marine disposal on the environment is acceptable in accordance with internationally recognized standards. The cost for undertaking the assessments and studies is about \$18 million in 2004-05.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)031

Question Serial No.

1670

Head: 43 – Civil Engineering Department Subhead (No. & title): 841
Minor consultancy studies (block vote)

Programme: (5) Geotechnical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Please list the topic, objectives and estimated expenditure of each item of minor consultancy studies to be carried out in 2004-05.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply: The minor consultancy studies to be carried out in 2004-05 are as follows -

Topic	Estimated Expenditure in 2004-05 (\$'000)	Study Objective
(a) Engagement of Reinforced Fill Engineering Expert	384	CED operates a certification system to regulate the use of reinforced fill products. The expert is to provide technical advice on the performance of such products as part of the certification process.
(b) Employment of Expert for Production of Reinforced Fill Design Guide	527	The expert is to prepare technical guidelines and standards for the design and construction of reinforced fill structures and slopes in Hong Kong.
(c) Minor Consultancy Studies for Research on Concrete Technology	400	The studies are to provide expert technical advice to improve the current practice/knowledge on some concrete technology related subjects.
	1,311	

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)032

Head : 60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

0413

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The number of excavation/road work permits authorised in 2003 was only 27 973. However, the number of permits to be authorised in 2004-05 is estimated to be increased significantly by 82.5% to 51 045. What is the reason?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply : Government departments, including Highways Department, are not bound by the existing ordinance. Under the existing administrative arrangement, works orders issued by Highways Department to its contractors to carry out road works are not covered separately by excavation permits. However, under the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Ordinance which will come into operation on 1 April 2004, Highways Department itself is also required to obtain a separate excavation permit for any excavation works. Owing to this change, we estimate that the number of excavation permits to be issued by Highways Department will increase significantly from 27 973 to 51 045.

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MAK CHAI KWONG

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)033

Head : 60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Question Serial No.

0816

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Highways Department estimates that the number of excavation/road work permits authorised will be increased by about 85% from some 27 000 in 2002 and 2003 to 51 045 in 2004-05. However, the department estimates that the number of inspections carried out on utility excavation in the same year will only be increased by 22% to 98 052. What is the reason? The department has indicated that it would streamline the procedure of issuing excavation/road work permits, but the estimated time required for issuing permits in 2004-05 has not been shortened. What are the details of the streamlining of procedure?

Asked by : Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply : The number of audit inspections on works under any excavation/road work permit (XP) depends on the duration of the permit, i.e. permit days. Highways Department maintains a frequency of no less than one inspection in every seven permit days. XPs with duration less than seven days are also subject to spot checks. The majority of the increased number of 23 000 XPs concerns minor maintenance works which require short durations to complete. Therefore the increase in the estimated number of inspections is not proportional to the number of permits issued.

Highways Department has set up streamlined procedures with which the utility undertakings and the relevant authorities can expeditiously obtain/exchange information, and agree on the detailed arrangement for the works by electronic means. Standard methods for calculation of required permit periods have also been agreed between Highways Departments and the utility undertakings. With these streamlined procedures, the necessary approvals would be provided in a timely manner.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)034

Question Serial No.

1080

Head : 60 Highways Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is estimated that the number of excavation/road work permits authorised in 2004 will be substantially higher than that in 2003. What is the reason? Does the department has adequate staff to handle the anticipated increase of application?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : Government departments, including Highways Department, are not bound by the existing ordinance. Under the existing administrative arrangement, works orders issued by Highways Department to its contractors to carry out road works are not covered separately by excavation permits. However, under the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Ordinance which will come into operation on 1 April 2004, Highways Department itself is also required to obtain a separate excavation permit for any excavation works. Owing to this change, we estimate that the number of excavation permits to be issued by Highways Department will increase significantly from 27 973 to 51 045.

Highways Department has already undertaken a re-organisation exercise on 27 February 2004 to make available the manpower required to handle the large increase in the number of excavation permits. Dedicated teams are now established to deal with the different requirements under the amended Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance to process applications and issue permits, to conduct regular inspections on excavations to see works are carried out in accordance with the permit conditions, and to collect evidence necessary for any prosecutions on offences.

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**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)035

Question Serial No.

1081

Head : 60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the improvement of appearance and safety of roadside slopes by a greening and enhanced maintenance programme in 2004-05, what are the details and the level of expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : Under the current enhanced maintenance programme for roadside slopes by Highways Department, we plan to upgrade 150 slopes adjacent to buildings or major roads in the next four years to current standards. These include 90 slopes in the urban area and 60 slopes in the New Territories area. The slope upgrading works will also incorporate greening and landscaping.

In 2004-05, we plan to complete investigation and design of upgrading and landscaping works on 70 slopes and carry out construction works on 20 slopes. The total expenditure is estimated at \$34 million.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)036

Question Serial No.

1417

Head : 60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the extension of excavation permits, how many extension application has been submitted in 2003. What are the numbers of applications approved and rejected? What is the reason for rejection in general?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply : In 2003, Highways Department received 11 299 applications for extension of the excavation permit. Out of these, 9 893 were approved and 1 406 were rejected. Common reasons for rejection include -

- a) the extension applications were not supported by any reasons;
- b) reasons for extension were not valid, e.g. revision of alignment, delay in work commencement;
- c) failing to meet the minimum lead time for extension application; and
- d) the extension applications were submitted after the expiry date.

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MAK CHAI KWONG

Director of Highways

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)037

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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Question Serial No.

1657

Head : 60 Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please explain the reason why the estimated number of excavation/road work permits authorised in 2004-05 is the double of that in 2003-04.

Asked by : Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply : Government departments, including Highways Department, are not bound by the existing ordinance. Under the existing administrative arrangement, works orders issued by Highways Department to its contractors to carry out road works are not covered separately by excavation permits. However, under the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Ordinance which will come into operation on 1 April 2004, Highways Department itself is also required to obtain a separate excavation permit for any excavation works. Owing to this change, we estimate that the number of excavation permits to be issued by Highways Department will increase significantly from 27 973 to 51 045.

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)038

Question Serial No.

1647

Head: 91 Lands Department
Programme:

Subhead(No. & title):
(1) Land Administration

Controlling Officer:

Director of Lands

Director of Bureau:

Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Regarding the key performance measures in respect of land administration – Maintenance of slopes on unallocated and unleased government land, why is there a significant increase in the workload for maintenance of slopes in 2004? What will be the amount of expenses in this respect? Is there a need for additional staff? Why?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply:

The increase in the number of slopes to be improved from 3 400 in 2003 to 5 300 in 2004 is due to an increase in the number of slopes assigned for maintenance by Lands Department. Most significantly, Civil Engineering Department has recently completed an exercise to register those newly-identified slopes that had not previously been included in Government's Catalogue of Slopes. Lands Department will likely be responsible for about 1 400 of the newly-identified slopes. An outsourcing arrangement for routine maintenance works is contributing to better planning and more efficient implementation of works, leading to an increasing number of slopes being maintained in line with current standards.

The estimated expenditure for 2004-05 is about \$99 million.

As consultants are employed to undertake the work, there is no need for additional government staff for the purpose.

Signature

Name in block letters

PATRICK L C LAU

Post Title

Director of Lands

Date

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)040

Question Serial No.

0823

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Since 1998, the Department has started a number of replacement works on leaking watermains, but in 2001-2003 and 2004, the leakage rate of watermains remained and is expected to remain at 25%. Will the Department estimate in which year the leakage rate of watermains will fall below 25%? What is the estimated annual losses caused by the 25% leakage rate?

Asked by : Hon.TANG Siu-tong

Reply : Works under stage I of the replacement and rehabilitation (R&R) programme commenced in December 2000. However the early phase of the works only covered some 40 km of watermains representing about 1.3% of the total length (3 000 km) of watermains proposed to be replaced or rehabilitated. The leakage rate has not yet shown improvement because only a relatively small amount of R&R works have been completed but the condition of the remaining distribution network continues to deteriorate. With the implementation of R&R works of some 300 km of watermains included in PWP item 9090WC which commenced in June 2003, we expect a slight improvement in leakage rate in the years to come and a measurable improvement will surface in about 2008 when the present Stage I Phase I R&R works are completed. The improvement is expected to continue and increase if subsequent stages of the R&R works can proceed.

The current loss of water at a 25% leakage rate is estimated to be in the order of 200 million cubic metres per year. It should be noted that the leakage percentage will be brought down to 15% upon the completion of the R&R programme, and other leakage detection and reduction works. This level represents a very good performance when compared to other international cities.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: William C G KO

Post Title: Director of Water Supplies

Date: 24 March 2004

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**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Regarding the accuracy of water meters, please inform this council of :

- the number of customers affected by the inaccuracy of water meters, and the total overcharged or undercharged amount involved in 2002-03 and 2003-04.
- the ten cases with the highest \pm inaccuracy percentages, the inaccuracy percentages and the money involved respectively.
- what is the plan of the Department to deal with the problem of inaccurate water meters?

Asked by : Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply :

- Water meters are accurate when installed. However, having served for a considerable period of time, they may become less accurate and normally tend to under-register, i.e. run slower due to mechanical wear and tear. According to the Waterworks Ordinance, water meters are considered accurate if the inaccuracy is not more than 3%. WSD issued 7,537,134 water bills in 2002-03 and 5,184,581 water bills in 2003-04 (up to Feb. 04). There were 451 dispute cases in 2002-03 and 689 dispute cases in 2003-04 (up to February 2004) about the accuracy of water meters. For all these dispute cases, the water meters were removed and tested for accuracy in WSD's accredited meter testing laboratory. Most of them were found to be accurate. Only a small proportion were found to be inaccurate. The results are tabulated below:

Year	Dispute Cases	Test Result		
		Accurate	Over-register	Under-register
2002-03	451	370	4	77
2003-04 (up to Feb. 04)	689	592	4	93

For all cases where the meters were found to be inaccurate, the bills were adjusted accordingly to remove any over-charge or under-charge.

- Ten cases of significant variations in 2003-04 (up to Feb. 04) are:

Under-register (%) : 24.29, 13.85, 13.66, 10.00, 9.97, 9.09, 9.09, 9.08, 8.00

Over-register (%) : 9.11

- c. As water meters normally tend to under-register due to mechanical wear and tear, WSD has an on-going programme to replace the aged meters to progressively improve the general accuracy of water meters. Based on the test results on random samples, we found that the percentage of meters complying with the accuracy requirement was 92.5% in 2003-04 compared with 91.5% in 2002-03. WSD will continue with the meter replacement programme to improve the overall meter accuracy.

Signature:	_____
Name in block letters:	<u>William C G KO</u>
Post Title:	<u>Director of Water Supplies</u>
Date:	<u>24 March 2004</u>

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1194

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead 700 General non-recurrent
(No.& title) (516) Replacement of imperial meters

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Please specify in detail the contents and purposes of the meter replacement programme and the number of meters to be replaced under the programme.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : WSD has an on-going programme to replace about 100 000 aged water meters annually. Through this meter replacement programme, WSD has been able to progressively improve the general accuracy of water meters. Based on the test results on random samples, we found that the percentage of meters complying with the accuracy requirement was 92.5% in 2003-04 compared with 91.5% in 2002-03. WSD will continue with the meter replacement programme to improve the overall meter accuracy.

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Name in block letters:	_____ William C G KO _____
Post Title:	_____ Director of Water Supplies _____
Date:	_____ 24 March 2004 _____

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)043

Question Serial No.

1195

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead 700 General non-recurrent -
(507) Consultancy on underground
asset management

(508) Consultancy for the surface
asset management study

(510) Hire of service for
implementation of the surface
asset management and the
pressure management schemes Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In regard to the three non-recurrent expenditure items mentioned above, would the Administration inform us of the contents and progress of the respective programmes?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

(1) Item 507 Consultancy on underground asset management

The scope of this item includes:

- (a) to study the condition and performance of the underground water supply system and to develop a comprehensive and cost-effective asset management plan for the system; and
- (b) to digitize paper record drawings of the water supply and distribution system to make full use of computerized mapping technology for easy updating, retrieval and information exchange.

This item has been substantially completed.

(2) Item 508 Consultancy for the surface asset management study

The scope of this item includes:

- (a) to develop a surface asset management strategy;
- (b) to develop detailed methodology on the preparation of a 20-year surface asset management plan;

- (c) to provide a framework and procedures for building a comprehensive asset register for the surface assets; and
- (d) to develop and set up a Surface Asset Inventory System.

The Final Report and the Surface Asset Management Manuals have been produced. WSD has built up the surface asset inventory and followed up with the recommendations in the Final Report.

(3) Item 510 Hire of service for implementation of the surface asset management and the pressure management schemes

This item covers various assignments arising from Item 508 and implementation of pressure management schemes as follows:-

- (a) to establish Surface Asset Register;
- (b) to conduct Complete On-condition Monitoring;
- (c) to form Asset Management Review Team;
- (d) to carry out Asset Valuation; and
- (e) to produce Surface Asset Management Plan.

Up to now, about half of the requirements of this item have been completed and the whole item is scheduled to be completed in 2005-06.

Signature:	_____
Name in block letters:	<u>William C G KO</u>
Post Title:	<u>Director of Water Supplies</u>
Date:	<u>24 March 2004</u>

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)044

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
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Question Serial No.

1196

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational expenses

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The revised estimated expenditure of \$66,457,000 on hire of services and professional fees in 2003-04 is lower than the original estimate. In 2004-05, the estimated expenditure on this item is \$64,962,000. In this regard, would the Administration inform this Council of the details of the services concerned and give reasons for the reduction in expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming Fred

Reply : Expenditures on hire of services and professional fees mainly cover the provision of connections to customers, installation of water meters, hire of consultants, hire of temporary staff and hire of security services. The decrease in 2004-05 estimates is mainly due to the reduction in the number of temporary staff required in 2004-05 as a result of maximising staff redeployment and streamlining of working procedures.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: William C G KO

Post Title: Director of Water Supplies

Date: 24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04
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INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

ETWB(W) 045

1197

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : In 2002-03 and 2003-04, what measures were taken by the Administration to reduce the leakage of watermains? What was the expenditure incurred? Has the Administration set a target for reducing the leakage rate of watermains?

Asked by : Hon. Li Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : Deterioration due to aging of watermains is the principal factor contributing to water leakage in the water distribution system. To combat the water leakage problem, WSD has implemented the following measures-

(1) Continuous Monitoring

Continuous monitoring of the water distribution system using district meters, and electronic data logging and transmission technology is employed to pick up early signs of suspected leakage in the district under monitoring.

(2) Proactive Leakage Control

Regular and systematic leak detection tests over the water distribution system are carried out so that underground leaks can be located and repaired as early as possible.

(3) Pressure Management

Flow-modulated pressure reducing valves are installed at strategic locations to regulate water pressure in the water distribution system to reduce water leakage while maintaining an adequate water pressure.

(4) Replacement and Rehabilitation of Watermains

Use of the statistical data of watermains, e.g. age, material, main burst records, maintenance history, to work out the 20-year watermains replacement and rehabilitation programme covering about 3 000 kilometres of watermains. Implementation of the replacement and rehabilitation programme will prevent further deterioration of the water distribution system.

WSD spent \$49.8 million on the replacement and rehabilitation of watermains in 2002-03 and will spend \$99.6 million in 2003-04. WSD also spent \$14 million on water leakage control in 2002-03 and will increase such spending to \$16 million in 2003-04.

WSD's target is to prevent further deterioration of the water distribution system and reduce the leakage level to 15% as a long term objective by the implementation of the watermains replacement and rehabilitation programme together with the leakage control measures.

Signature:

Name in block letters:

William C G KO

Post Title:

Director of Water Supplies

Date:

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)046

**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Question Serial No.

1198

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : What is the number of consumers presently using fresh water for flushing purpose? the quantity of fresh water used for that purpose? the cost of supplying fresh water for that purpose? the difference in cost as compared with the supply of salt water for flushing? Does the Administration have any concrete plan to assist those consumers to change to salt water for flushing?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : In 2003, the number of registered accounts for using fresh water for flushing is approximately 23 000 representing about 20% of the total population. The average consumption is about 140 000 cubic metres per day. In 2002-03, the cost of fresh water is \$9.7 per cubic metre whereas the cost of salt water is \$2.5 per cubic metre. However, a substantial infrastructure, including salt water pumping stations, distribution mains and service reservoirs, has to be constructed before WSD can supply salt water to consumers. There are a number of salt water supply projects under planning for areas in Pok Fu Lam, Tung Chung, Tai Ho, Tuen Mun East and Tin Shui Wai. WSD is also considering the possible use of other alternative water resources in order to arrive at the most cost-effective solution.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: William C G KO

Post Title: Director of Water Supplies

Date: 24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)047

**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Question Serial No.

1199

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : As regards the development of water resources, what are the new jobs to be carried out by the Administration in 2004-05 and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : In the development of water resources, WSD has been focusing on seawater desalination and recycling of treated sewage effluent. A pilot desalination plant study is being carried out and the pilot projects at Ngong Ping for the supply of treated sewage effluent for toilet flushing and other non-potable uses are now under construction. The estimated expenditure in 2004-05 for seawater desalination and recycling of treated sewage effluent are \$7 million and \$10 million respectively.

Signature: _____
Name in block letters: William C G KO
Post Title: Director of Water Supplies
Date: 24 March 2004

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)048

**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Question Serial No.

1267

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : It is mentioned in the document that the work of WSD includes the development of water resources to cope with the requirements. At the same time, the expenditure for Programme (1) has decreased by \$85.2 million (or 1.8%) as compared with the revised expenditure for 2003-04, which is partly due to the deletion of 69 posts. In this connection, would the Administration inform this Council of:

- (a) the progress of the work on the development of water resources, and whether it will be affected by the deletion of posts; and
- (b) the details of the 69 posts to be deleted.

Asked by : Hon. IP Kwok-him

Reply :

- (a) Apart from continuing the extension of salt water supply for toilet flushing, WSD is investigating the possibility of developing seawater desalination and recycling of treated sewage effluent (TSE) as alternative water resources.

For seawater desalination, WSD has started a pilot desalination plant study in May 2003 as an in-depth investigation on the application of seawater desalination by reverse osmosis in Hong Kong. WSD has already awarded a contract for the supply, installation and operation of a pilot desalination plant in February 2004. It is expected that the pilot plant would be in operation by middle of this year and preliminary results would be available by the end of this year.

For recycling of TSE, the pilot project on the supply of TSE has commenced. A tertiary sewage treatment plant at Ngong Ping, Lantau is currently under construction. The pilot TSE re-use scheme would provide further treatment to the effluent from that treatment plant before supplying it for flushing. The scheme would be put into operation in conjunction with the commissioning of the cable car in Ngong Ping in 2005-06. WSD is also exploring the feasibility of a wider use of the high quality TSE and, taking into account the experience gained in Ngong Ping, the feasibility of a more extensive application of recycling of TSE for non-potable uses in Hong Kong.

The progress on development of alternative water resources will not be affected by the reduction of posts in 2004-05, which is the result of enhancement of efficiency and streamlining of work procedures.

(b) The details of the 69 posts to be deleted are set out in the Annex.

Signature:	_____
Name in block letters:	<u>William C G KO</u>
Post Title:	<u>Director of Water Supplies</u>
Date:	<u>24 March 2004</u>

Water Supplies Department
69 Posts to be deleted in 2004-05 under Programme (1)

<u>Rank</u>	<u>No. of Post</u>
Artisan	8
Assistant Clerical Officer	3
Assistant Waterworks Inspector	5
Clerical Assistant	2
Clerical Officer	2
Electrical Engineer and Assistant Electrical Engineer	1
Official Language Officer I	2
Official Language Officer II	1
Principal Technical Officer	3
Senior Engineer	1
Senior Mechanical Engineer	1
Senior Official Language Officer	1
Senior Waterworks Inspector	4
Supplies Assistant	3
Supplies Supervisor II	3
Survey Officer and Survey Officer Trainee	2
Technical Officer and Technical Officer Trainee	1
Waterworks Inspector	5
Workman I	1
Workman II	3
Works Supervisor I	11
Works Supervisor II	6
	<hr/>
Total	69

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**Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution
(2) Water Quality Control
(3) Customer Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Water Supplies Department plans to delete 135 permanent posts in 2004-05. In this regard,

- (1) what are the ranks and number of staff mainly affected and the means through which the posts will be deleted?
- (2) is the deletion of posts related to the out-sourcing of certain jobs? If yes, please specify the ranks, number and types of work of the staff affected.
- (3) will the reduction of manpower establishment increase the workload of some of the staff of WSD and affect the service quality? If yes, how will the Department ensure that staff morale will not be undermined?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Fu-wah

Reply :

- (1) The ranks and number of permanent posts planned to be deleted in 2004-05 are set out at Annex. Deletion of posts will be effected by phases through voluntary retirement, natural wastage and deleting existing vacancies.
- (2) The planned deletion of posts is not related to out-sourcing of work.
- (3) As the reduction in establishment will be achieved through the use of information technology, re-engineering and streamlining of work processes and procedures, the quality of service will not be lowered. The WSD management will also ensure that there are appropriate staff communication and training to uphold staff morale and meet its performance standards.

Signature:

Name in block letters:

Post Title:

Date:

William C G KO

Director of Water Supplies

24 March 2004

**Water Supplies Department
Posts to be deleted in 2004-05**

<u>Rank</u>	<u>No. of Post</u>
Accounting Officer I	2
Artisan	8
Assistant Clerical Officer	19
Assistant Waterworks Inspector	9
Clerical Assistant	13
Clerical Officer	20
Consumer Services Inspector	3
Electrical Engineer and Assistant Electrical Engineer	1
Engineering Laboratory Technician	II/ 1
Student Engineering Laboratory Technician	
Engineering Laboratory Technician I	1
Meter Reader I	3
Meter Reader II	2
Official Language Officer I	2
Official Language Officer II	1
Principal Technical Officer	3
Senior Clerical Officer	2
Senior Engineer	1
Senior Mechanical Engineer	1
Senior Official Language Officer	1
Senior Waterworks Inspector	4
Supplies Assistant	3
Supplies Supervisor II	3
Survey Officer and Survey Officer Trainee	2
Technical Officer and Technical Officer Trainee	1
Water Sampler	3
Waterworks Inspector	5
Workman I	1
Workman II	3
Works Supervisor I	11
Works Supervisor II	6
	<hr/>
Total	135

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Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)050

Question Serial No.

1744

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Head : CWRP Head 703 - Buildings

Subhead :

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The provision for Head 703 in 2004-05 was drastically cut by about 26% with respect to that for the revised estimates in 2003-04. What is the main reason for this? Is it because the Government wants to control total spending on public works to below \$30 billion and so spending on building projects has to be reduced? Are some of the building projects planned to be started in 2004-05 delayed as a result? Is there any impact on cultural and recreational facilities projects previously undertaken by the Urban Council and the Regional Council?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The total provision for Head 703 has decreased from \$9,191.027 million for 2003-04 Revised Estimate to \$6,783.612 million for 2004-05 Estimate, i.e. by \$2,407.415 million or 26%. This is mainly attributable to –

- (a) The forecast reduction in the block allocations under Head 703 by \$1,355 million in 2004-05. The Government pledged in 2001 to spend an additional \$2 billion each for 2002-03 and 2003-04 financial year under the CWRP works-related block allocations to improve various public facilities and to create job. Out of the 2 billion, \$1.5 billion is attributable to minor building works undertaken by Architectural Services Department. The allocation in 2004-05 is on par with the level before the additional allocation came into play.
- (b) Also, there is a reduction of \$905 million in the anticipated spending for the project 3234LP : “Redevelopment of Police Headquarters at Arsenal Street, Wan Chai (Arsenal Yard phase 3 development) – stage 2” in 2004-05. As the majority of works will be completed in mid-April 2004, a substantial part of the payments for the project has been made in 2003-04.

The two reductions are not related to the cultural and recreational facilities projects undertaken by the former Urban Council and Regional Council. Also as explained above, the reduction in the provision for Head 703 in 2004-05 is not due to the alleged control over public works to below \$30 billion. In fact, the allocation for 2004-05 amounts to about \$32 billion.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C. H. YUE

Director of Architectural Services

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)051

Question Serial No.

0453

Head: Capital Works Reserve Fund – Head 705

Subhead (No. & title): 5001BX –

Landslip preventive measures and 5101CX – Civil engineering works, studies and investigations for items in Category D of the Public Works Programme

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: How many slopes will be greened and landscaped in 2003-04 and 2004-05 by the Civil Engineering Department? What will be the related expenditure? Generally speaking, what percentage of cost does landscape works constitute amongst the total cost of slope upgrading works?

Asked by: Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply: In 2003-04 and 2004-05, 501 slopes and retaining walls will be landscaped under the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme managed by the Civil Engineering Department. Amongst these, 375 will be greened. The total expenditure on landscaping under the CWRF 5001BX block vote will be \$120 million, out of which \$97 million will be spent on greening. Generally speaking, the cost of landscape works constitutes about 10% of the total cost of slope upgrading works. The breakdown of the above figures amongst these two years is as follows –

Year	Estimated no. of slopes and retaining walls to be landscaped (greened)	Estimated expenditure on landscaping (greening) \$ million
2003-04	251 (195)	60 (54)
2004-05	<u>250 (180)</u>	<u>60 (43)</u>
Total	501 (375)	120 (97)

In addition, nine slopes and retaining walls were landscaped under the slope stabilization works under the CWRF 5101CX block vote in 2003-04. All of them were greened. The total expenditure on landscaping and greening of slopes and retaining walls was \$0.70 million. The cost of landscape works constitutes about 12% of the total cost of slope stabilization works. We have no plan for any slope stabilization works and hence for landscaping works under the block vote in 2004-05.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

T K TSAO

Director of Civil Engineering

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

ETWB(W)052

Question Serial No.

1428

Head: Capital Works Reserve Fund – Head 705 - Civil Engineering

Subhead (No. & title): 5001BX – Landslip preventive measures and
 5101CX – Civil engineering works, studies and investigations for items
 in Category D of the Public Works Programme

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question: Please provide details of works in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts under Subheads 5001BX 'Landslip preventive measures' and 5101CX 'Civil engineering works, studies and investigations for items in Category D of the Public Works Programme'.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply: With regard to Subhead 5001BX, we plan to carry out investigation and, when required, upgrading works on the following slopes in the Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts in 2004-05 Landslip Preventive Measures Programme -

		Slope Location
Kwun Tong	11NE-C/C77	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/C78	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/C79	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/C219	Kung Lok Road
	11NE-C/C242	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-C/CR243	Ngau Tau Kok Road
	11NE-D/C47	Hiu Ming Street
	11NE-C/C10	Choi Ha Road
	11NE-D/C372	Tseung Kwan O Road
	11NE-D/C380	Cha Kwo Ling Road
	11NE-D/CR368	Yau Hong Street
Wong Tai Sin	11NE-A/C43	Fung Shing Street
	11NE-A/C134	Ngau Chi Wan Service Reservoir
	11NE-A/C317	Chui Chuk Street
	11NW-B/C437	Lok Fu Service Reservoir
	11NW-B/F202	Fu On street
	11NW-B/F206	Fu On street
	11NW-B/R144	Broadcast Drive

With regard to Subhead 5101CX, we plan to carry out investigation and minor slope improvement works for the following slopes in the Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin districts -

District	Slope No.	Slope Location
Kwun Tong	11NE-D/C403	Kwong Tin Estate

	11NE-D/C409	Kwong Tin Estate
	11NE-D/C579	Kwong Tin Estate
	11NE-D/F309	Kwong Tin Estate
	11NE-A/R5	Ping Shek Estate
	11NE-D/C20	Sau Mau Ping Estate
	11NE-B/C10	Shun Lee Estate
	11NE-A/C433	Shun Lee Estate
	11NE-A/C457	Shun Lee Estate
	11NE-D/C77	Ping Tin Estate
	11NE-D/F43	Ping Tin Estate
Wong Tai Sin	11NW-B/CR349(4)	Mei Tung Estate
	11NE-A/C4	Shatin Pass Estate
	11NE-A/C844	Shatin Pass Estate
	11NW-B/C168	Lok Fu Estate
	11NE-A/C5(2)	Tsz Ching Estate
	11NW-B/FR220	Wang Tau Hom Estate

Information on the above 35 slopes, together with other slopes funded from Subheads 5001BX and 5101CX, can be obtained from the Hong Kong Slope Safety Website (<http://hkss.ced.gov.hk>).

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

T K TSAO

Director of Civil Engineering

24 March 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(W)001

Question Serial No.

SV002

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

- Question : (a) To provide information on the volume of annual consumption of fresh water in Hong Kong and annual supply of Dongjiang water to Hong Kong in the past five years; and
- (b) To advise members whether there was over-supply of Dongjiang water to Hong Kong in the past five years, and if yes, to provide information on the volume of and expenditure on surplus Dongjiang water purchased in each year.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : The information regarding the annual consumption of fresh water in Hong Kong and the supply of Dongjiang water to Hong Kong in the past five years is set out in the Annex. The Administration has in fact made every effort to reduce the supply quantities and requested a more flexible supply arrangement. When negotiating the 1998 Loan Agreement for the construction of the close adqueduct, a total reduction of 560 million cubic metres in the supply of Dongjiang water was achieved as compared to the 1989 Water Supply Agreement.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: William C G KO

Post Title: Director of Water Supplies

Date: 14 April 2004

**Annual Consumption of Fresh Water
and Supply of Dongjiang Water to Hong Kong
From 1999 to 2003**

	<u>Unit</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Annual consumption of fresh water	mcm	911	924	940	949	974
Quantity of Dongjiang water in Agreement	mcm	770	780	790	800	810
Actual quantity of Dongjiang water supplied	mcm	738	706	729	744	761
Under-supply of Dongjiang water quantity	mcm	32	74	61	56	49
Unit price of Dongjiang water	HK\$/cu.m	3.085	3.085	3.085	3.085	3.085
Cost of under-supply of Dongjiang water quantity	HK\$M	99	228	188	173	151

Legend for unit - mcm : million cubic metre

HK\$/cu. m : Hong Kong dollar per cubic metre

HK\$M : Hong Kong dollar in million

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(W)002

Question Serial No.

S001

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Follow-up on Question Serial Nos. 0823 and 1197

Could the authorities concerned expedite the replacement and rehabilitation programme so as to reduce water leakage and waste of fresh water? The Water Supplies Department spent close to \$50 million on the replacement of watermains in 2002-03 and spent more than \$90 million in 2003-04, but the progress of the replacement works is still slow. Why is it so?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply : The first phase of Stage 1 of the Replacement and Rehabilitation Programme commenced in December 2000. In implementing the programme, WSD has endeavoured to quickly implement the project while striking a balance between the early improvement to watermains system to reduce leakage and waste and the need to minimise disruption to road traffic and the local environment. With completion of the advanced works including site investigation, detailed design and tender preparation, we awarded the major works contracts in late 2003. The progress has been in accordance with the programme and the public will notice more construction activities in the coming years.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: William C G KO

Post Title: Director of Water Supplies

Date: 14 April 2004

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

Question Serial No.

Head : 194 Water Supplies Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Water Supply : Planning and Distribution

Controlling Officer : Director of Water Supplies

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Follow-up on Question Serial No. 1198

Presently, 20% of the population in Hong Kong is still using fresh water for flushing purpose. The cost of using fresh water for flushing is much higher than that of using salt water. What are the cost and feasibility of changing to salt water or other water resources (recycling of sewage effluent) for flushing? The Administration is planning a number of salt water supply projects for areas in Pok Fu Lam, Tung Chung, Tai Ho, Tuen Mun East and Tin Shui Wai, and is also considering the possible use of other alternative water resources for flushing. Could the Administration provide details of the planning work and specify whether it can reduce the rate of using fresh water for flushing? If yes, what is the percentage of reduction? Apart from this, does the Administration have any other plans for the next few years to reduce the rate of using fresh water for flushing?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

In 2002-2003, the cost of supplying salt water for flushing is \$2.5 per cubic metre. In a study completed in 2002, the cost of providing treated sewage effluent (TSE) for non-potable re-uses was estimated to be in the range of \$3.5 to \$4.4 per cubic metre. An important factor to be considered for the use of either fresh water, salt water or TSE for flushing in a particular area is the overall cost-effectiveness. For TSE, public acceptance is also of importance.

The projects for provision of separate flushing supplies for Pokfulam, Tung Chung, Tai Ho, Tuen Mun East and Tin Shui Wai are in various stages of planning study. WSD is monitoring the development of these areas and will seek funding to implement these projects whenever it is cost-effective to do so. If all these projects are completed, the percentage of population using fresh water for flushing will be further reduced from the existing 20% to about 11%. In the next few years, WSD will focus on the implementation of these projects and the study on the feasibility of a more extensive application of recycling of TSE for non-potable uses in Hong Kong. Please note that in areas such as the Peak and Sai Kung, it would not be cost effective to provide salt water for flushing due to the low population density and the high cost of providing such facilities.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: William C G KO

Post Title: Director of Water Supplies

Date: 14 April 2004

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