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Replies to initial written questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)001

(Question Serial No. 1361)

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

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

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Dinosaur fossils were discovered on Port Island in the northeastern waters of the New Territories, Hong Kong. Last year, the Government and the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences signed and commenced implementation of the Framework Agreement on Deepening Exchange and Collaboration regarding Stratigraphy, Palaeontology and Prehistoric Sites (Framework Agreement) with a view to jointly studying palaeontology and prehistoric sites. The excavation and study of dinosaur fossils is the inaugural project under the Framework Agreement.

- 1) "Dinosaur Parlour" has subsequently been set up at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre and has attracted an attendance of over 40 000 in just two months. Will the Government plan on-site archaeological tours on Port Island to enable visitors to explore the dinosaurs and palaeoecology of ancient Hong Kong without interfering with the excavation work? If so, what is the estimated manpower involved?
- 2) Dinosaur fossils of the Cretaceous period were also unearthed in Guangdong Province. Will the Government develop an archaeological route in the Greater Bay Area to attract archaeological personnel from different countries for visits and exchanges? What is the estimated expenditure involved?
- 3) It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that upon completion of the preparation of the dinosaur fossils from Port Island, relevant public education activities will be organised. What are the content and timetables of the public education activities in the coming year? What is the amount of provision earmarked for such purpose by the Government?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

- 1) The Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB), in collaboration with the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Agriculture,

Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), excavated rocks containing dinosaur bone fossils on Port Island in late 2024. At this stage, the Government focuses on dinosaur fossil preparation and follow-up study, and enhances public understanding and interest in palaeontology and palaeoenvironment of Hong Kong through education activities such as fossil display, lectures and workshops.

The AFCD has planned 13 land and 2 sea tour routes for Hong Kong Geopark under its purview, one of them covers viewing Port Island at sea. Interested members of the public can arrange on their own a boat trip for viewing the landscape and rock formation of Port Island at sea. However, Port Island, which is remotely located with rugged terrain, has no pier. Landing on the island for sightseeing is not encouraged due to potential risks. Furthermore, all exposed dinosaur fossils on Port Island have been removed and are showcased at the “Dinosaur Parlour”, located at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre, for the public to view up-close and observe the process of fossil preparation.

- 2) The DEVB signed the Framework Agreement on Deepening Exchange and Collaboration regarding Stratigraphy, Palaeontology and Prehistoric Sites (Framework Agreement) with IVPP in October 2025 to conduct scientific research, specimen management and identification, training, and exchanges in the fields of palaeontology, palaeoanthropology and palaeolithic sites. The AMO and IVPP are jointly preparing the dinosaur fossils from Port Island. In-depth research will be conducted after the completion of preparation work. Based on the future research findings, we will plan how to make comparison with the dinosaur fossils of the adjoining Guangdong Province and other places, and arrangements on display of fossils to the public. We will also explore how to commence collaboration on visits and exchanges at suitable junctures.
- 3) From October 2024 to late-February 2025, the AMO organised 12 thematic public lectures on dinosaurs, palaeontology and palaeoanthropology as well as 10 workshops. The AMO will continue to maintain close liaison and hold discussions with IVPP, AFCD, universities and research institutions to arrange suitable experts and academics to speak at public education activities, with a view to enhancing the public and visitors’ understanding and interest in dinosaurs and palaeontology. Expenses for public lectures and workshops will be absorbed under AMO’s recurrent expenditure.

Apart from “Dinosaur Parlour” which will continue to be opened for public visits, the AMO in 2025-26 will keep providing free public docent services for the display and fossil preparation work on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. AMO will also provide free group docent services for local registered charity groups, non-profit-making organisations and schools.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)002

(Question Serial No. 2890)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Attention in 2025-26 under Programme (5): Project Strategy and Governance of Head 159 that the Works Branch will continue to achieve better cost management and control throughout the delivery of capital works projects by formulating, implementing and promoting cost control measures and cost saving initiatives; continue to monitor the delivery of capital works projects to ensure timely completion and within budget. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) whether key performance indicators have been devised for cost control and cost reduction plans; if so, of the details; and
- (2) whether there is any plan to put on hold works projects in the coming 3 years; if so, of the details?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki Maggie (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in June 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

- (1) Since its establishment, the PSGO has been assisting departments in exercising control over public works projects from the inception stage to reduce construction costs. For instance, the PSGO has been collaborating with works departments and relevant stakeholders to scrutinise a total of more than 540 public works projects that required funding approval from the FC of LegCo, achieving cost savings of more than \$190

billion out of the total original project estimates of \$1,200 billion from the project proponent departments. Moreover, through concerted efforts with construction industry stakeholders, Hong Kong's ranking in the International Construction Cost Index has improved from being among the top three globally during 2016–2020 to the ninth position in 2024.

Moreover, the DEVB completed a strategic study on construction costs in late 2024. After identifying the main reasons for the high construction costs in Hong Kong, we have established 4 major directions for measures to lower the construction costs of public works projects, including optimising the project procurement model; reviewing the design standards and requirements; applying advanced technologies and construction methods; and streamlining the approval process. We will implement the measures by launching them once they are ready, and will launch pilot schemes for individual construction cost reduction measures. As each construction cost reduction measure will bring about different levels of construction cost savings for individual projects, we will assess the overall effectiveness of the measures in reducing construction cost when more data is available.

- (2) In the coming years, projects related to the Northern Metropolis will be rolled out progressively. Together with other important infrastructure works projects aimed at improving people's livelihood, the capital works expenditure of the Government will start reaching its peak. In the medium range forecast, capital works expenditure is expected to increase from the previously estimated \$90 billion per annum on average to about \$120 billion per annum on average in future. The Government has always strictly adhered to fiscal discipline and proper use of public money, public works projects will be prioritised and rolled out in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)003

(Question Serial No. 2075)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Works Branch will continue to support tertiary institutions and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) to implement pilot schemes for providing on-the-job training allowances to trainees of part-time degree and safety officer courses; and will continue to implement the industry-wide promotion campaign, introduce more construction-related STEAM education contents and activities in the construction-related STEAM education platform, and support the CIC to foster voluntary work in the industry through the Construction Industry Volunteers Team, with a view to enhancing public perception of the industry and attracting new blood. In terms of enhancing the quality and quantity of manpower for the construction industry, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What training institutions were involved in the two pilot schemes, and what were the scopes of part-time degree courses, enrolments, and the amounts of subsidies in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 academic years?
2. Please list the dates of promotion activities and STEAM education events organised in the past 2 years, the staff establishment and the expenditures involved.
3. Please list the dates of promotion activities and STEAM education events planned to be organised in the coming year, the staff establishment and the expenditures involved.
4. How will the Government assess the effectiveness of the activities in enhancing public perception of the industry and attracting new blood?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

1. A funding of \$107 million was allocated under the 2023-24 Government Budget to launch two pilot schemes in collaboration with the Vocational Training Council (VTC), the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and other institutions, to provide on-the-job training subsidies for trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years, and trainees attending construction safety officer courses.

The Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) under the VTC, and the School of Professional Education and Executive Development (SPEED) of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University started to implement the pilot scheme for part-time construction-related degree programmes in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years respectively. The target of the pilot scheme is to provide subsidies to 1 000 trainees. The actual number of participating trainees, who each receive subsidy of a maximum of \$90,000, has already met the target. The related programmes provided by participating institutions and the numbers of enrollment in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years are as follows:

Construction-related part-time degree programme	Numbers of Enrollment	
	2023-24 academic year	2024-25 academic year (as of February 2025)
Electrical, Mechanical and Environmental Engineering	390	344
Civil Engineering	134	125
Surveying	109	142
Building Engineering and Management	62	71
Landscape Architecture and Management	45	51
Total	740	733

Note: Some students who have enrolled in the above programmes have not participated in this pilot scheme.

The pilot scheme for construction safety officer courses has been launched by the CIC since November 2023, under which each trainee will receive \$20,000 subsidies upon completion of the course. Since its rollout, 112 trainees have participated in the scheme. In the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years, the numbers of enrollment are 60 and 52 respectively.

2. The promotion activities and STEAM education events organised in the past two years are/were as follows:

Target	Event/activity
Members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - television programme (April, July and August 2023) - television promotion advertisement (July 2023 to June 2024) - large scale outdoor advertisement (July to August 2023) - mobile publicity van for district promotion (August 2023) - roving exhibition (May 2024) - newspaper articles (ongoing) - Lo Pan publicity activities (June to July 2024)
Youths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social media (ongoing) - Construction Youth Exchange Programme in GBA (July to August 2024)
Teachers and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visits to local infrastructure facilities (March to December 2023) - STEAM workshop (March to April 2024) - setting up construction industry information booths in various districts across Hong Kong on DSE results announcement day (July 2023 and July 2024) - poster design competition (November 2024) - STEAM creative design competition (December 2024) - Participating in innovation and Technology Fair (February 2025) - launched the “STEAM UP” project and under which producing a set of construction-themed STEAM teaching and learning materials (in a total of 9 themed units) for ongoing classroom use in 1 100 primary and secondary schools across Hong Kong (2024 to 2026)

The above activities were jointly implemented by the DEVB, the CIC and the construction industry with a total expenditure of about \$22 million. The DEVB coordinated the related work using its existing internal resources.

3. The promotion activities and STEAM education events planned to be organised next year are as follows:

Expected date of the event/activity	Event/activity
April and May 2025	Organising a roving exhibition to showcase the winning entries of STEAM × BIM Construction Model Creative Design Competition for secondary schools 2024 - Your Glamping Dream to promote the construction industry to the public
July 2025	Participating in Learning & Teaching Expo 2025 to promote STEAM education of the construction industry
July 2025	Setting up construction industry information booths in various districts across Hong Kong on DSE results announcement day
Late 2025 to early 2026	Organising construction-themed STEAM competition for primary and secondary schools across Hong Kong
2026	Organising school talks/district visits and exhibitions to enable students to understand the works design concepts and construction methods of local infrastructures
2024 to 2026	Continuing the implementation of the “STEAM UP” project and producing under the project a set of construction-themed STEAM teaching and learning materials for use in 1 100 primary and secondary schools across Hong Kong
Ongoing	Promoting the construction industry through the social media to attract new blood to join the industry.

The above activities will be jointly implemented by the DEVB, the CIC and the construction industry with an estimated expenditure about \$10 million. The DEVB will coordinate the related work using its existing internal resources.

4. In collaboration with the CIC, various government works departments, and industry stakeholders such as construction-related trade unions, chambers of commerce, professional institutions, and training institutions, the DEVB has launched the Hong Kong Construction Industry Joint Promotion Campaign since 2022, which includes the above activities. Having attracted over 1 million members of the public so far, the promotion activities help to enhance the image of the construction industry to the public. With the support of the Education Bureau, the Campaign is producing a set of construction-themed STEAM teaching and learning material, and assisting secondary school students in career planning by providing them with short term internships and mentorship opportunities. The STEAM teaching and learning materials are for ongoing classroom use in 1 100 primary and secondary schools with about 500 000 students across Hong Kong. The content of STEAM is related to the construction industry, covering knowledge of a number of professional fields such as architecture, surveying, planning, landscaping and engineering. The material has been well received by schools and are considered to be helpful for students to acquire STEAM knowledge and understand the relationship between construction professions and daily life, as well as the close connection with innovative technologies, which can increase their level of interest in the construction industry and encourage them to join the industry in the future.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)004

(Question Serial No. 2076)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) was officially established in August 2024 and the Development Bureau has injected \$10 million into the BTRi for its initial operation. In addition, under the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Works Branch will continue to collaborate with BTRi in driving applied research and development, reviewing and uplifting standards as well as providing accreditation, certification and testing. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the operational expenses and staff establishment of the BTRi in 2024-25?
2. What are the operational expenses and staff establishment of the BTRi in 2025-26?
3. So far, what projects and studies have been conducted by the BTRi in collaboration with academic institutions, research institutes, government departments, private organisations, etc.? What are the expenses involved?
4. In the coming year, what planned projects and studies will be conducted by the BTRi in collaboration with academic institutions, research institutes, government departments, private organisations, etc.? What are the expenses involved?
5. It is learnt that the Hong Kong Center for Construction Robotics (HKCRC) under the InnoHK Clusters is committed to bringing advanced technologies such as robotics, automation and AI into the construction industry. What are the plans of the Government to consolidate the resources of the HKCRC and related projects so as to jointly take forward the research and development of construction technologies?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The construction industry has been facing the challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour, etc. in recent years. To address these challenges, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established in August 2024 the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) as a limited company wholly owned by the Financial Secretary Incorporated, aiming at spearheading the construction industry in strengthening innovative applications to enhance productivity, cost-effectiveness, site safety performance, etc. The

BTRi's focus of work has 3 major development directions, namely driving applied research and development (R&D), reviewing and uplifting standards, and providing accreditation, certification and testing. Since its establishment, the BTRi has been developing its business in these areas and is gradually building a professional team to promote innovation in the construction industry so as to reduce local construction cost.

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

1&2.

The DEVB has injected funding of \$10 million for the initial operation of the BTRi, including employment of staff, renting offices and general operating expenses. The BTRi obtains business receipts through collaboration with local universities, government departments, private organisations and more to carry out various research and related business. It is expected that the BTRi can gradually achieve a fiscal balance. As at March 2025, the BTRi has about 13 staff, including 4 managerial level staff, 4 researchers and 5 clerical staff. It is anticipated that the BTRi will employ about 12 new staff in 2025-26, comprising mainly researchers and clerical staff, with the total number of staff reaching about 25.

3. Since its establishment in 2018, the BTRi has mainly engaged in the establishment of company structure, management and operational framework, and building up of a professional team and development of work plans, etc. In parallel, the BTRi has also explored with relevant academic institutions, research institutions, government departments and industry stakeholders collaboration plans and modes, with a view to promoting innovation in the industry. In November 2024, the BTRi signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Guangdong Provincial Academy of Building Research, the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore, and 3 local universities, namely the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, to collaborate and promote innovative applications to address the pressing challenges facing the construction industry. The BTRi will continue to strengthen co-operation with relevant local and overseas institutions to enhance the applied research capabilities of the BTRi and establish its leading position in the Greater Bay Area and even internationally. In November 2024, the BTRi introduced the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme, aiming at elevating the standards and reliability of MiC modules. It is anticipated that the first batch of approved manufacturers will be accredited in the first half of 2025. The BTRi is collaborating with various works departments and the industry to commence a variety of applied R&D projects, with a view to promoting innovative materials and technologies, including high-strength steel and remote-control tower crane systems. As some of the research projects involve the participation of private organisations, the disclosure of the expenditure involved is undesirable.
4. In the coming year, the BTRi will continue to promote innovative applications in the industry, such as the application of ultra-high performance concrete by piloting in public works projects with a view to implementing and establishing innovative construction materials, technologies and so on. On testing and accreditation, the BTRi will continue to implement the MiC Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme. Besides, the BTRi is developing the construction materials certification scheme. On the review of standards, the BTRi will review and enhance Hong Kong's building standards, which have been in place for many years, by making reference to overseas building standards and national

standards, to enhance construction efficiency and cost effectiveness. Moreover, the BTRi will establish standards for some innovative construction technologies and materials, and commence strategic study on the Greater Bay Area standards with relevant Guangdong Provincial authorities.

5. The Hong Kong Center for Construction Robotics (HKCRC) is committed to bringing advanced technologies such as robotics, automation, and AI into the construction industry and promoting the upgrading of the construction industry. The BTRi is also committed to promoting innovative technology application, and is vigorously pursuing partnership for joint promotion of innovation in the industry. The BTRi will liaise with the HKCRC to collect the data of some research projects that are conducive to enhancing productivity, reducing cost, expediting construction, etc. and can be applied widely in works projects through piloting in public works projects, and monitor the effectiveness. In addition, the BTRi can enhance performance through data analysis, and devise relevant standards and guidelines to facilitate approval by relevant departments so that these innovative technologies can be widely applied in various types of works projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)005

(Question Serial No. 2902)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding tree management, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the following information of "Tree Basis" Assessments conducted respectively from 2021 to 2022 and from January last year up to now (list by major tree management department): (i) the number of group inspections (Form 1 inspections) conducted and the number of trees covered; (ii) the number of Individual Tree Risk Assessments (Form 2 inspections) conducted and the number of trees covered; (iii) the number of problematic trees identified during Form 1 inspections; and (iv) the number of problematic trees requiring Form 2 inspections;
- (2) among the problematic trees mentioned in Item (1), of the number of trees for which annual risk mitigation measures have been taken and the number of trees requiring removal, please list by major tree management department, risk mitigation measure and reason for removal;
- (3) of the annual number of senescent pioneer species removed in the past 3 years and a breakdown by species and department;
- (4) of the percentage of removed senescent pioneer species mentioned in Item (3) in the total number of trees removed; the number and distribution of existing pioneer species on government land; and
- (5) of the establishment of civil servants of major tree management departments and the manpower provided by contractors, as well as the number of such tree management personnel registered voluntarily in each of the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

(1) & (2)

Before the onset of the wet season every year, the tree management departments conduct tree risk assessment in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow according to the Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement issued by the Tree Management Office (TMO) of the Development Bureau. The departments will take

appropriate mitigation measures according to the results of the tree risk assessment, including crown pruning, removal of dead branches, etc. If any tree with risk of failure is identified, the departments will remove it as soon as possible to safeguard public safety.

The annual tree risk assessment and management cycle runs from October to May of the following year. Since the tree risk assessment for 2024-25 is underway, comprehensive data are not available. The information on the “Tree Basis” risk assessments conducted by core tree management departments since 2021-22 is as follows:

The numbers of Tree Group Inspections (Form 1) conducted by departments and the numbers of trees covered:

Core tree management department	Year of tree inspection					
	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Number of forms	Number of trees	Number of forms	Number of trees	Number of forms	Number of trees
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	1 499	30 905	1 426	28 408	1 427	28 029
Architectural Services Department ^(Note 1)	4 655	100 677	4 572	100 866	5 258	97 343
Civil Engineering and Development Department ^(Note 1)	976	35 431	1 266	40 449	1 324	32 720
Drainage Services Department	236	4 342	309	6 328	363	5 643
Highways Department	8 375	289 910	7 725	208 081 ^(Note 2)	9 392	185 607 ^(Note 2)
Housing Department ^(Note 1)	581	88 183	2 085	87 247	2 231	84 786
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	18 225	372 843	18 073	364 152	17 990	352 858
Water Supplies Department	285	4 226	297	4 341	303	4 431

Note 1: The data of the Architectural Services Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department and Housing Department cover trees in areas not with high pedestrian and vehicular flow.

Note 2: The Highways Department reviewed the categorisation of tree risk management zones in the past few years and some locations of “high pedestrian and vehicular flow” are re-categorised.

The numbers of Individual Tree Risk Assessments (Form 2) conducted by departments and the numbers of trees covered:

Core tree management department	Year of tree inspection					
	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Number of forms	Number of trees	Number of forms	Number of trees	Number of forms	Number of trees
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	128	126	132	131	170	170
Architectural Services Department	2 008	1 460	1 944	1 135	5 102	5 102
Civil Engineering and Development Department	295	295	480	480	2 009	1 984
Drainage Services Department	120	120	266	266	692	692
Highways Department	800	550	872	434	5 469	5 469
Housing Department	3 801	3 800	3 827	3 827	6 127	6 127
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	1 564	505	1 468	955	11 687	11 687
Water Supplies Department	14	13	23	23	334	334

The numbers of problematic trees identified, trees with risk mitigation measures completed and trees removed during tree risk assessments by departments:

Core tree management department	Year of tree inspection								
	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
	Number of problematic trees identified	Number of trees with risk mitigation measures completed	Number of trees removed	Number of problematic trees identified	Number of trees with risk mitigation measures completed	Number of trees removed	Number of problematic trees identified	Number of trees with risk mitigation measures completed	Number of trees removed
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	183	133	50	155	110	45	222	136	86
Architectural Services Department	6 305	5 031	1 274	5 311	4 270	1 041	13 746	11 921	1 825
Civil Engineering and Development Department	2 141	958	1 183	2 639	1 253	1 386	2 294	916	1 378
Drainage Services Department	256	104	152	328	241	87	474	409	65
Highways Department	3 809	2 524	1 285	4 906	3 294	1 612	5 175	3 686	1 489
Housing Department	43	40	3	8	0	8	40	5	35
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	5 738	4 332	1 406	5 398	3 655	1 743	16 031	12 876	3 155
Water Supplies Department	181	95	86	70	27	43	162	42	120

Risk mitigation measures include crown pruning, guying or staking, pest and disease control or detailed tree inspection. The reasons for tree removal generally include death of trees, risks of failure due to serious health or structural problems. The tree management departments do not have the itemised details.

(3) & (4)

The Government carried out extensive afforestation as early as 1950s and 1960s, and fast-growing exotic pioneer species were selected to effectively prevent landslide due to soil erosion. The major species was *Acacia confusa*. Currently, this batch of *Acacia confusa* is in senescence, and the tree management departments will remove *Acacia confusa* with potential failure risks due to aging and structural or health problems during routine tree care and tree risk assessments, and replant suitable tree species according to the circumstances.

In addition, as a preventive measure, the core tree management departments have started to remove *Acacia confusa* with aging, structural or health problems in a systematic and orderly manner since 2023 so as to reduce the risks posed to public safety and enhance streetscape and local ecological value.

Currently, about 80 000 *Acacia confusa*, which mainly grow on road slopes, are under the management of various departments. In 2023 and 2024, the total number of *Acacia confusa* removed by the core tree management departments accounted for about 13% of the total number of trees removed. Detailed figures are set out in the table below:

Core tree management department	Number of <i>Acacia confusa</i> removed ^{Note1}	
	2023	2024
Architectural Services Department	390	2 440
Drainage Services Department	360	900
Highways Department	1 640	2 020
Housing Department	360	610
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	890	1 010
Water Supplies Department	60	250
Total	3 700	7 230

Note 1: The numbers of trees are rounded to the nearest 10. The data before 2023 are not available.

- (5) From 2023-24 to 2024-25, the number of tree management staff of departments and their contractors are as follows:

Core tree management department	Number of tree management staff ^(Note1) (including staff of departments and contractors)		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at 31 December 2024)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ^(Note2)	87	87	87
Architectural Services Department	198	218	228
Civil Engineering and Development Department ^(Note3)	19	128	127
Drainage Services Department	87	100	105
Highways Department	220	232	223
Housing Department	176	258	190
Lands Department	195	214	177
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	310	313	321
Water Supplies Department	40	42	44

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

Note 2: The departmental staff are also responsible for other work. The figures represent an estimate of the equivalent number of full-time tree management personnel.

Note 3: The numbers of trees and tree management personnel in infrastructural projects may vary at different project stages.

The Government launched the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel in December 2020 to encourage all qualified in-service practitioners to register voluntarily so as to uplift the standard of arboriculture practitioners. As at the end of 2024, about 950 practitioners have registered. Over 60% of contractor staff are registered personnel.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)006

(Question Serial No. 0799)

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

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

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is indicated in the Budget that the Government will study the use of new materials and innovative construction technologies by drawing reference from the Mainland and overseas practices and experience. All these efforts aim to help departments reduce project costs, enhance cost-effectiveness and ensure timely completion of public works projects. What new materials and innovative construction technologies is the Government planning to study? Regarding the Government's plan to draw reference from the Mainland and overseas practices and experience in order to enhance cost-effectiveness of public works projects, are there any preliminary ideas at this stage? By using new materials and innovative construction technologies and drawing reference from the Mainland and overseas practices and experience, what is the target cost reduction for public works projects?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) has completed a strategic study on the relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong (the Strategic Study) and has identified 5 major reasons for the relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong¹, and summarised 4 major directions for measures to lower the construction costs, including (1) optimising the project procurement model to reduce risk premium; (2) reviewing the design standards and requirements to increase cost-effectiveness; (3) applying advanced technologies and construction methods to uplift productivity; and (4) streamlining the approval process to boost work efficiency.

¹ The 5 major reasons for relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong include (1) labour cost; (2) contract risk premium on construction materials and equipment; (3) design standards and requirements; (4) approval process; and (5) project complexity.

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

In respect of the application of innovative technologies and construction methods, we will draw reference from practices and experiences of the Mainland and overseas. We

established the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) in 2024, which conducts research and development (R&D) on innovative materials, construction methods and technologies, and also devises standards, conducts testing and provides accreditation. We will work closely and exchange views with the industry, universities, and scientific research institutions to drive the adoption of innovative materials and advanced construction technologies through pilot projects in public works. We also pool the resources of the Government, industry, academia, and research sectors with a view to supporting the construction industry, reducing construction costs and enhancing cost-effectiveness for public works projects. The DEVB and works departments have also established a standing mechanism and signed working agreements with universities and scientific research institutions. If there are suitable new materials and innovative construction technologies, we will prioritize to pilot in public works projects. The BTRi will also facilitate this policy objective by formulating standards for new materials and technologies, so that they can be used in other projects. Also, the DEVB set up the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) in 2018 to provide subsidies to the construction industry with its \$2.2 billion funding, and actively promotes the use of new materials and innovative construction technologies in the construction industry, enhancing the cost-effectiveness of public works projects using a multi-pronged approach. Here are some examples:

- For new materials, the BTRi is working with works departments including the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) to drive the use of S960 ultra-high-strength steel and ultra-high-performance concrete in public works projects. These construction materials are 2 to 3 times stronger than traditional materials, which can reduce material usage, structural weight, and even the scale of foundations. They also facilitate the prefabrication of related components in factories, enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. The BTRi also assists project teams in solving technical issues, collecting data, and monitoring effectiveness, facilitating approvals from relevant authorities, and formulating related standards and guidelines for wide adoption in the industry.
- For innovative construction technologies, in recent years, we proactively promote the adoption of high productivity construction in the industry, including Modular Integration Construction (MiC) and Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP) to enhance construction efficiency and quality, shorten construction time, reduce the manpower demand on construction sites, and improve site safety. Currently, over 100 public and private development projects have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction or about to start. As for MiMEP, more than 30 public projects are already adopting the method.
- The BTRi is working with the ArchSD to introduce the use of “remote tower crane system” developed by the Mainland in a public works project for the first time, after taking into account the Labour Department’s advice regarding the legislation on occupational health and safety. By controlling the tower crane remotely from the ground, the time required for operators to climb up and down can be reduced, improving efficiency and productivity. The working environment and site safety could be substantially enhanced. This helps attract young fresh blood to become operators of tower crane. Additionally, the BTRi will continue to engage with the construction industry in Hong Kong, the Mainland and internationally to introduce more advanced and high productivity construction technologies for application in Hong Kong projects.

As each construction cost reduction measure will bring about different levels of construction cost savings for individual projects, we will assess the overall effectiveness of the measures to reduce construction cost, including cost savings and time saved, when more market data is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)007****(Question Serial No. 3231)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

One of the duties of the Development Bureau (Works Branch) is to provide financial assistance on the maintenance of privately-owned graded historic buildings. Please advise on the total number of privately-owned graded historic buildings across the territory. Further to the above question, please list the privately-owned graded historic buildings that the Government has provided financial assistance on their maintenance over the past 5 years and the amounts of expenditures involved.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

As at 28 February 2025, there are a total of 927 Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 historic buildings that are privately-owned or owned by non-government organisations.

The Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage (FAS) was launched by the Development Bureau in 2008 to subsidise maintenance works of privately-owned historic buildings. In the past 5 years (2020-2021 to 2024-2025 financial years), 39 maintenance works projects were subsidised under FAS at a total expenditure of about \$44.54 million. A brief summary is as follows:

Financial year	Subsidies (\$ million)
2020-2021	10.38
2021-2022	6.48
2022-2023	12.04
2023-2024	12.25
2024-2025 (as at 26 March 2025)	3.39
Total	44.54

The 39 privately-owned historic buildings having received subsidies under FAS in the past 5 years are listed below:

Serial No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded
1.	Tung Lin Kok Yuen	Declared monument *
2.	Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall	Declared monument *
3.	Hip Tin Temple, Sha Tau Kok	Declared monument *
4.	Jamia Mosque, Shelley Street, Central	Declared monument *
5.	Tsang Tai Uk	Grade 1
6.	Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Kau Yan Church	Grade 1
7.	Yuen Kwan Tai Temple, Mong Tseng Wai, Yuen Long	Grade 1
8.	Tin Hau Temple, Fung Chi Tsuen	Grade 1
9.	St. Andrew's Church Compound	Grade 1
10.	Man Ancestral Hall, Fan Tin Tsuen	Grade 1
11.	Liu Ying Lung Study Hall	Grade 1
12.	Hong Kong Red Swastika Society Building	Grade 1
13.	Man Ancestral Hall	Grade 1
14.	Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre	Grade 2
15.	Tat Yan Study Hall	Grade 2
16.	S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral	Grade 2
17.	Tin Hau Temple, Lam Tsuen	Grade 2
18.	First Church of Christ Scientist, Hong Kong	Grade 2
19.	No.14 Market Street, Tai O	Grade 2
20.	Sik Lo	Grade 2
21.	Kwan Tai Temple, Tai O	Grade 2
22.	College and Administration Block, Hong Kong Adventist College and Sam Yuk Middle School Compound, Sai Kung	Grade 2
23.	No.139 Ping Yeung, Ta Kwu Ling	Grade 2
24.	Kowloon Cricket Club	Grade 2
25.	Mi Tak Study Hall, Main Block and Ancillary Building	Grade 2
26.	No.11 Market Street, Tai O	Grade 2
27.	Ming Yuen Tong Ancestral Hall	Grade 2
28.	Kwong Yuet Tong Public Office	Grade 3
29.	Tin Hau Temple, Kat O	Grade 3
30.	Kowloon Bowling Green Club	Grade 3
31.	Ling Wan Monastery	Grade 3
32.	Tin Hau Temple, Sha Kong Tsuen	Grade 3
33.	Tin Hau Temple, Kat Hing Back Street, Tai O	Grade 3
34.	Ng Ancestral Hall, Fung Wong Wu, Ta Kwu Ling	Grade 3
35.	Old Village School, Yuen Long	Grade 3
36.	Nos.1 & 3 Playing Field Road	Grade 3
37.	Entrance Gate, Shek Po Wai, Shek Po Tsuen	Grade 3
38.	Chung Ancestral Hall, Tai Po	Grade 3
39.	No.1A Lee Yick Street, Yuen Long Kau Hui	Grade 3

Note:* The item was a Grade 1 historic buildings at the time of application for FAS subsidies.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)008

(Question Serial No. 3232)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Energizing Kowloon East

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

One of the duties of the Development Bureau (Works Branch) is to continue to enhance walkability and connectivity in Kowloon East by taking forward the remaining pedestrian and traffic environment improvement proposals recommended under the feasibility studies on Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas. It is learnt that the feasibility studies on Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas were completed in 2016, 2017 and 2019 respectively. Please list the improvement measures that have been implemented over the past 3 years and those which are to be implemented in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Energizing Kowloon East Office is proactively taking forward the pedestrian improvement proposals recommended under the feasibility studies on pedestrian environment improvement in Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas to further enhance walkability and connectivity in Kowloon East. Up till now, nearly 100 short-term measures have been completed in Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas, including improvement works of back alleys environment, streetscape, curbside loading/unloading areas and junctions, etc. The completed projects in the past 3 years include the north/south section (from Kai Cheung Road to Sheung Yuet Road) of the green spine connecting Kowloon Bay, the pedestrian crossing widening at junction of Wang Chiu Road/Sheung Yuet Road, facelifting works of Kai Cheung Road subway and the footbridge at Tsui Ping Road across Kwun Tong Road, widening of the pedestrian crossing and footpath at the junction of Tai Yau Street/Luk Hop Street in San Po Kong and back alley improvement works at Pat Tat Street. For the remaining short-term improvement measures, including a small number of improvement works of junctions, pedestrian crossings and back alleys in San Po Kong Business Area, they are being implemented as planned for completion as soon as possible.

For medium- and long-term improvement proposals, including a series of footbridges and pedestrian subways, some major works have been completed and opened for use, or at different construction stages. For example, 2 new footbridges connecting Exits B and A of MTR Kowloon Bay Station were completed and commissioned in 2023 and 2025 respectively, and a footbridge connecting Kowloon Bay area to the New Acute Hospital is currently under construction. The Government will prioritize the remaining improvement proposals, including the pedestrian subway near Exit B of MTR Ngau Tau Kok Station which is under planning, based on their urgency and significance for implementation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1542)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In connection with “overseeing the implementation of improvement and expansion of mountain bike trail networks in South Lantau and the cycle track network in the New Territories”, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the manpower and administrative expenditures spent (or expected to be spent) on the above work in the 2024-25 financial year and this year; and
2. given that the Government stated in its written response to the Member's question that, as regards the implementation of the cycle track network in the New Territories, it planned to submit a funding application to the Legislative Council in the second quarter of 2024 for the construction works of the “section between Tuen Mun and So Kwun Wat” and for the detailed design and site investigation work of the “section between So Kwun Wat and Ting Kau”; of the reasons that the plan fell through, whether any review has been conducted (for example, a review of the reasons for high construction costs), and of the latest implementation timetable?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The Government proposed in the Sustainable Lantau Blueprint promulgated in 2017 to study the improvement and expansion of the mountain bike trail networks to enhance the potential of Lantau for the development of leisure and recreational activities. To facilitate the development of Lantau into a leisure and recreational hotspot, we are now working on the improvement and expansion of the existing mountain bike trail networks in South Lantau in phases. We have already opened 44 kilometres of mountain bike trails from Pui O to Kau Ling Chung, and from Mui Wo to Chi Ma Wan, including the first practice ground for mountain bike in Hong Kong. We are now carrying out the remaining phase of works, including a new mountain bike trail from Mui Wo to Pui O and improvement to the existing facilities of mountain bike trails, etc., so as to build a mountain bike trail network with a total length of over 50 kilometres.

In addition, the Government has been committed to taking forward the cycle track network in the New Territories in phases, about 63 kilometres of which, including the Ma On Shan to Tuen Mun backbone section, the Sam Mun Tsai waterfront section in Tai Po and the Tsuen Wan waterfront section have already been opened to the public in phases, and the remaining 17 kilometres for the section between Bayview Garden in Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun are also under planning.

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

1. Staff of the Development Bureau (DEVB) are responsible for overseeing the work related to the mountain bike trail networks in South Lantau and the cycle track network in the New Territories. As the staff concerned are also responsible for other duties in the DEVB, a breakdown of the manpower and administrative expenditure involved in the above-mentioned work is not available.
2. The Government has been adjusting the implementation arrangements according to the priorities of different works projects. In view of the latest development, including policy development and the Government's financial situation, the Government has appropriately adjusted the implementation progress of the cycling tracks between Tuen Mun and So Kwun Wat and between So Kwun Wat and Ting Kau.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)010

(Question Serial No. 1543)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government has mentioned that the Works Branch will “continue to monitor the delivery of capital works projects to ensure timely completion and within budget.” In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the total number of capital works projects scrutinised by the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in the 2024-25 financial year and the amount of construction costs saved; and
2. of the number of capital works projects that could not be completed on time and had cost overruns in the 2024-25 financial year, the causes, the interventions made by the PSGO and their effectiveness, set out in a table?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

1. In the 2024-25 financial year, the PSGO scrutinised a total of 16 capital works projects which were subject to funding approval by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, and successfully saved about \$11.6 billion in construction cost out of the original estimate of about \$83 billion proposed by the project proponent departments.

2. The DEVB has been closely monitoring the performance of the portfolio of projects under the Capital Works Programme. Nevertheless, as the progress of individual projects may be affected by unforeseeable factors, such as COVID-19 epidemic, inclement weather and unexpected site conditions, some of these projects will experience delays in completion. Of the major works projects completed in the 2024-25 financial year (as at December 2024), 11 (see Appendix) could not be completed on time. As finalisation of accounts for these works projects are still in progress, we could only know whether any of them has cost overruns when the final accounts are settled.

The DEVB will closely monitor the implementation programme of projects by conducting regular high-level meetings with various works departments, complemented with the Project Surveillance System, for timely intervention so as to mitigate the risks of project delays. Also, to address the risks of project delays, government departments have adopted the “New Engineering Contract” (NEC) form in public works projects. With the introduction of an early warning mechanism in NEC, both the client's representative and the contractor are encouraged to identify and raise potential risks that may affect the project as early as possible, and when construction difficulties and problems are encountered, to negotiate and formulate the optimal solution for the smooth implementation of the project according to the procedure framework and timeframes prescribed in the contract. Since the establishment of the PSGO, as regards works projects experiencing delays, the average delay was about 2 quarters, reduced by about 1 quarter on average as compared with the situation of works projects experiencing delays before its establishment, reflecting an improvement in the delay situation. Nevertheless, we will continue to strengthen the governance of public works projects with a view to enhancing the performance of project progress.

Major works projects that could not be completed on time in the 2024-25 financial year (as at December 2024)

Works project no.	Works project title
3074MM	Community health centre cum social welfare facilities at Pak Wo Road, North District
6804TH	Retrofitting of Noise Barriers on Tai Po Road (Sha Tin Section)
3085MM	Hospital Authority Supporting Services Centre
3280RS	Redevelopment of Kowloon Tsai Swimming Pool Complex
3067JA	Construction of Departmental Quarters for Customs and Excise Department at Tseung Kwan O Area 123, Po Lam Road, Tseung Kwan O
6853TH	Widening of Castle Peak Road - Castle Peak Bay
3070MM	Redevelopment of Queen Mary Hospital, phase 1
3005MI	Expansion of North District Hospital - site formation and foundation Works
9355WF	Water Supply to New Housing Developments in Sheung Shui and Fanling
7861TH	Widening of Tai Po Road (Sha Tin Section) - construction
7822CL	Kai Tak Development - Infrastructure for Developments at the Former Runway and South Apron

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)011

(Question Serial No. 1715)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In connection with continuing to oversee the grading exercise for historic buildings, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the average time needed to handle the grading assessment for one building;
- (2) of the current number of buildings pending grading assessment in Hong Kong; and
- (3) as a follow-up to the above question, of the number of buildings pending grading assessment that was demolished by the owners in the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

- (1) In handling the grading assessment of historic buildings, Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) will first undertake different tasks, including detailed research, on-site inspections, and consultations with owners/stakeholders (such as clarifying the condition of the building and addressing objections). Subsequently, the Historic Buildings Assessment Panel that comprises experts will examine the findings of the study, assess the heritage value of the item, and recommend a proposed grading for consideration by the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB). If the proposed grading is endorsed by the AAB, AMO will conduct a one-month public consultation. The AAB will deliberate on the grading after taking into account the comments received during the public consultation period. The time required for studying and grading each historic building varies based on factors such as the complexity of the item, as well as the amount and comprehensiveness of primary source available. As such, the grading assessment generally takes at least a few months to a year. For more complex cases, it may take more than a few years to complete the whole grading process.
- (2) As at 6 March 2025, there are 93 items on the List of New Items for Grading Assessment of AMO. The list will be updated from time to time and uploaded to the webpage of AAB.

[https://www.amo.gov.hk/filemanager/amo/common/form/List%20of%20New%20Items%20for%20Grading%20Assessment%20\(bilingual\).pdf](https://www.amo.gov.hk/filemanager/amo/common/form/List%20of%20New%20Items%20for%20Grading%20Assessment%20(bilingual).pdf)

- (3) We endeavour to strike a balance between sustainable development and heritage conservation. The grading system is administrative in nature and does not affect the ownership, usage, management and development rights of the historical buildings. In the past 3 years, two new items pending grading assessment were demolished, both of which were privately owned, while 51 new items had been graded. Up till now, a total of 214 new items have been accorded Grade 1, 2 or 3 status. In general, on receipt of notification of any plans to demolish the buildings, AMO will contact the owners in a timely manner to explore feasible conservation options, including in-situ preservation and reinstating building components. Photographic recording will also be arranged for research, exhibition or education purposes. AMO has already conducted photographic recording of the aforementioned two demolished items.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)012

(Question Serial No. 1882)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

According to paragraph 164 of the Budget Speech, as regards actively leveraging complementary advantages of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) methods and developing MiC as an industry in the Greater Bay Area. Efforts will be dedicated to research and development (R&D), quality accreditation and international marketing of MiC, please advise this Committee on the following:

1. Since the adoption of MiC, what specific collaborative projects have been conducted between the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Guangdong Provincial Government?
2. How many resources have been allocated for R&D of MiC by the HKSAR Government?
3. What are the specific implementation schedules for international marketing of MiC?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour in recent years. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, have started the adoption of MiC. Currently, over 100 projects in both public and private sectors have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction and about to start.

It is mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that a Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) Manufacturer Certification Scheme (the Scheme) would be launched in synergy with production bases in the Mainland, so as to leverage the complementary functions of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. To this end, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has commissioned the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) to

implement the Scheme, which started accepting applications in November 2024. The Scheme ensures that accredited MiC manufacturers comply with project requirements for management, production and transportation, and that relevant laws and regulations are observed.

The DEVB is proactively fostering exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a robust ecosystem for the industry.

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

1. As the Greater Bay Area (GBA) is the main manufacturing base for MiC modules, our co-operation with the Guangdong Provincial Government is particularly important. In March 2024, the DEVB and Guangdong Province signed the Letter of Intent on Strengthening Guangdong-Hong Kong Co-operation in Construction and Related Engineering Sectors, deepening co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in construction and engineering sectors. This includes developing MiC as a quality productive force to contribute to the high-quality national development. Under the guidance of the DEVB and the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province, MiC manufacturer associations strive to make the GBA a centre of MiC technology, developing MiC into a strategic industry that facilitates the exploration of overseas markets. The governments of Hong Kong and Guangdong expect to jointly publish the Guidebook on MiC Cross-border Trading in the first half of 2025, to provide clear guidelines to related manufacturing enterprises, so as to facilitate the production of MiC modules in the GBA, as well as cross-border transportation.
2. We are commissioning universities to commence study on MiC, including using artificial intelligence and the intelligent system of Internet of Things to uplift the capabilities of transportation, lifting and installation and safety monitoring of MiC modules. The expenditure on the study is about \$2.5 million.
3. The DEVB has been committed to promoting MiC to local construction sector, the Greater Bay Area and international market. Recently, the DEVB has introduced Hong Kong's MiC projects, technology research and development and the Scheme, as well as the robust supply chain of the Mainland to the delegations of Qatar and Ireland visiting Hong Kong. In addition, the DEVB will, in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council and relevant Mainland authorities, organise and set up MiC thematic forum and display zone in the Construction Innovation Expo to be held in December 2025, showcasing MiC methods and innovative products to enhance international understanding of Hong Kong's MiC and develop overseas markets.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)013

(Question Serial No. 1898)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government established the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders (CoE) in July 2019, which is the first institution in Asia specialising in nurturing leaders for major works projects. The CoE offers a high-level project management and leadership development programme to senior government officials and major project leaders, aiming to enhance the professionalism of the construction industry in Hong Kong. It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that \$15 million will be set aside to continue to support the work of the CoE in the coming 2 years. Programme (5) has also responded to the target mentioned in the 2022 Policy Address, indicating that the Government will “enhance the role of the CoE as an international expert knowledge hub on project delivery”. In this connection, please advise this Committee on the following:

1. Please provide details of the yearly financial expenditures of the CoE since its establishment, including the yearly subsidies received, with a breakdown of expenditures on programme design, costs of training and manpower resources, trainee support, publicity and promotion. What are the plans for the allocation of the \$15 million set aside for the coming 2 years?
2. Please provide a list of the specific activities and programmes organised by the CoE since its establishment, setting out the number of activities and participants (including the percentages of senior government officials and major project leaders). Do these activities meet the training objectives of the CoE?
3. In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Government states again that “it will develop the CoE and enhance its role as an international expert knowledge hub on project delivery”. Has the Government assessed the effectiveness of the CoE and conducted satisfaction surveys, including collecting data on the effectiveness of the programme in enhancing project management and leadership skills of the trainees, and on its contribution to the professionalisation of the construction industry in Hong Kong? Has the Government established performance indicators to keep track of the

effectiveness of the CoE in terms of trainee number, programme completion rate, and trainees' career development?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

To address the challenges faced by the construction industry, enhance the professionalism of the construction industry and sustain our long-term competitiveness, the Development Bureau (DEVB) set up the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders (CoE) in 2019, the first of its kind in Asia specialising in nurturing major project leaders. The CoE offers a high-level project management and leadership development programme to senior government officials and major project leaders to equip them with a more innovative mindset and up-to-date leadership skills for the implementation of public works projects, thereby uplifting project delivery capability and improving project performances as a whole. In the coming years, there is an even more pressing need for more major project leaders and professionals to embrace a culture of project cost management, innovation and collaboration, with a view to enhancing project performance and ensuring prudent use of public funds.

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

1. & 2.

The funding earmarked for the CoE since its establishment are as follows:

Funding Source	Funding Earmarked
2019-2020 Budget	\$40 million
2021-2022 Budget	\$6 million
2022-2023 Budget	\$30 million

As at February 2025, about 160 major project leaders have completed or are currently studying the "Major Projects Leadership Programme", of whom about 130 and 30 are senior government officials and major project leaders in the industry respectively. About 320 mid-level project managers have completed the "Project Delivery Capability Programme", of whom about 280 and 50 are mid-level managers in the Government and the industry respectively.

In the past few years, through the CoE, we continued to organise activities for the industry via different channels and at various occasions, including a number of events for the industry such as the Project Cost Management Forum, the Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP) Symposium, the Construction R&D Forum, the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) Supply Chain Conference, and seminars for young professionals of the construction industry and site visits etc. More than 2 300 major project leaders and professionals participated in these CoE activities. The CoE also regularly holds Major Public Clients Forum to exchange and share experience with various major public clients, promoting high productivity construction and innovative procurement models for uplifting productivity, optimising project delivery process, driving down construction costs and building up a culture of project cost management, innovation and collaboration in the industry.

The Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) under the DEVB is responsible for the daily operations, programme management and other matters of the CoE. At present, the PSGO has an establishment of about 30 civil servants, including a Principal Government Engineer, a Government Engineer, a Chief Engineer and other professional, technical and clerical staff. As the duties concerned are part of the overall duties of the existing staff members, we are unable to provide a breakdown of the manpower resources and expenditures involved.

Overall speaking, the operational expenditure of the CoE is about \$13 million per year on average since its establishment, covering various expenditures for human resources, training programmes, forums and seminars etc.

In the 2025-26 Budget, we have set aside \$15 million for the work of the CoE over the next 2 years, including continuing the “Major Projects Leadership Programme” and the “Project Delivery Capability Programme” under the CoE for the training of major project leaders and mid-level managers of the Government and the industry. We will also organise summits and various events to facilitate exchanges and co-operation transcending geographical and sectoral boundaries, and develop the CoE into an international expert knowledge hub on project delivery.

3. We are pleased to see that, in recent years, our alumni in the Government and industry talents who have completed the CoE programmes have put learnings into practice in public works projects, and are actively promoting a wider adoption of innovative technologies and advanced construction methods, such as adopting and continuously improving MiC and MiMEP, utilising innovative materials such as Grade S960 ultra-high-strength steel and Grade S690 high-strength steel, and applying various digital technologies. They are exerting their influences to drive reforms in the construction industry, further consolidate and strengthen the culture of project cost management, innovation and collaboration, ensuring that public money is well-spent.

In the next 2 years, we will continue to train up about 100 major project leaders and mid-tier managers of the Government and the industry through the CoE. We will continue to organise summits and various events to showcase to the world our frontier strategies and infrastructural strengths in responding to the challenges faced by the construction industry globally, and to develop the CoE into an international expert knowledge hub on project delivery. We have received positive feedbacks from the international, Mainland and local industry practitioners on various initiatives of the CoE, and also received suggestions from various parties hoping that, through the CoE and the joint efforts of industry stakeholders, we tell good stories of Hong Kong and establish Hong Kong as an International Infrastructure Centre.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)014

(Question Serial No. 1899)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

To attract more young people to join the construction industry, the Government has implemented various measures to protect the long-term manpower development of the construction industry in recent years. It is mentioned in paragraphs 192 and 193 of the Budget Speech that the Government and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million to provide on-the-job training subsidies, and the CIC will further allocate \$150 million to support the on-the-job training of construction graduates. In addition, it is mentioned in the 2022 Policy Address that \$1 billion funding will be provided to the CIC with the aim of subsidising 27 000 training places in the coming six years starting from 2022. However, according to the report on the latest manpower forecast published in November 2024, the overall manpower shortage of the construction industry will more than triple from 15 000 in 2023 to 45 000 - 55 000 in 2028. At the same time, the construction industry is faced with the ageing problem, unstable supply of imported labour, etc. In this connection, please advise this Committee:

1. on the following data of the relevant funding from 2022 onwards: (i) the training places allocated for various trades, (ii) the number of construction graduates receiving assistance in attaining professional qualifications, (iii) the amount of funding allocated and (iv) the number of engineering companies funded; and
2. on the numbers of places and actual intakes of construction-related programmes organised by various tertiary institutions in recent years, including full-time and part-time programmes; whether the Government has assessed if the relevant training can meet the intended policy objectives.

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1. With continued investment in Hong Kong's future infrastructure by the Government, coupled with the economic recovery, the number of private sector construction works projects will gradually rebound. It is anticipated that the manpower demand of the

construction industry will remain substantial in the coming years. With regard to the information as requested in the question, it is summed up as follows:

I) Skilled workers

The Government has been supporting the Construction Industry Council (CIC) in providing skilled workers with training to timely address the training demand of trades with manpower shortage. The CIC has significantly increased the number of training quotas for skilled workers from 6 000 places in the 2021-22 academic year to at least about 12 000 places in each of the academic years from 2022-23 to 2027-28 by utilising the \$1 billion funding allocated by the Government in the 2022-23 financial year, along with Government's funding in the past and its own resources.

The aforementioned funding of \$1 billion is used for enhancing the manpower development initiatives of the CIC, increasing the number of training places and the amount of subsidy, so as to assist the industry in attracting and training more new entrants, providing incentives for in-service personnel to upskill, and retaining talents of the industry. It is envisaged that the aforementioned \$1 billion funding will subsidise about 27 000 training places of the Hong Kong Institute of Construction under the CIC, including 20 000 training places for new entrants-job changers to become semi-skilled workers, and about 7 000 training places for semi-skilled workers to become skilled workers, over a period of 6 years starting from 2022. The coverage of trades under subsidy are common trades such as bar bending and fixing, painting, plumbing and pipe-fitting, wood and aluminium formwork, electrical and mechanical related works etc. The training places for various trades will also be adjusted each year in view of the needs of the industry.

The DEVB and the CIC will continue to monitor the enrollment of the subsidised training schemes and programmes, and the progress and effectiveness of the various initiatives. We will also allocate training places to different training schemes and programmes and trades (including adjusting the number of trades according to needs) according to market situation in a flexible manner to suit the manpower demands of the industry.

II) Technicians

The 2023-24 Budget allocated \$100 million funding to launch an On-the-job Training Subsidy Pilot Scheme (the Scheme) to subsidise higher diploma graduates to enrol in part-time construction-related degree programmes. The Scheme has been well-received by young people and the industry. In the first year of its rollout, there was an increase of more than 50% in the enrollment for the relevant programmes. The target of the Scheme is to provide relevant subsidies to 1 000 trainees, and the actual number of participating trainees who are receiving subsidies has already met the target. In the past two academic years (i.e. the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years), types of related programmes and their enrollment under the Scheme are as follow:

Part-time construction-related degree programme	Numbers of Enrollment	
	2023-24 academic year	2024-25 academic year (as of February 2025)
E&M and Environmental Engineering	390	344
Civil Engineering	134	125
Surveying	109	142
Building Engineering and Management	62	71
Landscape Architecture and Management	45	51
Total	740	733

Note: Some students who have enrolled in the above programmes have not participated in this pilot scheme.

To attract more young people to join the construction industry, it is mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget that the Government and the CIC will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million (of which the Government will make a commitment of \$47.3 million) to continue the provision of on-the-job training subsidies to trainees enrolling in part-time construction-related degree programmes over the next two academic years (i.e. the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years). It is anticipated to further benefit 1 000 trainees.

III) Professionals

It is mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget that the CIC will allocate around \$150 million to subsidise the construction industry to provide on-the-job training for about 2 500 graduates of degree programmes in engineering, architecture, surveying, planning and landscape architecture. This will assist more young people in attaining professional qualifications and nurturing talents of the industry. As it is still in the application period from 17 March to 16 April 2025, the number of subsidised engineering companies is not available for the time being.

2. The Education Bureau has not maintained a breakdown of the number of places and actual number of enrollments of relevant courses by sectors (e.g. construction sector). Having communicated with various tertiary institutions, we have learnt that the number of intake quotas and actual number of enrolment in construction-related degree programmes and locally-accredited degree programmes have maintained at the level of 3 000 and 2 900 annually in the past three years. As various infrastructural projects are set to be launched, the construction manpower demand will remain substantial in future. Through the years, we have maintained communication with tertiary institutions and supported them in providing construction-related degree programmes to address the manpower needs of the industry. While maintaining the degree quotas in construction-related degree programmes, the tertiary institutions have also incorporated into their curriculum construction technology-related contents, including Building Information Modelling (BIM), Modular Integrated Construction, digital construction, artificial intelligence, and advanced robotics construction technology etc so as to achieve the goal of manpower demand by the industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)015

(Question Serial No. 1462)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

To pursue “Tourism is Everywhere” and to develop in-depth tourism of historic buildings, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the names of visits to historic buildings and heritage exhibitions organised in the past 3 years, and the venues, numbers of participants and expenditures involved;
2. of the number of declared monuments or historic buildings that are not open to the public at present due to revitalisation or maintenance in progress, and the expected completion dates and expenditures for the revitalisation and maintenance works;
3. of the number of declared monuments or historic buildings that have installed information panels at present, and the progress of work of the Government and the related expenditures;
4. whether the Government has regularly reviewed the attractiveness of various historic buildings or declared monuments to local and overseas visitors, and made timely adjustments to the related publicity and promotion work; if so, of the details and related expenditure; if not, the reasons for that; and
5. of the specific plans, timetables and expected expenditures for the promotion of in-depth tourism of historic buildings in the future?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. The Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB) is committed to enhancing public understanding of heritage conservation, historic buildings and archaeology through exhibitions and guided tours. Information on the exhibitions and guided tours organised by the AMO in the past 3 years (i.e. 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25), including names of the exhibitions, venues and numbers of visitors, is as follows:

Activity	Number of visitors		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at 28 February 2025)
Exhibition	984 553	744 140 ^(a)	818 805
Guided Tour ^(b)			
- Exhibitions	2 452	7 924	9 316
- Historic Buildings	2 564	15 710	14 872
- Heritage Trails	2 248	9 467	7 357

Note:

- (a) The number of visitors to the exhibitions in 2023-24 is lower than that in 2022-23 and 2024-25 because a number of exhibitions were concentrated in the first quarter of 2023 and the second to fourth quarters of 2024.
- (b) Due to the epidemic, the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre was closed from 7 January to 22 April 2022. All physical guided tours organised by the AMO were suspended from January 2020 until they were gradually resumed in November 2022. In the meantime, the AMO continued to organise online guided tours and engage local licensed travel agencies to organise physical tours with conditional exemptions.

Most of the DEVB's exhibitions were held at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre (HDC), with major ones including “Explore Our Heritage” permanent exhibition, “Light of Jinsha The Ancient Shu Civilisation” exhibition, “Under the Same Roof: Origin and Art of Lingnan Traditional Architecture” exhibition, “Harmony of Rites and Music: Exploring the Qilu Culture through Shandong Relics” exhibition, “Master of All Crafts: Investiture of the Gods” on the Ridge of Lo Pan Temple” exhibition, “Launch from Greater Bay Area: Nanhai I Shipwreck and the Maritime Silk Road” exhibition and Dinosaur Parlour. A permanent exhibition is held at Ping Shan Tang Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre and another exhibition is held in Wun Yiu respectively. Moreover, “Treasures from Sacre Hill: “Song-Yuan Archaeological Discoveries at Sung Wong Toi” exhibition is held at Song Wong Toi MTR Station and “In Virtual of Heritage - Exploring Monuments with Heritage Technology” roving exhibition was held at City Hall, Central Market, Hong Kong Cultural Centre and HDC.

In addition, the DEVB organised “Heritage Vogue Hollywood Road” in 2022 and “Heritage Fiesta” in 2023 and 2024 to introduce various declared monuments and graded historic buildings, highlighting Hong Kong's important role in bringing together Chinese and international cultures.

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

- At present, there are 9 declared monuments or historic buildings that are not yet open to the public due to revitalisation or maintenance works in progress. They are expected to be open to the public upon completion of works between the second

quarter of 2025 and the second half of 2026, at a total cost of about \$352 million. The scope, cost and duration of certain works are still being estimated.

3. At present, 295 historic buildings have installed information plaques, which were installed at different times in the past by the Government. The DEVB will install, replace or update the information plaques as and when necessary and the relevant expenses will be met by regular funding of the DEVB or by the works projects. No breakdown is available.

4.&5.

Regarding the publicity and promotion of declared monuments and historic buildings to tourists, as well as the promotion of in-depth tours to historic buildings, the DEVB has continued to work closely with the Tourism Commission under the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the tourism sector to identify historic buildings with high tourism potential, and co-operate with owners and user departments and organisations of historic buildings to encourage them to open their historic buildings to the public or tourists for viewing and appreciation, as well as to make arrangements for guided tours as far as practicable. The DEVB will provide appropriate support from the heritage conservation perspective.

Also, the DEVB organises visits to historic buildings and heritage exhibitions, as well as thematic exhibitions at the HDC from time to time, and shares the relevant information with Hong Kong Tourism Board. For instance, "Heritage Vogue Hollywood Road" was organised in 2022 and "Heritage Fiesta" in 2023 and 2024 to introduce to the public various declared monuments and graded historic buildings. The DEVB will continue to promote heritage sites and exhibitions, and introduce measures to facilitate visits by tourists. These include consolidating information on declared monuments and historic buildings by building type to facilitate the tourism sector to arrange thematic itineraries to attract more tourists to Hong Kong, and continuing to explore with owners or user departments and organisations to install information plaques in the historic buildings to facilitate the public and tourists to understand the historical background and heritage significance of the buildings.

In addition, the DEVB will also collaborate with different sectors to introduce historic buildings online through the use of technology. Following the launch of "HKU Heritage Sights and Sites" audio tours in collaboration with The University of Hong Kong in 2022, the first cross-border Greater Bay Area Education Heritage Trail was set up by the AMO with Guangdong and Macao in late 2024. With education as its theme, the Hong Kong section covers 48 declared monuments or historic buildings, with information plaques, audio guides and online booklet to facilitate visitors' understanding of the buildings. The DEVB has also collaborated with non-profit-making organisations in the sports sector and government departments to launch Heritage Runs in different districts to encourage the public to appreciate the historic buildings while running. The above information has been uploaded to the AMO website for the public and tourists.

The above publicity and promotional activities are absorbed by regular funding of the AMO. No breakdown has been maintained.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)016

(Question Serial No. 1478)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Category A projects with estimated cost over \$50 million account for over 90% of the total approved project estimate, and the Government always procures public works consultancies for these projects. Although the amounts involved in the overall expenditures of the whole projects are not high, the consultants' fees are still very high. In this connection, please advise the Government on the following:

In the past 3 financial years, among the Category A projects of implementation departments, what were the annual numbers of public works projects, total approved project estimates and consultants' fees of public works projects? Please list by implementation department.

In the past 3 financial years, among the public works consultancy agreements approved respectively by the Engineering and Associated Consultants Selection Board and the Architectural and Associated Consultants Selection Board, what were the annual lists of consultants and the number of Category A projects involved in each consultant?

In the past 3 financial years, among the public works consultancy agreements approved, what was the work content involved in each consultancy agreements (including but not limited to studies, design work, ground investigation, quantity surveying, preliminary environmental review, etc.)?

Last year, the Government pointed out that there were past cases where the consultants' fees exceeded the project estimates due to additional services. What were the relevant details and the expenditures involved?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

For Category A works projects approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the past 3 financial years, the annual number of works projects, the total approved project estimate (APE) and the total consultants' fees (excluding the remuneration of resident site staff and site investigation costs) are set out at **Annex 1**.

For public works consultancy agreements approved respectively by the Engineering and Associated Consultants Selection Board and the Architectural and Associated Consultants Selection Board in the past 3 financial years, the annual list of consultants and the number of consultancy agreements concerning Category A projects involved in each consultant are set out at **Annex 2**.

For public works consultancy agreements approved respectively by the Engineering and Associated Consultants Selection Board and the Architectural and Associated Consultants Selection Board in the past 3 financial years, the scope of the consultancy services and the number of relevant consultancy agreements are set out at **Annex 3**.

In taking forward works projects, works departments may request consultants as necessary to undertake additional studies and design work because of unforeseeable circumstances or according to the latest development of the projects. The additional expenditures involved will generally be met by the contingency sum reserved in the projects. In the past 3 financial years, there were only about 1% of consultancy agreements with the consultants' fees exceeding the original APEs due to additional services. Overall speaking, the majority of the consultancy agreements have been completed within the original APE.

For the above-mentioned consultancy agreements with the original APE being exceeded, they involve additional work of various categories, including additional study, impact assessment, ecological or tree survey, expansion of scope of study, alteration of design, and review of completed design proposal or provision of additional design proposal, etc. The amounts in exceedance of the original APE mostly range from several hundred thousand dollars to several million dollars, with one item having the consultant's fee exceeded the original APE by approximately over \$10 million due to the need to expand the study scope and carry out additional studies and assessments to tie in with the latest change in development.

**Category A projects approved by
the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the past 3 financial years**

2022-23 financial year

Implementation department	Number of Category A projects	Total approved project estimate	Total consultants' fee (Note 2)
Architectural Services Department	20	About \$59.6 billion	About \$700 million
Civil Engineering and Development Department	16	About \$13.9 billion	About \$100 million
Drainage Services Department	5	About \$2.4 billion	About \$60 million
Highways Department	7	About \$0.9 billion	About \$50 million
Water Services Department	1	About \$2.3 billion	About \$20 million
Other departments and organisations (Note 1)	5	About \$15.9 billion	About \$520 million

2023-24 financial year

Implementation department	Number of Category A projects	Total approved project estimate	Total consultants' fee (Note 2)
Architectural Services Department	13	About \$62.6billion	About \$650 million
Civil Engineering and Development Department	13	About \$10 billion	About \$220 million
Drainage Services Department	8	About \$11 billion	About \$90 million
Highways Department	5	About \$1.9 billion	About \$500 million
Other departments and organisations (Note 1)	6	About \$15.2 billion	About \$160 million

**Category A projects approved by
the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the past 3 financial years**

2024-25 financial year (as a February 2025)

Implementation department	Number of Category A projects	Total approved project estimate	Total consultants' fee (Note 2)
Architectural Services Department	9	About \$12.2 billion	About \$150 million
Civil Engineering and Development Department	10	About \$92.1 billion	About \$760 million
Drainage Services Department	9	About \$9.4 billion	About \$60 million
Highways Department	3	About \$3.7 billion	About \$460 million
Water Services Department	2	About \$2.4 billion	About \$20 million
Other departments and organisations (Note 1)	3	About \$11.3 billion	About \$20 million

Note 1: including the Education Bureau, Health Bureau, Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Environmental Protection Department and other subvented organisations such as schools.

Note 2: consultant's fee does not include site supervisory staff cost and site investigation cost.

**Consultancy agreements approved by the Architectural and Associated Consultants
Selection Board in the past 3 financial years
List of consultants and number of consultancy agreements concerning
Category A projects involved in each consultant**

No.	Name of consultant	Number of consultancy agreements		
		2022-23 financial year	2023-24 financial year	2024-25 financial year (as at February 2025)
1	AECOM Asia Company Limited	1	-	-
2	Arcadis Hong Kong Limited	1	-	-
3	Design 2 (HK) Limited	1	-	-
4	Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Limited	-	1	-
5	Northcroft Hong Kong Limited			1
6	Hsin Yieh Architects & Associates Ltd	1	-	-
7	Rider Levett Bucknall Limited	2	-	-
8	Ronald Lu & Partners (Hong Kong) Ltd	-	1	-
9	Wong Tung & Partners Limited	-	1	-

**Consultancy agreements approved by the Engineering and Associated Consultants
Selection Board in the past 3 financial years
List of consultants and number of consultancy agreements concerning
Category A projects involved in each consultant**

No.	Name of consultant	Number of consultancy agreements		
		2022-23 financial year	2023-24 financial year	2024-25 financial year (as at February 2025)
1	AECOM Asia Company Limited	12	8	5
2	Asia Infrastructure Solutions Limited	1	1	2
3	AtkinsRealis Asia Limited	2	3	4
4	Binnies Hong Kong Limited	4	7	3
5	Egis Engineering & Consulting Hong Kong Limited	-	-	2
6	Halcrow China Limited	1	2	1
7	Mannings (Asia) Consultants Limited	4	2	2
8	Meinhardt Infrastructure and Environment Limited	8	2	-
9	Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Limited	-	2	4
10	Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Limited	2	6	4
11	WSP (Asia) Limited	2	-	-

**Consultancy agreements approved by the Architectural and Associated Consultants
Selection Board in the past 3 financial years
Scope of consultancy services and number of relevant consultancy agreements**

No.	Scope of consultancy services	Number of consultancy agreements
1	Building inspection and investigation study	56
2	Quantity surveying services	40
3	Building repair and maintenance consultancy services	16
4	Architectural design and project management services	15
5	Advanced technology study	3
6	Project management services	3
7	Contract advisory services	2
8	Structural engineering services	1

**Consultancy agreements approved by the Engineering and Associated Consultants
Selection Board in the past 3 financial years
Scope of consultancy services and number of relevant consultancy agreements**

No.	Scope of consultancy services	Number of consultancy agreements
1	Investigation study, design and project management services of infrastructure projects [#]	98
2	Design and project management services of infrastructure projects [#]	47
3	Feasibility study of infrastructure projects [#]	39
4	Investigation study of infrastructure projects [#]	28

[#] Infrastructure projects mainly include drainage and sewerage, geotechnical and slope, roads and bridges, mechanical and electrical, waterworks, environmental and traffic and transport.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)017

(Question Serial No. 1153)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In paragraph 236 of the 2025-26 Budget, it is mentioned that the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB) supports various departments in enhancing governance of public works projects on all fronts. The multi-disciplinary office is responsible for implementing strategies and reinforcing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance. The PSGO adopts a holistic approach to strengthen cost management and improve the performance of capital works projects. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the percentage of the total expenditures on consultants' fees in the total costs of public works projects in the 2024-25 financial year; and
2. in view of the fact that the Government has employed a large number of civil servants and staff such as engineers with professional abilities, whether the Government will consider deploying civil servants and staff to handle tasks such as investigation, surveying and assessment in future public works projects instead of engaging consultants; if not, of the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

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

1. In the 2024-25 financial year (as at February 2025), the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council has approved in total 34 public works projects involving the engagement of consultants. The consultants' fees in total are about \$2 billion (excluding the remuneration of resident site staff and the costs of site investigation), accounting for about 1.5% of the approved project estimates of the related public works projects.
2. Works departments will take account of the scale and complexity of public works projects as well as the workload and manpower allocation of the departments to

determine whether there is sufficient manpower with the necessary expertise and qualifications within the departments to undertake the work. If necessary, consultants can be engaged through a tendering process to form a project team. In general, the Government's internal project management staff will mainly be responsible for project management, relevant statutory procedures, public consultation and inter-departmental co-ordination, etc. The consultants will focus on technical work including project planning, design, budgeting, preparation of tender documents, etc.

In fact, employing consultants could avoid the need for works departments to recruit a large number of staff so that their staff establishment could be controlled at a reasonable level. As compared with the Government which has a huge structure, consultants are more flexible in staff deployment and they could readily mobilise the requisite professional and technical staff to meet the project needs, and even engage experts to help resolve complicated technical problems, thereby enhancing work efficiency.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)018

(Question Serial No. 1154)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Development Bureau (Works Branch) pressed ahead with the establishment of the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) in 2024, and has promoted Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) method through the BTRi to strengthen monitoring and certification of the MiC method. MiC Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (the Scheme) has been launched by the BTRi since November 2024. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the applications, in the form of a list, under the Scheme, including names of enterprises with applications submitted, enterprises' places of registration, types of certificates and whether approval has been granted;
2. of the measures put in place by the Government to promote the Scheme to Mainland and overseas construction companies, with a view to attracting advanced MiC construction companies to Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing the challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour in recent years. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority and Hospital Authority have started the adoption of MiC. Currently, over 100 projects in both public and private sectors have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction and about to start.

In March 2024, the Development Bureau and the Guangdong Province signed the Letter of Intent on Strengthening Guangdong-Hong Kong Cooperation in Construction and Related Engineering Sectors, deepening co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in

construction and engineering sectors. This includes developing MiC as a quality productive force to contribute to the high-quality national development. The goal is to make the Greater Bay Area a centre of MiC technology, developing MiC into a strategic industry that facilitates the exploration of overseas markets.

It is mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that a Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (the Scheme) would be launched in synergy with production bases in the Mainland, so as to leverage the complementary functions of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. To this end, the DEVB has commissioned the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) to implement the Scheme, which started accepting application in November 2024. The Scheme ensures that accredited MiC manufacturers comply with project requirements for management, production and transportation, and that relevant laws and regulations are observed.

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

1. Since the launch of the Scheme in November 2024, the BTRi has received about 20 applications. The applicants include local and Mainland registered companies, covering applications for full and provisional accreditation certificates. The BTRi is now conducting the vetting work. Since commercial information is involved, it is not appropriate to disclose the list of applicant enterprises. The BTRi expects to announce the first batch of accredited MiC manufacturers in the first half of 2025. The DEVB has proposed to establish a list of approved MiC manufacturers for public works' reference and use.
2. The DEVB has been committed to promoting MiC to local construction sector, the Greater Bay Area and international market. Recently, the DEVB has introduced Hong Kong's MiC projects, technology research and development and the Scheme, as well as the robust supply chain of the Mainland to the delegations of Qatar and Ireland visiting Hong Kong. In addition, the DEVB will, in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council and relevant Mainland authorities, organise and set up MiC thematic forum and display zone in the Construction Innovation Expo to be held in December 2025, showcasing MiC methods and innovative products to enhance international understanding of Hong Kong's MiC and develop overseas markets.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)019

(Question Serial No. 1648)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The community isolation facilities for the epidemic have been progressively placed into standby mode or put to other purposes. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the actual monthly expenditures and total expenditure of various community isolation facilities before they are released for their planned uses in 2024-25 financial year in table form; and
2. whether it still needs to pay part of the operational expenses for the community isolation facilities released for other purposes, or whether rental incomes are being received? Please set out the relevant amounts.

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

Since early 2022, Hong Kong has been severely affected by the fifth wave of the epidemic. Hong Kong urgently needed more isolation, treatment and related facilities to cope with the demand for isolation and treatment of a large number of confirmed patients. With the support of the Central Government, the Government constructed community isolation facilities (CIFs) at nine locations respectively (i.e. the CIFs located in Yuen Long Tam Mei, San Tin, Tsing Yi, the Hong Kong Port Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, Ma Sik Road in Fanling, Hung Shui Kiu, Kai Tak and Penny's Bay, and the CIFs located in the Loop which were funded by and constructed with assistance of the Central Government).

With the subsiding epidemic situation in early 2023 and gradual resumption of social normalcy, the Government on one hand maintains the city's capacity to respond to changes in the epidemic situation, and on the other hand makes subsequent arrangements for community isolation and treatment facilities, while taking into account Hong Kong's economic, livelihood and social needs. The Government has earlier announced the use of CIFs in Yuen Long Tam Mei, San Tin, Tsing Yi and Kai Tak for other purposes, while the sites of CIFs in the Loop, Hung Shui Kiu, the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities of the Hong Kong-

Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Ma Sik Road in Fanling was released for their original planned uses.

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

1. Before implementation of subsequent arrangements for CIFs, the Department of Health has arranged for contractors to provide essential security services there for the integrity of the facilities. Some of the facilities still require outsourced cleansing services and need to maintain the operation of lighting, air-conditioning, fire services and telecommunication equipment, which involves electricity and maintenance costs. Also, the management of the CIF in the Loop also covers the living facilities of the Central Government-aided Emergency Hospital, which include storage area and temporary offices. In 2024-25 financial year, expenditure for maintaining standby CIFs is funded by the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF). Overall speaking, the actual monthly expenditures for various CIFs is about \$2.69 million in total, a breakdown of which is provided as follows:

Location of community isolation facilities	Approximate monthly expenditure (\$'000)
Hung Shui Kiu	120 (monthly expenditure before release of the site in July 2024)
Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge	60 (monthly expenditure before release of the site in July 2024)
Fanling	60 (monthly expenditure before release of the site in July 2024)
Penny's Bay	1,340
Runway area of Kai Tak	420
Lok Ma Chau Loop	930

2. The Government has earlier announced the use of CIFs in Yuen Long Tam Mei, San Tin and Tsing Yi and Kai Tak for other purposes. After modifications, the Yuen Long Tam Mei CIF and San Tin CIF are now used as centralised quarters for imported labour for the construction sector and for holding training courses and trade tests for the construction industry respectively. As these 2 facilities are operated by the Construction Industry Council, the related operating expenditures do not involve public funds.

In addition, after modifications, the Tsing Yi CIF is now a base for youth development and national education managed by the Hong Kong Army Cadets Association. It commenced operation in April 2024, providing a venue and ancillary facilities to youth uniformed groups to hold training on flag raising, foot drill and other youth development-related activities. As at January 2025, the base for youth development and national education has organised about 70 activities (including training on flag raising and foot drill) and more than 6 300 youths have participated in the activities held in relevant facilities. According to the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB), in the past financial year, the estimated operating expenditure of the base charged to public funds is about \$4.9 million.

It is planned to convert the Kai Tak CIF into a youth development facility, which includes setting up a “Youth Post” hostel for Mainland, overseas and local young people to stimulate creativity, develop culture, arts and sports, and engage in mutual exchange. The HYAB has just finished assessing the tenders for the “Youth Post” hostel and selected the operating organisation for the youth development facility. The operating organisation should operate on a self-financing basis and no public funds will be involved in the relevant operational expenses.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)020

(Question Serial No. 2924)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is indicated in paragraph 236 of the Budget Speech that the Government has requested the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) under Development Bureau to support various departments in enhancing governance of public works projects on all fronts. Since its establishment, PSGO has reviewed over 540 public works projects, achieving savings in construction costs by over 15 per cent. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the number of public works projects reviewed by PSGO since its establishment; among them, the number of projects approved, the number of projects not yet approved, and their respective percentages in the total number of projects reviewed;
- (2) of the total amount of money saved and its percentage in respect of public works projects reviewed by PSGO since its establishment, as compared with their project costs before review;
- (3) of the projects under surveillance of PSGO since its establishment that have eventually experienced cost overruns, the cost overrun amounts and the reasons for that (if any); and
- (4) how PSGO will support various departments in enhancing governance of public works projects on all fronts?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

- (1) Since its establishment, the PSGO (including the former PCMO) has scrutinised more than 540 capital works projects, over 450 of which have obtained funding approval from the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo), accounting for more than 80% of the total number of projects.
- (2) Since its establishment, the PSGO (including the former PCMO) has scrutinised more than 540 capital works projects, and successfully saved about \$190 billion in construction cost out of the original estimate of about \$1,200 billion (about 16%) proposed by the project proponent departments.
- (3) Since the establishment of the PSGO (including the former PCMO), of the works projects that have been scrutinised, 2 had to apply for additional funding from the FC of LegCo. Details are as follows:

Financial Year	Title of works project	Original approved project estimate	Increase in approved project estimate	Reason(s) for increase in approved project estimate
2023-24	Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 2	\$2.453 billion	\$130.7 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased provision for price adjustments - to enhance food waste pre-treatment system and wastewater treatment system
2022-23	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	\$1.1714 billion	\$391.2 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - higher than expected tender price

- (4) The PSGO will vigorously scrutinise cost estimates of major projects under planning and design. While not compromising the functionality, quality and safety of works, the PSGO scrutinises project cost estimates in accordance with the principle of "fitness-for-purpose and no frills". We have been collaborating with policy bureaux and departments to enhance the cost-effectiveness of projects, reduce cost and minimize risk of cost overrun through design optimisation by means of exploring different design options, construction methods and procurement models, such as optimisation of foundation works and building layouts, etc.. We will also carry out benchmarking with costs of other similar projects and make reference to the prevailing market situation, to ensure that the project estimates are reasonable. At the construction stage, the DEVB will closely monitor the implementation programme of projects by conducting regular high-level meetings with works departments, complemented with the Project

Surveillance System, for timely intervention so as to mitigate the risks of project delays. At the same time, the PSGO also examines major variations during the construction period to ensure that they are cost effective.

Moreover, the DEVB completed a strategic study on construction costs in late 2024. After identifying the main reasons for the high construction costs in Hong Kong, we have formulated 4 major directions for measures to lower the construction costs, including optimising the project procurement model; reviewing the design standards and requirements; applying advanced technologies and construction methods; and streamlining the approval process.

The DEVB will implement the relevant measures by launching them once they are ready. We will launch pilot schemes for individual construction cost reduction measures, and evaluate the effectiveness of the measures to reduce construction cost.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)021

(Question Serial No. 1242)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Questions regarding cost control of capital works projects and assessment of effectiveness are as follows:

- (1) Please list the works projects that have achieved actual cost reductions and the related rate of reductions of construction expenditure since the establishment of the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO).
- (2) Has the Government conducted any in-depth analysis of the above data and facts to identify the keys to cost-effectiveness control, with a view to facilitating policy bureaux and works departments in formulating engineering options.
- (3) Please list, with details of the situation, works projects that have applied to the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo) for additional funding since the establishment of the PSGO.
- (4) As regards public works projects with unsatisfactory performance, when the estimated expenditure of a project exceeds the original approved project estimate, the concerned policy bureau and controlling officer will have to submit an application for additional funding to the FC of LegCo. Apart from this, what other measures are there under the current monitoring mechanism to ensure smooth implementation of works projects?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

(1) & (3)

Since its establishment, the PSGO (including the former PCMO) has scrutinised more than 540 capital works projects, and successfully saved about \$190 billion in construction cost out of the original estimate of about \$1,200 billion proposed by the project proponent departments. As the data involves internal financial information, we thus provide the relevant figures of the past 5 financial years in the following table:

Financial year	Number of projects scrutinised	Original estimate	Saving in construction cost
2024-25	16	About \$83 billion	About \$11.6 billion
2023-24	47	About \$145 billion	About \$20 billion
2022-23	52	About \$95 billion	About \$13 billion
2021-22	78	About \$180 billion	About \$29 billion
2020-21	54	About \$165 billion	About \$25 billion
Total	247	About \$668 billion	About \$98.6 billion

During the same period, only 2 projects had to apply for additional funding from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council. Details are as follows:

Financial year	Title of works project	Original approved project estimate	Increased approved project estimate
2023-24	Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 2	\$2.453 billion	\$130.7 million
2022-23	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	\$1.1714 billion	\$391.2 million

- (2) Leveraging the experience and data gained from scrutinising project estimates over the years, the PSGO has been collaborating with policy bureaux and departments to formulate and adopt cost effective measures through design optimisation by means of exploring different design options, construction methods and procurement models, such as optimisation of foundation works and building layouts, etc., as well as driving the application of innovative technologies. We will also carry out benchmarking with costs of other similar projects and make reference to the prevailing market situation, to ensure that the project estimates are reasonable.
- (4) As the progress of individual projects are affected by unforeseeable factors, such as COVID-19 epidemic, inclement weather and unexpected site conditions, some of these projects will experience delays in completion. The DEVB will closely monitor the implementation programme of projects by conducting regular high-level meetings with various works departments, complemented with the Project Surveillance System, for timely intervention so as to mitigate the risks of project delays. Also, to address the risks of project delays, government departments have adopted the "New Engineering Contract" (NEC) form in public works projects. With the introduction of an early warning mechanism in NEC, both the client's representative and the contractor are encouraged to identify and raise potential risks that may affect the project as early as

possible, and when construction difficulties and problems are encountered, to negotiate and formulate the optimal solution for the smooth implementation of the project according to the procedure framework and timeframes prescribed in the contract.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)022

(Question Serial No. 2852)

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

Subhead (No. & title): (694) Archaeological Excavations (block vote)

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding Subhead (694) Archaeological Excavations under Programme 2, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) Please provide the following information on the archaeological excavations conducted by the Government in each of the past 2 years: (i) staff establishment, strength and related expenditures involved; (ii) location of excavation works; and (iii) quantity and category of relics found.
- (2) It is learnt that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department found suspected animal fossils on the Port Island, Sai Kung as early as 2013 and samples, which were intended for scientific research and identification, were collected. However, the relevant work was delayed for more than 10 years due to various reasons. It was not until March 2024 that the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) was contacted to discuss follow up actions. Will the Government review and enhance various departments' notification mechanisms for the discovery of suspected relics? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?
- (3) What were the respective numbers of reported cases of discovery of suspected relics received by the AMO from other government departments, public and private organisations, and the public, and the number of cases requiring follow-up actions upon preliminary investigation and their details in each of the past 5 years?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

- (1) The staff establishment and strength of the archaeology unit of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) under the Development Bureau in financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25 were both 17, and the expenditures for these 2 years were \$11.35 million and \$11.86 million respectively. Such personnel are responsible for archaeological excavations and monitoring the excavations conducted under archaeological licences.

The details of the archaeological excavations conducted by the AMO are as follows:

Year	Number of archaeological excavation projects	Location	Significant archaeological discoveries
2023-24	8	Tuen Mun (Lung Kwu Tan); Tai Po (Wun Yiu, Tai Tung Wo Liu, Cheung Shue Tan); and Islands (Lo So Shing of Lamma Island, Tong Fuk Miu Wan of Lantau Island)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prehistoric ceramic sherds and stone implements were found in Lung Kwu Tan of Tuen Mun, Tong Fuk Miu Wan of Lantau Island, and Cheung Shue Tan of Tai Po. 2. Prehistoric ceramic sherds and stone implements, as well as ceramic sherds and kiln furniture of Tang dynasty were found in Lo So Shing of Lamma Island. 3. Ceramic kiln remnants and artefacts of Qing dynasty were found in Wun Yiu of Tai Po.
2024-25*	4	Tai Po (Yung Shue O) and Islands (Tung Wan of Cheung Chau)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A large quantity of stone implements were excavated from Yung Shue O of Tai Po. 2. Prehistoric ceramic sherds and stone implements of prehistoric period were found in Tung Wan of Cheung Chau.

*Note: The above small-scale archaeological work was conducted by the AMO in light of the construction of small houses by villagers within the boundary of “Sites of Archaeological Interest”. Separately, since the excavation of dinosaur fossils on Port Island falls under the scope of search and study on palaeontological fossils, it is not included in the above archaeological works.

The details of archaeological excavations conducted under archaeological licences and monitored by the AMO are as follows:

Year	Number of archaeological investigations and excavation projects monitored	Locations	Significant archaeological discoveries
2023-24	12	Kowloon City (Kai Tak); Wong Tai Sin (Ngai Tsin Wai); Yuen Long (San Tin, Mai Po, Deep Bay); Tuen Mun (Lam Tei and Siu Hang Tsuen); North District; Islands (Tung Chung, Man Kok Tsui waters of Lantau Island and Kau Yi Chau waters)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building remnants, ceramic sherds and abandoned building materials of Qing dynasty were found in Ngai Tsin Wai of Wong Tai Sin. 2. Building remnants and artefacts of the late 19th century to early 20th century were found in Lam Tei of Tuen Mun. 3. A small quantity of prehistoric pottery and stone tools, as well as ceramic sherds of the Song-Yuan period were found in Tung Chung of Lantau Island.
2024-25	12	Kowloon City (Lung Tsun Stone Bridge); Wong Tai Sin (Ngai Tsin Wai); Yuen Long (Lin Fa Tei, Shan Ha Tsuen); Islands (Tung Chung of Lantau Island); Wan Chai (Magazine Gap Road); Tai Po (Yung Shue O waters); Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O waters, Yim Tim Tsai waters, Ma Nam Wat waters); Kwai Tsing (Tsing Yi to Lantau waters); Islands (Sunny Bay waters of Lantau Island)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building remnants, a large quantity of ceramic sherds and abandoned building materials of Ming and Qing dynasties, as well as remnants of Han dynasty were found in Ngai Tsin Wai of Wong Tai Sin. 2. Structures of Lung Tsun Stone Bridge of Qing dynasty were excavated in Kowloon City. 3. A small quantity of ceramic sherds of Song to Ming dynasties were found near Shan Ha Tsuen of Yuen Long.

- (2) The AMO frequently offers advice on development and works projects, and reminds project proponents that no person other than the Secretary for Development (SDEV) and designated persons authorised by the SDEV shall excavate antiquities. Any person who discovers or knows of the discovery of an antiquity or supposed antiquity must immediately report the discovery to the AMO. In addition, the Government has implemented an administrative measure since 2008, requiring proponent departments of government works projects to consult the AMO on whether a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) should be conducted for capital works projects. If an HIA is required, project proponent departments should submit heritage conservation proposals and conservation measures for AMO's approval to ensure proper heritage conservation, such as conducting archaeological watching brief during the works period. If antiquities with archaeological significance or fossils are found during the works period, project proponent departments should inform the AMO. The AMO will continue to remind departments to inform AMO if antiquities with archaeological significance or fossils are found during the works period, and will review from time to time the enhancement of the notification mechanism for the discovery of antiquities or supposed antiquities with relevant departments.
- (3) From 2020-21 to 2024-25, the AMO received a total of 47 discoveries or enquiries about supposed antiquities. The details are tabulated as follows:

Years	Other government departments (a)	Public and private organisations (b)	Notification by the public (c)
2020-2021	0	0	3
2021-2022	1	0	5
2022-2023	1	0	13
2023-2024	1	1	6
2024-2025	0	0	16
Total	3	1	43
Total (a)+(b)+(c)			47

After preliminary inspection and study, 3 of the above cases require follow-up actions, including 3 supposed pre-historic rock carvings in Southern District, in which the AMO has kept a record and is conducting a detailed study. After a detailed study, the stone tablet bearing the inscription “九龍關” near Ma Wan Back Street has been included in the list of Government Historic Sites identified by AMO for protection. Furthermore, suspected vertebrate fossils, which were subsequently confirmed as dinosaur fossils by experts, had been discovered on Port Island. Excavations were conducted on Port Island and rock samples containing dinosaur fossils are being prepared for future in-depth study.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2960)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) and Smart Site Safety System (4S) Labelling Scheme (the Scheme), will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) What are the annual numbers of applications received, approved and rejected, and the amounts of funding involved in approved applications since the launch of the CITF? Please provide the statistics by (i) technology adoption category (i.e., Building Information Modelling, advanced construction technologies, Modular Integrated Construction, prefabricated steel rebar and manpower development), (ii) nature of enterprises (i.e., small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and non-SMEs) and (iii) category of enterprises (including but not limited to principal contractors, sub-contractors and consultants).
- (2) What is the average approval time for each application received as mentioned in Item (1)? Please provide a breakdown by item category (i.e., pre-approved items and non-pre-approved items). What are the main reasons for rejecting the applications mentioned in Item (1)?
- (3) It is learnt that the Government has subsidised contractors of private development projects to adopt 4S through the CITF since April 2023. How many CITF applications from private development projects have been received by the Government every year? Among such applications, what are the numbers of approved applications and the amounts of funding involved? Please provide a breakdown by nature of enterprises (i.e., SMEs and non-SMEs).
- (4) What is the current balance of the CITF? How many enterprises have been reimbursed the subsidy ceiling (i.e., \$7.5 million) under the CITF?
- (5) What were the numbers of applications received, approved, rejected and under process from the launch of the Scheme in May 2024 to the end of 2024, and those in 2025 so far? Please provide a breakdown by works category (i.e., public or private works). What is the average processing time for each of those applications received and the main reasons for rejecting the applications?

- (6) What is the current percentage of construction sites issued with a label in the total number of construction sites in the territory? Please provide a breakdown by works category (i.e., public or private works).
- (7) It is learnt that to tie in with the work of the Development Bureau (DEVB), the Labour Department (LD) will, during site inspections, pay attention to whether 4S is being implemented in earnest at the construction sites with labels, and will pass the inspection information to the DEVB for appropriate follow-up actions if necessary. Has the DEVB received such information from the LD since the implementation of the Scheme? If so, what are the details, number of construction sites involved (provide a breakdown by public and private works), reasons for LD's referral, follow-up actions of the DEVB and the numbers of construction sites whose labels have been confiscated due to unsatisfactory adoption of 4S (provide a breakdown by public and private works)?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

The Government injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) in 2018 and 2022 respectively. The CITF aims to encourage and support wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies in the construction industry, promote productivity, uplift built quality, improve site safety, enhance environmental performance, and boost the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in the application of new technologies. As at February 2025, the CITF has approved about \$1.6 billion to support over 1 300 enterprises (60% of which are small and medium enterprises (SMEs)) to adopt various technologies in local construction projects. Also, over 18 000 technology training places have been approved.

- (1) As at end-February 2025, the statistics on approval under the CITF are as follows:
[Note: the figure shown in the table refers to the number of applications received, the figure within () refers to the number of applications approved and the figure within [] refers to the number of applications rejected. After subtracting the number of applications approved and rejected from the number of applications received, the remaining figure refers to the number of applications withdrawn by applicants and being processed by the CITF.

(i) By technology adoption category:

	From October 2018 to December 2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	From January to February 2025	Total
(a) Building Information Modelling	629 (440) [8]	477 (398) [13]	442 (351) [8]	530 (360) [5]	396 (291) [27]	433 (389) [23]	57 (47) [4]	2 964 (2 276) [88]
(b) Advanced construction technology	339 (162) [46]	419 (318) [35]	408 (284) [17]	561 (300) [18]	558 (364) [61]	838 (395) [36]	100 (103) [7]	3 223 (1 926) [220]
(c) Modular Integrated Construction	38 (17) [10]	37 (20) [12]	57 (18) [21]	31 (6) [7]	35 (14) [8]	39 (15) [6]	8 (3) [3]	245 (93) [67]
(d) Prefabricated steel rebar	41 (35) [1]	51 (40) [1]	43 (37) [0]	40 (37) [0]	62 (44) [0]	60 (65) [2]	4 (8) [1]	301 (266) [5]
(e) Manpower development	43 (20) [9]	8 (6) [2]	13 (6) [1]	6 (1) [0]	7 (3) [0]	18 (7) [0]	3 (0) [0]	98 (43) [12]

Total amount of funding approved	\$139.47 million	\$223.99 million	\$197.02 million	\$232.50 million	\$320.33 million	\$377.64 million	\$117.23 million	\$1.60818 billion
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(ii) By nature of enterprises:

	From October 2018 to December 2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	From January to February 2025	Total
SMEs#	477 (292) [27]	430 (326) [25]	450 (334) [12]	458 (258) [12]	422 (289) [28]	705 (346) [37]	82 (78) [9]	3 024 (1 923) [150]
Non-SMEs	613 (382) [47]	562 (456) [38]	513 (362) [35]	710 (446) [18]	636 (427) [68]	683 (525) [30]	90 (83) [6]	3 807 (2 681) [242]
Total amount of funding approved	\$139.47 million	\$223.99 million	\$197.02 million	\$232.50 million	\$320.33 million	\$377.64 million	\$117.23 million	\$1.60818 billion

SMEs refer to companies with less than 50 staff members.

(iii) By category of enterprises:

	From October 2018 to December 2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	From January to February 2025	Total
Consultant	246 (168) [6]	194 (158) [14]	211 (155) [14]	267 (171) [5]	212 (156) [7]	262 (220) [17]	60 (22) [2]	1 452 (1 050) [65]
Principal contractor	357 (222) [21]	345 (268) [25]	306 (224) [17]	365 (229) [10]	355 (228) [50]	423 (282) [19]	46 (52) [9]	2 197 (1 505) [151]
Subcontractor	442 (264) [37]	445 (350) [22]	432 (311) [15]	530 (302) [14]	482 (329) [39]	468 (348) [31]	61 (67) [4]	2 860 (1 971) [162]
Others	45 (20) [10]	8 (6) [2]	14 (6) [1]	6 (2) [1]	9 (3) [0]	235 (21) [0]	5 (20) [0]	322 (78) [14]

- (2) The average approval time for each application of pre-approved items and non-pre-approved items under the CITF is 23 days and 39 days respectively, which are lower than the time under the performance pledge, i.e., 30 days and 60 days respectively.

The main reasons for rejecting the applications mentioned in Item (1) include:

- (i) the products under application are not considered as innovative (e.g., they have been widely adopted or have existed in the market for quite a long period of time);
- (ii) failure to prove that the products under application can meet the main objectives of the CITF (i.e., promoting productivity, uplifting built quality, improving site safety or enhancing environmental performance);
- (iii) the amount applied for exceeds the funding ceiling;
- (iv) the products or software under application is not covered by the CITF (e.g., general word processing software); and

- (v) applicants' failure to provide information required under the scheme within 3 months upon submission of their applications.
- (3) Various initiatives have been implemented under the CITF since April 2023 to promote the adoption of the Smart Site Safety System (4S) in private development projects. The initiatives include raising the funding ceiling for each applicant from \$6 million to \$7.5 million, of which the additional \$1.5 million must be used on the 4S, streamlining the application procedures, providing corresponding product packages and support for different types of works projects, and extending the scope of subsidy to cover relevant additional expenses in various aspects of adopting the 4S (including upgrading the network capacity, additional manpower to be employed for system operation, maintenance and technical support). In addition, since May 2024, the Government has extended the scope of subsidy to cover local mobile plant / tower crane rental companies for funding application for 4S installation.

As at end-February 2025, the application figures relating to 4S are as follows:

	April 2023 to March 2024	April 2024 to February 2025	Total
Number of applications received	SMEs: 31 non-SMEs: 42	SMEs: 300 non-SMEs: 123	SMEs: 331 non-SMEs: 165
Number of applications approved	SMEs: 14 non-SMEs: 26	SMEs: 74 non-SMEs: 53	SMEs: 88 non-SMEs: 79
Total amount of funding approved	SMEs: \$6.88 million non-SMEs: \$2.88 million	SMEs: \$16.54 million non-SMEs: \$60.63 million	SMEs: \$23.42 million non-SMEs: \$63.51 million

- (4) After taking into account the approved applications and the interest income, the current balance of the CITF for application is about \$800 million. The CITF raised the funding ceiling for each enterprise to \$7.5 million in April 2023. Enterprises can claim subsidies a few times, and no enterprises have been reimbursed subsidies up to the funding ceiling of \$7.5 million so far.

(5) & (6)

The 4S Labelling Scheme (the Labelling Scheme) was launched in May 2024. As at March 2025, a total of 643 applications have been received under the Labelling Scheme. The details are tabulated as follows:

	From May to December 2024		From January to March 2025		Total
	Public works (Note)	Private works	Public works (Note)	Private works	
Number of applications received	542	66	30	5	643
Number of applications withdrawn	47	2	0	0	49
Number of applications rejected	0	0	0	0	0

Note: Including public works and works of statutory bodies

Contractors can submit an application to the Construction Industry Council (CIC). After on-site inspection and evaluation of proper adoption of 4S, they will be issued with a label. Although each case is different, the average processing time is about 3 months. If the CIC notes that the adoption of 4S at construction sites is not fully in place when approving label applications, it will give advice according to the situations of individual construction sites so as to support the relevant contractors in proper adoption of 4S.

As at March 2025, 524 construction sites have been issued with a label, including 371 public works construction sites, 104 public sector construction sites of statutory bodies and 49 construction sites of private development projects.

- (7) Since the launch of the scheme, the issued labels of 3 construction sites have been revoked due to improper adoption of 4S, including 1 public works construction site and 2 construction sites of private development projects. The Development Bureau (DEVB) has received from the Labour Department (LD) 1 referral case involving suspected improper adoption of 4S at 1 public works construction site. Upon receipt of the referral case from the LD, the CIC has arranged a surprise inspection targeting the construction site concerned. Having learnt that the construction site concerned is preparing to submit an application under the Labelling Scheme, the CIC has taken the opportunity to give advice to the contractor concerned so as to support proper adoption of 4S at the construction site concerned.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)024

(Question Serial No. 2961)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As regards Design for Safety, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) the number of public works projects having implemented Design for Safety each year since 2016, given that the Development Bureau (DEVB) has required the implementation of Design for Safety in public works projects with an estimated project sum exceeding \$500 million since 2016; whether the effectiveness of such requirement in enhancing site safety has been continuously reviewed, such as by comparing the data on industrial accidents between these public works projects and private works projects of similar scale without the implementation of Design for Safety; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) the implementation details of the pilot scheme on Design for Safety (the Scheme) of the Construction Industry Council and the expenditure involved, given that the Construction Industry Council rolled out the Scheme last year to promote a wider adoption of Design for Safety in the industry; the number of projects participating in the Scheme, with a breakdown by public works projects and non-public works projects; and
- (3) whether the Government will study the practices of other advanced economies (such as Singapore and the United Kingdom) in requiring private projects to adopt Design for Safety in order to enhance site safety?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (1) The Government has been promoting the adoption of Design for Safety in public works projects. The Development Bureau (DEVB) started to systematically promote Design for Safety back in 2006, and published a set of guidance notes and worked examples on Design for Safety in 2006, which were subsequently updated in 2016 to clearly demarcate the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders further at various stages of a works project. At present, public works projects with estimated cost

exceeding \$500 million are required to implement Design for Safety. So far, over 200 public works projects have implemented Design for Safety.

Design for Safety is one of the measures implemented to enhance the site safety of public works projects. Although we do not have sufficient data to solely quantify the effect of the implementation of this measure, the relevant data reveal that, with the implementation of Design for Safety, the accident rate of public works projects has dropped by nearly 50% in 2024 as compared with that of a decade ago. This demonstrates that the implementation of Design for Safety can help enhance the safety performance of construction sites and has created a positive impact on site safety.

- (2) To further promote the adoption of Design for Safety in the construction industry, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) rolled out a pilot scheme on Design for Safety (the scheme) in 2024 with the aim of providing professional advice, training and assistance to project proponents interested in implementing Design for Safety. At present, there are 10 projects, including 2 public works projects and 8 non-public works projects, participating in the scheme. As the scheme is managed by the CIC, we do not have information on the expenditure involved.
- (3) At present, there is no consensus in the construction industry on regulating the adoption of Design for Safety in private projects by legislative means. Some stakeholders indicated that it would be difficult to generalise architectural design as it would be affected by a number of factors including project nature, locations, project characteristics and trends of the times. Stakeholders are worried that legislative regulation would result in constraints to the design and hinder the development of the industry. In addition, stakeholders are worried about contravening the law inadvertently in the design process and facing criminal liabilities. We therefore at this stage consider that a more pragmatic strategy is to continue working with the CIC and other stakeholders to promote a wider adoption of Design for Safety in the construction industry, instead of legislative means. At the same time, we will continue to listen to the views of industry stakeholders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)025****(Question Serial No. 2474)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Development Bureau and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million to provide on-the-job training subsidies to young people enrolling in part-time construction-related degree programmes over the next 2 academic years. What kind of eligibility assessment model will be adopted for subsidy applications (such as academic qualification accreditation, industry qualifications, weighting of working experience)? How can the system ensure that the funding goes to young community who really learn on the job? Have an anti-deception mechanism and penalty provisions been put in place? Does the subsidy adjustment mechanism link to the salary index of the construction industry or make reference to the cost of living of local low-income young people? Can the assessment reports on funding efficiency of similar subsidy plans in the past 2 years be disclosed?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

To attract more young people to join the construction industry, the 2023-24 Budget has allocated \$100 million to launch the On-the-job Training Subsidy Pilot Scheme (the Scheme) to subsidise higher diploma graduates to enrol in part-time construction-related degree programmes. The Scheme has been well-received by young people and the industry. In the first year of its rollout, there was an average increase of more than 50% in the number of enrollment for the relevant programmes. The target of the Scheme is to provide relevant subsidies to 1 000 trainees, and the actual number of participating trainees who are receiving subsidies has already met the target. It is mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget that the Government and the Construction Industry Council will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million to provide on-the-job training subsidies to trainees enrolling in relevant programmes over the next two academic years (i.e. 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years). It is anticipated to further benefit 1 000 trainees.

The proposed subsidy amount is the same as that of the scheme implemented since 2023-24 academic year, with each trainee receiving three years of subsidy, amounting to a maximum of \$90,000 per trainee. Participating institutions must ensure that the trainee receiving subsidies meet all the relevant requirements such as regular class participation and continued employment, before disbursing subsidies to trainees each quarter. Participating institutions concerned have established task forces to verify and approve the applicants' eligibility. Applicants are required to submit information to prove their employment status in the construction industry, which aims to ensure that the subsidy recipients are genuine working youths who pursue studies in parallel. To deter fraud, the task forces will conduct sample check and authentication on applications, and will contact employers stated in the applications for verification. If any false declarations are discovered, or if successful applicants fail to meet all the requirements of the Scheme, we reserve the rights to recover part or all of the subsidies disbursed or to take other legal actions. We will refer alleged fraud cases to law enforcement agencies for follow-up actions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)026

(Question Serial No. 0426)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In the past 3 years, did the Development Bureau procure external legal consultancy services in accordance with the Stores and Procurement Regulations of the Government without going through the Department of Justice? If so, what were the nature of such services and the expenditures incurred?

Asked by: Hon LAM San-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

In the past 3 years, the Development Bureau (Works Branch) did not procure any external legal consultancy services without going through the Department of Justice.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0316)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 164 of the Budget Speech that the Government is collaborating with the Guangdong Province to leverage complementary advantages of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) methods and develop MiC as an industry in the Greater Bay Area. Efforts will be dedicated to research and development, quality accreditation and international marketing of MiC. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the number of government housing projects adopting MiC in the past year and a breakdown of the expenditures involved; and
- (2) the expenditures for transporting MiC modules in respect of each project in the past year?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The construction industry has been facing the challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour in recent years. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority and Hospital Authority, have started the adoption of MiC. Currently, over 100 projects in both public and private sectors have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction and about to start.

In March 2024, the DEVB and the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province signed the Letter of Intent on Strengthening Guangdong-Hong Kong Co-operation in Construction and Related Engineering Sectors, deepening co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in construction and engineering sectors. This includes developing MiC as a quality productive force to contribute to the high-quality national

development. The goal is to make the Greater Bay Area a centre of MiC technology centre, developing MiC into a strategic industry that facilitates the exploration of overseas markets.

It is mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that a Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme would be launched in synergy with production bases in the Mainland, so as to leverage the complementarity of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. To this end, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has commissioned the Building Technology Research Institute to implement the Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme, which started accepting applications in November 2024. The scheme ensures that accredited MiC manufacturers comply with project requirements for management, production and transportation, and that relevant laws and regulations are observed.

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

(1)&(2)

In 2024-25, government expenditures on housing projects adopting MiC through the Architectural Services Department are set out in the table below. However, the costs of transporting MiC modules have not been calculated separately in the estimates for the above projects.

	MiC Housing Projects	2024-25 revised estimate (\$ million)
1	Construction of Fire Station-cum-ambulance Depot with Departmental Quarters and Facilities in Area 72, Tseung Kwan O	180
2	Implementation of Light Public Housing - the First Batch of Projects	3,225
3	Implementation of Light Public Housing - the Second Batch of Projects	709
4	Redevelopment of Western Police Married Quarters site	205

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0367)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

On formulating and implementing a series of strategic cost reduction measures in project delivery, procurement models, utilisation of innovative technologies, streamlining approval process, and review of standards, please inform this Committee:

1. whether targets have been set for the procurement models, including cost and time that can be saved; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) commenced a strategic study on construction costs (the Strategic Study) and has identified five major reasons for the relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong¹, and has summarised four major directions for measures to lower the construction costs, including (1) optimising the project procurement model to reduce risk premium; (2) reviewing the design standards and requirements to increase cost-effectiveness; (3) applying advanced technologies and construction methods to uplift productivity; and (4) streamlining the approval process to boost work efficiency.

¹ The five major reasons for relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong include (1) labour cost; (2) contract risk premium on construction materials and equipment; (3) design standards and requirements; (4) approval process; and (5) project complexity.

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

To enhance the speed and efficiency of delivery for public works projects in Hong Kong, we have launched a series of enhancement measures for the procurement models, including the introduction of a new provision of "innovation and technology" into NEC contracts and a reward mechanism into public works contracts to encourage consultants and contractors to jointly and actively formulate a more cost-effective construction option to raise efficiency and lower construction cost.

In addition, we have also consolidated the experience of overseas countries and the Mainland, exchanged views with the stakeholders of the industry, and adopted innovative procurement models for construction materials and equipment in the suitable public works contracts. We have pilot plans for the measures and will launch them once they are ready. For example, we have adopted the framework contract procurement model and “Early Contractor Involvement” model in suitable public works contracts, and will actively explore the adoption of direct procurement or central procurement for MiC modules and steel reinforcement. We have already launched pilot schemes for some innovative procurement models, and will evaluate their effectiveness and refine the schemes.

Considering each construction cost reduction measure will bring different levels of construction cost savings for individual projects, we will collect more market data and assess the overall effectiveness of the measures to reduce construction costs, including cost and time savings.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)029

(Question Serial No. 0490)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

On continuing to monitor the delivery of capital works projects to ensure timely completion and that they are within budget, please inform this Committee of:

1. the number of works projects that had a final outturn expenditure higher than the tender price in the past 3 years, the cost overruns and reasons; and
2. the number of works projects that could not be completed on time in the past 3 years, the reasons and follow-up actions that have been taken.

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

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

1. Regarding finalisation of works contracts, in the past 3 years, out of the 250 completed capital works contracts with final accounts settled, about 40% had their final contract sum higher than the awarded contract sum, amounting to about an increase of \$7 billion in total, i.e. 10% of the total sum of these contracts. It is mainly due to the additional costs incurred as a result of variation of works in the light of different situations during the construction period, such as design revisions in view of public aspirations or unforeseeable geological conditions. However, it is expected that the total expenditure of the works projects would not exceed their approved project estimates.

2. The DEVB has been closely monitoring the performance of the projects under the Capital Works Programme. Quarterly reports are issued on a regular basis to update the progress of major capital works projects. Amongst the major projects completed in the past 3 years, 46 did not complete on time. Their progress was affected by unforeseeable circumstances, such as COVID-19 epidemic, inclement weather and unforeseen site conditions.

The DEVB closely monitor the implementation programme of projects by conducting regular high-level meetings with various works departments, complemented with the Project Surveillance System, for timely intervention so as to mitigate the risks of project delays. Also, to address the risks of project delays, government departments have adopted the “New Engineering Contract” (NEC) form in public works projects. With the introduction of an early warning mechanism in NEC, both the client's representative and the contractor are encouraged to identify and raise potential risks that may affect the project as early as possible, and when construction difficulties and problems are encountered, to negotiate and formulate the optimal solution for the smooth implementation of the project according to the prescribed procedure framework and timeframes in the contract.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2520)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned under this Programme that the Government will continue to oversee the administration of the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) by the Construction Industry Council and the implementation of enhancement measures arising from the review on CITF for promoting wider adoption of technologies and greater provision of related training. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

- (1) the operational details of items under the CITF, the assessment of application effectiveness and the expenditures involved in the past 2 years;
- (2) the new items that are planned to be implemented in 2025-26 and the related details.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Government injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) in 2018 and 2022 respectively, with a view to encouraging and supporting wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies in the construction industry to promote productivity, uplift built quality, improve site safety, enhance environmental performance, and to build up the capacities of enterprises and practitioners to leverage innovation for continuous improvement. As at February 2025, the CITF has approved about \$1.61 billion to support over 1 300 enterprises (60% of which are small and medium enterprises) to adopt various technologies in local construction projects, and has approved over 18 000 technology training places.

- (1) In 2023/24 and 2024/25, the CITF continued to support the industry to adopt Building Information Modelling (BIM), Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), Prefabricated Steel Rebar, other advance construction technologies and related manpower development. As at February 2025, the number of applications approved and the amount of subsidies involved are as follows:

	Number of applications approved	Amount of subsidy (\$)
BIM	2 276	180 million
MiC and MiMEP	93	230 million
Prefabricated Steel Rebar	266	280 million
Advance Construction Technologies	1 926	900 million
Manpower Development	43	16 million
Total	4 604	1.61 billion

Moreover, since 2023, we have been enhancing the operation of the CITF. The initiatives include raising the funding ceiling for each applicant from \$6 million to \$7.5 million, of which the additional \$1.5 million must be used on the Smart Site Safety System (4S), streamlining the application procedures, and extending the scope of subsidy to cover relevant ancillary expenses in various aspects of adopting 4S (including upgrading the network capacity, additional manpower for 4S operation, maintenance and technical support). In addition, a round of funding application for 4S installation was conducted specifically for local rental companies for mobile plants / tower cranes.

Since the introduction of the above measures, there has been a significant increase in the number of construction projects adopting various technologies. According to a survey by the Construction Industry Council, about 60% of the responded construction companies have applied BIM in their projects; about 60% of the responded contractors have used prefabricated steel rebar components on their construction sites; and about 70% of the construction companies that have used the CITF indicated that the use of innovative technologies has significantly increased their productivity, and reduced manpower demand for the relevant work processes by over 20%. In addition, about 90% of local mobile plants / tower cranes have installed 4S or will do so soon.

- (2) In 2025-26, we will explore how to effectively assist the construction industry through the CITF, particularly small and medium-sized companies and subcontractors that employ a larger number of workers. In respect of trades with significant ageing of workers, we will enhance promotion for the application of construction robots and other automation technologies. We will also promote artificial intelligence, MiMEP, and will support small and medium-sized companies in using BIM. We are consulting the industry and the committees that operate the CITF regarding the supporting measures, which are expected to be rolled out in phases starting from the second quarter of 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)031

(Question Serial No. 2521)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government states that it actively collaborates with Guangdong Province to leverage complementary advantages of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) methods and develop MiC as an industry in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). Efforts will be dedicated to research and development, quality accreditation and international marketing of MiC. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the itemised expenditures on its works projects that have adopted the MiC methods in the past 3 financial years;
- (2) its enhanced efforts in promoting MiC methods to the industry and the results of effectiveness assessment;
- (3) its collaborative projects with GBA cities on MiC industry, and the staff establishments and expenditures involved; and
- (4) the details of the works projects adopting MiC methods that are expected to be approved in 2025-26, with a table listing the titles, numbers, estimates, etc. of the relevant works projects?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing the challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour in recent years. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority and Hospital Authority, have started the adoption of MiC. Currently, over 100 projects in both public and private sectors have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction and about to start.

It is mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that a Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Certification Scheme (the Scheme) would be launched in synergy with production bases in the Mainland, so as to leverage the complementary functions of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. To this end, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has commissioned the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) to implement the Scheme, which started accepting applications in November 2024. The Scheme ensures that certified MiC manufacturers comply with project requirements for management, production and transportation, and that relevant laws and regulations are observed.

The DEVB is proactively fostering exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a robust ecosystem for the industry.

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

- (1) The overall expenditures of the projects adopting MiC awarded by the Government through the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) in the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) are set out at **Annex 1**. As MiC is part of the whole project, a breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available.
- (2) To encourage the wider adoption of high productivity construction methods such as MiC by the industry, the Government has introduced a series of measures including granting a 10% concession for MiC floor area in the calculation of gross floor area and site coverage, and up to a 4% relaxation of storey height restriction for MiC floors in private development projects, providing subsidies through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund, and setting up the Modular Integrated Construction Dedicated Section to provide technical support to the industry to strengthen communication and collaboration with relevant departments, and facilitate project approvals. These measures will effectively promote the development of MiC. We are pleased to see the increasing participation of the private sector in MiC projects.
- (3) As the Greater Bay Area (GBA) is a major manufacturing base of MiC modules, our co-operation with the Guangdong Provincial Government is particular important. In March 2024, the DEVB and the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province (DHURDGP) signed the Letter of Intent on Strengthening Guangdong-Hong Kong Co-operation in Construction and Related Engineering Sectors, deepening co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in construction and engineering sectors. This includes developing MiC as a quality productive force to contribute to the high-quality national development. The goal is to make the GBA a centre of MiC technology, developing MiC into a strategic industry that facilitates the exploration of overseas markets. Moreover, the Governments of Guangdong and Hong Kong expect to jointly publish the Guidebook on MiC Cross-border Trading in the first half of 2025, to provide clear guidelines to relevant manufacturing enterprises, so as to facilitate the production of MiC modules in the GBA, as well as cross-boundary transportation. The DEVB set up the Modular Integrated Construction Dedicated Section in 2023 to oversee and support the aforementioned initiatives, ensuring smooth implementation. The dedicated section consists of 4 non-directorate professional staff members, and its annual expenditure is about \$7 million.

- (4) Projects adopting MiC that are expected to be awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in 2025-26 are set out at **Annex 2**.

MiC-related projects awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in the past 3 years (i.e. 2022-23 to 2024-25) and their overall expenditures are set out in the table below.

	Works project	Annual expenditure (\$ million)		
		2022-23 (Actual)	2023-24 (Actual)	2024-25 (Revised)
1	A 36-classroom primary school at Area 9, Tai Po	135.017	197.154	34.0
2	A 30-classroom primary school in Tsuen Wan West Station (TW7) Development, Tsuen Wan	59.921	179.996	80.0
3	A 24-classroom primary school at Au Pui Wan Street, Fo Tan, Sha Tin	53.599	83.937	157.0
4	A 30-classroom primary school at Site KT2c, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	40.542	102.882	141.0
5	A 30-classroom primary school and a 6-classroom kindergarten at Site E-1, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	49.858	63.452	149.0
6	The development of Chinese Medicine Hospital in Tseung Kwan O	542.023	508.185	2,347.1
7	Construction of fire station-cum-ambulance depot with departmental quarters and facilities in Area 72, Tseung Kwan O	80.537	99.951	180.0
8	A 30-classroom primary school at Site KT2a, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong	8.940	29.987	130.0
9	A 30-classroom primary school at Lin Cheung Road, Sham Shui Po	2.904	96.661	145.0
10	A 30-classroom primary school at Site 1B-4, Kai Tak Development	11.741	79.414	72.0
11	Expansion of the Legislative Council Complex	85.687	451.381	600.0
12	Two special schools at Renfrew Road, Kowloon Tong	43.787	61.388	120.0
13	Implementation of Light Public Housing – the First Batch of Projects	-	272.584	3,225.0
14	Implementation of Light Public Housing – the Second Batch of Projects	-	-	709.0
15	Kwun Tong Composite Development Project	104.890	253.629	325.0
16	Construction of a Public Market in Tin Shui Wai	24.276	46.594	94.3
17	Redevelopment of Western Police Married Quarters site	18.410	127.845	205.0
18	A 12-classroom special school at Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai	-	-	35.4
19	Joint-user Complex with Market in Area 67, Tseung Kwan O	-	-	151.6
20	Redevelopment of Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre	-	-	138.5

MiC-related projects expected to be awarded by the Government through the ArchSD in 2025-26 and their overall estimates are set out in the table below.

	MiC projects	Estimated project cost
1	A 30-classroom primary school at Area 89 (Northern side), Tung Chung	About \$0.6 billion
2	A 30-classroom primary school at Area 17, Fanling North New Development Area	About \$0.5 billion
3	A 30-classroom primary school at Area 29, Kwu Tung North New Development Area	About \$0.6 billion
4	A 30-classroom primary school at Site E-2, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	About \$0.5 billion
5	A 30-classroom secondary school at Site E-3, Development of Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	Estimation is underway
6	Construction of Fire Station-cum-Ambulance Depot with Departmental Quarters and Facilities of the Fire Services Department at Anderson Road Quarry Site, Sai Kung	About \$1.2 billion

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)032

(Question Serial No. 2534)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

To encourage and support the industry and departments to apply Building Information Modelling (BIM), will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) how to assist small and medium construction companies and individual architects in obtaining the initial investment required for BIM at the policy level, including software, hardware and training costs; if so, of the details and the numbers of companies and organisations that have newly adopted BIM in the past 3 years;
- (2) whether a mechanism has been established to assess the data of BIM integrated effectiveness in enhancing the efficiency of construction projects, reducing mistakes, controlling costs and enhancing construction quality; if so, of the details and results; and
- (3) whether a plan will be put in place to provide incentives, such as tax concessions, and allowances and subsidies to encourage more enterprises to adopt BIM in 2025-26, with a view to increasing the popularity of adopting BIM among enterprises; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

Since January 2018, the Government has been requiring public works projects with project estimates exceeding \$30 million to use Building Information Modelling (BIM) for their design and construction. We have been continuously promoting the application of BIM in public works. In addition, the Government published the Roadmap on Adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM) for Building Plan Preparation and Submission in December 2023 with the target of extending BIM application to all private development projects by 2029.

- (1) The Government injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) in 2018 and 2022 to encourage and support wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies in the construction industry with a view to boosting the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in adopting BIM. On

promoting the adoption of BIM in the industry, the CITF subsidises eligible contractors, subcontractors and consultants (including small and medium-sized construction companies) to train up their staff and procure related hardware and software for adoption of BIM, with a view to boosting the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in adopting BIM. In the past 3 years, there were a total of 150 companies that newly received BIM subsidies, 63% of them were small and medium-sized companies.

- (2) Since the launch of CITF, there has been a significant increase in the adoption of BIM in the industry. According to a survey by the Construction Industry Council (CIC), about 60% of the surveyed construction companies have applied BIM in their projects. Approximately 12 000 practitioners in the industry have received training related to BIM through subsidies under CITF, with over 90% of them indicating that it has helped them increase efficiency and reduce costs in their work.
- (3) On BIM subsidies, as at end-January 2025, the CITF has received a total of 2 929 BIM-related applications since its launch in 2018, of which 2 262 have been approved and the total amount of subsidies granted is about \$181 million. The response is very positive. The CITF has been reviewed and enhanced a number of times. We plan to enhance and increase the subsidies for BIM application this year so as to subsidise more small and medium-sized companies and subcontractors. Besides, the CIC commenced the BIM manpower survey in March 2025 to update the demand and supply of BIM manpower, and put forward a proposal on enhancing training and encouraging subcontractors and small and medium-sized companies to adopt BIM.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)033

(Question Serial No. 2535)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government has proposed a series of strategic cost reduction measures to achieve better cost management and control by, among other things, formulating, implementing and promoting cost control measures and cost saving initiatives. Will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the amount of financial resources saved by streamlining the approval process in the past 3 years and the main area of savings;
- (2) whether the Government plans in 2025-26 to provide incentives such as subsidies or tax exemptions for enterprises that take the initiative to innovate and save costs (by, for example, using new materials), so as to encourage them to save resources and costs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) has completed a strategic study on the relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong (the Strategic Study) and has identified 5 major reasons for the relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong¹, and has summarised 4 major directions for measures to lower the construction costs, including (1) optimising the project procurement model to reduce risk premium; (2) reviewing the design standards and requirements to increase cost-effectiveness; (3) applying advanced technologies and construction methods to uplift productivity; and (4) streamlining the approval process to boost work efficiency.

¹ The five major reasons for relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong include (1) labour cost; (2) contract risk premium on construction materials and equipment; (3) design standards and requirements; (4) approval process; and (5) project complexity.

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

- (1) The Development Bureau (DEVB) has been proactively rolling out various measures to streamline development control procedures. The Steering Group on Streamlining Development Control (Steering Group) led by the DEVB has continuously reviewed the approval process involved in development projects. A joint subcommittee comprising representatives from professional bodies and the industry was also set up under the Land and Development Advisory Committee of the DEVB to provide a standing communication platform for the industry and the Government to discuss matters related to streamlining the administrative approval process. Subsequently, the DEVB issued an internal circular to, for the first time, stipulate expressly that all approving departments are required to adopt the “facilitator” mentality when processing development applications. The circular also sets out guiding principles and good practices to help bureaux/ departments (B/Ds) institutionalise facilitation measures. In addition to the around 100 streamlining measures implemented, all relevant B/Ds have drawn up work plans to explore or implement about 60 new measures from the third quarter of 2024 to end-2025, covering areas including promoting self-certification, introducing more arrangements for phased submission of information, reviewing the requirements for submitting and updating technical assessment, and streamlining land administration process, etc., so as to implement the requirements stipulated in the circular.

Measures of streamlining development control procedures involve various departments and different aspects and areas of the development control procedures. As implementation of these streamlining measures by various relevant B/Ds is undertaken as part of their overall duties (including approval work), it is difficult to quantify the actual impact of individual measures on financial resources.

- (2) The DEVB has introduced a host of measures in recent years to promote the adoption of innovative technologies. These include subsidising the construction industry to drive digitalisation through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF), promoting applied research and development, advocating advanced construction technologies such as high productivity construction etc., and promoting adoption of innovative technologies to enhance cost-effectiveness of public works through multipronged measures.

The Government injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the CITF in 2018 and 2022 respectively to encourage and support wider adoption of innovative construction methods and technologies in the construction industry with a view to promoting productivity, uplifting building quality, improving site safety and enhancing environmental performance, and to boost the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in adopting new technology. As at December 2024, the CITF has approved grants of about \$1.5 billion, subsidising over 1 300 construction enterprises (of which 60% are small and medium-sized companies) in adopting various types of technologies in local construction projects, as well as funding over 18 000 technology-related training places. Since the launch of the CITF, there has been a significant increase in the adoption of various innovative technologies in the industry (such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), prefabricated steel rebar products, and advanced robotic technologies for construction, etc.). According to a survey by the Construction Industry Council, about 60% of the surveyed construction companies have applied BIM in their projects, and around 60% of contractors reported having used prefabricated steel rebar products on their sites. Approximately 12 000 practitioners

in the industry have received training related to BIM, with over 90% of them indicating that it has helped them increase efficiency and reduce costs in their work. About 70% of construction companies using the CITF for projects employing relevant technologies reported that the use of innovative technologies (such as automatic rebar benders, automatic paint machines, automatic plastering machines, demolition robots, and transportation robots) significantly increased productivity and reduced manpower demand by over 20%.

In addition, the CITF has introduced a number of enhancement measures in recent years. These include expediting approval processes and providing partial funding before arrival of products to alleviate cashflow pressure; providing one-stop services for small and medium enterprises, including predesigned tender templates and product lists, as well as a WhatsApp Chatbot for providing assistance, etc. Approximately 80% of respondents considered that these measures effectively support the industry, particularly small and medium enterprises, in applying innovative technologies through the use of the CITF.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)034

(Question Serial No. 2536)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government states that it will continue to lead and drive the digitalisation of public works and the construction industry, and continue to utilise the developed integrated capital works platform to consolidate the data of all public works projects. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) of the itemised expenditures on the “digitalisation of the construction industry” and development of the “integrated capital works platform” in the past 3 years;
- (2) of the specific works projects adopting construction digitalisation in the past 3 years in table form; whether there are any assessment data which can show the enhancement of productivity after the adoption of construction digitalisation, and the major areas for assessment; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether provisions have been earmarked for subsidising small and medium enterprises to apply construction digitalisation technologies in 2025-26; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

To cope with Hong Kong's future construction volume and the challenges facing the construction industry, the Development Bureau (DEVB) is driving digitalisation of public works and construction industry in full swing, covering the whole project life cycle from planning and design, construction, to operation and maintenance. The DEVB has established a Task Force on Digitalisation of Public Works to lead and co-ordinate works departments in the application of digital technology.

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

- (1) The Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB) is responsible for driving digitalisation of public works and construction industry, and the application of innovative technologies. Currently, the PSGO has

about 30 civil service staff, including the Head of PSGO, a Principal Assistant Secretary, a Chief Assistant Secretary and other professional, technical and clerical grade staff. As the duties concerned are part of the overall duties of the existing staff members, a detailed breakdown of the manpower resources and expenditures involved is not available. The expenditure for developing the Integrated Capital Works Platform in the past 3 years is around \$16 million.

- (2) The DEVB leads and drives the application of digital technology throughout the whole project life cycle in public works projects, enabling project management team to grasp the real-time progress and performance of various projects with a view to further enhancing the management efficiency of public works projects. By doing so, we can better control works project costs and enhance site safety. The progress and effectiveness in respect of digitalisation of public works and construction industry, championed by the DEVB, are as follows:

Major digital system	Progress	Effectiveness
Building Information Modelling (BIM)	<p>Since January 2018, the Government has been requiring public works projects with project estimates exceeding \$30 million to use BIM for their design and construction.</p> <p>In 2025, the DEVB issued an updated technical circular to incorporate BIM models in tender documents of public works projects, forming part of the works contracts, with a view to continuing to enhance BIM application and effectiveness in works projects.</p>	As at December 2024, BIM has been adopted in over 700 consultancy and works contracts with a total value of about \$370 billion.
Digital Works Supervision System (DWSS)	<p>In 2020, the DEVB promulgated a technical circular requiring all public works contracts with value exceeding \$300 million to adopt a Digital Works Supervision System (DWSS) to enhance site safety, workmanship and the efficiency in contract management.</p> <p>In 2023, we promulgated an updated technical circular to enhance the DWSS, lowering the adoption requirement to public works contracts with a value of \$30 million with a view to further promoting digitalisation of public works.</p>	<p>So far, more than 180 public works contracts with a total value exceeding \$200 billion have adopted the DWSS. More than 10 000 users are from the Government, engineering consultant firms and contractors.</p> <p>Industry stakeholders have responded positively to the DWSS and agreed that the system can enhance project performance in such areas as quality, progress, safety, environmental protection, productivity and contract management.</p>

Major digital system	Progress	Effectiveness
	<p>Apart from public works, the Government also encourages private sector works projects to use the DWSS, and provides subsidies through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) with a view to further driving digitalisation of the construction industry.</p>	
Digital Project Delivery System (DPDS)	<p>In 2025, the DEVB promulgated a technical circular requiring the implementation of the Digital Project Delivery System (DPDS) across-the-board for consultancies with value exceeding \$15 million. This will effectively enhance the management efficiency of consultancy contracts.</p>	<p>Consultants can make use of the DPDS to submit the required technical documents to different policy bureaux and departments for approving officers' review. This will reduce the time required for documents travelling to and from, and circulating among various bureaux and departments, and departments will be more efficient in approving project documents.</p>
Integrated Capital Works Platform (iCWP)	<p>The DEVB has established an inter-departmental Integrated Capital Works Platform (iCWP) to consolidate major data of different works projects and carry out comprehensive analysis. Major data include costs, progress, safety, quality, resources, contractors and consultant management.</p>	<p>Since the commissioning of the iCWP in 2022, data have been collected from more than 200 Category A works projects with a total value of \$600 billion for analysis. They include more than 300 works contracts and nearly 700 consultancies.</p> <p>The iCWP consolidates data of various projects at different stages for project management team to grasp their real-time progress and performance. More comprehensive data consolidation and analyses can then be conducted to further enhance the overall performance and management efficiency of the entire Capital Works Programme.</p>
Smart Site Safety System (4S)	<p>The DEVB and the Construction Industry Council launched the 4S Labelling Scheme in May 2024 and have been issuing labels to work sites</p>	<p>As at March 2025, more than 500 works contracts have been issued with labels, including over 370 government works contracts..</p>

Major digital system	Progress	Effectiveness
	with proper adoption of the 4S. The plaques will be placed at conspicuous spots around construction sites, with 4S labels for identification and ease of monitoring, including facilitating enforcement departments to monitor the sites without 4S labels.	

- (3) The Government injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the CITF in 2018 and 2022 respectively to encourage and support wider adoption of digital and innovative construction technologies in the construction industry, with a view to promoting productivity, uplifting building quality, improving site safety and enhancing environmental performance, and to boost the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in adopting new technology, hereby further driving the innovation of the construction industry. As at February 2025, the CITF has approved grants of about \$1.6 billion, subsidising over 1 300 enterprises (of which 60% are small and medium-sized companies) in adopting various types of technologies in local construction projects, as well as funding over 18,000 technology-related training places.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)035

(Question Serial No. 0790)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Since 2009, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has been adopting the “New Engineering Contract” (NEC) form in public works projects to enhance project management efficiency and cost-effectiveness. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) In the past 3 financial years, how many public works projects adopted the NEC form? What percentage of the total number of public works projects adopted NEC form?
- (2) In the past 3 financial years, what was the expenditure incurred in various public works projects adopting the NEC form? With the adoption of the NEC form, how many public works projects experienced enhancement in terms of reduction of construction time, cost saving, etc.?
- (3) Does the Government have any measures to enhance the NEC form? If so, what are the details?
- (4) What measures has the Government put in place to promote application of the NEC form in private works projects? What was the expenditure incurred in the past 3 financial years? What is the estimated expenditure this year?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

Since 2009, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has been adopting the “New Engineering Contract” (NEC) form in public works projects, with a view to advocating the spirit of collaborative partnering and bringing the project team together to tackle difficulties, thereby facilitating the smooth implementation of the projects as well as enhancing project management efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The DEVB has recently mandated the adoption of the NEC form for public works contracts with a contract value over \$400 million, unless for enough reasons.

- (1) In the past 3 financial years (as at the end of December 2024), a total of 328 new public works contracts adopted the NEC form, representing about 70% of all works contracts

awarded during the same period. In the past 2 years, large-scale public works contracts (with a contract value over \$400 million) have fully adopted the NEC form.

- (2) The expenditure incurred in public works contracts adopting the NEC form in the past 3 financial years was about HK\$25 billion. Since most of the works projects concerned are still underway, their performance in terms of construction time and expenditure cannot be assessed yet. However, based on past statistical analysis, the actual construction period of the NEC contracts is on average about 10% shorter than that of the conventional contracts. There is also a time saving of over 30% on average for finalising the accounts of the NEC contracts as compared with that of the conventional contracts. As the construction time is shortened, the relevant expenditures of works projects, including the remuneration of resident site staff, the administrative expenditures for contract supervision and management, etc. will also be reduced accordingly.
- (3) The DEVB has issued the Hong Kong Edition of NEC contract templates earlier. Apart from aligning with local legislation requirements and procurement practices, those templates also encourage public works contractors to apply innovative technologies to uplift performance on site supervision efficiency, site safety, decarbonisation, etc., thereby enhancing cost-effectiveness in the delivery of public works.
- (4) The DEVB has been proactively participating in various activities of the construction sector on works project management, including seminars, workshops, etc. with a view to sharing experience on adopting the NEC form in public works projects and associated policies, etc. with other public organisations, private construction sectors, relevant institutions and trade associations and so on, so as to promote wider adoption of the NEC. It is understood that the MTR Corporation Limited, the Airport Authority and the CLP Power Hong Kong Limited have adopted the NEC form in suitable engineering projects. Since these promotion activities are organised by the construction sector, no government expenditures are involved in the promotion measures concerned.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)036

(Question Serial No. 3029)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Mainland has introduced a number of new liberalisation measures targeting construction and related engineering services, including allowing Hong Kong engineering construction consultant enterprises to bid for Greater Bay Area (GBA) projects in joint venture. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

How will the Government of the Special Administrative Region assist local construction and engineering enterprises in adapting to the new bidding mode (such as provision of training, resource connections or legal advice, etc.)? What are the specific support measures?

Has the Government established a co-ordination mechanism with relevant Mainland departments to ensure that problems can be solved when Hong Kong enterprises bid for GBA projects? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the future plans?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has been committed to maintaining close liaison with relevant Mainland authorities to promote the provision of professional services by the local construction and related engineering sectors in the Mainland, with a view to making contributions to the high-quality development of our country, in particular the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA). In this connection, the Mainland has been introducing various liberalisation measures from time to time to facilitate the sectors' development in the Mainland, including the signing of the Second Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement Agreement on Trade in Services (Amendment Agreement II) by the HKSAR Government and the Ministry of Commerce on 9 October 2024. The Amendment Agreement II covers a number of new liberalisation measures, including allowing Hong Kong engineering construction consultant enterprises to bid for projects in joint venture in the GBA. The measure has been implemented since 1 March 2025.

Since the signing of the Amendment Agreement II, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has been maintaining close dialogues with relevant local professional institutions, enterprises and trade associations to brief them on the contents and implementation arrangements of the new measures and assist them in adapting to the new tendering arrangement. In this connection, the HKSAR Government and the Ministry of Commerce jointly organised a forum on the Amendment Agreement II on 19 February 2025. In a breakout session of the forum, the DEVB, together with the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, explained in detail the application conditions and procedures of the liberalisation measures to the local construction and engineering sectors, and answered the questions raised by the sectors right away at the forum. Besides, with the DEVB's support, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) set up a liaison office in the GBA in July 2023 to facilitate resource connection and complementarity between the Mainland and local contractors, and to co-ordinate their joint participation in projects in the GBA.

Besides, the DEVB uploads and updates on its website various Mainland liberalisation measures and tendering information targeting the local construction sector, and provides hyperlinks to the on-line thematic platforms of relevant government departments such as the Trade and Industry Department for disseminating business information of the Mainland. It also provides a hotline and an email address, as a one-stop enquiry service, to facilitate the sector in solving potential problems encountered when bidding for public works projects in the GBA. Furthermore, we arrange exchange visits for the sector to the GBA and invite relevant Mainland authorities to hold forums in Hong Kong from time to time, thereby enabling the sector to better seize the business opportunities and understand the tendering systems of Mainland cities in the GBA, such as Qianhai and Nansha, as well as reflect its views to the Mainland authorities for optimising various liberalisation measures.

Looking ahead, we will continue to maintain close communication with the local construction sector to find out the difficulties it has encountered in running business in the Mainland, and will provide appropriate support measures as necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)037

(Question Serial No. 1734)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the report that the total public housing supply in the coming 5 years will reach 190 000 units, and the Housing Bureau estimates that the number of on-going construction projects will be maintained at 50 in 2025. In 2024, there were a number government construction sites experiencing contract payment delays due to defaults of the contractors. Will the Development Bureau and the Housing Bureau strengthen supervision of main contractors of construction sites to ensure smooth project delivery in 2025? If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

Regarding public works projects, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has a comprehensive mechanism to manage public works contracts and monitor closely the works progress to ensure smooth project delivery. There are also mechanisms built in works contracts to handle various possible situations that may arise during construction, including the performance and financial situation of contractors. In addition, the DEVB has been paying close attention to whether public works contractors have sufficient cash flow to carry out the works smoothly. In this connection, we have enhanced contractors' cash flow through a number of contract payment arrangements. For example, contractors are offered an advance payment at the onset of contracts; target contract form of the New Engineering Contract is adopted for large-scale public works contracts, which offers payments for contractors' forecast expenditure; etc. To assist the construction industry in tiding over the current difficult economic situation, in addition to the above-mentioned payment arrangements, the DEVB has co-ordinated with all works departments to arrange more frequent payments to contractors and to further split payment milestones into smaller ones as far as possible so that contract payments can be made to align more closely with contractors' works progress.

As for public housing projects, the Hong Kong Housing Authority and the Hong Kong Housing Society have been managing construction projects in a professional manner and

monitoring the contractors' performance according to the well-established mechanism. Each stage of the construction works is supervised by professionals and experienced construction staff are also stationed on site to supervise daily construction operations and work progress. In addition, payment arrangements as deemed appropriate, e.g. providing advance payment to contractors at the onset of contracts, shortening the time frame of payment certification for every phase of works, etc. are adopted in public housing contracts, with a view to facilitating contractors' maintenance of a stable cash flow and enabling smooth construction works.

As for the issue of delay in making contract payments by contractors, the Construction Industry Security of Payment Ordinance (the Ordinance) was gazetted on 27 December 2024, which aims to improve the longstanding payment problems in the construction industry and provide better protection for the stakeholders in the supply chains of the industry to receive their entitled payment on time, while also seeking to help reduce occurrence of wage arrears of workers. Construction contracts entered into on or after 28 August 2025 will be governed by the Ordinance.

We will, as always, continue to closely monitor the progress of various projects. In case of delays in individual projects, we will take immediate follow-up actions and adopt practical and effective means to resolve difficulties encountered during construction, enabling smooth project delivery.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)038

(Question Serial No. 2318)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As regards the “professional development of construction industry” mentioned in the speech, would the Government advise:

1. on the tertiary institutions that participated in the On-the-job Training Allowance Pilot Scheme offering part-time construction-related degree programmes and the programmes offered, the respective numbers of applicants and enrolments for each programme and the ratios, and the trainees’ average ages in each of the past 3 years;
2. in view of the increasing application of innovative technologies in the construction industry, whether the Government will consider extending the allowance to higher diploma courses related to innovative construction technologies, so as to nurture more new-generation technology talents to join the industry; if so, the details; and
3. on the measures that will be implemented to enhance the professional development of the construction industry and promotion of the programmes in secondary schools, so that students will know more about the contents of construction-related programmes and increase their knowledge of future prospects for construction works; if so, the related projects and estimates?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

1. The Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) under the Vocational Training Centre, and the School of Professional Education and Executive Development (SPEED) of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University started to implement the pilot scheme for part-time construction-related degree programmes in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years respectively. The target of the pilot scheme is to provide subsidies to 1 000 trainees, and the actual number of participating trainees receiving subsidies has already met the target. The average age of students is between 21 and 32. The pilot scheme has been implemented for two academic years (i.e. 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years) and the number of applicants, number of students admitted, and admission rate of the programmes are as follows:

	2023-24 academic year		2024-25 academic year	
Part-time degree programme in construction-related professions participating in the pilot scheme	Number of applicants	Number of students admitted	Number of applicants	Number of students admitted
Electrical, Mechanical and Environmental Engineering	517	390	474	344
Civil engineering	134	134	125	125
Surveying	193	109	227	142
Building Engineering and Management	133	62	128	71
Landscape Architecture and Management	45	45	51	51
Total	1 022	740	1 005	733
Admission rate *	72%		73%	

* The admission rate (i.e. the number of applicants versus the number of students admitted) is affected by the number of places offered by the programme concerned, eligibility of applicants, etc.

2. Talents in the construction industry require to have technical skills and professional knowledge. Therefore, we provide subsidies under the pilot scheme to encourage graduates of higher diploma programmes to join the industry and enrol in construction-related part-time degree programmes. These programmes already included technology elements related to the profession which will help to attract the new generation who are interested in technology to enrol, and also will encourage young people to join the construction industry. Moreover, the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund under the Development Bureau provides funding support for local tertiary institutions to organise continuing education programmes related to construction innovation and technology to full-time undergraduates/postgraduates/associate degree students in construction-related disciplines, with a view to nurturing a new workforce with knowledge and ability in technology application in the construction industry.
3. The DEVB has launched the “Construction Hong Kong industry-wide promotion campaign in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council, various government works departments, and industry stakeholders such as construction-related trade unions, trade associations, professional institutions, training institutes and universities, with a view to promoting the professional image and development opportunities of the industry, and its contribution to the community, as well as to promote the career pathway of the industry to attract new blood to join. Since 2022, we have organised a wide range of industry promotion and publicity activities and training programmes under the Campaign for the industry. In December 2024, we launched the “STEAM UP” project under the Campaign to produce a set of construction-themed STEAM teaching and learning materials for classroom use in 1 100 primary and secondary schools across Hong Kong, integrating knowledge in the fields of architecture, surveying, town planning, landscape architecture and engineering in line with the curriculum guidelines for primary and secondary school levels. The Campaign has also set up a STEAM learning resource centre which consists of a STEAM library, and will organise thematic exhibitions and workshops, as well as a wide range of STEAM activities, so as to inspire students’ interest

in and understanding of various professions of the construction industry, for better planning for their future development. The Campaign will support over 20 industry organisations in their promotion activities for five years. The total budget is about \$55 million. So far, these promotion activities have attracted over 1 million members of the public.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)039

(Question Serial No. 0026)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government has indicated that it will collaborate with the Guangdong Province to develop Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) methods. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the specific details, timetable and expected results of related collaboration projects; whether a task force or a platform will be established to co-ordinate the collaboration between the Governments, the industry, and research institutes of the two places;
2. of the implementation of the Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (the Scheme) introduced by the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) in November 2024, the number of applications received, the number of manufacturers accredited, the plans to further promote the Scheme to boost the confidence of the industry in MiC and increase the adoption rate; and
3. of details of the plans to leverage Mainland China's strong manufacturing capabilities to foster close collaboration and synergy between Hong Kong and regional stakeholders by utilising the above Scheme.

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

Reply:

The construction industry has been facing the challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour in recent years. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority and Hospital Authority, have started the adoption of MiC. Currently, over 100 projects in both public and private sectors have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction or about to start.

It is mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that a Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme would be launched in synergy with production bases in the Mainland, so as to leverage the complementarity of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. To this end, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has commissioned the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) to implement the Modular Integrated Construction Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme, which started accepting applications in November 2024. The scheme ensures that accredited MiC manufacturers comply with project requirements for management, production and transportation, and that relevant laws and regulations are observed.

The DEVB is proactively fostering exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, and formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a robust ecosystem for the industry.

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

1. As the Greater Bay Area (GBA) is the main manufacturing base for MiC modules, our co-operation with the Guangdong Provincial Government is particularly important. In March 2024, the DEVB and Guangdong Province signed the Letter of Intent on Strengthening Guangdong-Hong Kong Co-operation in Construction and Related Engineering Sectors, deepening co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in construction and engineering sectors. This includes developing MiC as a quality productive force to contribute to the high-quality national development. Under the guidance of the DEVB and the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province, MiC manufacturer associations strive to make the GBA a centre of MiC technology, turning MiC into a strategic industry that facilitates the exploration of overseas markets. The governments of Hong Kong and Guangdong expect to jointly publish the Guidebook on MiC Cross-border Trading in the first half of 2025, to provide clear guidelines to related manufacturing enterprises, so as to facilitate the production of MiC modules in the GBA, as well as cross-border transportation.
2. Since the introduction of the Accreditation Scheme in November 2024, the BTRi has received about 20 applications and is vetting them at present. The BTRi expects to announce the first batch of accredited MiC manufacturers in the first half of 2025. To further promote the Scheme, the DEVB has proposed to establish a list of accredited MiC manufacturers for public works projects, making the qualification of an accredited manufacturer a prerequisite for applying to join the list, so as to ensure the quality standards of the modules and facilitate the development of MiC. In addition, the DEVB has established a MiC Dedicated Section that provides advice, technical support, and shares past project experiences with the industry. It also strengthens communication and collaboration between departments to facilitate the approval of MiC projects, boost industry confidence in MiC and increase its adoption rate.
3. The Accreditation Scheme examines manufacturers' capabilities in 7 major areas, namely project management, safety precautions, infrastructure management, human resource management, material management, process and product quality monitoring, and logistics management. The DEVB regularly holds events related to MiC, such as the MiC Supply Chain Conference held in Huizhou in 2024 and briefing sessions on the Accreditation Scheme, to promote communication with GBA manufacturers. This

serves to make certain that they understand the requirements of the Accreditation Scheme, so as to ensure product quality. Leveraging the Mainland's strong manufacturing capabilities to complement the quality development of MiC in Hong Kong and GBA, joint efforts can be made to "go global" in tapping international markets.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0027)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned in the Budget Speech, the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) established last year is comparing and complementing the testing and certification requirements between standards in different regions with a view to promoting local application of high-quality and cost-effective construction materials. To ensure effective implementation of this policy for the achievement of the intended objectives, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the concrete progress made by the BTRi in comparing and complementing the testing and certification requirements between standards in different regions, and the actual application cases;
2. the measures the Government will take to ensure the wide acceptance and adoption of the new standards by the industry in the course of promoting standardisation;
3. the focus of work and objectives of the BTRi in the days ahead;
4. the key areas and objectives of the strategic study on standards in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to be conducted by the BTRi and the counterparts concerned in Guangdong Province in the near future, and the measures the Government will take to ensure that the outcome of the study will be effective in promoting collaborative development of the construction industry in the GBA?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour. To address these challenges, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established in August 2024 the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) as a limited company wholly owned by the Financial Secretary Incorporated, aiming at spearheading the construction industry in strengthening innovative applications to enhance productivity, cost-effectiveness and site safety performance. The BTRi's focus of work has 3 major development directions, namely driving applied research and development, reviewing and uplifting standards, and providing accreditation, certification and testing.

Since its establishment, the BTRi has been developing its business in these areas and is gradually building a professional team to promote innovation in the construction industry so as to reduce local construction cost.

In November 2024, the BTRi signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Guangdong Provincial Academy of Building Research, the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore, and 3 local universities, namely the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, to collaborate and promote innovative applications to address the pressing challenges facing the construction industry. The BTRi will continue to strengthen co-operation with relevant local and overseas institutions to enhance the applied research capabilities of the BTRi and establish its leading position in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and even internationally.

It is stated in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that we will review and enhance Hong Kong's building standards, which have been in place for many years, through the BTRi by making reference to overseas building standards and Guobiao (GB), with a view to effectively improving the efficiency of works projects and reducing construction costs. Moreover, the BTRi will compare and complement the testing and certification requirements between standards in different regions, in order to facilitate local application of high-quality and cost-effective construction materials from the Mainland and overseas. It will also be beneficial for these products to explore international markets. We will also closely liaise with our counterparts in the Guangdong Province to take forward the formulation of the GBA Construction Standards.

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

1. The BTRi will bridge the gaps between the differences in testing and certification requirements in standards by comparing Hong Kong standards with GB and international standards such as British Standards and European Standards, so as to facilitate the local application of high-quality and cost-effective construction materials and products from the Mainland and overseas to reduce construction costs in Hong Kong. The BTRi has taken the lead to conduct relevant work for certain construction materials and products such as acoustic panels and structural sealants. The BTRi is also formulating a construction materials certification scheme and building a database of certified materials for the industry's reference, which will effectively cut down on the approval process of materials in the future and further reduce construction costs.
2. By making reference to overseas building standards and GB, the BTRi will review and optimise building standards that have been used in Hong Kong for many years to effectively improve the efficiency of works projects and reduce construction costs. These optimised standards can generally bring significant gains in cost-effectiveness of works projects, and in the process of promoting these standards, the BTRi may use public works projects as pilot projects to collect data and monitor performance. At the same time, the BTRi can communicate with relevant government authorities to reach a consensus, gradually incorporating the relevant standards into or adding them to codes of practice or specifications to facilitate their wide adoption in the industry.
3. The focus of work of the BTRi in the days ahead will be to continue driving innovation and application, to collaborate with the Government and the industry, and use public works projects as pilot projects. The BTRi will continue to implement the Modular

Integrated Construction (MiC) Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme and develop a construction materials certification scheme. It will also liaise closely with relevant authorities of Guangdong Province to commence a strategic study on GBA standards and establish a specific proposal for the standards formulation. In terms of future development objectives, the BTRi will develop its business in the areas of applied research and development, standards upgrading, accreditation, certification and testing, and gradually build up a team of professionals to promote innovation in the construction industry and reduce local construction costs.

4. Key areas of the strategic study on the standards in GBA include working with relevant authorities of Guangdong Province to jointly establish the objectives, framework, proposal, priorities and timetable for GBA standards. The strategic study will also establish specific proposals for developing GBA standards for innovative materials and technologies, such as MiC, high-strength steels, etc. The establishment of GBA standards will enable high quality or innovative materials and products from the Mainland or Hong Kong to be used locally or in the Mainland, and exported to the international market with Hong Kong as a platform, so as to facilitate the synergised development of the construction industry in the GBA.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)041

(Question Serial No. 0031)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) will allocate around \$150 million to subsidise the construction industry to provide on-the-job training for about 2 500 graduates of degree programmes in engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture. This will assist more young people in obtaining professional qualifications. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Can more specific implementation details of the scheme, including application procedures, approval criteria, subsidy payment mechanism and monitoring measures, be provided? Has a clear supervision mechanism been established to ensure the effectiveness of subsidy payment and training of young professionals?
2. How will the Government assess the effectiveness of this scheme? For example, will clear indicators be set (such as the employment rate of young professionals, rate of obtaining professional qualifications, industry's satisfaction rate, etc.) for evaluating the outcome of the scheme?
3. Apart from providing on-the-job training subsidies, does the Government have put in place other supporting measures to ensure that young beneficiaries can receive continuous support from the industry with stable career development?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. With the support of the Government, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will allocate \$150 million to launch the Construction Industry Professional Degree Graduate On-the-Job Training Subsidy Scheme (PDGOTSS) to subsidise the construction industry in providing on-the-job training for a total of approximately 2 500 graduates (young talents) from degree programmes in engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture, with a view to enriching their expertise and experience, assisting them in obtaining professional qualifications, nurturing talents for the industry and retaining talent during the recent adjustments in the private market.

The CIC announced the details on the dedicated website of PDGOTSS in March 2025, and has organised briefings for the industry. The key details of PDGOTSS are as follows:

Subsidy period: From 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, successful applicants (i.e. consultants and main contractors employing eligible young talents) will be disbursed with the subsidy for the number of approved quotas if they employ young talents no less than the number of approved quotas within the 12-month subsidy period.

Subsidy amount: During the subsidy period, successful applicants will be granted a monthly subsidy of \$5,000 for 12 months totalling \$60,000 for each eligible/approved young talents employed during the period.

Application procedures: Applicants can submit their applications by completing the application forms on the dedicated website of PDGOTSS within the application period (from 17 March to 16 April 2025). The CIC will issue application results-in-principle to applicants from May to June, including the number of approved subsidy quotas.

Approval criteria:

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- (i) must be consultants or main contractors of the 5 construction professional disciplines (i.e. engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture); and
- (ii) must have employed eligible young talents as their full-time employees to engage in construction-related professional work within the subsidy period.

The eligibility criteria of young talents are as follows:

- (i) aged 35 or below; and
- (ii) being graduates of degree programmes (including Master Degree programmes) of the 5 construction professional disciplines recognised by local statutory professional institutions in the construction field;
- (iii) has not yet obtained any professional qualification; and
- (iv) has not received any subsidies under other similar government subsidy schemes.

Subsidy disbursement: Subsidies will be disbursed in two installments. Successful applicants must submit documentary proof to the CIC in the 7th and 13th month after the commencement of the subsidy period to demonstrate their employment of eligible young talents. The CIC will disburse subsidies within 2 months after verification of the submitted documents.

Monitoring measures: Applicants must complete declarations with legal effect to declare that the information submitted are true and meet the requirements of PDGOTSS (including to employ the approved number of young talents within the subsidy period). The CIC will conduct random check on the approved applications. If false declarations are identified, or successful applicants do not meet all requirements of PDGOTSS, the CIC has the right to claw back part or all of the subsidies disbursed, or take other legal actions. Suspected deception cases will be referred to law-enforcement departments for follow-up actions.

2. PDGOTSS aims to assist the industry to nurture and retain young talents during the recent adjustments in the private market. Its effectiveness lies in continuation of employment of young talents not less than subsidy quotas within the subsidy period. The CIC will conduct surveys and random interviews with applicants with approved subsidies and relevant young talents after the end of the subsidy period to collect their views on the effectiveness of PDGOTSS.
3. Apart from providing subsidies, the CIC also requests employers under PDGOTSS to provide on-the-job training to the young beneficiaries, with a view to enriching their expertise and experience, and assisting them in obtaining professional qualifications, thus supporting their stable development in the industry. In addition, on training, with the Development Bureau (DEVB)'s support, the CIC collaborates with the industry and professional institutions to enhance the continuous professional development for in-service professionals, including young practitioners, and incorporate elements of the latest construction technologies and management in relevant training to enable them to keep pace with the times, thereby supporting their career development. On activities, the DEVB and CIC are committed to improving the industry's image and promoting the industry's promotion ladder. The Government also supports the trade associations and professional institutions of the industry to organise various activities for youth development, such as exchange activities in the Greater Bay Area, etc., to broaden the vision and career network of young practitioners, and launch the mentorship scheme to provide support for and share experience with young practitioners through their senior mentors in the industry to facilitate their career development.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)042

(Question Serial No. 0032)

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

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

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, it is indicated that the Government will complete the study on the suitability and sustainability of existing roadside trees. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the expected completion date of the study, and the expenditure and staff establishment involved;
2. whether a review of the species diversity of trees in Hong Kong's public space is included in the study, in view of non-stop criticisms of tree management in Hong Kong saying that it is dull and monotonous, and that the lack of diversity of flowers and tree species, when compared with places like Guangdong, is affecting the overall landscape and ecological balance;
3. whether collaboration will be strengthened with local and international experts on tree preservation to formulate a more scientific greening policy;
4. whether a study will be conducted to introduce more flowering trees of different species, such as rows of cherry blossoms and Hong Kong Orchid Trees to create more distinctive urban green spaces in new development areas and urban renewal projects; and
5. how the Government will ensure that various departments (such as the Development Bureau, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Highways Department) will co-ordinate their efforts to promote greening proposals of greater ecological value?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. The Development Bureau (DEVB) has commissioned a consultancy study to develop the criteria and scoring system for assessing the suitability and sustainability of roadside trees, and devise appropriate improvement measures and treatment options. The study is expected to be completed within 2025. Existing staff have been deployed to handle the relevant work. The consultancy fee is about \$1.8 million.

2, 4 & 5.

The Government has all along been advocating the principle of “Right Plant, Right Place”, under which suitable plants are selected for planting in appropriate places, with due consideration of various factors, such as site and spatial constraints, surrounding environment and microclimate to ensure sustainable plant growth and compatibility with the overall landscape and ecological balance.

To enhance species diversity in urban area, the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section has developed the “Street Tree Selection Guide”, introducing tree species suitable for planting on Hong Kong’s streets, including both native and exotic species. The objective is to enrich urban tree species diversity, and facilitate the sustainable development of urban forest.

Moreover, we have formulated a Greening Master Plan for every district, under which greening themes were studied and established based on district characteristics and particular needs, including the planting of flowering trees. In addition, we encourage departments to consider planting flowering plants at suitable locations, including new development areas and urban renewal projects. Popular spots for flower appreciation in recent years include cherry blossoms in Tin Shui Wai Park, Tai Po Waterfront Park, and On King Street in Sha Tin, Camel’s Foot Tree at Lai Chi Kok Park and Kowloon Tsai Park, Yellow Pui at Nam Cheong Park and Tin Pak Road Park, and the Camellia Garden at Kai Tak Station Square.

The DEVB will continue to promote and co-ordinate policies and work related to greening and tree management. Through research, publication of guidelines, organising inter-departmental meetings and seminars, we aim to facilitate co-ordination and sharing of experiences among tree management departments. We will also guide relevant departments in implementing greening proposals that offer both landscape and ecological value.

3. In formulating greening and urban forestry policies and measures, we make reference to studies conducted by academics as well as experience from the Mainland, Hong Kong and other region. We also consult experts and practitioners from various regions through different channels. Through organising the International Urban Forestry Conferences, experts and academics from different regions are invited as keynote speakers. The conferences keep urban forestry practitioners abreast of the latest global best practices in urban forestry management, research and technological advancements, and provide a platform for the sharing of regional and international experience and expertise.

We also engage consultants and academics to conduct research on tree management, and refine relevant policies and guidelines based on their findings. For example, to improve soil and planting space for urban trees, we consolidated the research findings and promulgated “Guidelines on Soil Improvement” and “Guidelines on Soil Volume for Urban Trees” in 2022 and 2023 respectively. We also updated a technical circular in 2024 to require sufficient growing space be reserved for roadside greening in new road projects to promote healthy and sustainable growth of trees.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)043

(Question Serial No. 0034)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) is responsible for liaising with the relevant Mainland authorities to promote the construction and related professional services, and strive for further liberalisation measures for further market access in the Mainland. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. In order to promote the Mainland's evaluation mechanism for "Professional Title" qualifications to Hong Kong construction professionals, regularise the application of the evaluation mechanism and extend it to other suitable construction-related professions, has the Government prioritised its future work and formulate key performance indicators? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?
2. The DEVB will promulgate Greater Bay Area (GBA) Standards on the skill level of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and finalise the "One Examination, Multiple Certification" arrangement with the Guangdong Province and Macao Special Administrative Region. Has the Government considered holding further discussion with the relevant departments and industries of the three places to expedite the enhancement of the training quality of the construction industry in GBA and nurturing of talents through the introduction of other policy support measures? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

1. The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address has formulated key performance indicators for taking forward the "Professional Title" evaluation, namely regularising the "Professional Title" assessment mechanism by mid-2025 and expanding its coverage to other construction-related professions which are ready to go through the assessment mechanism. In this connection, the DEVB has continued to discuss with the relevant Mainland authorities and local professional bodies and reached a consensus to regularise the evaluation mechanism in mid-2025 and expand its coverage to more professional engineering disciplines (including the Manufacturing, Industrial and Systems discipline;

the Mechanical discipline; the Electronics discipline and the Information discipline) as well as the Quantity Surveying and Architectural professions. As regards further extension of the “Professional Title” evaluation, we will maintain close communication with local construction-related professional bodies and relevant Mainland authorities and strive to extend the evaluation mechanism to other suitable professional sectors, with a view to assisting more Hong Kong professionals to obtain the corresponding “Professional Title” qualifications in the Mainland. This initiative will not only facilitate Hong Kong professionals to provide direct services in the Mainland cities of the GBA, but also promote the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA.

2. The Chief Executive’s 2024 Policy Address states that the DEVB is collaborating with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate GBA Standards of the skill levels of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and will take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. Skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector who pass the examinations adopting the GBA Standards can concurrently obtain vocational skill certificates issued by the three places. The arrangement aims at enhancing the training quality of the construction industry in the GBA and nurturing talents.

The DEVB, in collaboration with Guangdong and Macau, is taking forward the relevant work. In March 2025, we have announced the GBA standards and taken forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement for skilled workers in the first two pilot trades (i.e. painter and bricklayer). As for technicians, we plan to establish and promote the GBA standards for the first pilot position (i.e. civil engineering works supervisor) in mid-2025 and will announce the details later in due course. Subsequently, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau will take forward the above arrangement for other major trades/ positions of the construction industry in an orderly manner taking into account the implementation experience and the situations of various trades/ positions.

Apart from formulating GBA standards, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau have implemented the corresponding supporting measures. On training support, with the DEVB’s encouragement, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) has signed collaboration agreements with nearly 10 training institutions in the GBA, covering various aspects, such as strengthening collaboration in training for participation in WorldSkills Competition and provision of training according to the GBA standards. On examination support, the CIC collaborates with examination bodies in Mainland and Macau to enhance examination procedures and facilities. After the announcement of the GBA standards for the first pilot trade, we will commence the publicity and promotion work, continue to enhance the supporting measures required and speed up the enhancement of the training quality of the construction industry in the GBA.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)044

(Question Serial No. 0050)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 165 of the Budget Speech that collaborating with Guangdong Province and Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate Greater Bay Area (GBA) standards on the skill levels for skilled workers and technicians of the construction sector, and taking forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of the trades involved in the GBA standards for skilled workers and technicians and their implementation schedules?
2. What are the details of the trades involved in “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement and their implementation schedules?
3. In view of the needs for exchange and collaboration among various sectors of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, has the Government considered promoting the above arrangement in other sectors in the three places in addition to the construction sector? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1&2.

The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address states that the Development Bureau is collaborating with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate Greater Bay Area (GBA) Standards of the skill levels of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and will take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. Skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector who pass the examinations adopting the GBA Standards can concurrently obtain vocational skill certificates issued by the three places. The arrangement aims at enhancing the training quality of the construction industry in the GBA and nurturing talents.

The DEVB, in collaboration with Guangdong and Macao, is taking forward the relevant work. In March 2025, we have announced the GBA standards and taken forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement for skilled workers in the first two pilot trades (i.e. painter and brick layer). As for technicians, we plan to establish and promote the GBA standards for the first pilot position (i.e. civil engineering supervisor) in mid-2025 and will announce the details later in due course. Subsequently, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will take forward the above arrangement for other major trades/positions of the construction industry in an orderly manner taking into account the implementation experience and the situations of various trades/positions.

3. According to the information provided by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, apart from the above “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement relating to the construction industry, the Vocational Training Council is proactively implementing the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” system in the beauty and hairdressing industries. Candidates may obtain relevant certificates for beauty and hairdressing issued by the Mainland, Hong Kong, and Macao by passing a standardised examination. This will not only enhance their competitiveness, but also facilitate them to explore development opportunities in the GBA and foster talent mobility in the GBA. In future, various policy bureaux of the Government of the Special Administrative Region will continue to consider the promotion of the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” system based on the actual circumstances of different industries.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)045

(Question Serial No. 0063)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Since February 2023, mandatory adoption of the Smart Site Safety System (4S) for capital works contracts exceeding \$30 million has been required. The Government has also provided subsidies to contractors of private development projects through the “Construction Innovation and Technology Fund” (CITF) to adopt 4S since April 2023. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) So far, how many capital works contracts have adopted 4S? How many contractors of private development projects have been subsidised to adopt this system?
- (2) 4S can collect a large quantity of data to identify safety hazards. How will the Government make use of such data to formulate more targeted safety enhancement measures? Will a relevant analysis report be released on a regular basis for reference and application by the industry?
- (3) Under the overall framework of “Construction 2.0”, how will the Government make planning for long-term development and continue to enhance the professionalism and safety level of the construction industry?

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

Reply:

- (1) The Development Bureau (DEVB) attaches great importance to site safety of public works. In February 2023, the DEVB began to lead by example in public works, requiring all capital works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million to adopt the Smart Site Safety System (4S). Contractors of private development projects are subsidised to adopt 4S through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund. As at March 2025, about 530 works contracts (including 370 capital works contracts and 160 other public and private development projects) have adopted 4S in Hong Kong.
- (2) 4S collects real-time data and transmit the data to the central management platform for one-stop management and analysis to facilitate real-time and remote monitoring of high-risk activities at construction sites, facilitating early identification of hazards and timely

generation of alerts, with a view to reducing safety hazards at construction sites. Contractors of capital works contracts are required to submit monthly reports, analysing data and alerts collected by 4S in order to identify the crux of the safety hazards. Contractors will make a report and an analysis of the findings at the monthly Site Safety Management Committee meeting, and discuss with the resident site staff of works departments' and jointly work out enhancement measures as appropriate according to the actual circumstances of the site, with a view to continuously uplifting the safety performance. The DEVB will, in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council, promulgate relevant analysis outcomes on a regular basis for reference and use by the industry.

- (3) To address the various challenges, including manpower shortage, declining productivity, high construction costs faced by the construction industry, the DEVB has been promoting "Construction 2.0" since 2018, advocating "innovation", "professionalisation" and "revitalisation" to enhance quality, safety, environmental and cost management performance of projects, and the productivity, capacity and sustainability of the construction industry.

On professionalisation, we are committed to enhancing the mindset and capability of project officers in order to implement relevant strategic initiatives. In this connection, the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders (CoE) was established in 2019, and the Major Projects Leadership Programme and the Project Delivery Capability Programme, launched under the CoE, provide training for major project leaders and mid-tier managers respectively and enable them to deliver projects with an innovative mindset and better leadership skills, thereby enhancing infrastructure project performance and professionalisation of the construction industry. In the 2025-26 Budget, we have set aside \$15 million for the work of the CoE over the next 2 years to enhance the professionalism, innovation capabilities and cost-effectiveness management of the construction industry.

Besides, the DEVB has been working closely with different stakeholders, including the Construction Industry Council (CIC), developers, engineering consultants, contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, professional institutions and trade unions to discuss and devise various site safety measures, including technology application initiatives (e.g. using 4S to enhance site safety supervision), and has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to uplift site safety performance. To tie in with the Government's efforts, the CIC has also implemented measures to strengthen site safety culture in the construction industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)046

(Question Serial No. 0077)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In paragraph 250 of the Budget Speech, it is mentioned that capital works expenditure of the Government is expected to increase from the previously estimated \$90 billion per annum on average to about \$120 billion per annum on average in the coming years. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

1. of the major efforts made by the Works Branch over the past 2 years to monitor the implementation of public sector infrastructure development and works programmes, manage and control cost-effectiveness, and roll out industry reform initiatives; and
2. whether the Government has carefully reviewed the investment amount and scale of each public works project to be implemented, so that works projects of various scales can be launched in a timely and orderly manner to avoid drastic fluctuations in the volume of works; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

1. The PSGO has always vigorously scrutinised cost estimates of major projects at the planning and design stage. While not compromising the functionality, quality and safety of works, the PSGO scrutinises project cost estimates in accordance with the

principle of "fitness-for-purpose and no frills". We have been collaborating with policy bureaux and departments to enhance the cost-effectiveness of projects, reduce cost and minimize risk of cost overrun through design optimisation by means of exploring different design options, construction methods and procurement models, such as optimisation of foundation works and building layouts, etc. We will also carry out benchmarking with the costs of other similar projects and make reference to the prevailing market situation, to ensure that the project estimates are reasonable. At the construction stage, the DEVB will closely monitor the implementation programme of projects through a high-level task force, complemented with the Project Surveillance System, for timely intervention so as to mitigate the risks of project delays. At the same time, the PSGO also examines major variations during the construction period to ensure that they are cost effective.

Moreover, the DEVB completed a strategic study on construction costs in late 2024. After identifying the main reasons for the high construction costs in Hong Kong, we have established 4 major directions for measures to lower the construction costs, including optimising the project procurement model; reviewing the design standards and requirements; applying advanced technologies and construction methods; and streamlining the approval process. We will implement the measures by launching them once they are ready, and will launch pilot schemes for individual construction cost reduction measures. As each construction cost reduction measure will bring about different levels of construction cost savings for individual projects, the Government will assess the overall effectiveness of the measures in reducing construction cost when more data is available.

2. In the coming years, projects related to the Northern Metropolis will be rolled out progressively. Together with other infrastructure projects aimed at improving the economy and people's livelihood, the capital works expenditure of the Government will start reaching its peak. In the Median Range Forecast, capital works expenditure is expected to increase from the previously estimated \$90 billion per annum on average in 2024 to about \$120 billion per annum on average in future. As the Government has always strictly adhered to financial discipline and proper use of public money, public works projects will be prioritised and rolled out in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)047

(Question Serial No. 0084)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Government has indicated that it will continue to oversee and monitor the adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM) technology in major government capital works projects and promote the use of this technology in private construction projects. In December 2023, it promulgated the Roadmap on Adoption of BIM for Building Plan Preparation and Submission, with the target of extending BIM to all development projects by 2029. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. whether the Government has assessed the effectiveness of existing support measures, such as training programmes and the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) given that BIM technology has obvious advantages and the Government has also adopted the strategy of spearheading its adoption in public works projects, making the application of BIM technology in public works projects relatively earlier and more mature, and that there are views saying that some private construction companies, small and medium ones in particular, are facing challenges in its application due to manpower and resource constraints; and
2. of the statistics on applications for the CITF in relation to BIM?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

In December 2023, the Government announced the preliminarily proposed Roadmap on Adoption of Building Information Modelling (BIM) for Building Plan Preparation and Submission for consultation with the stakeholders. It outlines key proposed initiatives for adoption of BIM by the private sector through a step-by-step approach, with the ultimate goal of achieving full use of BIM throughout the preparation and approval process of all building plans submitted under the Buildings Ordinance. Our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

1. Since January 2018, the Government has been requiring public works projects with project estimates exceeding \$30 million to use BIM for their design and construction. We have been continuously promoting the application of BIM in public works and BIM has become the pillar of the digitalisation of construction works.

The Government injected a total of \$2.2 billion into the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) in 2018 and 2022 to subsidise eligible contractors, subcontractors and consultants in staff training and procuring related software and hardware for adoption of BIM, with a view to boosting the capacities of enterprises and practitioners in adopting BIM. Since the launch of CITF, there has been a significant increase in the adoption of BIM in the industry. According to a survey by the Construction Industry Council (CIC), about 60% of the surveyed construction companies have applied BIM in their projects. Approximately 12 000 practitioners in the industry have received training related to BIM through subsidies under CITF, with over 90% of them indicating that it has helped them increase efficiency and reduce costs in their work.

In mid-2024, the Buildings Department commissioned a consultancy study to support the formulation of technical framework for full adoption of BIM by the private sector for preparation of plans for statutory submissions and approval under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123). The consultancy study is expected to be completed in 2025. Regarding the above initiative, we will strengthen our collaboration with the CIC and the industry, enhance training provided to the industry (in particular the small and medium-sized companies) and encourage their wider adoption of BIM, with a view to supporting the industry's demand for BIM application in the future. Besides, the CIC commenced the BIM manpower survey in March this year to update the demand and supply of BIM manpower, and put forward a proposal on enhancing training and encouraging subcontractors and small and medium-sized companies to adopt BIM.

2. As at January 2025, the CITF has received a total of 2 929 BIM-related applications, of which 2 262 have been approved and the total amount of subsidies granted is about \$181 million. The response is very positive. The amount of subsidies granted to small and medium-sized companies is \$67 million, accounting for about 37% of the total amount of BIM subsidies.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)048

(Question Serial No. 1085)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-2026, the Government states that it will commence scientific research on the dinosaur fossils excavated in Hong Kong upon completion of the preparation of such fossils, and continue to organise public education activities to deepen understanding of dinosaur fossils and paleontology of Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the timetable of the scientific research and the provisions for 2025-26;
- (b) the details of the public education activities concerned; and
- (c) the manpower and resources allocated for 2025-26 to organize the public education activities?

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

Reply:

- (a) The Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB), in collaboration with the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, started preparing dinosaur fossils since late 2024. It is preliminarily expected that fossil preparation will be completed around late 2025. However, the actual time required will be subject to the quantity, form and condition of fossils contained in the rocks. Upon completion of the preparation work, IVPP will be lined up to discuss the arrangements and relevant estimates for scientific identification and studies according to the fossil preparation outcomes.
- (b) From October 2024 to end-February 2025, the AMO has organised 12 thematic public lectures on dinosaurs, palaeontology and palaeoanthropology as well as 10 workshops, and organised science popularisation activities in primary and secondary schools. The DEVB also set up "Dinosaur Parlour", which has been open to the public since 20 December 2024, at the courtyard of the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre. "Dinosaur Parlour" consists of a preparation area and a display area for visitors to

observe preparation of dinosaur fossils by experts, and view dinosaur fossils and other animal and plant fossils of the same period. In addition, the AMO provides free public docent services for the exhibition and fossil preparation work on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. AMO will also provide free group docent services for local registered charity groups, non-profit-making organisations and schools.

- (c) In 2025-26 financial year, the AMO will continue to arrange the above activities and services, which are part of the overall public education activities of the AMO and is dealt with through AMO's deployment of existing resources. Hence no breakdown of the manpower resources concerned is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)049

(Question Serial No. 1086)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The revised estimate for 2024-25 under this Programme is \$608.7 million, which is considerably lower than the original provision for 2024-25 by 25.3%. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the reason for the decrease in the revised estimate for 2024-25?

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

Reply:

Under Programme (6) Intra-Governmental Services, the revised estimate for 2024-25 is 25.3% lower than the original provision for 2024-25. This is mainly due to the lower-than-expected requirement of the recurrent consequences arising from new minor works projects funded under Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations and the lower-than-expected cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)050

(Question Serial No. 1087)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 under this Programme is \$362.5 million, which is higher than the revised provision for 2024-25 by 6.9%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the change is mainly due to the increased provisions for organising exhibitions and filling of vacancies, and increased cash flow requirement for a non-recurrent item. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the details of the exhibitions to be organised and the provisions involved;
- (b) the details of the vacancies to be filled and the provisions involved; and
- (c) the details of the non-recurrent item concerned and the provision involved?

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

Reply:

- (a) The Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB) is planning to organise a large-scale heritage exhibition at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre in 2025-26. Discussion with relevant Mainland organisations is underway on the display of important unearthed relics from Mainland cultural and museum institutions and Hong Kong. The provision involved is about \$16 million.
- (b) There are currently about 11 vacancies in the Commissioner for Heritage's Office and AMO under the DEVB. If all of them are to be filled, the expenditure for 2025-26 will be about \$9 million.
- (c) The non-recurrent item under this Programme mainly includes expenditures relating to the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (Revitalisation Scheme), Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage, and Funding Schemes for Public Engagement Projects and Thematic Research. The estimate for 2025-26 is higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25 by \$3.6 million. This is mainly due to the increase in the estimated provisions for the start-up costs and operating deficits incurred in the first two years of operation under Batches III to VI of the Revitalisation Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)051

(Question Serial No. 1088)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Governance and Strategy

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Government states that it will take forward the development of the Advanced Construction Industry Building in Tsing Yi to provide space to set up advanced manufacturing facilities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the progress and timetable of the development of the Advanced Construction Industry Building in Tsing Yi; and
2. the manpower and resources allocated for executing this task in 2025-26?

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

Reply:

In the 2023-24 Budget, we earmarked \$30 million for conducting a study on the construction of an advanced construction industry building at a site of about 3 hectares in Tsing Yi, mainly to provide space for operators to set up steel reinforcement bar prefabrication yards, processing sites for Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MiMEP), and other advanced manufacturing yards, in order to meet the increasing market demand and the challenges of the huge construction volume ahead.

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

1. We have completed the study on business models, the market sounding exercise, preliminary planning and related impact assessments of the building. Our current plan is to adopt the "Build – Operate – Transfer" contract model to develop this project utilising market financing. We expect to openly invite investors or stakeholders of the construction industry to submit expressions of interest on this project in the second quarter of 2025, and seek to conduct a tender exercise within 2025 for the construction of the building.

2. In 2025-26, the main tasks for this project include collecting expressions of interest, after which will be the tender exercise and assessment. As for manpower, we will deploy internal resources of the Development Bureau to handle the work. Consultants will also be engaged to assist in preparing and assessing tenders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)052

(Question Serial No. 1089)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Attention in 2025-26, the Government has stated that it will continue to lead and drive the digitalisation of public works and the construction industry to enhance works processes and uplift efficiency and productivity. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the implementation progress of digitalisation of public works and the construction industry; and
- (b) the performance indicators and effectiveness of the digitalisation initiatives?

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

Reply:

To cope with Hong Kong's future construction volume and the challenges facing the construction industry, the Development Bureau (DEVB) is driving digitalisation of public works and construction industry in full swing, covering the whole project life cycle from planning and design, construction, to operation and maintenance. The DEVB has established a Task Force on Digitalisation of Public Works to lead and co-ordinate works departments in the application of digital technology.

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

(a) & (b)

The DEVB leads and drives the application of digital technology throughout the whole project life cycle in public works projects, enabling project management team to grasp the real-time progress and performance of various projects with a view to further enhancing the management efficiency of public works projects. By doing so, we can better control works project costs and enhance site safety. The progress and effectiveness in respect of digitalisation of public works and construction industry, championed by the DEVB, are as follows:

Major digital system	Progress	Effectiveness
Building Information Modelling (BIM)	<p>Since January 2018, the Government has been requiring public works projects with project estimates exceeding \$30 million to use BIM for their design and construction.</p> <p>In 2025, the DEVB issued an updated technical circular to incorporate BIM models in tender documents of public works projects, forming part of the works contracts, with a view to continuing to enhance BIM application and effectiveness in works projects.</p>	<p>As at December 2024, BIM has been adopted in over 700 consultancy and works contracts with a total value of about \$370 billion.</p>
Digital Works Supervision System (DWSS)	<p>In 2020, the DEVB promulgated a technical circular requiring all public works contracts with value exceeding \$300 million to adopt a Digital Works Supervision System (DWSS) to enhance site safety, workmanship and the efficiency in contract management.</p> <p>In 2023, we promulgated an updated technical circular to enhance the DWSS, lowering the adoption requirement to public works contracts with a value of \$30 million with a view to further promoting digitalisation of public works.</p> <p>Apart from public works, the Government also encourages private sector works projects to use the DWSS, and provides subsidies through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) with a view to further driving digitalisation of the construction industry.</p>	<p>So far, more than 180 public works contracts with a total value exceeding \$200 billion have adopted the DWSS. More than 10 000 users are from the Government, engineering consultant firms and contractors.</p> <p>Industry stakeholders have responded positively to the DWSS and agreed that the system can enhance project performance in such areas as quality, progress, safety, environmental protection, productivity and contract management.</p>

Major digital system	Progress	Effectiveness
Digital Project Delivery System (DPDS)	In 2025, the DEVB promulgated a technical circular requiring the implementation of the Digital Project Delivery System (DPDS) across-the-board for consultancies with value exceeding \$15 million. This will effectively enhance the management efficiency of consultancy contracts.	Consultants can make use of the DPDS to submit the required technical documents to different policy bureaux and departments for approving officers' review. This will reduce the time required for documents travelling to and from, and circulating among various bureaux and departments, and departments will be more efficient in approving project documents.
Integrated Capital Works Platform (iCWP)	The DEVB has established an inter-departmental Integrated Capital Works Platform (iCWP) to consolidate major data of different works projects and carry out comprehensive analysis. Major data include costs, progress, safety, quality, resources, contractors and consultant management.	<p>Since the commissioning of the iCWP in 2022, data have been collected from more than 200 Category A works projects in progress with a total value of \$60 million for analysis. They include more than 300 works contracts and nearly 700 consultancies.</p> <p>The iCWP consolidates data of various projects at different stages for project management team to grasp their real-time progress and performance. More comprehensive data consolidation and analyses can then be conducted to further enhance the overall performance and management efficiency of the entire Capital Works Programme.</p>
Smart Site Safety System (4S)	The DEVB and the Construction Industry Council launched the 4S Labelling Scheme in May 2024 and have been issuing labels to work sites with proper adoption of the 4S. The plaques will be placed at conspicuous spots around construction sites, with 4S labels for identification and ease of monitoring, including facilitating enforcement departments to monitor the sites without 4S labels.	As at March 2025, more than 500 works contracts have been issued with labels, including over 370 government works contracts..

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)053

(Question Serial No. 1090)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-2026, the Government states that it will continue to support tertiary institutions and Construction Industry Council to implement pilot schemes for providing on-the-job training allowances to trainees of part-time degree and safety officer courses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) breakdown of the relevant courses offered by each training institution in the 2024/25 academic year;
- (b) the number of trainees enrolled in each of these courses in the 2024/25 academic year; and
- (c) the manpower and resources allocated for 2025-26 to execute this task?

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

Reply:

(a) and (b)

We have made use of the funding of \$107 million allocated under the 2023-24 Government Budget to launch two pilot schemes in collaboration with the Vocational Training Council (VTC), the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and other institutions, to provide on-the-job training subsidies for trainees who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years, and trainees attending construction safety officer courses.

The Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) under the VTC, and the School of Professional Education and Executive Development (SPEED) of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University started to implement the pilot scheme for part-time construction-related degree programmes in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years respectively. Currently, the number of trainees in enrollment and receiving subsidies has reached 1 000. The related programmes provided by participating institutions and their enrollment in the 2024-25 academic year are as follows:

Part-time construction-related degree programme	Number of trainee enrollment in 2024-25 academic year (as at February 2025)	
	THEi	SPEED
Electrical, Mechanical and Environmental Engineering	140	204
Civil Engineering	125	0
Surveying	24	118
Building Engineering and Management	0	71
Landscape Architecture and Management	51	0
Sub-total	340	393
Total	733	

The scheme has been well-received by young people and the industry. In the first year of its rollout, there was an average increase of more than 50% in the number of enrollment for the relevant programmes. To attract more young people to join the construction industry, it is mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget that the Government and the CIC will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million to continue the provision of on-the-job training subsidies to trainees enrolling in part-time construction-related degree programmes over the next two academic years (i.e. 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years), so as to assist them in grasping development opportunities in the construction industry for upward mobility, and to broaden the source of students for construction programmes. It is anticipated to further benefit 1 000 trainees.

As for the pilot scheme for construction safety officer courses, it was launched by the CIC in November 2023. Since its introduction, 112 trainees have participated in the scheme. In 2024-25 academic year, the number of enrollment is 52.

- (c) The Government will continue to implement the above two pilot schemes using existing internal resources. No separate breakdown is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1091)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 under this Programme is \$95.1 million, which is considerably lower than the revised provision for 2024-25 by 18.4%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the change is mainly due to the decreased cash flow requirement for a non-recurrent item, decreased provision for operating expenses and a net decrease of two posts in 2025-26. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the details of the non-recurrent item concerned and the relevant provisions involved for 2024-25 and 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

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

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

The main reason for the change in provision for 2025-26 is that some important studies have been substantially completed, and the estimated expenditures have been adjusted correspondingly. These studies include (i) strategic study on construction costs, (ii) study on establishing the Building Technology Research Institute and (iii) study on strengthening the supply chain of MiC modules. In 2024-25 and 2025-26, the provisions for paying the expenses for such studies are \$20 million and \$10 million respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)055

(Question Serial No. 1092)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 under this Programme is \$809.5 million, which is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2024-25 by 33%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the change is mainly due to the lower-than-expected requirement of the recurrent consequences arising from new minor works projects funded under Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations in 2024-25 and the increased cash flow requirement for non-recurrent items in 2025-26. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the reasons for the lower-than-expected requirement of the recurrent consequences arising from new minor works projects funded under Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations in 2024-25; and
- (b) the details of the non-recurrent items concerned and the relevant provisions involved?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

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

- (a) The expenditure concerned is the recurrent consequences arising from new minor works projects funded under Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations, to cater for, among other things, the costs of routine repair and maintenance works required after completion of the new minor works projects. The related routine repair and maintenance works required for 2024-25 were less than expected in the light of the actual situation and requirements. Therefore, the actual recurrent consequences arising from new minor works projects funded under Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations in 2024-25 is also lower than expected.
- (b) The non-recurrent items mentioned in the question are related to allocations made under Budget in previous years to provide subsidies for a number of manpower training schemes for the construction industry, which include enhanced training measures for construction workers and the Pilot Scheme for On-the-job Training Allowance for

Construction-related Part-time Degree Programmes, etc. As more construction personnel are expected to be trained under these schemes in 2025-26 compared to 2024-25, the estimated cash flow requirement for 2025-26 has also increased, from \$111.9 million in 2024-25 to \$270.8 million in 2025-26.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)056

(Question Serial No. 1093)

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

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

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The approved commitment for the Strengthening Cost Management and Uplifting Performance of Public Works Projects was \$135.5 million. According to the Government, an increase in commitment of \$15 million is sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2025. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the justification for the increase in commitment by \$15 million?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

To address the challenges faced by the construction industry, enhance the professionalism of the construction industry and sustain our long-term competitiveness, the Development Bureau (DEVB) set up the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders (CoE) in 2019, the first of its kind in Asia specialising in nurturing major project leaders. The CoE offers a high-level project management and leadership development programme to senior government officials and major project leaders to equip them with a more innovative mindset and up-to-date leadership skills for the implementation of public works projects, thereby uplifting project delivery capability and improving project performances as a whole. In the coming years, there is a pressing need for more major project leaders and professionals to embrace a culture of project cost management, innovation and collaboration, with a view to enhancing project performance and ensuring prudent use of public funds.

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

In the Budget this year, we have set aside \$15 million for the work of the CoE over the next 2 years to enhance the professionalism, innovation capabilities and cost-effectiveness management of the construction industry. We will continue the "Major Projects Leadership Programme" and the "Project Delivery Capability Programme" under the CoE for the training of major project leaders and mid-level managers of the Government and the industry. We will also organise summits and various events to facilitate exchanges and co-operation

transcending geographical and sectoral boundaries, and develop the CoE into an international expert knowledge hub on project delivery.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)057

(Question Serial No. 1094)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The approved commitment for the Pilot Scheme for On-the-job Training Subsidy for Construction-related Part-time Degree Programmes was \$100 million. The accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2024 together with the revised expenditure for 2024-25 is about 25 million. According to the Government, an increase in commitment of \$47.3 million is sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2025. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the justification for the increase in commitment by \$47.3 million?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

To attract more young people to join the construction industry, the 2023-24 Budget has provided \$100 million funding to launch a pilot scheme to provide on-the-job training subsidies to higher diploma graduates who have enrolled in part-time construction-related degree programmes. Subsidies have been provided to trainees who have enrolled in related programmes under the pilot scheme in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years respectively, each receiving three years of allowance, amounting to a maximum of \$90,000 per trainee. In other words, the last batch of beneficiaries of the pilot scheme will receive subsidies up to the 2026-27 academic year. The accumulated expenditure together with the revised estimated expenditure for the 2024-25 financial year is about \$25 million in total. It is expected that the remaining funds will be utilised in the coming three financial years (up to the 2027-28 financial year) as planned.

The pilot scheme has been well-received by young people and the industry. In the first year of its rollout, there was an average increase of more than 50% in the number of enrolment for the relevant programmes. The target of the pilot scheme is to provide subsidies to 1 000 trainees, and the actual number of participating trainees who are receiving subsidies has already met the target. It is mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget that the Government and the Construction Industry Council will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million (of

which the Government will make a commitment of \$47.3 million) to continue the provision of on-the-job training subsidies to trainees enrolling in part-time construction-related degree programmes over the next two academic years (i.e. 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years), so as to assist them in grasping development opportunities in the construction industry for upward mobility, and to broaden the source of trainees for construction programmes. It is anticipated to benefit an additional 1 000 trainees.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)058

(Question Serial No. 1402)

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

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

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

- (1) The estimate for “Artefacts and Museum Exhibitions” under Operational Expenses is about \$27 million in 2025-26, which is considerably higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25 by 140%. What plans are there regarding exhibitions and what are the various expenditures for the year? Are these exhibitions different from those organised by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau or are there repetitions? Will there be an admission fee for these exhibitions?
- (2) Of the heritage or historical buildings under the Development Bureau open for public visits, are there any that charge an admission fee? If so, what buildings are included? If not, why hasn't the Government considered charging an admission fee?
- (3) A large number of people have visited the Mission Hill Service Reservoir since its opening. What is the number of visitors in the past 2 years and how much does it cost to repair and maintain the reservoir per year? At present, admission to the service reservoir is free of charge. Has the Government considered charging visitors an admission fee in accordance with the user-pay principle, with a view to allocating the revenue for the maintenance of the service reservoir and for daily expenses, thereby reducing the spending of public funds?
- (4) What is the total number of buildings, sites or structures of historical interest that have been restored using the provision under the item of Restoration of Historic Buildings? How many of these are open for visits by the public? Do any of these charge the public a fee or have a membership system in place? Does the Government require the buildings or structures that apply for subsidies under the item of Restoration of Historic Buildings to shoulder certain social responsibilities?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (1) In 2025-26, the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) under the Development Bureau (DEVB) will continue to deepen and promote research, conservation, revitalisation, exhibitions and education activities on archaeology and historic buildings. Generally speaking, the expenditure and budget regarding exhibitions are determined by a number of factors, such as the theme, content and period of exhibitions, the number and rarity of artefacts, the number and locations of the museums and cultural institutions that loan out the exhibits, the quantity of publications, the extent of publicity, etc. The main expenditures for exhibitions include loan fees for exhibits, transportation, insurance, mounting and dismounting, and curation fees, exhibition fabrication and catalogue production costs, venue design costs, education activities and publicity costs, as well as other fees related to venue management, e.g. security and cleansing fees. The budget for 2025-26 is \$27 million, which covers 2 large scale heritage exhibitions planned to be held in collaboration with the Mainland, small scale exhibitions or photograph exhibitions to be organised, as well as the updating or urgent maintenance of permanent exhibitions or displays in other historic buildings.

The AMO is responsible for the preservation of Hong Kong's archaeological and built heritage, and to promote public awareness and appreciation of the preservation of local cultural heritage through research, exhibitions, education and publicity. The Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre (HDC), managed by the AMO, often organises heritage-themed exhibitions, which generally only involve archaeology, built heritage and heritage conservation. The AMO, when organising heritage exhibitions, will suitably display archaeological finds and artefacts of built heritage of Hong Kong in parallel to facilitate comparison of the artefacts with those on the Mainland. To encourage the public to visit the exhibitions and to deepen their understanding of and interest in heritage conservation, the multi-dimension of Chinese culture, as well as the common origin of the history and culture of the Mainland and Hong Kong, admission to the exhibitions staged in the HDC is free.

(2)&(4)

The DEVB has been working with government departments and organisations as well as encouraging owners to open up their historic buildings for public access and enjoyment as far as practicable. At present, there are a total of 124 declared monuments and historic buildings that are open to the public under schemes/projects of the DEVB or with the assistance of the DEVB. Among them, 13 are revitalisation projects managed by non-profit-making organisations under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme; 3 are other revitalisation/restoration projects implemented by the DEVB; 69 are projects receiving financial assistance for carrying out maintenance works under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage; and 40 are open to the public under the management of or with the assistance of the AMO.

Under the above Revitalisation Scheme and other revitalisation/restoration projects implemented by the DEVB, the operator of the Sik Sik Yuen Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre Eco-Learn Institute charges visitors an admission fee of \$10 per person due to business considerations. For the remaining 15 projects, no admission fee is charged by the operating organisations. The above 69 declared monuments and historic

buildings that have received subsidies from the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage are open to the public for free visit to varying degrees. Historic buildings are important resources and entry points for understanding history, culture and heritage conservation. Free opening of historic buildings can enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation of Hong Kong's cultural heritage, thereby promoting heritage education.

However, operators will charge the public for services or use of facilities provided in the historic buildings revitalised under the Revitalisation Scheme and other revitalisation projects mentioned above according to their operational needs so as to achieve financial self-sufficiency.

In respect of opening to the public, the above 124 declared monuments and historic buildings do not have a membership system.

- (3) The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has been organising guided tours of the Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir (Ex-SSPSR) for the public since December 2021, and a new self-guided tour has been launched since the fourth quarter of 2022. To further enable the public to visit the Ex-SSPSR, no prior appointment is required for the public to visit the service reservoir starting from 1 August 2024. The numbers of visitors to the former service reservoir in 2023 and 2024 were 54 500 and 85 153 respectively, and the related operation and maintenance cost was about \$6 million per year. In order to continue attracting the public to visit the Ex-SSPSR, so as to enhance the public's understanding of the historical background and appreciate the internal structure of the Ex-SSPSR, and increase the public's awareness on conservation of historic waterworks buildings and heritage, the WSD has no plan to change the existing free admission arrangement for the time being but will review the relevant arrangement as and when necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)059

(Question Serial No. 2157)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) took multi-pronged measures to address the manpower need based on the construction manpower forecast published by the Construction Industry Council (CIC) in 2023, including enhancing training for professionals, technicians and workers, driving wider adoption. Amidst the slackening economy, the results of government land sales are not as good as expected, developers are less enthusiastic about submitting bids for land. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) of the situation of manpower shortage in various professions, skills and trades in the coming years according to the latest construction manpower forecast, and among these, the professions and trades that are facing the most serious manpower shortage, and the methods to quantitatively assess the impact of manpower shortage on progress of infrastructural works, including possible delays and additional costs for major infrastructural projects;
- (b) whether the Government has any specific plans or measures in 2025-26, apart from importing labour, to improve working conditions of the construction industry, the image of the industry, and the application of innovative technologies, etc., so as to stimulate the supply of local workforce and uplift productivity; if so, of the specific timetables, budget allocation and expected results regarding the measures; and
- (c) whether the Government will review the supply and demand of manpower resources in the construction industry of Hong Kong in view of the construction manpower forecast published in 2023 and the notable changes in the current economic situation, and in particular, whether it will take the current economic situation and future economic development into consideration; if not, of the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

(a)&(c)

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) published its construction manpower forecast published in February 2023 which showed that there would be a notable shortage of professionals, technicians, site supervisory personnel and skilled workers in 2027. Although there has been a recent decrease in private sector construction projects, which has slightly eased the overall manpower demand of the construction industry, certain trades are still facing manpower shortage. With the gradual recovery of the economy, we believe that the volume of private sector construction works will rebound gradually. At the same time, the Government will continue to invest in public infrastructure, including projects for the Northern Metropolis, which will be rolled out progressively. Together with other major infrastructure works projects supporting economic development and people's livelihood, the capital works expenditure of the Government will start reaching its peak. Capital works expenditure is expected to increase from the previously estimated \$90 billion per year on average in 2024 to about \$120 billion per year on average in the next period. In addition, the strategic study on construction costs conducted by the Development Bureau (DEVB) has pointed out that the problem of ageing workers is more serious in Hong Kong than in other cities (about 40% of skilled workers in Hong Kong are aged 55 or above), and that it is still common for the construction industry in Hong Kong to adopt relatively labour-dependent construction methods, resulting in projects requiring longer working hours to complete and a decline in the overall productivity. The manpower demand for the construction industry will remain strong in the coming years. The CIC is updating the manpower forecast for the construction industry taking into account of the latest situation.

(b) The DEVB has been working closely with the CIC and the industry to improve working conditions and enhance the image of the construction industry, and apply innovative technologies.

In 2023, the CIC published Reference Materials on Construction Site Facilities for Workers (Reference Materials), so as to encourage construction industry stakeholders to improve workers' facilities on construction sites to enhance their well-being, sense of belonging and work efficiency. The Reference Materials list out the standards and recommendations for various facilities and measures, based on the workers' actual needs, for example installing mobile air coolers or mist fans on construction sites to help workers cool down; and placing mosquito repellents or setting up rest facilities on construction sites with sufficient space. In 2025-26, the CIC will continue to promote the Reference Materials to the industry.

The DEVB has launched the "Construction Hong Kong" industry-wide promotion campaign in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council, and industry stakeholders such as construction-related trade unions, trade associations, professional institutions, training institutes, and universities. Since 2022, we have organised a wide range of industry promotion, publicity and training programmes to uplift the image of the industry, and to attract more young people to join the industry. Under the Campaign, we have promoted educational activities through social media platforms and announcement of public interests, and have also organised construction technology application competitions for secondary students. With the support of the Education Bureau, we are producing a set of construction-themed STEAM teaching and learning

materials for classroom use in 1 100 primary and secondary schools across Hong Kong. We also assist secondary school students in career planning by providing them with short term internships and mentorship opportunities. The Campaign will support over 20 industry organisations in their promotion activities for 5 years. The total budget is about \$55 million. So far, the promotion activities have attracted over 1 million members of the public.

In line with the industrialisation strategy, the DEVB has been committed to promotion of application of innovative technologies. We are actively promoting applied research and development, advocating the use of advanced construction technologies, construction robots, digitalization and artificial intelligence, so as to enhance the cost-effectiveness of public works projects. Our measures include subsidising the construction industry through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF). As at February 2025, the \$2.2 billion CITF has approved grants of about \$1.6 billion, subsidising about 1 300 construction enterprises (of which 60% are small and medium-sized companies) in adopting various types of technologies in local construction projects, as well as approved over 18 000 technology-related training places. Since the launch of the CITF, there has been a significant increase in the adoption of various innovative technologies in the industry (such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), prefabricated steel rebar, and advanced robotic technologies for construction, etc.). According to a survey by the Construction Industry Council, about 60% of the responded construction companies have applied BIM in their projects, and about 60% of responded contractors have used prefabricated steel rebar components on their construction sites. Approximately 12 000 practitioners in the industry have received training related to BIM, with over 90% of them indicating that it has helped them increase efficiency and reduce costs in their work. About 70% of construction companies that had used the CITF for application of relevant technologies in their projects indicated that the use of innovative technologies (such as automatic rebar bending machines, painting robots, plastering robots, demolition robots, and transportation robots) had significantly increased their productivity, and reduced manpower demand by over 20%. In 2025-26, CITF will pay particular attention to trades with significant ageing of skilled workers, strengthen promotion of the application of construction robots and other automation technologies, as well as the artificial intelligence, manpower training, MiMEP methods, and supporting small and medium-sized subcontractors in using BIM.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2158)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 under Programme (6), the Development Bureau states that it will “continue to administer the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector”. Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the (i) staff establishments and (ii) emolument, operational and equipment expenses of the Bureau for approving applications under the scheme in 2024-25 and those estimated for 2025-26?
- (b) What are the (i) numbers of principal contractors/employers with applications submitted, (ii) numbers of projects (list by District Council district), (iii) numbers of quotas applied for labour importation and (iv) numbers of quotas approved for labour importation (list by trades and disciplines for (iii) and (iv)) in each round since the implementation of the scheme?
- (c) Has the Government maintained the number of complaints from imported workers about exploitation, failure to protect their occupational safety and health, etc. since the implementation of the scheme? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
- (d) Has the Government examined the changes in the salaries, employment opportunities, unemployment/underemployment of local construction workers since the implementation of the scheme? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
- (e) According to labour unions, all works contracts with approved quotas for labour importation are required to comply with the ratio requirement of 1 imported worker to at least 2 full-time local workers. However, in order to save manpower costs, contractors/sub-contractors usually give imported workers priority to work while no arrangements are made for local workers to work daily because imported workers receive monthly salaries while local workers receive daily wages. This not only reduces the incomes of local workers, but also violates the ratio requirement of “1:2” in respect of actual on-site manpower deployment. Does the Bureau know about that? If so, what measures will be adopted to step up monitoring to close the loophole?
- (f) Since the implementation of the scheme, (i) what are the numbers of principal contractors/employers (1) who have been issued with warning letters, (2) whose quotas

granted have been revoked and (3) who have been debarred temporarily from making application under the scheme pursuant to paragraph 17.4 of the Guidance Notes for Application for Labour Importation Quota due to violation of the ratio requirement of “1:2” or other requirements; and (ii) what are the respective (1) numbers of warning letters, (2) numbers of quotas revoked and (3) maximum period of debarment from application?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

To address the manpower shortage of the construction sector, the Special Administrative Region Government has been adopting multi-pronged measures such as enhancing local training and recruiting new blood, promoting the application of technologies for uplifting overall productivity across the construction sector and implementing the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme) as a supplementary measure to help fill the manpower gap under the principle of safeguarding the employment priority for local labour.

- (a) Since the implementation of the Scheme in July 2023, the Development Bureau (DEVB) utilized existing internal resources for relevant works such as processing of applications and monitoring of quota usage. With the increase in workload after the implementation of the Scheme for a year, the DEVB created a time-limited non-directorate professional post in 2024-25, involving an additional annual expenditure of about \$1.7 million.
- (b) The approval of the first seven rounds of applications under the Scheme has been completed. Quota allocation is on a rolling basis, i.e. quotas will be released for new application after the completion of the relevant construction work. Together with the 685 active quotas previously approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, which are to be counted towards the importation quota of the Scheme, there were a total of 9 056 approved and active quotas under the Scheme as of March 2025. The number of principal contractors/employers, the number of construction projects, the number of importation quotas applied and the number of importation quotas approved in each round of applications are set out at the Annex.
- (c) Since the implementation of the Scheme, the Labour Department (LD) had referred to the DEVB a total of three complaints concerning the protection of imported workers' rights and benefits, all of which have been followed up. One of the complaints involves the calculation of salaries, and the LD has issued a warning letter to the employer of the imported labour concerned. For the remaining two complaints, as there is suspected exploitation of imported workers' rights, we have debarred new applications from the two principal contractors and nine subcontractors concerned for a period ranging from 6 months to 12 months. Relevant departments and public organisations have been reminded to reflect these breaches in the performance report of the construction projects.
- (d) The DEVB has been closely monitoring the overall employment, remuneration and manpower situation of the construction industry. Since the end of the epidemic in 2022, the overall employment and wage situations in the construction industry have remained stable. According to the Construction Industry Council's daily attendance

records, the number of workers who took part in construction works in the past three months (from December 2024 to February 2025) and the average daily number of workers engaged at construction sites are similar to those for the same period in 2023. According to the statistics of the Census and Statistics Department, in December 2024, there was a 7% increase in the average daily wages of workers engaged in public sector construction projects when compared with that in June 2023 (that was before the launch of the Scheme). The overall attendance record, the average daily number of workers engaged at construction sites and the average daily wages have not dropped, reflecting that the overall employment and underemployment situation in the construction industry are generally stable.

(e) & (f)

The quota approval condition under the Scheme clearly specify that the employer shall not displace local employees in employ by imported labour. In the event of redundancies, imported labour should be retrenched first. A minimum manning ratio of 1:2 (i.e. one imported labour to at least two full time local labour) shall apply to the works contract under application during labour importation period within the works contract period, unless with prior approval of the Approving Authority based on reasonable justifications (e.g. the application is to import special trade(s)/discipline(s) the local supply of which is very limited). Should relevant works departments and public organisations responsible for the works contracts find that there is a breach of the manning ratio requirement, a report will be made to the DEVB. If the breach is substantiated, the DEVB will consider taking administrative sanctions against the principal contractor-applicant and subcontractor-employer concerned, including revoking the approved quotas, debarring them from making new applications, etc. Also, the relevant works departments and public organisations responsible for the works contracts would take follow up action subject to the seriousness of the breaches, including reflecting these breaches in the performance report of the construction projects, which would affect their opportunity of successfully bidding future works tenders. As of March 2025, the DEVB has not found any non-compliance cases related to such breaches.

Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector
Quota application details and approval results
(as at March 2025)

Table (1): Quota application details and approval results

		First round of applications	Second round of applications	Third round of applications	Fourth round of applications	Fifth round of applications	Sixth round of applications	Seventh round of applications	First to seventh round of applications (Total)
1.	Application period	17 July to 16 August 2023	1 October to 31 October 2023	1 January to 31 January 2024	1 April to 30 April 2024	1 July to 31 July 2024	1 October to 31 October 2024	1 January to 3 February 2025	--
2.	Number of received applications ^{Note 1} from works contracts for importation quota	26	31	20	14	18	13	14	136
	Principal contractor-applicant ^{Note 1}	20	22	16	11	15	9	8	101
	Employer ^{Note 1}	39	56	25	22	24	11	8	185
4.	Number of importation quotas received	5 251	3 440	1 402	2 220	1 752	2 274	2 793	19 132
	Category								
	Skilled worker	5 167	3 373	1 361	2 182	1 699	2 152	2 680	18 614
	Technician	84	67	41	38	53	122	113	518
5.	Number of approved applications ^{Note 1} from works contracts for importation quotas	20	15	14	9	0	7	10	75
6.	Number of importation quotas approved	4 680	1 669	758	1 921	0	935	1 008	10 971
	Category								
	Skilled worker	4 625	1 641	729	1 886	0	816	943	10 640
	Technician	55	28	29	35	0	119	65	331
7.	Trades/disciplines and numbers involved in the approved and active quotas		<p style="text-align: center;">9 056</p> <p>Quota allocation is made on a rolling basis, i.e. quotas will be released for new applications after the completion of the relevant works. As of March 2025, there were a total of 9 056 approved and active importation quotas under the Scheme.</p> <p>see Table (2) for detailed breakdown by trades/disciplines</p>						

Note 1: Applications for importation quotas should be submitted by the principal contractor of eligible works contract for itself and/or on behalf of its sub-contractor(s) for the same contract. The imported labour applied for can be employed by the principal contractor-applicant or its sub-contractor(s). Each application for imported labour is submitted on the basis of an eligible works contract. Therefore, individual eligible works contract will make an application for imported labour in different application periods in the light of the progress of work, and accordingly the trade(s) required and the volume of works during the period.

Table (2) Number of approved and active importation quotas (as at March 2025) ^{Note 2}

	Trade of skilled/semi-skilled workers	Number of approved and active importation quotas in the first seven rounds of applications
1.	Refrigeration/Air-conditioning/ Ventilation Mechanic (including Water System and Air System)	1 335
2.	Cement Sand Mortar Worker (including Plastering, Bricklaying and Tiling)	997
3.	Fire Service Mechanic	632
4.	Electrician	505
5.	Bar Bender and Fixer	401
6.	Rigger/Metal Formwork Erector	378
7.	Woodworker	375
8.	Metal-steel Worker	372
9.	Curtain Wall and Glass Panes Installer	341
10.	Painter and Decorator	334
11.	Welder	332
12.	Plant and Equipment Mechanic (Construction Work)	304
13.	False Ceiling Installer	274
14.	Paving Block Layer	254
15.	Concrete and Grouting Worker	230
16.	Drain and Pipe Layer	212
17.	Leveller	169
18.	Metal Scaffolder	169
19.	Lift and Escalator Mechanic	132
20.	Overhead Linesman (High Voltage)	124
21.	Plant and Equipment Operator	56
22.	Construction Goods Vehicle Driver	49
23.	Demolition Worker	44
24.	Blasting Worker	26
25.	Piling Operative	12
26.	Craftsman (Historical Building)	2
27.	Plaster Mural Restorer (Historical Building)	1
28.	Asphalter (Road Construction)	1
Total		8 061

**Table (2) Number of approved and active importation quotas (as at March 2025)
(continued)**

	Discipline of technicians and site supervisory personnel	Number of approved and active importation quotas in the first seven rounds of applications
1.	(a) Site Foreman and (b) Assistant Site Foreman	267
2.	Draftsman	24
3.	Site Supervisor	5
4.	(a) Project Co-ordinator and (b) Assistant Project Co-ordinator	5
5.	E&M Engineering Technician (Mechanical)	4
6.	Civil Engineering Technician	1
7.	Structural Engineering Technician	1
8.	Surveying Technician (Quantity)	1
9.	Surveying Technician (Land)	1
10.	BIM Modeller	1
	Total	310

Note 2: As of March 2025, there are 8 371 quotas approved and active under the Scheme. Together with the 685 quotas previously approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, which are counted towards the importation quota of the Scheme, there are a total of 9 056 approved and active quotas.

Table (3) Number of importation quota applications involving works contracts (by District Council) (as at March 2025)

		Number of applications involving works contracts							
		First round of applications	Second round of applications	Third round of applications	Fourth round of applications	Fifth round of applications	Sixth round of applications	Seventh round of applications	First to seventh round of applications (Total)
1.	Central and Western District	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
2.	Wan Chai District	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Eastern District	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
4.	Southern District	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
5.	Yau Tsim Mong District	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	10
6.	Sham Shui Po District	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	5
7.	Kowloon City District	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	14
8.	Wong Tai Sin District	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
9.	Kwun Tong District	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	6
10.	Tsuen Wan District	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11.	Tuen Mun District	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	5
12.	Yuen Long District	1	3	4	1	0	1	0	10
13.	North District	5	6	5	5	1	2	2	26
14.	Tai Po District	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15.	Sai Kung District	3	1	1	0	1	1	0	7
16.	Sha Tin District	2	1	1	0	2	1	3	10
17.	Kwai Tsing District	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	6
18.	Islands District	5	8	2	3	1	1	0	20
19.	Details of construction sites are not available	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	4
Total		26	31	20	14	18	13	14	136

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)061

(Question Serial No. 0965)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned under the programme that “introduced improvement measures, including rolling out of Smart Site Safety System (4S4S) Labelling Scheme to encourage a wider adoption of 4S4S in the construction industry, and organised promotional activities to enhance safety and environmental performance at public works construction sites”. In this connection, will the Bureau inform this Committee of the following:

1. In the past 3 years, what were the expenditures involved and manpower allocated in promoting 4S4S? Please give an account of the specific situations and assessments of effectiveness.
2. In the coming year, what are the expenditures and manpower planned in promoting 4S4S? Please provide the specific work plans and implementation schedules.
3. The Development Bureau, in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council, introduced 4S4S Labelling Scheme and a series of measures to encourage a wider application of 4S in the construction industry so as to provide a safer working environment for site personnel. Please provide the details of the measures, including implementation, participation rate, difficulties encountered and assessments of effectiveness.
4. As regards private works projects, the Government subsidises private works projects to implement 4S4S mainly through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF). Since 1 April 2023, the CITF has increased the amount of funding available to each applicant for 4S4S from \$6 million to \$7.5 million. Please give a brief account of all measures involved in promoting the adoption of 4S in private works projects and their effectiveness. What are the specific measures to encourage the adoption of 4S in more private works projects in future?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The Development Bureau (DEVB) attaches great importance to site safety. As a main facilitator of works projects and advocator of site safety policies on public works, we have

maintained close co-operation with various stakeholders to deliberate and formulate various site safety measures, including driving the construction industry to expedite full adoption of the Smart Site Safety System (4S) to enhance site safety.

1&2

The work relating to driving the construction industry to adopt 4S is absorbed by the existing manpower of the DEVB and the Buildings Department (BD). As such duty is part of the overall work, we are unable provide a breakdown of the staff involved in this area of work.

3&4

Since February 2023, the DEVB required all capital works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million to adopt 4S. 4S is composed of a one-stop management platform and various smart safety devices. The configuration of 4S depends on factors such as size, nature of works and site environment of the contract. As at March 2025, over 370 capital works contracts have adopted 4S. With the adoption of 4S, there has been a notable reduction in the number of incidents, thus having a positive impact on site safety and providing workers with more comprehensive protection.

To expedite full adoption of 4S in the construction industry, the Government introduced a series of enhanced measures in 2024 with a view to promoting the adoption of 4S in private development projects. They include the following:

- (a) The BD has introduced a mandatory measure since July 1, 2024. When granting the first approval or major revisions of superstructure plans of private development projects, with estimated cost exceeding \$30 million and involving the use of mobile plants and tower cranes, conditions are imposed under the Buildings Ordinance requiring registered contractors to adopt relevant alert systems for building works. As at February 2025, the BD has already imposed the above conditions on more than 70 private development projects.
- (b) The DEVB and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) launched the 4S Labelling Scheme in May 2024 and have been issuing labels to work sites with proper adoption of the 4S. The plaques will be placed at conspicuous spots around construction sites, with 4S labels for identification and ease of monitoring, including facilitating enforcement departments to monitor the sites without 4S labels. The list of such construction sites is available at the CIC's website for public inspection. As at March 2025, more than 520 construction sites have been issued with 4S labels.
- (c) The Government has been subsidising private development projects to adopt the 4S through the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF). The scope of subsidy under the CITF has been extended since May 2024 to cover relevant additional expenses in various aspects of adopting the 4S, including upgrading the network capacity, additional manpower to be employed for system operation, maintenance and technical support, arising from the use of the 4S. Since September to November 2024, the applicant eligibility of the CITF has been extended to local mobile plant/ tower crane rental companies. The subsidy ceiling for each company is \$7.5 million to support the installation of danger zone alert system on the mobile plants. As at February 2025, the CITF has approved nearly 170 applications, involving a funding grant of about \$90 million. Moreover, about

120 applications, which are mainly from local mobile plant and tower crane rental companies, are being processed at full swing in recent months. The relevant approval procedures are expected to be completed within the next 2 months.

- (d) The CIC will step up its publicity efforts and arrange outreach teams to visit construction sites to promote the CITF and the 4S to the industry, and work out and propose different types of 4S packages, with a view to assisting the industry choose the appropriate 4S according to the different nature of works, site environment, etc.

In addition, the BD will extend the above mandatory requirement on the installation of alert system on mobile plants and tower cranes in private development projects from superstructure works to demolition works, excavation and lateral support works, foundation works, pile cap works and site formation works. Besides, even if the above mandatory requirement has not been implemented when the plans are approved, the BD will impose the above requirement when granting the first consent for commencement of development projects concerned. The mandatory requirement will also be applicable to alterations and additions projects involving structural works. The BD issued the revised practice notes at end-March 2025 and the new mandatory requirement will come into operation on 1 July 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)062

(Question Serial No. 0967)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that “we have, in collaboration with Guangdong Province, successfully established the “Professional Title” evaluation mechanism for the first batch of Hong Kong engineering professionals. The mechanism will be gradually extended to other construction-related professions with the right conditions. We will also collaborate with Guangdong Province and Macao SAR to formulate GBA standards on the skill levels for skilled workers and technicians of the construction sector, and take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. We will announce the GBA standards for the first pilot trade in due course.” In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. It is mentioned in the Budget that the “Professional Title” evaluation mechanism for engineering professionals in Hong Kong will be gradually extended to other construction-related professions. What specific professions have been included in the extended mechanism? When are the related arrangements expected to be completed? What plans does the Government have to deepen the recognition of professional qualifications and titles, including pushing forward the establishment of an assessment and certification system, and setting up a sharing platform and workstation for the review of skilled talents, and jointly training up assessment personnel and formulating standards for assessment;
2. The Government indicates that it will collaborate with Guangdong Province and Macao SAR to formulate GBA standards on the skill levels for skilled workers and technicians of the construction sector, and take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. What is the progress of the development of standards on skill levels at present? When will the Government announce the GBA standards for the first pilot trade? What specific trades are covered? What is the expectation of the Government in terms of enhancement of the employment opportunities of skilled workers and their professional recognition?

3. Does the Government have any specific measures to encourage skilled talents in Hong Kong and on the Mainland to enrol in courses related to the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement? For example, will there be training subsidies, promotion and publicity, or employment support to encourage participation and enhance the effectiveness of the courses?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

1. The pilot assessment of the first batch of applications for "Professional Title" has been completed in 2024 with 207 Hong Kong engineers obtained the Mainland Professional Titles, covering five engineering disciplines, namely civil engineering, geotechnical, highway, electrical and measurement, control and instrumentation. With the completion of the pilot assessment, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has discussed with the relevant Mainland authorities and local professional bodies, and reached a consensus to regularise the “Professional Title” evaluation mechanism in mid-2025 and expand its coverage to more engineering disciplines (including the Manufacturing, Industrial and Systems discipline; the Mechanical discipline; the Electronics discipline and the Information discipline), as well as the Quantity Surveying and Architectural professions in the next phase. Apart from the “Professional Title” evaluation, the DEVB and relevant authorities of Guangdong Province have made fruitful discussions and launched the “Interim Guidelines for the Management of Hong Kong Engineering Construction Consultant Enterprises and Professionals Starting Business and Practising in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cities” in 2021, which allows Hong Kong construction and engineering enterprises and professionals to acquire equivalent qualifications in the Mainland, thereby facilitating their provision of direct services in the Mainland cities of the GBA. As regards the deepening of the recognition of professional qualifications and “Professional Title”, in view of the fact that relevant Mainland authorities and local professional bodies will have to be fully consulted on the matter, the DEVB will continue to maintain close dialogues with all parties, and assist them in developing and enhancing the relevant measures in a gradual and orderly manner, which will help promote the interfaces of regulatory frameworks and mechanisms in the construction and engineering fields in the two places.
2. The Chief Executive’s 2024 Policy Address states that the DEVB is collaborating with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate GBA Standards of the skill levels of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and will take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. Skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector who pass the examinations adopting the GBA Standards can concurrently obtain vocational skill certificates issued by the three places. The arrangement aims at enhancing the training quality of the construction industry in the GBA and nurturing talents.

The DEVB, in collaboration with Guangdong and Macao, is taking forward the relevant work. In March 2025, we have announced the GBA standards and taken forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement for skilled workers in the first two pilot trades (i.e. painter and bricklayer). As for technicians, we plan to establish and promote the GBA standards for the first pilot position (i.e. civil engineering works

supervisor) in mid-2025 and details will be announced later in due course. Subsequently, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will take forward the above arrangement for other major trades/ positions of the construction industry in an orderly manner taking into account the implementation experience and the situations of various trades/ positions.

Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have their own training systems and standards for the construction industry. The GBA Standards will be established based on the principle of “adopting the higher standards, and covering more elements”, so as to follow the higher standards among the three places and cover the key elements in the individual syllabuses of the three places, combining the strengths of the three places in training. For example, in painting craftsmanship, skilled workers in the three places have their own strengths in terms of evenness in paintwork, skills in the use of tools, and systematisation of workflow. As for bricklaying craftsmanship, workers in the three places have their own strengths in terms of surface flatness in bricklaying, skills in the use of materials, and systematisation of workflow. Enhancing training quality will further improve the skill level of workers, facilitate the overall development of manpower in the construction industry in the GBA, and enhance development opportunities for workers themselves.

3. To tie in with training development, the DEVB and the Construction Industry Council review and update from time to time the training content and publicity arrangements. After the announcement of the GBA standards for the first pilot trade, we will launch the publicity and promotion work, strengthen the co-operation among the training institutions and industry stakeholders in the three places, and continue to enhance supporting measures required, so as to encourage more construction workers to participate in the relevant training and examination.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)063****(Question Serial No. 3158)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

To address the manpower shortage of the construction sector, the Government has launched the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (Construction Sector Scheme), as a supplementary measure. On the premise of safeguarding the employment priority for local workers, the Scheme allows importation of labour at an appropriate scale to fill in the temporary manpower gap. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please list by the application period of each round the number of construction works contract applications received under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme), the number and types of workers involved (e.g. skilled construction workers, semi-skilled construction workers, technicians, site supervisory personnel), trades (e.g. refrigeration/air-conditioning/ventilation mechanic; fire service mechanic; cement sand mortar worker; woodworker, bar bender and fixer), level of wages, project cost, etc., and provide the details of the final approval status and quota usage.
2. It is learnt that private sector construction works contracts with special circumstances may also be considered under the Scheme, and they may include contracts involving construction labour of special trades or disciplines of which the local supply is extremely limited, or contracts with exceptional circumstances warranting special consideration and of a considerable scale. Please advise whether applications from private sector construction works contracts have been received under the Scheme so far. If so, please provide specific information about the handling of the applications.
3. There are a number of measures to “safeguard the employment priority for local workers” under the Scheme, including local recruitment, manning ratio requirements, participation of relevant stakeholders, etc. Please give a brief account of the implementation of these measures and provide assessments on their effectiveness.
4. Recently, there are a number of suspected cases where imported Mainland workers coming to Hong Kong under the Scheme have been exploited. In response to this, the Government has put forward various measures to enhance the protection of the employment rights of imported workers, including enhancing the mechanism for investigating complaints from imported workers, specifying the responsibilities and

limitations of “agencies”, requiring principal contractors to assign senior managers to oversee the matters, etc. Please provide the implementation details and effectiveness assessments of these measures, and state whether the Government has explored further measures to prevent imported workers from being exploited.

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

To address the manpower shortage of the construction sector, the Special Administrative Region Government has been adopting multi-pronged measures such as enhancing local training and recruiting new blood, promoting the application of technologies for uplifting overall productivity across the construction sector and implementing the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme) as a supplementary measure to help fill the manpower gap under the principle of ensuring the employment priority for local labour.

1. The vetting of the first seven rounds of applications under the Scheme has been completed so far. Quota allocation is on a rolling basis, i.e. quotas will be released for new application after the completion of the relevant works activities. Together with the 685 active quotas previously approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, which are to be counted towards the importation quota of the Scheme, there were a total of 9 056 approved and active quotas under the Scheme as of March 2025. Details of the number of applications, the numbers and types of personnel, trades, wage levels, etc. in each round of applications are set out at the **Annex**.
2. The Scheme will consider applications submitted by the principal contractors of the private sector construction works contracts with special circumstances, e.g. those works contracts involving construction personnel of special trades/disciplines of which the local supply is very limited. As of March 2025, a total of 11 applications involving private sector construction works contracts were received under the Scheme. Among them, one application was withdrawn by the applicant. Three applications that were not submitted by the principal contractors responsible for the contract concerned and five applications failing to prove special circumstances were rejected. The remaining two were eligible applications. Having considered the manpower needs of these two applications and the fact that they had complied with the requirement of local recruitment but could not employ sufficient local labour, the Approving Authority has approved for them a total of 124 quotas for Overhead Linesman (High Voltage), which is a special trade.
3. To ensure employment priority for local labour, the following measures have been formulated and put in place after consultation with committees comprising representatives from employers, employees and training institutions. They include:
 - The principal contractor-applicant/subcontractor-employer must conduct local recruitment as per the requirements of the Scheme and prove that sufficient local labour cannot be employed before his application could be considered.
 - The wage level of imported labour must be no less than the prevailing median monthly wage of the relevant posts promulgated by the Development Bureau (DEVB).

- All works projects with approved quotas must comply with the minimum 1:2 manning ratio requirement during the labour importation period (i.e. one imported labour to at least two full-time local labour).
- All works projects with approved quotas must provide training places for local labour in a number no less than 10% of the approved quota.

If the principal contractor-applicant/subcontractor-employer fail to comply with quota approval conditions, the DEVB will consider imposing administrative sanctions against them, including revoking the approved quotas, debarring them from making importation quota applications under the Scheme, etc. As of March 2025, the DEVB has not found any cases in breach of the above quota approval conditions. The committees concerned consider that the overall operation of the Scheme is smooth and effective.

4. Imported labour are entitled to the same protection under the labour laws of Hong Kong as local workers. There are clear provisions under the Scheme requiring the employers to comply with all relevant requirements. Law enforcement agencies will conduct investigations, take enforcement actions and impose penalties according to the law if breaches of the law are found. The DEVB will impose administrative sanctions on the principal contractor concerned under the Scheme in the light of the breaches of the Scheme specific requirements. For cases referred by the Labour Department earlier, the DEVB has debarred the relevant parties (principal contractors and subcontractors) from importation quota application for a period ranging from six months to 12 months, and the relevant departments and public organisations would reflect these breaches in the performance report of the construction projects.

Since December 2024, we have introduced new requirements under the Scheme that “agencies” (which are responsible for recruiting imported labour on behalf of the employers and assisting in the management of imported labour, including arranging services such as accommodation, transportation and meals for them) engaged by principal contractor-applicants or subcontractor-employers should comply with the labour protection requirements of the Scheme. The new requirements clearly define the responsibilities of applicants, employers and agencies respectively, which include requiring these “agencies” to sign deeds of undertaking on labour protection, and requiring “agencies” responsible for recruitment and personnel management to refrain from charging imported labour any fees.

We continue to monitor the implementation of the Scheme and perform a proper gate-keeping role in vetting and approving applications, and will make further enhancements to the Scheme details as necessary.

Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector
Quota application details and approval results
(as of March 2025)

Table (1): Quota application details and approval results

		First round of applications	Second round of applications	Third round of applications	Fourth round of applications	Fifth round of applications	Sixth round of applications	Seventh round of applications	First to seventh round of applications (Total)
1.	Application period	17 July to 16 August 2023	1 October to 31 October 2023	1 January to 31 January 2024	1 April to 30 April 2024	1 July to 31 July 2024	1 October to 31 October 2024	1 January to 3 February 2025	--
2.	Number of received applications ^{Note 1} from works contracts for importation quota	26	31	20	14	18	13	14	136
3.	Number of importation quota received	5 251	3 440	1 402	2 220	1 752	2 274	2 793	19 132
	Category								
		Skilled worker	5 167	3 373	1 361	2 182	1 699	2 152	18 614
		Technician	84	67	41	38	53	122	518
4.	Number of approved applications ^{Note 1} from works contracts for importation quotas	20	15	14	9	0	7	10	75
5.	Number of importation quotas approved	4 680	1 669	758	1 921	0	935	1 008	10 971
	Category								
		Skilled worker	4 625	1 641	729	1 886	0	816	10 640
		Technician	55	28	29	35	0	119	331
6.	Trades/disciplines and numbers involved in the approved and active quotas	<p style="text-align: center;">9 056</p> <p>Quota allocation is made on a rolling basis, i.e. quotas will be released for new applications after the completion of the relevant works activities. As of March 2025, there were a total of 9 056 approved and active importation quotas under the Scheme.</p> <p>See Table (2) for detailed breakdown by trades/disciplines</p>							
7.	Contract sum of works contracts approved with importation quotas	Apart from two private sector construction contracts' applications involving special trades of which the local manpower supply is very limited, the remaining applications involve public sector construction works contracts with contract sum not less than \$1 billion.							
8.	Wage of imported labour	The wage level of all imported labour approved should be no less than the prevailing median monthly wage of relevant trades/disciplines promulgated on the designated webpage of the Scheme.							

Note 1: Each application for imported labour is submitted on the basis of an eligible works contract. Therefore, individual eligible works contract will make an application for imported labour in different application periods in the light of the progress of works and accordingly the trade(s) required and the volume of works during the period.

Table (2) Number of approved and active importation quotas (as at March 2025) ^{Note 2}

	Trade of skilled/semi-skilled workers	Number of approved and active importation quotas for the first seven rounds of applications
1.	Refrigeration/Air-conditioning/ Ventilation Mechanic (including Water System and Air System)	1 335
2.	Cement Sand Mortar Worker (including Plastering, Bricklaying and Tiling)	997
3.	Fire Service Mechanic	632
4.	Electrician	505
5.	Bar Bender and Fixer	401
6.	Rigger/Metal Formwork Erector	378
7.	Woodworker	375
8.	Metal-steel Worker	372
9.	Curtain Wall and Glass Panes Installer	341
10.	Painter and Decorator	334
11.	Welder	332
12.	Plant and Equipment Mechanic (Construction Work)	304
13.	False Ceiling Installer	274
14.	Paving Block Layer	254
15.	Concrete and Grouting Worker	230
16.	Drain and Pipe Layer	212
17.	Leveller	169
18.	Metal Scaffolder	169
19.	Lift and Escalator Mechanic	132
20.	Overhead Linesman (High Voltage)	124
21.	Plant and Equipment Operator	56
22.	Construction Goods Vehicle Driver	49
23.	Demolition Worker	44
24.	Blasting Worker	26
25.	Piling Operative	12
26.	Craftsman (Historical Building)	2
27.	Plaster Mural Restorer (Historical Building)	1
28.	Asphalter (Road Construction)	1
Total		8 061

**Table (2) Number of approved and active importation quotas (as at March 2025)
(continued)**

	Discipline of technicians and site supervisory personnel	Number of approved and active importation quotas in the first seven rounds of applications
1.	(a) Site Foreman and (b) Assistant Site Foreman	267
2.	Draftsman	24
3.	Site Supervisor	5
4.	(a) Project Co-ordinator and (b) Assistant Project Co-ordinator	5
5.	E&M Engineering Technician (Mechanical)	4
6.	Civil Engineering Technician	1
7.	Structural Engineering Technician	1
8.	Surveying Technician (Quantity)	1
9.	Surveying Technician (Land)	1
10.	BIM Modeller	1
Total		310

Note 2: As of March 2025, there are 8 371 quotas approved and active under the Scheme. Together with the 685 quotas previously approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, which are counted towards the importation quota of the Scheme, there are a total of 9 056 approved and active quotas.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)064

(Question Serial No. 3112)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Faced with rising overall construction costs in recent years, the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) is co-ordinating the relevant work on reducing construction costs. This includes formulating policies for the procurement of construction materials and products, such as MiC modules and steel reinforcement, through direct procurement by relevant works departments and centralised procurement by a single department. The PSGO will also study the use of new materials and innovative construction technologies by drawing reference from the Mainland and overseas practices and experience. All these efforts aim to help departments reduce project costs, enhance cost-effectiveness and ensure timely completion of public works projects. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the respective percentages of the costs of construction materials, manpower and other expenditures in the construction costs of public works projects of the Government;
2. of the amount of savings anticipated from the implementation of policies for the procurement of construction materials and products through direct procurement by relevant works departments and centralised procurement by a single department (with a breakdown of items);
3. of the number of imported workers participating in public works projects as construction workers, their percentage in the total number of construction workers participating in the project concerned, and the total amount of their wages; and
4. whether it will consider relaxing the requirement that imported workers must be paid no less than the median wage in the local industry, so as to lower construction costs and enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

After completing a strategic study on construction costs (the Strategic Study), the Development Bureau (DEVB) has identified five major reasons for the relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong (please see note), and summarised four major directions for measures to lower the construction costs, including (1) optimising the project procurement

model to reduce risk premium; (2) reviewing the design standards and requirements to increase cost-effectiveness; (3) applying advanced technologies and construction methods to uplift productivity; and (4) streamlining the approval process to boost work efficiency:

(Note: The five major reasons for relatively high construction costs in Hong Kong include (1) labour cost; (2) contract risk premium on construction materials and equipment; (3) design standards and requirements; (4) approval process; and (5) project complexity.)

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

1. Construction costs of public works projects can be divided into four categories, including (1) construction labour cost (accounting for about 30% to 40%), (2) construction material and equipment cost (accounting for about 25% to 35%), (3) machinery cost (accounting for about 10% to 20%), and (4) risk premium arising from project complexity, as well as operational costs and profits of contractors, etc. (accounting for about 10% to 30%).
2. Construction materials and equipment account for about 25% to 35% of the overall construction cost. Construction materials mainly used in Hong Kong include steel reinforcement, steel, concrete, copper wires, and timber etc. Considering that Hong Kong has adopted competitive global procurement model for construction materials and equipment, their basic prices are generally comparable to those of other developed cities. According to the strategic study conducted by the DEVB, the price difference between the "labour and materials inclusive" mode of purchasing construction materials and equipment adopted by traditional works projects in Hong Kong and the central procurement of construction materials and equipment for projects can be 10% or more. Therefore, we are actively studying the adoption of direct procurement and central procurement for, for example, MiC modules and steel reinforcement. We will implement the related measures by piloting and launching them once they are ready.

As each construction cost reduction measure will bring about different levels of construction cost savings for individual projects, we will collect more market data and assess the overall effectiveness of the measures in reducing construction cost, and the total cost savings.

3. As of late March 2025, together with the 685 active quotas approved earlier under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, there are a total of 9 056 approved and active quotas under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme), the majority of which are for public works projects and works projects of public organizations (such as Hong Kong Airport Authority, Hospital Authority, and Hong Kong Housing Society), the remaining few are for private works projects involving special trades (such as overhead linesman (high voltage)).

The Scheme requires that the manpower ratio of works projects with approved quotas should be at least 1:2 (i.e. one imported labour to at least two full-time local labour) during the labour importation period within the works contract period, unless with prior approval of the Approving Authority based on reasonable justifications (e.g. the application is to import special trade(s)/discipline(s) the local supply of which is very limited). As the percentage of imported labour as compared to the total number of labour involved in the relevant works contract varies at different stages of the project, it is difficult to compile such percentage figures. It is stipulated under the Scheme that

the wages of all approved imported labour must be no less than the prevailing median wage of relevant trades/disciplines as published in the dedicated website of the Scheme. The overall amount of expenditure on imported labour for various works projects is related to the total number of working hours of the labour (including overtime work), which is the employers' business information, and therefore not available to the DEVB.

4. When the Scheme was launched in July 2023, it is specified that the wage level of imported labour should adopt the median wage level of local labour engaged in the similar type of work, in line with the policy of ensuring employment priority for local labour. The arrangement was formulated in consultation with committees comprising representatives from employers, employees and training institutions in the construction industry, with reference to the data provided by the Census and Statistics Department. The DEVB will continue to monitor the operation of the Scheme and the market situation of the industry. With continued liaison with the industry, including consultation with the above committees, we will refine the Scheme details and introduce enhancement measures as necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)065****(Question Serial No. 2175)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Development Bureau will continue to steer and support the wider use of Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), and will roll out progressively measures to strengthen the supply chain of MiC modules, foster complementarities with the Mainland and drive the high-quality development of MiC so as to turn it into one of the industries in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) that enjoy clear advantages. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of :

- (a) the exact number of public and private projects that have adopted MiC method as at March 2023 since the promotion of this technology in 2020, the total floor area and distribution of project types (categorised by residential, commercial, industrial and government facilities), and a quantitative data analysis in terms of the percentage of construction time shortened, percentage of cost reduction, percentage of site accident reduction, and the amount of construction waste reduction and carbon emission reduction as compared with projects using traditional construction methods;
- (b) the plans to foster complementarities and industry collaboration between Hong Kong and the GBA for MiC, including the collaboration agreements already signed or planned to be signed, and specific policies and measures that will be implemented in 2025-26 regarding mutual recognition of product standards, mutual recognition of professional qualifications, facilitation of cross-border logistics and tariff arrangements;
- (c) the specific advantages that Hong Kong enjoys in MiC; the estimated budget allocation in 2025-26 for releasing these advantages with the exact expenditure figures for research and development funding, manpower training, infrastructural facilities, demonstration projects; and
- (d) the impact assessment findings of MiC adoption on various traditional construction trades (such as carpenters, bar benders, plasterers), including the percentage changes in the manpower demand for various trades anticipated for the coming 3 years, the trades that will face a reduction in demand or will have considerable changes in job nature, the specific measures that will be taken by the Government to assist the affected workers to transition or upskill and the related budget, and ways to ensure that the rights and interests of workers will not be jeopardised in the process of transition?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges, including declining productivity, high construction cost, ageing workforce in recent years. The Government has been leading by example and piloting Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) to enhance the industry's productivity and cost effectiveness, with a view to enhancing speed, quantity, efficiency and quality. A number of public and non-governmental organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority, Hong Kong Housing Society, Urban Renewal Authority, Hospital Authority, have started the adoption of MiC. Currently, over 100 projects in both public and private sectors have adopted MiC, including projects that have been completed, and those under construction or about to start.

The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address announced the launching of the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme in synergy with production bases in the Mainland, so as to leverage the complementary functions of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. The Development Bureau (DEVB) has commissioned the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) to implement the MiC Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme, which started accepting applications in November 2024. This scheme ensures that accredited MiC manufacturers comply with project requirements for management, production, and transportation, and that relevant laws and regulations are observed.

The DEVB is proactively fostering exchanges and collaboration with the Guangdong Provincial Government to strengthen mutual co-operation in the areas of implementation and regulations, formulate conducive strategies for the MiC supply chain, with a view to establishing a robust ecosystem for the industry.

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

- (a) Please refer to the **Annex** for a list of public and private projects adopting MiC completed in the past 5 years (2020 to March 2025). As the scope and magnitude of the use of MiC vary from project to project, the benefits also manifest in varying degrees. According to a study conducted by the University of Hong Kong in respect of MiC pilot projects, when compared with traditional construction methods, adoption of MiC can reduce construction time by 30% to 50%, uplift on-site productivity by 100% to 400%, reduce site waste by 45% to 80%, save construction cost by about 6% to 7%, reduce work at height by 50% to 80%, and can effectively reduce site accident risk.
- (b) As a pioneer in MiC development in Greater Bay Area (GBA), Hong Kong will leverage the GBA's strengths as a major production base and commit to advancing research and development in Hong Kong, ensuring quality accreditation, and promoting MiC in the international market, thereby fostering complementary functions of the construction industries in Guangdong and Hong Kong. In March 2024, the DEVB and Guangdong signed the Letter of Intent on Strengthening Guangdong-Hong Kong Cooperation in Construction and Related Engineering Sectors, deepening co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in construction and engineering sectors. This includes developing MiC as a quality productive force to contribute to the high-quality national development. The goal is to make GBA a centre of MiC technology, developing MiC

into a strategic industry that facilitates the exploration of overseas markets. Moreover, the Hong Kong Government and Guangdong Government expect to jointly publish the Guidebook on MiC Cross-border Trading in the first half of 2025, to provide clear guidelines to related manufacturing enterprises, so as to facilitate the production of MiC modules in the GBA, as well as cross-border transportation.

- (c) Hong Kong possesses significant advantages in MiC, showcasing its leadership position in the region while promoting the application of MiC in global market and highlighting the strength of Hong Kong construction industry. In addition to being a pioneer in adopting MiC, the Hong Kong construction industry also ensures production quality through the MiC Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme. At the same time, the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund provides strong support for research and development of the MiC technology to further driving the high quality development of MiC in Hong Kong.

In promoting the development of MiC, the DEVB primarily utilizes internal resources and collaborates with the Building Technology Research Institute to foster technological innovations and application. Through the Construction Industry Council and the Hong Kong Institute of Construction, training programs are conducted to enhance industry practitioners' proficiency in MiC technology. The adoption of MiC in public works projects is funded by the Public Works Programme. In addition, the DEVB has established the MiC Dedicated Section to oversee and support the aforementioned initiatives, ensuring smooth implementation. The dedicated section consists of 4 non-directorate professional staff members, and its annual expenditure is about \$7 million. A breakdown of expenditure for the above work is not available.

- (d) Facing the challenge of manpower shortage in certain trades (e.g. carpenter, bar bender, plasterer), MiC effectively alleviates onsite manpower pressure while driving increased demand for other trades, such as riggers and installers. It is anticipated that, over the next 3 years, MiC-related construction will account for less than 10% of the total construction volume, thereby limiting its impact on site workers. The DEVB and CIC have been working closely to launch relevant training programs to assist workers in need transition and upgrade their skills.

Public and private projects adopting MiC completed in the past 5 years (2020 to March 2025) (not including epidemic prevention facilities built under urgent circumstances):

Type of MiC project	Completed project (Number)	Gross floor area (square metre)
A. Public works project		
• school	4	About 46 400
• elderly home	1	About 39 700
• dormitory	5	About 140 700
• government office	1	About 6 000
B. Public housing		
• transitional housing	32	About 369 400
• elderly housing	1	About 2 500
• subsidised sale flats	1	About 15 400
C. Private housing	1	About 9 700
D. Others	5	About 700

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**(Question Serial No. 2176)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The estimate for 2025-26 under Programme (5) is \$95.1 million, 18.4% lower than the revised estimate of \$116.6 million for last financial year. The Development Bureau explains that “this is mainly due to the decreased cash flow requirement for a non-recurrent item, decreased provision for operating expenses and a net decrease of two posts in 2025-26”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) As regards the non-recurrent item, (i) what does it refer to? (ii) What is the cash flow for it in 2024-25 and the estimated cash flow for it in 2025-26?
- (b) As regards the net decrease of two posts under Programme (5), what are the (i) grades, ranks and posts; (ii) responsibilities; and (iii) emolument expenses involved?
- (c) As regards the estimate of \$95.1 million for 2025-26 under Programme (5), what are the emolument, operational and equipment expenses involved?
- (d) In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Bureau states that it will continue to deliver the Major Projects Leadership Programme under the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders (CoE) to equip officers with innovative mindset and world-class leadership skills for delivering public works projects, and the Project Delivery Capability Programme under CoE to enhance the professional skills of mid-tier managers and uplift the project delivery capability. What are the staff establishments and emolument expenses involved in CoE and the above 2 programmes?
- (e) In 2024-25 and it is expected that in 2025-26, (i) how many capital works projects have been/ will be reviewed by the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO)? (ii) How much of the capital works expenditures has been/ will be curbed by the PSGO through comparing the difference between the department's original estimates and the funding proposals submitted to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

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

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

- (a) The main reason for the change in provision for the non-recurrent item in 2025-26 is that some important studies have been substantially completed, and the corresponding estimated expenditures have been adjusted. These studies include: (i) strategic study on construction costs, (ii) study on establishing the Building Technology Research Institute and (iii) study on strengthening the supply chain of MiC modules. In 2024-25 and 2025-26, the provisions for paying the expenses for such studies are \$20 million and \$10 million respectively.
- (b) As regards the net decrease of 2 posts, they are time-limited non-directorate professional and technical posts. Their duties are to provide support in respect of the scrutiny of the proposed project costs under the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme. The total expenditure involved in 2024-25 is about \$2.4 million.
- (c) As regards the estimate of \$95.1 million in 2025-26 under Programme (5), the emolument, operational expenses and non-recurrent expenditure are about \$38.4 million, \$23.7 million and \$33 million respectively, and no estimate for equipment expenses is involved.
- (d) The PSGO is responsible for the daily operations, programme management and other matters of the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders. Currently, the PSGO has about 30 civil service staff, including the Head of PSGO, a Principal Assistant Secretary, a Chief Assistant Secretary and other professional, technical and clerical grade staff. As the relevant tasks are part of the overall duties of the existing staff, a breakdown of the manpower resources and expenditures involved is not available. Overall speaking, the annual operational expenditure of the Centre of Excellence for Major Project Leaders is about \$13 million on average since its establishment.
- (e) In the 2024-25 financial year, the PSGO scrutinised a total of 16 capital works projects which were subject to funding approval by the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo), and successfully saved about \$11.6 billion in construction cost out of the original estimate of about \$83 billion proposed by the project proponent departments. As the relevant bureaux and departments are reviewing the new capital works projects that have to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of Legislative Council in the coming year, we are unable to estimate the number of capital works projects to be scrutinised by the PSGO in 2025-26 for the time being.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)067

(Question Serial No. 2182)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Energizing Kowloon East

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the work of the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO), will the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) of the respective (i) staff establishments, (ii) grades, ranks and posts of staff, and (iii) expenditures on emoluments, operation and equipment of the EKEO for the past 3 years and anticipated for 2025-26;
- (b) of the effectiveness of EKEO in attracting companies and investment in the past 3 years (for example, in terms of the number of enterprises attracted to set up headquarters in the second core business district (CBD2), and the amount of economic value created for Hong Kong), and whether EKEO will continue to assess its effectiveness in attracting companies and investments, and publish the figures periodically;
- (c) as regards the revitalization scheme of industrial buildings within CBD2, of (i) the number of relaxation of plot ratio applications approved by the Town Planning Board and their locations; (ii) the respective number of lease modification and special waiver applications approved by the Lands Department and their locations in 2024;
- (d) of the latest respective (i) gross floor areas and (ii) vacancy rates of the commercial, industrial and trade and industry buildings within CBD2;
- (e) given that it is mentioned in paragraph 185 of the Budget Speech that “the Government will not roll out any commercial site for sale in the coming year to allow the market to absorb the existing supply”, whether any sites within CBD2 will be affected; if so, of the number of sites, and their respective locations and sizes;
- (f) given that it is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Government will “enhance walkability and connectivity in Kowloon East through taking forward the remaining improvement proposals recommended under the feasibility studies on Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas”, and “implement quick-wins and short term improvement measures recommended under the Kowloon East pedestrian environment improvement review, and plan on the provision of further external pedestrian linkages to the nearby residential areas”; of the respective natures, locations and costs of each works project under these measures; and
- (g) given that it is indicated in the reply from the Bureau in May 2024 to the question made by the Honourable TANG Ka-piu that EKEO was conducting another round of survey

on business establishments in Kowloon East, of the progress of the survey and the anticipated announcement date?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- (a) For the past 3 years and anticipated for 2025-26, the staff establishment of the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) has been and will be 15 members. The multi-disciplinary team consists of Town Planner(s), Architect(s), Engineer(s), Landscape Architect(s), Surveyor(s), and technical and administrative support staff.

The provisions for EKEO in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25, and the estimate for 2025-26 are \$42.1 million, \$42.2 million, \$42 million and \$41.9 million respectively, the expenditures inclusive of emoluments are \$30.9 million, \$31.8 million, \$33.4 million and \$34.7 million respectively.

- (b) In the existing government structure, Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) is responsible for promoting Hong Kong's status as the leading international business location in Asia, and attracting overseas and Mainland enterprises to set up a primary office in Hong Kong for business development. EKEO maintains regular liaison with relevant government departments and organizations, including InvestHK, the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, etc., and disseminates the latest information regarding Kowloon East to related departments and organizations in a timely manner to promote CBD2. Recently, EKEO has distributed promotion pamphlets on Kowloon East to the Economic and Trade Offices in the overseas and Mainland. In the new round of survey on business establishments in Kowloon East, initial findings has revealed that the number of business establishments engaging in "banking and financial services and insurance" and "real estate and professional and business services" in Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay is 3.8 times that of the survey conducted in 2011. The number of multinational financial and business services enterprises in Kowloon East has also been increasing in recent years, creating an agglomeration effect.
- (c) Since the promulgation of the Energizing Kowloon East initiative over the past decade or so, the Government has encouraged owners of industrial buildings to undertake redevelopment and wholesale conversion under the industrial buildings revitalization policy. The policy has been successful in increasing the supply of commercial floor space in the district over the years. However, industrial building revitalization projects are market-driven and their number will be affected by market demand. In 2024, within CBD2 (i.e. Kai Tak Development Area, Kwun Tong Business Area, Kowloon Bay Business Area and San Po Kong Business Area), there is neither a case concerning relaxation of plot ratio approved by the Town Planning Board, nor special waiver approved by the Lands Department. In addition, there is one lease modification application involving a proposed redevelopment of an industrial building in Kwun Tong Business Area approved by the Lands Department.

- (d) Please see the table below for the gross floor areas of commercial, industrial and trade, and industrial buildings within CBD2 (i.e. Kai Tak Development Area, Kwun Tong Business Area, Kowloon Bay Business Area and San Po Kong Business Area) as at December 2024. We do not have information about related vacancy rates.

	Gross floor area
Commercial#	About 3.7 million square metres
Industrial/ Office	About 0.25 million square metres
Industrial	About 4.8 million square metres

Including new developments, redevelopments and converted commercial buildings, but excluding the commercial portions of residential/commercial developments in the Kai Tak Development Area.

- (e) The Government's decision not to roll out any commercial sites for sale in the whole territory in the coming year will not affect the positioning of CBD2. At present, CBD2 has a relatively adequate supply of commercial floor area of about 3.7 million square metres. Together with projects under construction or those that have attained approvals, as well as the planned major commercial developments, the commercial floor area will increase to about 4 million square metres, which is comparable to the scale of Central CBD.
- (f) EKEO is proactively taking forward the remaining improvement proposals recommended under the feasibility studies on pedestrian environment improvement in Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas to further enhance walkability and connectivity in Kowloon East. Up till now, the short-term improvement proposals for Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong Business Areas have been completed. The remaining short-term proposals for San Po Kong Business Area are being implemented as planned. As for medium- and long-term improvement proposals, some have been completed and opened for use, and some have proceeded to the construction stage. The Government will take forward the remaining improvement proposals in order of priority. EKEO is also commissioning the Civil Engineering and Development Department to conduct a Kowloon East pedestrian environment improvement review feasibility study to review the overall pedestrian environment and connectivity in CBD2, and study the feasibility of extending the pedestrian network to the residential areas in Kowloon East's hinterland, so as to further enhance the pedestrian environment and connectivity in Kowloon East. Relevant departments are reviewing the proposals recommended in the study and the funding arrangements, which include a series of short-, medium- and long-term improvement measures. The short- and medium-term measures include addition of pedestrian wayfinding systems in the Kowloon East CBD and the hinterland in the vicinity, improvement to back alley environment, enhancement of pedestrian facilities, and addition of pedestrian crossings, etc. We expect to consult related stakeholders in mid-2025.
- (g) EKEO is conducting a new round of survey on the business establishments in Kowloon East. It is anticipated to publish the relevant report in the second quarter of 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0014)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

As mentioned in paragraph 236 of the Budget Speech, the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) scrutinises project cost estimates upon inception of a project. Since its establishment, the PSGO has reviewed over 540 public works projects, achieving savings in construction costs by over 15%. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

1. of the major areas of considerable construction cost reductions so far and details of 5 projects with the largest construction cost reductions, including the original project costs and the expenditure for cost reductions; and
2. whether the PSGO expects to require additional manpower in the light of the fact that capital works expenditure will increase to about \$120 billion per annum on average in the coming 5 years. If so, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

1. The main task of the PSGO is to vigorously scrutinise cost estimates of major projects under planning and design stage. While not compromising the functionality, quality and safety of works, the PSGO scrutinises project cost estimates in accordance with the principle of "fitness-for-purpose and no frills". We have been collaborating with policy

bureaux and departments to enhance the cost-effectiveness of projects, reduce cost and minimize risk of cost overrun through design optimisation by means of exploring different design options, construction methods and procurement models, such as optimisation of foundation works and building layouts, etc. We will also carry out benchmarking with costs of other similar projects and make reference to the prevailing market situation, to ensure that the project estimates are reasonable.

In the past 5 financial years, the PSGO scrutinised a total of 247 capital works projects which were subject to funding approval by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, and successfully saved about \$98.6 billion in construction cost out of the original estimate of about \$668 billion proposed by the project proponent departments. As the data involves internal financial information, we are unable to provide details of construction cost saved in individual projects. Therefore, the related figures are provided by financial year in the following table:

Financial year	Number of projects scrutinised	Original estimate	Saving in construction cost
2024-25	16	About \$83 billion	About \$11.6 billion
2023-24	47	About \$145 billion	About \$20 billion
2022-23	52	About \$95 billion	about\$13 billion
2021-22	78	About \$180 billion	About \$29 billion
2020-21	54	About \$165 billion	About \$25 billion
Total	247	About \$668 billion	About \$98.6 billion

2. We will review the resources of the PSGO at an appropriate time to ensure that there are sufficient manpower and resources to cope with the related workload.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)069

(Question Serial No. 0017)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraphs 191-193 of the Budget Speech that to attract more young people to join the construction industry, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will allocate around \$150 million to subsidise the construction industry to provide on-the-job training for about 2 500 graduates of degree programmes in engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture. This will assist more young people in obtaining professional qualifications. In this connection, please advise on the following:

1. Since the introduction of the measure entitled “Anti-epidemic Fund – Support for Engineering, Architectural, Surveying, Town Planning and Landscape Sectors” (the Support Measure) in 2020, how many on-the-job training quotas are provided for graduates in engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture every year and what are the amounts of subsidies involved?
2. The CIC will allocate around \$150 million to provide on-the-job training, what are the amounts of subsidies involved in respect of architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

With the support of the Government, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will allocate \$150 million to launch the Construction Industry Professional Degree Graduate On-the-Job Training Subsidy Scheme (PDGOTSS) to subsidise the construction industry in providing on-the-job training for a total of approximately 2 500 graduates (young talents) from degree programmes in engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture, with a view to enriching their expertise and experience, assisting them in obtaining professional qualifications, nurturing talents for the industry and retaining talent during the recent adjustments in the private market.

1. Under the support measure introduced under the Anti-epidemic Fund, on-the-job training was provided for graduates in engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and

landscape architecture in the three financial years from 2020-21 to 2022-23. The quotas and amounts of subsidies in each year are as follows:

Graduate	Subsidy quota (amount involved)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Architecture	601 (\$53.57 million)	570 (\$49.27 million)	574 (\$48.74 million)
Engineering	1 487 (\$126.39 million)	964 (\$90.09 million)	974 (\$91.37 million)
Surveying	755 (\$67.42 million)	547 (\$44.16 million)	546 (\$45.14 million)
Town Planning	20 (\$1.65 million)	17 (\$1.52 million)	16 (\$0.98 million)
Landscape architecture	52 (\$4.92 million)	28 (\$2.01 million)	42 (\$3.47 million)
Total	2 915 (\$253.95 million)	2 126 (\$187.05 million)	2 152 (\$189.70 million)

The funding for the support measure is allocated from the Anti-epidemic Fund, which does not fall within the scope of the Appropriation Bill nor the Estimates of Expenditure of the Government's General Revenue Account.

- Under the PDGOTSS, successful applicants (i.e. consultants and main contractors employing eligible young talents) will be granted a monthly subsidy of \$5,000 for 12 months totalling \$60,000 for each eligible/approved young talent. The 2 500 quotas will cover the graduates of degree programmes in the 5 construction professional disciplines, namely engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture. The CIC has been receiving applications since 17 March 2025, and expects to complete the processing and inform the approved applicants by June 2025. In processing the applications, the CIC will take into account relevant factors such as the actual number of applications received, the number of eligible applications, the numbers of graduates of relevant disciplines, the needs and situations of various professional sectors before working out the number of quotas approved for individual professional disciplines.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)070****(Question Serial No. 2694)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

According to “Enhanced Cost Management Mechanisms for Variations of Works Contracts”, for a variation order (VO) of a public works project with an estimated value exceeding \$1.4 million, the views from Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) shall be sought before authorising it. Please advise on:

1. the total number of VOs received by PSGO for advice in each of the past 3 years, and the projects mainly involved;
2. the respective numbers of VOs involving the following amounts:

	2022	2023	2024
14-20 billion			
20-30 billion			
over 30 billion			

3. whether unauthorised VOs have been issued without seeking advice; if so, the details?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in June 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in April 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

The PSGO (and formerly the PCMO) will examine Variations Orders (VO) not less than \$1.4 million in public works contracts as an independent third party. The project team will provide background for the variations and analyze their implications on the works contract, including costs, time and operating expenses. The PSGO will review the cost-effectiveness of the VOs and provide independent advice to the Controlling Officers.

In the past 3 years, the numbers of variation orders (VOs) involving various amounts examined by the PSGO are as follows:

	2022	2023	2024
\$1.4 - 2 million	13	14	17
\$2 -3 million	35	37	29
Above \$3 million	165	190	186
Total	213	241	232

Public works projects involve diverse scopes and complexities. In response to on-site conditions or changes, as well as to align with the latest design, operation and maintenance requirements, works departments need to adjust their designs during the construction period and issue VOs in writing. Works departments shall comply with relevant contract clauses and other prevailing government guidelines/regulations, including the Stores and Procurement Regulations, and obtain approval from authorized internal personnel when issuing VOs. According to past records, there is no unauthorized VOs issued without prior consultation to PSGO.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)071

(Question Serial No. 1184)

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

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

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government will formulate Greater Bay Area (GBA) standards on the skill levels for skilled workers and technicians of the construction sector, and take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. The GBA standards for the first pilot trade will be announced in due course. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) On formulating GBA standards on skill levels and taking forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement, what are the staff establishment and estimated salary expenses involved?
- (2) What is the first pilot trade preliminarily selected? What other trades are being included for consideration?
- (3) How will GBA standards on skill levels and the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement assist the workers and skilled workers of the local construction sector in “going global”?
- (4) Will GBA standards on skill levels and the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement be tantamount to facilitating the admission of imported workers, which will bring further impact on the employment and salaries of local workers?
- (5) Will imported construction workers from the Mainland be required to fulfil GBA standards on skill levels and the requirements of the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement in future?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (1) The Government handles the work relating to Greater Bay Area (GBA) standards on skill levels and the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement using existing internal resources. Therefore, no additional staff establishment and salary expenses are involved.

- (2) The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address states that the Development Bureau (DEVB) is collaborating with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate GBA standards of the skill levels of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and will take forward the "One Examination, Multiple Certification" arrangement. Skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector who pass the examinations adopting the GBA standards can concurrently obtain vocational skill certificates issued by the three places. The arrangement aims at enhancing the training quality of the construction industry in the GBA and nurturing talents.

The DEVB, in collaboration with Guangdong and Macao, is taking forward the relevant work. In March 2025, we have announced the GBA standards and taken forward the "One Examination, Multiple Certification" arrangement for skilled workers in the first two pilot trades (i.e. painter and bricklayer). As for technicians, we plan to establish and promote the GBA standards for the first pilot position (i.e. civil engineering works supervisor) in mid-2025 and details will be announced later in due course. Subsequently, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will take forward the above arrangement for other major trades/positions of the construction industry, in an orderly manner taking into account the implementation experience and the situations of various trades/positions.

- (3), (4) and (5)

Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have their own training systems and standards for the construction industry. The GBA Standards will be established based on the principle of "adopting the higher standards, and covering more elements", so as to follow the higher standards among the three places and cover the key elements in the individual syllabuses of the three places, combining the strengths of the three places in training. For example, in painting craftsmanship, skilled workers in the three places have their own strengths in terms of evenness in paintwork, skills in the use of tools, and systematisation of workflow. As for bricklaying craftsmanship, workers in the three places have their own strengths in terms of surface flatness in bricklaying, skills in the use of materials, and systematisation of workflow. Enhancing training quality will further improve the skill level of workers, facilitate the overall development of manpower in the construction industry in the GBA, and enhance development opportunities for workers themselves. The aim of formulating GBA standards and taking forward the "One Examination, Multiple Certification" arrangement is to enhance training quality instead of superseding the current technical requirements for construction work in the three places or facilitating labour importation. Therefore, the employment of skilled workers and technicians of local construction industry will not be affected. In fact, applications must be made to the DEVB under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (the Scheme) for importing labour for the local construction sector. The authority will examine the works progress and manpower needs under the applications in detail, including whether employers have genuine needs to import workers for the relevant trades, before approving them according to the needs of each project. In addition, the Scheme has put in place various measures to safeguard the employment priority for local workers, and importation applications will be considered only if there is evidence that local workers could not be recruited. If applications are approved, the employment terms for imported workers must be the same as those specified for local recruitment. Like local workers, imported workers must be registered as registered construction workers under the Construction

Workers Registration Ordinance before engaging in relevant work in Hong Kong. There are no requirements under the Scheme to require imported workers to fulfil GBA standards on skill levels or pass the examination under the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)072

(Question Serial No. 0511)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that, apart from reserving land for cultural and sports facilities, the Northern Metropolis preserves traditional villages and historical and cultural resources. In this connection, will the Government encourage the public, especially the business sector, to make capital contribution and jointly build patriotic educational bases related to local history while preserving traditional villages and historical and cultural resources? For example, memorial halls or monuments can be built to commemorate important historical events in Hong Kong such as the “Uprising of the Two Airlines” incident. Through vivid displays and interactive experiences, the public’s sense of national identity and pride can be enhanced.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

After consulting the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the Transport and Logistics Bureau, our consolidated reply is as follows:

The Northern Metropolis (NM) has traditional rural townships with rich historical and cultural resources that can be integrated with the future development in harmony, thereby creating the characteristics of urban-rural co-existence and integration. The Government has commissioned a consultant to conduct a study for formulating guidelines on how to further promote “Urban-Rural Integration” in the development of the entire NM, with a view to taking forward measures for “Urban-Rural Integration” in terms of software and hardware.

The promotion of history and culture is of great significance as it can deepen the public’s sense of belonging to the country and sense of national identity. The work involves a number of policy areas. In this regard, there are already quite a lot of museum resources that can be utilised, including the Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence, the Hong Kong Museum of History, etc. By viewing the exhibitions and collections of the museums, visitors can gain a deeper understanding of our country’s history

and achievements, heightening their sense of national identity. Moreover, the public can enjoy a rich experience in patriotic education through historic places and buildings in Hong Kong, such as the Law's House (Grade 3 historic building, currently the Hong Kong Sha Tau Kok Anti-war Memorial Hall), which was used by the Hong Kong and Kowloon Independent Brigade of the East River Column as its base of operations and transportation checkpoint, the Cenotaph for Martyrs in Wu Kau Tang, etc. The Antiquities and Monuments Office under the Development Bureau (DEVB), in its work on built heritage conservation, focuses on close communication with relevant government departments and private owners to provide professional and technical advice on the conservation of their historic buildings from the heritage conservation perspective, including the interpretation of historic buildings. We are also installing information plaques for some graded historic buildings so that members of the public can know about their history.

The question suggests promoting the "Uprising of the Two Airlines" incident as patriotic education material. In this regard, the Hong Kong Museum of History will introduce relevant historical facts in their permanent exhibition. Besides, the Civil Aviation Department has added the galleries of "Uprising of the Two Airlines" and civil aviation development of the country (including home-developed aircraft) to the Aviation Education Path, so that the public can deepen their understanding of our country's history of civil aviation. When planning for sitting-out facilities for Kai Tak Development Area, the Government will consider incorporating the "Uprising of the Two Airlines" incident into the design, and consult the District Office and various stakeholders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)073

(Question Serial No. 2564)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Heritage Conservation

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

1. Please provide in a table the establishment and estimates of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) for 2024-25, as well as the projects related to publicity, promotion and education, and their expenditures.
2. Please provide in a table the declared monuments and historic buildings managed by the AMO that were open for public visits, the number of visitors each month, and the distribution of local and non-local visitors in 2024. Will docent services be provided in these monuments and are bookings for visit made by travel agents accepted? If they were accepted, please provide the number of visitors who had made their bookings through travel agents.
3. Please list the privately owned or managed declared monuments and graded historic buildings that were open for public visits in 2024. Will docent services be provided in these monuments and are bookings for visit made by travel agents accepted?
4. Will the Government consider adding elements of tourism promotion to the assessment process of the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme, so as to encourage operators to make good use of the monuments for tourism purposes?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

1. The establishment and estimates of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) for 2025-26 are set out in the table below:

	2025-26
Establishment	
(a) Civil servant	129
(b) Contract staff	19
Financial provision#	\$222 million (estimate)

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

The AMO attaches great importance to education, promotion and publicity. To enhance public awareness of and interest in heritage conservation, the AMO organises various activities such as free exhibitions, workshops, lectures, symposiums, guided tours, fun days and the Cultural Heritage Summer Course. For promotion and publicity of heritage conservation, the Development Bureau (DEVB) also attends media interviews, writes newspaper articles / online feature articles and utilises social media platforms such as Instagram and YouTube.

In the 2025-26 financial year, the AMO will continue to collaborate with the National Cultural Heritage Administration, museums and cultural institutions in the Mainland to present large scale heritage exhibitions at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre, showcasing important unearthed relics from Mainland museums and cultural institutions and Hong Kong, and deepen and promote the research, conservation, revitalisation, exhibitions and educational activities on archaeology and historic buildings. The AMO will continue to organise a wide range of heritage education activities such as a series of lectures on historic buildings in the Hong Kong section to tie in with the Greater Bay Area Education Heritage Trail, which was just launched in Macao in late 2024

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

2. There are a total of 40 declared monuments and historic buildings open to the public under the management of or with assistance of the AMO in 2024. The monthly numbers of visitors are at Annex 1. Free guided tours of 16 of these buildings are offered to the general public as well as to local registered charitable groups, non-profit-making organisations and schools. Tour groups are not required to make appointment to visit the buildings during opening hours. The AMO does not have a breakdown of the respective number of local and non-local visitors.

3. Apart from the declared monuments and historic buildings listed above, under the Revitalising Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme and other revitalisation/restoration projects of the DEVB, the 16 declared monuments and historic buildings that provide docent services are listed in Annex 2. The non-profit-making organisations operating these revitalised buildings will decide whether or not to accept travel agent bookings for visits in accordance with their operational arrangements. There are a total of 69 declared monuments or graded buildings that have received subsidies for carrying out maintenance works under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance Scheme on Built Heritage, and agreed to open to public visit, as listed in Annex 3. Private owners or operators will allow a reasonable degree of public access to their buildings depending on their individual circumstances.
4. The Advisory Committee on Built Heritage Conservation is responsible for assessing applications received under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme. Members are from various fields and professions including tourism, social enterprises, heritage conservation and community arts and culture. When considering the applications, the Committee will take into account the benefits of the applications to the revitalisation of the historic buildings and to the community in various aspects, including the promotion of conservation of revitalised buildings and tourism services for the enjoyment of visitors to these buildings after revitalisation.

Declared monuments and historic buildings open to the public under the management of or with assistance of the AMO

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
	Declared monuments and historic buildings open to the public under the management of or with assistance of the AMO															
1.	Tai Fu Tai Mansion	Declared Monument	✓	1 978	2 336	2 384	1 926	2 015	1 220	1 189	1 365	1 440	1 321	2 318	2 912	22 404
2.	Tung Lung Fort and Information Centre ¹	Declared Monument		118	473	633	471	289	397	220	235	347	1 112	934	1 397	6 626
3.	Tung Chung Fort and Information Centre	Declared Monument		720	1 055	1 047	1 041	986	773	479	543	700	1 476	2 752	1 659	13 231
4.	The Old House at Wong Uk Village	Declared Monument		1 836	1 658	1 721	1 123	1 184	1 629	850	685	1 180	1 253	1 407	1 270	15 796
5.	Fortified Structure at Ha Pak Nai ²	Declared Monument		304	196	0	34	166	143	127	168	124	284	261	289	2 096

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
6.	Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre	Grade 1	✓	15 671	14 784	13 907	11 403	13 612	11 565	15 281	17 600	12 968	16 679	19 386	23 453	186 309
7.	Haw Par Mansion	Grade 1	✓	1 101	780	1 193	852	968	937	920	841	709	859	781	685	10 626
8.	Old House, No. 10 Wong Chuk Hang San Wai	Grade 2		52	30	66	72	58	6	11	7	10	49	89	122	572
9.	Ping Shan Tang Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre	Grade 2	✓	2 139	3 178	3 445	2 194	2 006	2 135	1 557	1 417	1 250	2 604	3 004	2 096	27 025
10.	Fong Yuen Study Hall ³	Grade 3		608	724	862	202	586	470	758	476	390	645	717	702	7 140

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
	Declared monuments and historic buildings open to the public under the management of or with assistance of the AMO															
11.	Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall	Declared Monument	✓	3 750	3 898	5 182	3 346	2 263	2 293	1 349	1 011	1 143	1 998	3 041	1 828	31 102
12.	Tang Ancestral Hall, Ping Shan	Declared Monument	✓	6 327	5 942	8 415	5 530	4 302	4 101	2 559	1 853	3 184	4 270	5 546	5 140	57 169
13.	Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall	Declared Monument	✓	1 117	1 319	1 925	1 061	1 679	1 345	620	445	676	1 488	1 039	1 374	14 088
14.	Yi Tai Study Hall	Declared Monument	✓	1 403	693	2 583	807	606	938	618	844	747	1 043	1 279	1 211	12 772
15.	Tang Kwong U Ancestral Hall	Declared Monument	✓	1 162	389	1 626	611	382	708	597	735	584	677	1 228	1 287	9 986
16.	Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall	Declared Monument		544	955	803	644	472	897	505	305	632	760	708	762	7 987

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
17.	Hau Ku Shek Ancestral Hall	Declared Monument		455	831	1 023	889	432	333	422	360	278	441	557	529	6 550
18.	Kang Yung Study Hall	Declared Monument		2 053	872	2 846	1 811	1 843	1 536	1 066	458	1 195	1 713	2 027	1 597	19 017
19.	Cheung Shan Monastery	Declared Monument		904	1 718	1 130	843	1 326	1 024	1 327	690	1 115	968	1 076	711	12 832
20.	Man Lun Fung Ancestral Hall ⁴	Declared Monument		662	325	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	987
21.	Cheung Ancestral Hall, Shan Ha Tsuen	Declared Monument		271	387	260	220	199	215	235	276	292	579	414	476	3 824
22.	King Law Ka Shuk	Declared Monument		391	723	348	237	364	300	311	320	282	464	1 382	326	5 448
23.	Fan Sin Temple ⁵	Declared Monument		0	0	367	667	386	1 219	899	1 052	423	588	531	683	6 815

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
24.	Leung Ancestral Hall, Pat Heung	Declared Monument		134	145	124	121	159	130	115	135	130	165	130	145	1 633
25.	Tsui Sing Lau Pagoda	Declared Monument	✓	3 736	4 079	5 823	3 287	2 586	2 141	1 456	943	1 646	3 183	4 192	2 808	35 880
26.	I Shing Temple	Declared Monument		814	1 370	930	561	552	544	586	533	494	635	541	797	8 357
27.	Chik Kwai Study Hall	Declared Monument		149	193	185	199	183	189	109	109	100	107	80	188	1 791
28.	The Residence of Ip Ting-sz	Declared Monument		282	230	332	183	262	147	148	153	130	257	462	482	3 068
29.	Tang Ancestral Hall, Ha Tsuen	Declared Monument		2 785	2 097	2 372	1 753	2 091	1 359	1 343	1 105	1 663	2 001	4 630	3 223	26 422
30.	Yan Tun Kong Study Hall ⁶	Declared Monument	✓	2 020	1 704	3 337	1 386	1 122	1 089	854	202	0	0	0	0	11 714

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
31.	Race Course Fire Memorial	Declared Monument		86	45	72	61	33	40	36	46	54	227	101	153	954
32.	Tat Tak Communal Hall	Declared Monument	✓	1 955	1 470	2 097	1 471	1 359	1 512	944	954	1 407	2 191	2 625	1 696	19 681
33.	Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall	Declared Monument		233	322	188	138	220	97	103	142	122	160	299	189	2 213
34.	Yeung Hau Temple, Ha Tsuen ⁷	Declared Monument		275	440	196	174	143	148	144	25	0	40	546	141	2 272
35.	Tin Hau Temple, Lung Yeuk Tau	Declared Monument	✓	1 310	1 213	1 558	952	1 474	1 104	724	732	718	1 366	958	1 272	13 381

No.	Name	Declared monument/ graded building	Docent service	Monthly number of visitors (January to December 2024)												
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
36.	Lo Pan Temple ⁸	Declared Monument	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	290	360	386	850	1 020	775	3 681
37.- 38.	Kun Ting Study Hall and Ching Shu Hin ⁹	Grade 1	✓	3 679	4 209	5 376	3 087	2 536	2 424	1 302	942	1 748	2 669	4 012	3 044	35 028
39.	Cheung Chun Yuen	Grade 1	✓	448	463	1 241	293	238	388	100	413	324	322	419	403	5 052
40.	Lik Wing Tong Study Hall	Grade 1		369	667	746	323	283	283	375	265	221	283	343	464	4 622
Total:				61 841	61 913	76 343	49 973	49 365	45 779	40 529	38 745	38 812	55 727	70 835	66 289	656 151

- Note:¹ Tung Chung Fort and Information Centre is closed from 1 December 2023 until 23 January 2024 for maintenance.
- ² Fortified Structure at Ha Pak Nai is closed from 19 February 2024 until 18 April 2024 for maintenance.
- ³ Fong Yuen Study Hall was closed temporarily from 3 April 2024 until 18 April 2024 for maintenance.
- ⁴ Man Lun Fung Ancestral Hall is closed temporarily from 29 February 2024 until 6 February 2025 for maintenance.
- ⁵ Fan Sin Temple was closed temporarily from 30 August 2023 until 15 March 2024 for maintenance.
- ⁶ Yan Tun Kong Study Hall was closed temporarily from 12 August 2024 until 26 March 2025 for maintenance.
- ⁷ Yeung Hau Temple, Ha Tsuen was closed temporarily from 6 August 2024 until 22 October 2024 for maintenance.
- ⁸ Starting from 15 July 2024, the AMO provides security and cleaning services for Lo Pan Temple.
- ⁹ Kun Ting Study Hall and Ching Shu Hin are located next to each other, so visitors will be able to visit both buildings at the same time.

Declared monuments and historic buildings open to the public and managed by the Development Bureau/ non-profit-making organisations under the “Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme” and other revitalisation/ restoration projects under the Development Bureau

Serial No.	Name	Declared monument/ Grading
Declared monuments and historic buildings under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme		
1.	Lui Seng Chun	Declared monument
2.	Old Tai Po Police Station	Declared monument
3.	The Blue House Cluster	Grade 1
4.	Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters	Grade 1
5.	Old Tai O Police Station	Grade 2
6.	Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre	Grade 2
7.	Mei Ho House	Grade 2
8.	Former Lai Chi Kok Hospital	Grade 3
9.	Stone Houses at Junction Road in Kowloon	Grade 3
10.	Bridges Street Market	Grade 3
11.	Former Fanling Magistracy	Grade 3
12.	No. 12 School Street	Grade 3
13.	Luen Wo Market	Grade 3
Other revitalisation/ restoration projects		
14.	Central Police Station compound (comprises the former Central Police Station, Central Magistracy and Victoria Prison) (“Tai Kwun”)	Declared monument
15.	Cattle Depot Artist Village ¹	Grade 2
16.	Former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road	Grade 3

¹ Guided tours are held on an irregular basis.

Privately-owned or managed declared monuments and historic which are open for public visits under the Financial Assistance for Maintenance of Historic Buildings Scheme of the Development Bureau

No.	Name	Declared monument/ Grading
1.	Kowloon Union Church	Declared monument
2.	Hau Mei Fung Ancestral Hall	Declared monument
3.	Hip Tin Temple, Sha Tau Kok	Declared monument
4.	Island House	Declared monument
5.	Jamia Mosque, Shelly Street	Declared monument
6.	Main Building of the Helena May	Declared monument
7.	Old District Office (North)	Declared monument
8.	Bridges Street Centre, Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong	Declared monument
9.	Lo Pan Temple	Declared monument
10.	Tsang Tai Uk	Grade 1
11.	Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Kau Yan Church	Grade 1
12.	Yuen Kwan Tai Temple, Mon Tseng Wai, Yuen Long	Grade 1
13.	Tin Hau Temple, Fung Chi Tsuen	Grade 1
14.	St. Andrew's Church	Grade 1
15.	Man Ancestral Hall, Fan Tin Tsuen	Grade 1
16.	Po Leung Kuk Main Building	Grade 1
17.	Liu Ying Lung Study Hall	Grade 1
18.	HK Red Swastika Society Building	Grade 1
19.	Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre	Grade 2
20.	No. 3 Bungalow, St. Stephen's College	Grade 2
21.	Hung Shing Temple, Ping Shan	Grade 2
22.	Tat Yan Study Hall	Grade 2
23.	Lim House, No.176 Shung Ching San Tsuen, Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long	Grade 2
24.	H.K.S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral	Grade 2
25.	No.8 San Lau Street	Grade 2
26.	Tin Hau Temple, Lam Tsuen	Grade 2
27.	First Church of Christ Scientist, Hong Kong	Grade 2
28.	No.60 Kat Hing Street, Tai O	Grade 2
29.	Lai Mansion, Pat Heung	Grade 2
30.	No.14 Market Street, Tai O	Grade 2
31.	Sik Lo	Grade 2
32.	Kwan Tai Temple, Tai O	Grade 2
33.	No.7 Market Street, Tai O	Grade 2
34.	Hong Kong Adventist College, Administration Block, Sai Kung	Grade 2
35.	No.139 Ping Yeung, Ta Kwu Ling	Grade 2
36.	Kowloon Cricket Club	Grade 2

No.	Name	Declared monument/ Grading
37.	Mi Tak Study Hall, Main Block and Ancillary Building	Grade 2
38.	No.11 Market Street, Tai O	Grade 2
39.	St. Joseph's Chapel, Yim Tin Tsai	Grade 2
40.	Earth God Shrine, Kam Tsin Tsuen	Grade 2
41.	High Rock Christian Camp	Grade 2
42.	Tin Hau Temple, Kam Tin	Grade 3
43.	Hung Shing Temple, Fanling	Grade 3
44.	Leung Ancestral Hall, Ma Po Mei	Grade 3
45.	Tsang Ancestral Hall, Chuen Lung Village	Grade 3
46.	Ip Ancestral Hall, Sha Tau Kok	Grade 3
47.	Holy Spirit Seminary Chapel	Grade 3
48.	Entrance Gate, Mong Tseng Wai	Grade 3
49.	No.71 San Wai Tsuen	Grade 3
50.	Municipal Services Staff Recreation Club	Grade 3
51.	Kwong Yuet Tong Public Office	Grade 3
52.	Tin Hau Temple, Kat O	Grade 3
53.	No.21 San Lung Tsuen	Grade 3
54.	No.22 San Lung Tsuen	Grade 3
55.	Shrine, Tin Sam Tsuen	Grade 3
56.	Kowloon Bowling Green Club	Grade 3
57.	Ling Wan Monastery	Grade 3
58.	Tin Hau Temple, Sha Kong Village	Grade 3
59.	St. Stephen's Chapel, St. Stephen's College	Grade 3
60.	Law Ancestral Hall, Tai Po	Grade 3
61.	Tin Hau Temple, Kat Hing Back Street, Tai O	Grade 3
62.	Ng Ancestral Hall, Fung Wong Wu, Ta Kwu Ling	Grade 3
63.	Old Village School, Yuen Long	Grade 3
64.	Yeung Hau Temple, Ping Shan	Grade 3
65.	No.1 and 3 Playing Field Road	Grade 3
66.	Law Uk and Ancillary Block, Shek Chung Au, Sha Tau Kok	Grade 3
67.	Entrance Gate, Shek Po Wai, Shek Po Tsuen	Grade 3
68.	Lutheran Yan Kwong Church (Church Building, Former Kindergarten and Former Primary School)	Grade 3
69.	Chung Ancestral Hall, Tai Po	Grade 3

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2972)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that since its establishment, the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) has reviewed over 540 public works projects, achieving savings in construction costs by over 15 per cent. Please advise this Committee on:

1. the numbers and percentages of projects (1) with approved provision not exceeding \$50 million and (2) with approved provision exceeding \$50 million among the 540 public works projects;
2. the savings in construction costs achieved by the PSGO by year, and the costs and percentages involved by various parts of a works project; and
3. the 10 public works projects with the largest and smallest reduction in construction costs achieved by the PSGO, set out in table form, including project titles/categories, original approved provision and revised provision, cost reduction measures adopted, etc.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

1. Since its establishment, the PSGO (including the former PCMO) has scrutinised more than 540 capital works projects, among them, the number of projects with approved

provision not exceeding \$50 million is about 16, accounting for about 3% of the total number.

2&3.

The PSGO will vigorously scrutinise cost estimates of major projects under planning and design stage. While not compromising the functionality, quality and safety of works, the PSGO scrutinises project cost estimates in accordance with the principle of “fitness-for-purpose and no frills”. We have been collaborating with policy bureaux and departments to enhance the cost-effectiveness of projects, reduce cost and minimize risk of cost overrun through design optimisation by means of exploring different design options, construction methods and procurement models, such as optimisation of foundation works and building layouts, etc. We will also carry out benchmarking with costs of other similar projects and make reference to the prevailing market situation to ensure that the project estimates are reasonable.

As the data involves internal financial information, we thus provide the relevant figures of the past 5 financial years in the following table:

Financial year	Number of projects scrutinised	Original estimate	Saving in construction cost
2024-25	16	About \$83 billion	About \$11.6 billion
2023-24	47	About \$145 billion	About \$20 billion
2022-23	52	About \$95 billion	About \$13 billion
2021-22	78	About \$180 billion	About \$29 billion
2020-21	54	About \$165 billion	About \$25 billion
Total	247	About \$668 billion	About \$98.6 billion

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)075

(Question Serial No. 3003)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Please inform this Committee:

1. in the past 5 years (2020-2024), among the public works projects submitted individually for which funding approval has been granted by the Finance Committee (FC) for carrying out technical feasibility studies, detailed design and/or investigation (advance works with FC funding approval), of the projects for which the relevant design and studies were not completed on time or for which funding has not been sought from the FC for the relevant construction works after completion of design and studies, the reasons and the progress of each of such projects at present (set out by year in a table);
2. of the annual estimated expenditure on works-related block allocations (i.e. Heads 702 to 709 and 711) approved under the Capital Works Reserve Fund in the 2024-25 financial year, as well as the actual expenditure as at the end of the financial year (set out in a table); and
3. of the total estimated annual expenditure on public works projects submitted individually to the FC and granted funding approval in the 2024-25 financial year, as well as the actual expenditure as at the end of the financial year (set out in a table).

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

Reply:

The Government has been striving to enhance the planning and governance of public works projects, in order to ensure quality of works, better manage cost-effectiveness, and enhance site safety performance. In view of the challenges of relatively high construction cost and the ageing construction labour force faced by Hong Kong in recent years, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established the Project Cost Management Office (PCMO) in 2016 and upgraded it to become the Project Strategy and Governance Office (PSGO) in 2019 for implementing strategic initiatives and enhancing capabilities in cost surveillance and project governance.

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

1. Before a works project proceeds to the main construction stage, different pre-construction planning and design works have to be carried out. These include conducting site investigation, technical impact assessment and engineering design, carrying out consultation with relevant departments and stakeholders, processing statutory procedures, and estimating project cost (advance works). The time required will depend on the project scope, nature, complexity as well as the implementation strategy and timetable for the main construction works.

In the past 5 years (i.e. 2020-2024), there was no works project with funding for advance works approved by the Finance Committee that did not proceed to the main construction stage upon its completion. The projects for advance works that did not complete on time during the same period are listed below:

Date of securing funding approval from the Finance Committee	Title of works project
14 July 2020	Pre-construction activities for expansion of Hong Kong Science Museum and Hong Kong Museum of History
4 December 2020	Studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters
11 December 2020	Ngau Tam Mei Water Treatment Works Extension - Investigation study, design and site investigation
19 February 2021	Engineering Study on Road P1 (Tai Ho - Sunny Bay Section)
16 July 2021	Remaining Phase Development of the New Territories North (NTN) - Planning and Engineering Study for NTN New Town and Man Kam To
8 October 2021	Construction of additional academic building and ancillary facilities for Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong (Phase 2 - Consultancy Study)
15 July 2022	Upgrading of Nim Wan Road (North) and Deep Bay Road – Investigation and Detailed Design
5 May 2023	Tsing Yi - Lantau Link - Investigation and Detailed Design
5 May 2023	Improvement of Lion Rock Tunnel – First Stage Design and Site Investigation

2&3.

The actual annual expenditure of capital works reflects the actual progress of the projects. Therefore, despite the approved estimates of projects remaining unchanged, the actual annual expenditures will still be slightly different from the estimated expenditures. In 2024-25, the estimated expenditure and revised estimated expenditure for capital works are as follows:

Financial year	Estimated expenditure for capital works	Revised estimated expenditure for capital works
2024-25	\$90.2 billion (inclusive of a block vote of \$14.3 billion and total expenditure of \$75.9 billion for individual projects)	About \$105.4 billion (inclusive of a block vote of \$14.1 billion and total expenditure of \$91.3 billion for individual projects)

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)076****(Question Serial No. 3050)**Head: (25) Architectural Services DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services (Michael LI Kiu-yin)Director of Bureau: Secretary for DevelopmentQuestion:

It is expected that there will be a net decrease of 23 posts in 2025-26 for the Architectural Services Department. Please explain the reasons for the decrease in the number of posts, and set out the posts to be deleted and the total amount of saving in expenditure.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)Reply:

In order to optimise the use of the civil service manpower resources and maintain the sustainability of our public finance, and taking into account the lapse of some time-limited posts, there will be a decrease of 23 posts in 2025-26 for the Architectural Services Department, with an estimated saving of about \$16.2 million in expenditure. The posts to be deleted are set out as follows:

Rank	Number of posts
Senior Architect	2
Architect/Assistant Architect	4
Senior Building Services Engineer	1
Senior Quantity Surveyor	1
Quantity Surveyor/Assistant Quantity Surveyor	1
Senior Structural Engineer	2
Structural Engineer/Assistant Structural Engineer	3
Maintenance Surveyor	2
Senior Clerk of Works	1
Clerk of Works	1
Senior Survey Officer (Quantity)	1
Survey Officer/Survey Officer Trainee (Quantity)	1
Clerical Assistant	3
Total	23

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)077

(Question Serial No. 3132)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

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

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The revised provision for 2024-25 is 24.6% lower than the original provision, while the estimate for 2025-26 is 68.2% higher than the revised provision for 2024-25, mainly due to the increased provision for handling of surplus public fill. Please provide the difference between the estimated amount of surplus public fill to be handled in 2025-26 and 2024-25, and justify the increase in the estimate.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

In recent years, the construction industry has generated an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually. The Government manages the public fill arising from various types of construction works through a multi-pronged approach, including controlling and managing through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reduction, we request the construction industry to minimise the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects to lessen the burden on the existing public fill reception facilities. Regarding proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or sent to the 2 fill banks for temporary storage for later reuse. With respect to recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal.

The revised provision for the 2024-25 financial year is lower than the original provision, mainly due to our efforts to increase the public fill reception capacity at the fill banks starting from early 2024 through enhancements to the fill bank configuration as well as the optimised reuse of public fill at local projects according to their actual circumstances. As a result, the quantity of public fill that needed to be delivered to the Mainland was reduced from the

original estimate of 11 million tonnes to 6.2 million tonnes, leading to a reduction in the relevant expenditures.

The Government has been creating land through reclamation projects, which have taken up a primary role in reusing a large amount of public fill. Given that several major reclamation projects in Hong Kong have been substantially completed and the storage capacity of the existing fill banks is close to saturation, as well as the fact that the Tseung Kwan O Fill Bank needs to gradually release land for long-term development, after assessing the public fill output from various projects in Hong Kong in 2025, we anticipate an increase in the quantity of surplus public fill that needs to be delivered to the Mainland from 6.2 million tonnes in 2024 to 16 million tonnes in 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)078

(Question Serial No. 0085)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Slope Safety and Geotechnical Standards

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding slope maintenance, please advise on the following:

1. the expenditure of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) on slope maintenance in Hong Kong in the past 3 years, and the respective proportions of the relevant work and expenses in residential and non-residential areas;
2. the number of slopes in Hong Kong on the CEDD's maintenance watch list, and the estimated maintenance cost of these slopes.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

Currently, the "Catalogue of Slopes" maintained by the Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) contains a total of about 61 000 registered man-made slopes. Amongst these slopes, the maintenance of about 45 000 government man-made slopes is mainly carried out by 7 government departments (namely the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Lands Department, the Highways Department, the Architectural Services Department, the Drainage Services Department, the Housing Department and the Water Supplies Department), depending on the slopes and the departments' jurisdiction or facilities. According to the "Guide to Slope Maintenance" published by the GEO, relevant government departments will regularly conduct routine maintenance inspections for the slopes under their purview and engage geotechnical engineers to conduct inspections regularly to ensure proper maintenance of the slopes. Relevant government departments respectively spent a total of about \$750 million, \$900 million and \$850 million on slope maintenance over the past 3 years (2022 to 2024) with a cumulative total of about \$2.5 billion, and the estimated expenditure on slope maintenance in 2025 is about \$900 million. Since the relevant work is a part of the overall work of the responsible government departments, we do not have a breakdown of the expenditure on slope maintenance work in residential and non-residential areas.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1362)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The feasibility study on road network enhancement to South Lantau commenced in March 2023 for anticipated completion in mid-2025 to improve the road connection between North Lantau and South Lantau, and the resilience of the road network in emergency situations. Will the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) the study on East Lantau includes the construction of a new road tunnel connecting Mui Wo and the existing roads/tunnels of Discovery Bay; or the construction of a new road tunnel directly connecting Mui Wo and Siu Ho Wan. Is there a preliminary cost estimate for the above 2 projects?
- 2) the study on West Lantau includes the construction of a new road tunnel connecting Shek Pik and Tai O; and/or the provision of viaducts to improve some sections of Keung Shan Road, which have many bends and are relatively steep and narrow, to improve the connection between South Lantau and Tai O. Is there a preliminary cost estimate for the above 2 projects?
- 3) the estimated time for the announcement of the study results, and the long-term benefits of the relevant works for Lantau.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

The Civil Engineering and Development Department commenced the “Feasibility Study on Road Network Enhancement to South Lantau” in March 2023 to study the enhancement of traffic infrastructure to improve the road connection between North and South Lantau, with a view to improving the resilience of the road network in South Lantau under emergency situations. Since the commencement of the study, the study team has not only reviewed the existing traffic network and the planned traffic and transport projects of Lantau, but also conducted a desk-top study and site visits to understand the development constraints. In addition, the study team is exploring various alignment options for the eastern and western parts of Lantau, and conducting preliminary assessments on the technical feasibility of the various alignments and their impacts on the environment and traffic. The study team will

continue the assessment on various aspects such as environment and ecology, technical feasibility, construction costs and social impacts, etc., and the collection of comments and suggestions from relevant departments on the preliminary alignment options. The whole study is anticipated to be completed in 2025. Since there is no concrete project design at this stage, we cannot provide a cost estimate for the aforementioned proposal.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2086)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 is \$787.9 million (68.2%) higher than the revised provision for 2024-25, mainly due to the increased provision for handling of surplus public fill. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. over the past 2 years, (i) the expenditure on the management of public fill, (ii) the quantity of construction waste generated locally, (iii) the quantity of public fill reused locally, (iv) the quantity of surplus public fill delivered to the Mainland, (v) the net increase/decrease of year-end quantity of public fill stored in local fill banks and (vi) the quantity of construction waste disposed of at landfills;
2. for the next 2 years, the estimated (i) expenditure on management of public fill, (ii) quantity of construction waste generated locally, (iii) quantity of public fill reused locally, (iv) quantity of surplus public fill delivered to the Mainland, (v) net increase/decrease of year-end quantity of public fill stored in local fill banks, and (vi) quantity of construction waste disposed of at landfills.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

In recent years, the construction industry has generated an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually. The Government manages the public fill arising from various types of construction works through a multi-pronged approach, including controlling and managing through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reduction, we request the construction industry to minimise the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects to lessen the burden on existing public fill reception facilities. Regarding proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or sent to the 2 fill banks for temporary storage for later reuse. With respect to recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above

management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal.

1. Over the past 2 years, the quantities of public fill handled and the expenditures incurred are tabulated below:

(i) The expenditures on the management of public fill in the past 2 financial years are tabulated below:

Financial year	Expenditure on the management of public fill (\$million)
2023-24	1,077 (Actual)
2024-25	1,155 (Revised estimate)

(ii) to (iv) The quantities of construction waste generated locally, public fill reused locally, surplus public fill delivered to the Mainland, net increase/decrease of year-end quantity of public fill stored in local fill banks and the quantities of construction waste disposed of at landfills in the past 2 years are tabulated below:

Year	Quantity of construction waste generated locally		Quantity of public fill reused locally* (million tonnes)	Quantity of surplus public fill delivered to the Mainland (million tonnes)	Net increase/decrease of year-end quantity of public fill stored in local fill banks (million tonnes)
	Construction waste comprising entirely of inert construction waste (or public fill) (million tonnes)	Quantity of construction waste disposed of at landfills# (million tonnes)			
2023	15	1.6	7.6	2.5	4.9 (Increased from 2022)
2024	16.8^	1.7^	7.4^	6.2^	3.2^ (Increased from 2023)

In accordance with the requirement of the Waste Disposal (Designated Waste Disposal Facility) Regulation (Cap. 354L), in general, construction waste comprising entirely of inert construction waste (or public fill) shall be delivered to public fill reception facilities for storage and later reuse, and shall not be disposed of at landfills. Construction waste containing more than 50% by weight of inert construction waste shall be delivered to sorting facilities for handling. The remaining construction waste containing not more than 50% by weight of inert construction waste can be delivered to landfills directly. The handling of the construction waste disposed of at landfills is not included in the 2025-26 estimated expenditure of Programme (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials.

* Including the quantities of public fill reused/recycled in local construction projects and from local fill banks.

^ Provisional actual figure subject to adjustment.

2. The Government has been closely monitoring the generation of and the demand for public fill, and has requested relevant departments to provide estimated quantities of public fill generation or demand during the planning and design stages of major projects. The amount of public fill generated locally will vary depending on the quantity and type of projects. We roughly anticipate that the construction industry will generate an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually in the next few years, which is similar to the current situation. The Government will continue to implement control and management measures to reduce public fill generation and reuse public fill in suitable local construction projects. Only the surplus public fill will be delivered to the Mainland for reuse, and the actual quantity and the associated expenditure are dependent on the progress of the local construction projects. The estimated expenditure on management of public fill in 2025-26 will be \$1.9432 billion.

As for the amount of construction waste disposed of at landfills, since it is subject to the number of public and private construction works (including small-scale works such as home renovations and shop demolitions), as well as the effect of business cycle, it is therefore difficult to provide an accurate forecast of the future trend. If there is an increase in number of small-scale works such as home renovations and shop demolitions, the amount of construction waste disposed of at landfills will also increase.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3256)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The development plan for the artificial islands in the Central Waters was not mentioned in the Budget, and it has been claimed that the construction date of the artificial islands will be postponed. Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the current expenditure involved in the preliminary study on the artificial islands in the Central Waters;
2. the estimated increase in the relevant costs in each of the next 3 years;
3. if the Government decides to suspend the project of artificial islands in the Central Waters, the costs saved by the Government in (i) preliminary study, (ii) construction and (iii) staff establishment.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)

Reply:

At its meeting in 2020, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a funding of \$550.4 million for the ongoing planning and engineering study on the KYCAI (i.e. PWP Item No. 768CL “Studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters”) to engage consultants to carry out the relevant study. Up to the end of the 2024-25 financial year, the expenditure for the above study is about \$400 million. The remaining work of the study, including the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the strategic roads and other technical assessments, etc., is being undertaken in accordance with the terms of the consultancy agreement. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) will use the remaining balance of the approved funding to cover these ongoing tasks.

In addition, the Government has initiated the following 3 small-scale studies, targeting specific engineering aspects, through the Block Allocations under the Capital Works Reserve Fund in 2024, each with a total funding of approximately \$30 million:

- (i) Hong Kong Island West - Kau Yi Chau Link - advance design and ground investigation;
- (ii) Northeast Lantau - Kau Yi Chau Link - advance design and ground investigation; and
- (iii) Marine ground investigation works for re-provisioning of deep draft anchorage area at Kellett Bank and adjoining areas

Up to the end of the 2024-25 financial year, the total expenditure for the above 3 small-scale items is about \$20 million.

The forecast of total expenditure for the above items is about \$76 million in 2025-26. We will estimate the expenditure for subsequent financial years in light of the actual progress of the study in a timely manner. It is anticipated that the aforementioned studies in progress can be completed within the approved funding, and no additional funding will be required.

The KYCAI project is at the preliminary planning and study stage. The Government has reviewed the competing priorities of various projects and considered that the pace to take forward the KYCAI project could be slowed down. Although there is no concrete timetable for the commencement of works for the KYCAI project, we will still prudently carry out the necessary preparatory work at the study stage so that the reclamation works of the KYCAI project can commence as quickly as possible at the appropriate time in the future. Therefore, we will continue to complete the study in progress to provide an important and useful basis for future deployment. In this regard, the CEDD submitted the first completed EIA report for the reclamation for KYCAI to the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) at the end of last year. The EPD subsequently informed the CEDD of the suitability of the EIA report for public inspection. In light of the latest priority of various public works projects being taken forward by the Government, there are different possibilities for the implementation strategy and timetable for the reclamation works of the KYCAI project. In this connection, we are reviewing and fine-tuning the relevant background information and project description in the EIA report, aiming to convey a precise message to the public. We will submit the EIA report with the updated background information and project description incorporated to the EPD as soon as possible, and will make the report available for public inspection in a timely manner in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Ordinance.

The Government will formulate the project implementation strategy according to the progress of studies, as well as the priority and overall deployment of the Government's various land creation and infrastructure projects.

In addition, there is insufficient information at this stage to accurately estimate the construction cost of the project since the study is still in progress. As for the staff establishment, the staff of the CEDD will be responsible for overseeing the aforementioned study. As the staff concerned will also be responsible for other tasks of the department, we are unable to provide a separate breakdown for the cost of staff establishment involved in the study.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)082

(Question Serial No. 1941)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

- (1) What is the progress of the development of the 48 Strategic Cavern Areas in the territory which are available for development and the expenditure involved? Which of these projects have significant achievement? What are the economic benefits of implementing the cavern development projects and releasing the original sites for redevelopment?
- (2) In developing caverns, what are the criteria for the Government to decide to relocate a facility into a cavern; will priority be given to relocating obnoxious public facilities into caverns so as to minimise the impact on the community while enhancing the development potential of the original site, or will the need for land reclamation be reduced?
- (3) What are the advantages and cost differences of cavern development compared to the development of underground space in urban areas and land reclamation; and whether cavern development is cost-effective and economically viable for Hong Kong in the long term?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

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

The Government is taking forward 5 projects for relocating/accommodating suitable public facilities into SCVAs, with a view to releasing existing land for housing or other beneficial uses. These public facilities include sewage treatment works, fresh water/salt water service reservoirs, material testing laboratories and archives centre.

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

Relocation / Accommodation Projects of Public Facilities into Caverns	Project Details and Estimated Expenditure	Latest Project Progress and Benefits of Released Land
(1) <u>Projects under construction</u>		
1. Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works	<p>Relocation of the sewage treatment works to the caverns at Nui Po Shan, A Kung Kok, Sha Tin (SCVA No. 20).</p> <p>The approved project estimate for Stage 1 works, including site preparation and tunnel construction works, is \$2.0775 billion (in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices).</p> <p>The approved project estimate for Stage 2 works, including main caverns construction and upstream sewerage works, is \$14.0765 billion (in MOD prices).</p> <p>The approved project estimate for Stage 3 works, including the ancillary buildings of the sewage treatment works, cavern ventilation system works, etc., is \$3.1238 billion (in MOD prices).</p> <p>The proposed project estimate for the remaining works, including construction and installation of sewage treatment facilities, decommissioning and demolition of the existing sewage treatment works, is \$15.6484 billion (in MOD prices) (pending review).</p>	<p>The construction works are being carried out in phases. Stage 1 works commenced in 2019 and were completed in 2022 as scheduled. Stage 2 works and Stage 3 works commenced in July 2021 and August 2023 respectively. Consultation with the Legislative Council Panel on Development on the remaining works was held on 15 July 2024. Subject to funding approval of the remaining works by the Finance Committee, the relevant works will commence as soon as possible. The target is to release the existing site of about 28 hectares in 2031 for other beneficial uses.</p>

Relocation / Accommodation Projects of Public Facilities into Caverns	Project Details and Estimated Expenditure	Latest Project Progress and Benefits of Released Land
2. Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs	The approved project estimate for the relocation of the service reservoirs to the caverns to the south of Lion Rock (SCVA No. 26) is \$2.3342 billion (in MOD prices).	The works commenced in December 2022, with a target to release the existing site of about 4 hectares in the second half of 2027 for development of housing and community facilities.
3. Public Works Central Laboratory (PWCL)	The total approved project estimate for the relocation of the PWCL and accommodation of the AC in the caverns at Anderson Road Quarry (SCVA No. 28) is \$4.93 billion (in MOD prices).	The works commenced in July 2023, with a target to release the existing site of the PWCL and the adjoining land of about 0.8 hectares in total in mid-2027, for housing and recreational facilities. The whole project is planned for completion in the third quarter of 2028.
4. Archives Centre (AC)		
(2) <u>Project to be constructed</u>		
5. Victoria Public Mortuary	The approved project estimate for the project to relocate the public mortuary to the site at the western end of Victoria Road is \$1.2091 billion (in MOD prices), which includes approximately \$55.6 million for slope and cavern enhancement works in connection with the provision of Modular Refrigerated Mortuary Units (MRMUs) in an existing cavern (SCVA No. 41) located at the southeast of the site.	The funding application was approved by the Finance Committee on 21 March this year. The works are anticipated to commence in the third quarter of this year, with a target for completion by the first quarter of 2030. After the reprovisioning of the Victoria Public Mortuary, about 0.1 hectare of land at the existing site of the public mortuary, together with the adjoining land, will be used for the provision of a waterfront promenade and open space.

(2) & (3)

Before implementing the relocation of public facilities in caverns, the Government will consider various factors, such as the existing site conditions, overall planning and development needs of the neighbouring community, potential land uses, relocation timeframe and departments' consent, merits and constraints brought about by the relocation of these facilities, etc., and conduct analysis and assessments in terms of environmental benefits and cost-effectiveness, etc.

In terms of environmental benefits, relocating facilities that are incompatible with land uses nearby can improve the urban layout and community environment. In terms of cost-effectiveness, the Government will propose preliminary planning assumptions in relation to the land use of the released site to roughly estimate the development potential and potential value of the concerned site. The expanded land resources could help meet public needs and bring benefits to the society.

In view of the potentially higher costs and longer implementation time for cavern development and that the actual development cost and effectiveness depend on the scale of the project and the complexity of the relevant facilities, the Government will carefully consider the uniqueness of individual projects and compare the economic benefits of different options, including development of underground space and reclamation, to identify projects which achieve cost effectiveness and social benefits and ascertain the feasibility of implementing the projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0483)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is stated in the “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26” that the Development Bureau will continue to steer the relevant study on road network enhancement to South Lantau. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the expenditure involved and the progress of the study, as well as the expected time for the publication of the study results;
- (2) Tung Chung Road is the only road that links North and South Lantau, and South Lantau Road is the only road connecting various places of South Lantau. The Government is committed to developing the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor, and any traffic incidents in this area will affect its tourist receiving capability. In addition, all roads in South Lantau are closed roads and motorists who wish to access the closed roads are required to hold a valid Lantau Closed Road Permit. The “Driving on Lantau Island” Scheme is only available on Mondays to Fridays with a daily quota of 50, which may reduce visitation momentum. Does the Government have any short to medium term measures to promote tourism in South Lantau? If yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (1) The Civil Engineering and Development Department commenced the “Feasibility Study on Road Network Enhancement to South Lantau” in March 2023, with an estimated study fee of about \$17.5 million. Since the commencement of the study, the study team has not only reviewed the existing traffic network and the planned traffic and transport projects of Lantau, but also conducted a desk-top study and site visits to understand the development constraints. In addition, the study team is exploring various alignment options for the eastern and western parts of Lantau, and conducting preliminary assessments on the technical feasibility of the various alignments and their impacts on the environment and traffic. The study team will continue the assessment on various aspects such as environment and ecology, technical feasibility, construction costs and social impacts, etc., and the collection of comments and suggestions from relevant departments

on the preliminary alignment options. The whole study is anticipated to be completed in 2025.

- (2) Under the planning intention of South Lantau as a nature conservation area, visitors to South Lantau will mainly use public transport services. To support the development of the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor, the Government plans to enhance the land and water transport infrastructure and supporting facilities, including the proposed construction of a new pier at Cheung Sha. Additionally, the Government proposes to enhance public transport links and ancillary facilities to and from different attractions in South Lantau, including the provision of additional parking spaces and the construction of new pedestrian walkways to connect major attractions and facilities.

At this stage, the Government has no plan to further adjust the road closure and permit issuance arrangements in Lantau. The Government will continue to review the permit arrangements in the light of the planning for South Lantau, and the implementation of various enhancement measures, etc.

On 2 April 2025, the Government invited the market to submit an expression of interest for the proposals of the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor, in which the views of the market on the development of the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor will be gauged.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)084

(Question Serial No. 1098)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 under this Programme is \$1,024.2 million, which is considerably lower than the revised provision for 2024-25 by 11.1%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the change is mainly due to the decreased provision for operating expenses and a net decrease of 30 posts in 2025-26. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the ranks and responsibilities of the posts to be reduced in 2025-26;
- (b) the justification for reduction of staffing provision in 2025-26; and
- (c) the impacts of reduction of staffing provision on the work under this Programme and the measures to mitigate the impacts?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- (a) Under this Programme, 32 existing posts in the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) will be deleted in 2025-26, while 2 new time-limited posts for a period of 3 years will be created in the same year. Therefore, the net decrease of posts in 2025-26 under this Programme is 30. A breakdown of the 32 posts to be deleted under this Programme by their ranks and responsibilities is tabulated below:

Responsibilities	Rank	Number of Post
Responsible for Multiple Projects involving Provision of Land and Infrastructures	Principal Government Engineer	1
	Government Town Planner	1
	Chief Engineer	2
	Chief Town Planner	1
	Senior Engineer	2
	Senior Architect	1
	Engineer/Assistant Engineer	8
	Geotechnical Engineer/Assistant Geotechnical Engineer	1
	Architect/Assistant Architect	2
	Technical Officer/Technical Officer Trainee (Civil)	1
	Personal Secretary II	3
	Clerical Assistant	1
Land Sharing Pilot Scheme	Senior Engineer	1
	Engineer/Assistant Engineer	2
General Support in Headquarters	Clerical Assistant	1
	Workman II	4
Total:		32

(b) & (c)

Among the above posts, most of them are to be deleted upon expiry of the duration for which the posts are created or upon completion of the jobs concerned. The CEDD will enhance efficiency through management measures and digitalisation, re-prioritisation and internal redeployment of work, streamlining of work processes, and capitalising on technology solutions to continue to implement various policies and initiatives under this Programme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)085

(Question Serial No. 1099)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The revised provision for 2024-25 under this Programme is \$1,155.3 million, which is considerably lower than the original provision for 2024-25 by 24.6%. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the reason for the decrease in revised provision for 2024-25?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

In recent years, the construction industry has generated an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually. The Government manages the public fill arising from various types of construction works through a multi-pronged approach, including controlling and managing through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reduction, we request the construction industry to minimise the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects to lessen the burden on the existing public fill reception facilities. Regarding proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or sent to the 2 fill banks for temporary storage for later reuse. With respect to recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal.

The revised provision for the 2024-25 financial year is lower than the original provision, mainly due to our efforts to increase the public fill reception capacity at the fill banks starting from early 2024 through enhancements to the fill bank configuration as well as the optimised reuse of public fill at local projects according to their actual circumstances. As a result, the quantity of public fill that needed to be delivered to the Mainland was reduced from the original estimate of 11 million tonnes to 6.2 million tonnes, leading to a reduction in the relevant expenditures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)086

(Question Serial No. 1100)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 under this Programme is \$1,943.2 million, which is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2024-25 by 68.2%. According to the Controlling Officer's explanation, the change is mainly due to increased provision for handling of surplus public fill. As mentioned in the key performance indicators, the public fill delivered to the Mainland for beneficial reuse will be increased from 6.2 million tonnes in 2024 to 16 million tonnes in 2025. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the details of the local receiving capacity of existing fill banks in 2023 and 2024;
- (b) the measures to maximise reuse of the public fill in local projects;
- (c) the provision for 2025-26 in handling of surplus public fill; and
- (d) the basis on which the estimation for 2025-26 in (c) is made?

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

Reply:

(a)&(b)

In recent years, the construction industry has generated an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually. The Government manages the public fill arising from various types of construction works through a multi-pronged approach, including controlling and managing through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reduction, we request the construction industry to minimise the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects to lessen the burden on the existing public fill reception facilities. Regarding proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or sent to the 2 fill banks for temporary storage for later reuse. With respect to recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal.

Over the past 2 years, the public fill receiving capacity of existing fill banks is tabulated below:

Year	Total storage capacity of local fill banks at the end of the year (million tonnes)
2023	23.5
2024	28*

* Following the enhancements to the fill bank configuration starting from early 2024, the total storage capacity of fill banks has been increased.

(c)&(d)

The Government has been creating land through reclamation projects, which have taken up a primary role in reusing a large amount of public fill. Given that several major reclamation projects in Hong Kong have been substantially completed and the storage capacity of the existing fill banks is close to saturation, as well as the fact that the Tseung Kwan O Fill Bank needs to gradually release land for long-term development, after assessing the public fill output from various projects in Hong Kong in 2025, we anticipate an increase in the quantity of surplus public fill that needs to be delivered to the Mainland from 6.2 million tonnes in 2024 to 16 million tonnes in 2025. As a result, the estimated expenditure in 2025-26 increases to \$1,943.2 million, which will be primarily used for the operation and maintenance of public fill reception facilities, supply of public fill stockpiled in the fill banks to local projects for reuse, provision of required facilities for disposal of public fill at the disposal ground in the Mainland, delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland, the associated staff and administrative arrangement, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2044)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is indicated in the Estimates of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) that it has continued the engineering study on Sunny Bay reclamation. On the same occasion in 2024, the CEDD stated that a feasibility study on Sunny Bay reclamation had commenced in May 2023 for completion in mid-2025 to ascertain the extent of reclamation required and its technical feasibility. It also stated that once the extent of the reclamation has been ascertained, the Government will explore the provision of various recreational and entertainment facilities on the Sunny Bay reclamation site, including a multi-purpose venue and a motor racing circuit. However, the latest Budget has not mentioned Sunny Bay reclamation at all. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the estimated timetable for the publication of the study report?

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

Reply:

The engineering feasibility study for Sunny Bay reclamation is in progress. In the course of the study, we are prudently planning the extent of reclamation taking into account different technical and environmental factors, including the results of ground investigation, the interfaces with the proposed projects in the vicinity, the re-provisioning needs of different operators as well as the compatibility of accommodating other industry activities. The engineering feasibility study is anticipated to be completed in 2025-26.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)088

(Question Serial No. 2045)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government reported to the Legislative Council in 2024 on the recommendations of the study on the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor, with a view to developing South Lantau into an integrated Asian tourism resort. Lantau Island is strategically located given its proximity to the Hong Kong International Airport and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge. It also offers a variety of tourism activities, both active and passive, attracting tourists who love exciting activities and adventure, while at the same time providing leisure and tranquil resorts and hotels to attract high-end travellers, making Lantau Island a new engine for Hong Kong's tourism in the future.

At present, the two-lane two-way Tung Chung Road is the only road connecting North and South Lantau, and the two-lane two-way South Lantau Road is the only road connecting Mui Wo and Shek Pik. The Civil Engineering and Development Department has indicated that it is conducting a feasibility study on road network enhancement to South Lantau to develop the traffic infrastructure improving the road connection between the North and South Lantau.

In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee whether it has estimated the feasibility of constructing a new road tunnel connecting Discovery Bay and Mui Wo to link North and South Lantau, and the relevant costs; if yes, the details and the relevant costs; if not, the reasons.

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

Reply:

Given the designation of South Lantau as a nature conservation area by the relevant government departments, the roads on South Lantau have been designated as 24-hour closed roads since the 1970s to control the number of vehicles entering South Lantau.

The Civil Engineering and Development Department commenced the "Feasibility Study on Road Network Enhancement to South Lantau" in March 2023 to study the enhancement of

traffic infrastructure to improve the road connection between North and South Lantau, with a view to improving the resilience of the road network in South Lantau under emergency situations. The feasibility study covers the following road network enhancement options in East and West Lantau:

East Lantau

- (1) Construct a new road tunnel connecting Mui Wo and existing road/tunnel of Discovery Bay; or
- (2) Construct a new road tunnel directly connecting Mui Wo and Siu Ho Wan.

West Lantau

- (1) Construct a new road tunnel connecting Shek Pik in the south and Tai O in the north; and/or
- (2) Provide viaducts for improving parts of Keung Shan Road which are steep in gradient and narrow with many bends, thus improving the connection between South Lantau and Tai O.

Since the commencement of the study, the study team has not only reviewed the existing traffic network and the planned traffic and transport projects of Lantau, but also conducted a desk-top study and site visits to understand the development constraints. In addition, the study team is exploring various alignment options for the aforementioned proposals in the eastern and western parts of Lantau, and conducting preliminary assessments on the technical feasibility of the various alignments and their impacts on the environment and traffic. The study team will continue the assessment on various aspects such as environment and ecology, technical feasibility, construction costs and social impacts, etc., and the collection of comments and suggestions from relevant departments on the preliminary alignment options. The whole study is anticipated to be completed in 2025. Since there is no concrete project design at this stage, we cannot provide a cost estimate for the aforementioned proposal.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)089

(Question Serial No. 3114)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

With regard to the management of construction and demolition materials, the provision for 2025-26 is considerably higher than the revised provision for 2024-25 by 68.2%, mainly due to the increased provision for handling of surplus public fill. The higher estimated figure in 2025 is due to the fact that more deliveries of surplus public fill materials to Taishan are expected as a result of the diminished local receiving capacity attributable to the substantial completion of major reclamation works in Hong Kong and the land of existing fill banks gradually being surrendered for development thus reducing the temporary stockpiled capacities of existing fill banks. During 2025-26, the Civil Engineering and Development Department will continue to implement the cross-boundary delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland for beneficial reuse. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the quantity of public fill used in various major reclamation works in Hong Kong over the past 5 years, and the quantity of fill prepared for the relevant works;
- (b) the reclamation projects to be implemented in Hong Kong in the next 5 years, and the estimated quantity of public fill required;
- (c) the cost of delivering surplus public fill to Taishan;
- (d) whether it has reviewed the feasibility and cost of using other abandoned land or islands in Hong Kong for stockpiling public fill? If yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

In recent years, the construction industry has generated an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually. The Government manages the public fill arising from various types of construction works through a multi-pronged approach, including controlling and managing through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reduction, we request the construction industry to minimise the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects to lessen the burden on the existing public fill reception facilities.

Regarding proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or sent to the 2 fill banks for temporary storage for later reuse. With respect to recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal.

- (a) The quantities of public fill used in major reclamation works in Hong Kong and the quantities of public fill supplied by local fill banks for the relevant reclamation works over the past 5 years are tabulated below:

Year	Quantity of public fill used in major reclamation works in Hong Kong (Hong Kong International Airport Three-Runway System, Tung Chung New Town Extension and Integrated Waste Management Facilities in Shek Kwu Chau) over the past 5 years (million tonnes)	Quantity of public fill supplied by local fill banks for reclamation works in Hong Kong* (million tonnes)
2020	59	12.8
2021	13.3	4.8
2022	4.1	2.3
2023	4.1	2.3
2024	2.9	2

* Figures do not include the quantity of public fill that has been directly delivered to reclamation projects without temporary storage at public fill reception facilities.

- (b)&(d)

The Government will continue to create land in a resolute and persistent manner, so that a steady and continuous land supply for Hong Kong can be maintained to meet the needs of future economic and livelihood development. In fact, the Government has been creating land through reclamation projects, which have taken up a primary role in reusing a large amount of public fill. Looking ahead, we will continue to implement control and management measures to reduce public fill generation and reuse public fill in suitable local construction projects, including timely implementation of planned reclamation projects. Only the surplus public fill will be delivered to the Mainland for reuse. The Government will from time to time review its management strategies for handling public fill, including the provision of public fill handling facilities, and make timely adjustments as necessary.

- (c) The expenditure for management of public fill mainly includes the operation and maintenance of public fill reception facilities, supply of public fill stockpiled in the fill banks to local projects for reuse, provision of required facilities for disposal of public fill at the disposal ground in the Mainland, delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland, associated staff costs and administrative arrangement, etc. As the supply of public fill stockpiled in the fill banks to local projects for reuse and the delivery of surplus public fill to the Mainland are both undertaken by a single contractor, there is no cost breakdown of individual operations in the contract.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2696)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

1. What is the current progress of the planning and engineering study on the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands (KYCAI)?
2. What is the specific work to be carried out in 2025-26 in relation to the KYCAI?
3. What is the expenditure incurred so far in relation to the KYCAI? Please list the related expenditure.

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

1. & 2.

The KYCAI project is at the preliminary planning and study stage. The Government has reviewed the priority of various projects and considered that the pace to take forward the KYCAI project could be slowed down. Although there is currently no concrete timetable for the implementation of the KYCAI project, we will still prudently carry out the necessary preparatory work at the study stage so that the reclamation works of the KYCAI project can commence as quickly as possible at an appropriate time in the future. Therefore, we will complete the remaining work of the study, including the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and essential items already commenced with approved funding, to provide an important and useful basis for future deployment.

The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) submitted the first completed EIA report for the reclamation for KYCAI to the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) at the end of last year. The EPD subsequently informed the CEDD of the suitability of the EIA report for public inspection. In light of the latest priority of various public works projects being taken forward by the Government, there are different possibilities for the implementation strategy and timetable for the reclamation works of the KYCAI project. In this connection, we are reviewing and fine-tuning the relevant background information and project description in the EIA report, aiming to convey a precise message to the public. We will submit the EIA report with the updated background information and project description incorporated to the EPD as soon as

possible, and will make the report available for public inspection in a timely manner in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Ordinance. The Government will formulate the project implementation strategy according to the progress of the studies, as well as the priority and overall deployment of the Government's various land creation and infrastructure projects.

3. At its meeting in 2020, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a funding of \$550.4 million for the ongoing planning and engineering study on the KYCAI (i.e. PWP Item No. 768CL “Studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters”) to engage consultants to carry out the relevant study. Up to the end of the 2024-25 financial year, the expenditure for the above study is about \$400 million. The remaining work of the study, including the EIA for the strategic roads and other technical assessments, etc., is being undertaken in accordance with the terms of the consultancy agreement. The CEDD will use the remaining balance of the approved funding to cover these ongoing tasks.

In addition, the Government has initiated the following 3 small-scale studies, targeting specific engineering aspects, through the Block Allocations under the Capital Works Reserve Fund in 2024, each with a total funding of approximately \$30 million:

- (i) Hong Kong Island West - Kau Yi Chau Link - advance design and ground investigation;
- (ii) Northeast Lantau - Kau Yi Chau Link - advance design and ground investigation; and
- (iii) Marine ground investigation works for re-provisioning of deep draft anchorage area at Kellett Bank and adjoining areas

Up to the end of the 2024-25 financial year, the total expenditure for the above 3 small-scale items is about \$20 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0574)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (7) Management of Construction and Demolition Materials

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The financial provision has been increasing in recent years. The increase in expenditure is mainly due to the substantial increase in public fill materials delivered to the Mainland (e.g. Taishan) for reuse.

In this regard, this Committee raised the issue of exploring temporary storage sites in Hong Kong last year. The financial provision for 2025-26 is 68.2% higher than the revised provision for 2024-25. In this connection, please inform this Committee: despite the substantial completion of major reclamation works in Hong Kong, there is still a need for reclamation in the long term, therefore, whether the Government will identify new suitable temporary storage sites for fill materials for reuse in future local projects.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

In recent years, the construction industry has generated an average of about 15 million tonnes of public fill annually. The Government manages the public fill arising from various types of construction works through a multi-pronged approach, including controlling and managing through reducing generation, proper reuse and recycling. On the aspect of reduction, we request the construction industry to minimise the generation of public fill at source and achieve cut-and-fill balance as far as practicable through proper planning, design and management in projects to lessen the burden on the existing public fill reception facilities. Regarding proper reuse, the generated public fill is either delivered to earth filling and reclamation projects for direct reuse, or sent to the 2 fill banks for temporary storage for later reuse. With respect to recycling, we carry out sorting of the public fill and suitable hard materials are recycled as construction materials. After implementation of the above management measures, only the surplus public fill would be delivered to Taishan in the Guangdong Province for disposal.

We keep reviewing the demand for public fill reception facilities based on the anticipated quantity of public fill to be generated or absorbed by future large-scale construction projects and scrutinise the public fill management plans of project proponents at the planning and design stages to ensure that in their work plans, the construction waste is minimised and the public fill is reused and recycled as far as practicable. Only the surplus public fill will be delivered to the Mainland for reuse, and the actual quantity and the associated expenditure are dependent on the progress of the local construction projects. In addition, the Government will continue to create land in a resolute and persistent manner, so that a steady and continuous land supply for Hong Kong can be maintained to meet the needs of future economic and livelihood development. In fact, the Government has been creating land through reclamation projects, which have taken up a primary role in reusing a large amount of public fill. Looking ahead, we will continue to implement control and management measures to reduce public fill generation and reuse public fill in suitable local construction projects, including timely implementation of planned reclamation projects. Only the surplus public fill will be delivered to the Mainland for reuse. The Government will from time to time review its management strategies for handling public fill, including the provision of public fill handling facilities, and make timely adjustments as necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)092****(Question Serial No. 2566)**Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): Not specifiedProgramme: (3) Provision of Land and InfrastructureControlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development (Michael H S FONG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for DevelopmentQuestion:

The “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26” mentioned by the Development Bureau includes “continue to oversee the implementation of the Pier Improvement Programme”. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. please tabulate the titles of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Pier Improvement Programme (PIP) projects, the commencement dates of the planning and design work, the latest progress of the works, the estimated expenditure and the actual expenditure incurred;

Title of PIP Project	Commencement Date of the Planning and Design Work	Latest Works Progress	Estimated and Actual Expenditure

2. whether the Government has estimated which projects need to or will seek funding approval from the Legislative Council, and the relevant timetable;
3. whether the Government has any plans to set up a third phase of the programme to further improve the pier facilities in the rural areas so as to provide better supporting facilities for eco-tourism; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1. Works progress of the 10 public piers under Phase 1 of the Pier Improvement Programme (PIP):

Title of PIP Project	Commencement Date of the Planning and Design Work	Latest Works Progress	Estimated and Actual Expenditure (\$million)
Pak Kok Pier, Lamma Island	July 2017	Commissioned in November 2022	72.4 (Approved estimate) 62.4 (Actual expenditure)
Kau Sai Village Pier	November 2017	Commissioned in September 2024	77.8 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Lai Chi Chong Pier		Under construction, expected to be completed in 2025	108.8 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Sham Chung Pier			111.9 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Leung Shuen Wan Pier			88.3 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Yi O Pier			128.5 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Shek Tsai Wan Pier, Ma Wan			57.5 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Yung Shue Wan Public Pier		Under construction, expected to be completed in 2026	157.4 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Lai Chi Wo Pier	June 2018	Detailed design completed	Pending (Note 1)
Tung Ping Chau Public Pier			

Note 1: The implementation schedule will be subject to the priority and overall deployment of the Government's various infrastructural and public works projects. There is no specific timetable at this moment, and the project cost estimate cannot be provided.

Works progress of the 13 public piers under Phase 2 of the PIP:

Title of PIP Project	Commencement Date of the Planning and Design Work	Latest Works Progress	Estimated and Actual Expenditure (\$million)
Sam Mun Tsai Village Pier	November 2017	Under construction, expected to be completed in 2025	110.8 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Ma Wan Chung Pier			45.8 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier	February 2022		40.3 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Tai O Public Pier	May 2021	Under construction, expected to be completed in 2026	15.7 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Sai Wan Jetty, Cheung Chau			30.9 (Approved estimate) (Actual expenditure to be confirmed)
Ma Nam Wat Pier	February 2022	Detailed design in progress	Pending (Note 2)
Yung Shue O Jetties			
Yim Tin Tsai Pier			
Ap Chau Public Pier	May 2021		
Peng Chau Public Pier			
Sok Kwu Wan Pier No. 2			
Man Kok Tsui Pier		Feasibility study in progress	
Tap Mun Pier	August 2023	Investigation and preliminary design in progress	

Note 2: These piers are still under investigation and preliminary / detailed design.

2&3.

Since the launch of the PIP in 2017, 2 piers has been rebuilt, and the 11 piers under construction are expected to be completed in phases from 2025 to 2026. The remaining 10 piers are currently at the investigation and design stage. Upon completion of the detailed design, we will apply to the Legislative Council for funding for individual pier projects as needed based on the priority and overall deployment of the government's various infrastructure and public works projects. We will review and plan the implementation strategy for the next phase of the PIP with the Committee on Piers, which comprises representatives from various policy bureaux and departments.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)093

(Question Serial No. 0139)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Systematic Drainage and Sewage Disposal in the New Territories

It is learnt that the Drainage Services Department (DSD) has been formulating drainage master plans for rural areas and implementing long-term improvement measures, including river training works targeting flood-prone areas in the northern New Territories, village flood protection schemes to safeguard low-lying villages, as well as drainage improvement works in the New Territories. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the progress of river training works and village flood protection schemes carried out by the DSD in the past year and the expenditure involved, as well as the outstanding works and anticipated completion dates of the entire works project and schemes; and
2. the progress of drainage improvement works in the New Territories in the past year and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) has been striving to formulate drainage master plans for rural areas and implement long-term improvement measures. Since 2008, the DSD has been conducting, in phases, reviews of the drainage master plans in the New Territories and implementing drainage improvement works for concerned districts as planned to further reduce the flood risk of these areas. Currently, 5 drainage improvement projects in North District, Yuen Long District, Tai Po District, Sha Tin District and Sai Kung District are in progress and the scopes of works include construction of drainage systems, stormwater storage schemes, flood protection walls, barrage, etc. In the past year, the DSD also planned other drainage improvement works, including river training works and village flood protection scheme.

The respective progress, approved project estimate and expenditure (revised estimate) of the on-going drainage improvement works in the New Territories carried out by the DSD in 2024-25 are set out in the table below:

District	Project	Progress	Approved Project Estimate (\$ million)	2024-25 Expenditure (Revised Estimate) (\$ million)
North	Drainage improvement works at North District – phase 1	Works are in progress and anticipated to be completed in 2028	950	about 81
Yuen Long	Drainage improvement works at Yuen Long	Stage 1 works were completed in March 2023; Stage 2 works are in progress and anticipated to be completed in 2027	785	about 155
	Yuen Long Barrage Scheme	Works are in progress and anticipated to be completed in 2030	3,783	about 515
Tai Po	Drainage improvement works in Tai Po – phase 1	Works are in progress and anticipated to be completed in 2029	1,286	about 26
Sha Tin and Sai Kung	Drainage improvement works in Sha Tin and Sai Kung – phase 1	Works are in progress and anticipated to be completed in 2029	707	about 17

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)094

(Question Serial No. 2899)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Stormwater Drainage

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the promotion work of Drainy, the mascot of the Drainage Services Department (DSD), would the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the respective expenditures on the management and operation of different social media accounts (including Facebook page and Instagram account) of Drainy in each of the past 3 years;
2. of the number and percentage increase of followers, the number of posts and videos, as well as the average number of likes, comments and shares of each post and video on the Facebook page of Drainy in each of the past 3 years;
3. of the number and percentage increase of followers, the number of posts and videos, as well as the average number of likes, comments and shares of each post and video on the Instagram account of Drainy in each of the past 3 years;
4. whether performance indicators have been set for the social media accounts of Drainy, such as requirements on the number of followers for Facebook page or Instagram account, the number of views of posts and the number of interactions; if yes, of the details; if no, of the reason(s);
5. of the expenditure on producing peripheral gifts or souvenirs featuring Drainy in each of the past 3 years; and
6. of the expenditure involved in placing 75 art installations of Drainy with various themes along the riverbank of the King Yip Street section of the Tsui Ping River earlier on by the DSD?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1, 5 & 6.:

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) has been striving to provide world-class wastewater and stormwater drainage services enabling the sustainable development of Hong Kong. As the DSD's services are closely related to the daily life of the public, Drainy, the mascot of the DSD, was introduced in 2021 to act as the department's KOL.

Social media pages including Facebook and Instagram with the account name “下水水Drainy” have been launched to introduce the DSD’s services, share latest information and knowledge, respond to issues of public concern, report the handling of flooding incidents during heavy rainstorms, etc. through videos and posts. Since the expenditure involved in Drainy including the art installations placed along the riverbank of the Tsui Ping River forms part of the overall expenditure on publicity and promotion, a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved solely for Drainy is not available.

2 & 3.:

Details of “下水水Drainy” Facebook and Instagram pages in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year		2022	2023	2024
No. of page followers (percentage increase)	Facebook	13 204	15 339 (+16%)	19 331 (+26%)
	Instagram	3 455	5 439 (+57%)	7 548 (+39%)
No. of posts and videos posted	Facebook	138	150	185
	Instagram	127	120	138
Average no. of interactions (i.e. likes, comments, shares and clicks)	Facebook	611	586	636
	Instagram	225	352	395

4. The DSD has established the following performance indicators for social media accounts of “下水水Drainy”:
- (i) an increase in the number of followers by 1 500 each year for Facebook and Instagram pages respectively;
 - (ii) among posts and videos posted on Facebook and Instagram pages each month, 4 of them need to reach 10 000 views; and
 - (iii) among posts and videos posted on Facebook and Instagram pages each month, 4 of them need to have a total of 400 interactions (i.e. likes, comments, shares and clicks).

Since the launch of “下水水Drainy” Facebook and Instagram pages, the performance indicators set by the DSD have been met as expected.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)095

(Question Serial No. 3063)

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Since 2007, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has collaborated with many organisations to promote the practice of “standing firm and holding the handrail”. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the number of escalator incidents in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the main causes of the incidents;
- (2) the methods, collaborating organisations and expenditure involved in promoting the practice of “standing firm and holding the handrail” by the EMSD in the past 3 years;
- (3) whether any study has been conducted in Hong Kong to evaluate if the practice of “standing firm and holding the handrail” can increase the handling capacity of escalators and make users safer; if yes, the details; if no, the reasons;
- (4) whether any assessment has been conducted on the effectiveness of promoting the practice of “standing firm and holding the handrail” by the EMSD over the years; if yes, the results; if no, the reasons; and
- (5) the future plan to strengthen the promotion of the practice of “standing firm and holding the handrail”?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has been enhancing the safety level of lifts and escalators through multi-pronged measures, of which public education and publicity campaigns are an integral part. Moreover, passengers' safe use of lifts and escalators is one of our priority considerations. As far as escalators are concerned, in order to ensure their safe use and avoid incidents, apart from proper maintenance and periodic examination, passengers' proper use of escalators is also important. Therefore, the EMSD

has always been committed to publicising and promoting the right attitude of passengers when using escalators, including standing firm, holding the handrail and not walking on the escalator, etc.

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

- (1) At present, there are about 10 900 escalators in Hong Kong. In the past 3 years, the numbers of escalator incidents reported to the EMSD in accordance with the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Cap. 618) are tabulated below:

Year	2022 ^{Note 3}	2023	2024
Incidents caused by human factors ^{Note 1}	1 705	2 627	2 698
Incidents caused by other factors ^{Note 2}	134	138	111
Total	1 839	2 765	2 809

Note 1: For example, passengers fell down due to loss of balance when walking on the escalator.

Note 2: For example, incidents caused by external factors, such as foreign objects being wedged in the space between the step and combplate, or equipment fault, or those occurred when works were being carried out.

Note 3: Due to the influence of the COVID-19 epidemic, the people flow reduced significantly and hence there were fewer passengers using escalators.

- (2) As mentioned above, the EMSD has been dedicated to the publicity and promotion of the right attitude of passengers when using escalators, including standing firm, holding the handrail and not walking on the escalator, etc. In the past 3 years, the EMSD disseminated relevant publicity materials through different channels to enrich the public's knowledge about the safe use of escalators. These channels included mass media (including television, radio broadcasts and social media, etc.) and the departmental newsletter. Meanwhile, the EMSD has been collaborating closely with the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the Hong Kong Housing Authority, as well as the property management industry, to jointly promote the message of using escalators safely. In addition, the EMSD from time to time conducted outreach activities in schools and elderly centres to provide information on the safe use of escalators to students and the elderly.

As the above public education and publicity campaigns are carried out by officers of different divisions of the EMSD, who also undertake other duties, their payroll cost has been subsumed under the daily operating costs of the EMSD. Therefore, we do not have the breakdown of the manpower and expenditure on this area of work.

- (3) to (5)

In Hong Kong, escalators shall comply with the technical and safety requirements in the Code of Practice on the Design and Construction of Lifts and Escalators, under which the designed handling capacity of an escalator is calculated based on the safe operational speed of the escalator with passengers standing on all steps. Therefore, passengers standing firm on all steps and holding the handrail when using the escalator will not increase the designed handling capacity of the escalator. Meanwhile, leaving one side

of the escalator for passengers who do not follow the safety guideline to walk on it will not only pose safety risks to other passengers, but also result in the reduction of the handling capacity of the escalator, probably causing longer waiting time for using the escalator during peak hours. It is worth mentioning that as the steps of an escalator are higher than those of a normal staircase and the height of the escalator steps varies during operation, passengers walking on the escalator may result in tripping incidents and affect other passengers on the escalator.

Owing to the drawbacks of passengers walking on the escalator, the EMSD has been encouraging the public to hold the handrail tightly and stand firm on either side of the steps when riding an escalator. In fact, the EMSD has made reference to the practices of a number of Mainland and overseas cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Taipei, Tokyo, Seoul, Melbourne, Singapore and Toronto. The governments of all of these cities encourage passengers to stand firm and hold the handrail when using escalators, in order to ensure safety.

In promoting the practice of “standing firm and holding the handrail”, the EMSD has been working closely with the MTRCL to enhance escalator safety at stations, including using different publicity approaches to raise public awareness of the safe use of escalators. In November 2024, the MTRCL launched a new round of campaign with a promotional video and posters, reminding passengers to hold the handrail and stand firm on either side of the escalator. The MTRCL has also deployed “escalator safety ambassadors” at specific stations to remind passengers of the safe use of escalators, including using lifts when travelling with bulky items or pushchairs as well as using wheelchairs. As these new measures have only been implemented for a short period of time, the EMSD will closely monitor their execution and will review their effectiveness in conjunction with the MTRCL in due course. Meanwhile, the EMSD will continue to conduct in-depth analyses with the MTRCL on the causes of escalator incidents in stations, with a view to implementing more effective improvement measures.

In future, the EMSD will incorporate into various publicity campaigns innovation and technology, such as interactive virtual reality technology, to educate the public on the safe use of escalators in a more vivid and interesting way, and in turn enhance the effectiveness of the campaigns.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)096

(Question Serial No. 1108)

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-2026, the Government states that it will step up public education and publicity efforts to enhance the safety of lifts and escalators. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the manpower and resources allocated for 2025-26 to execute this task; and
- (b) information on the public education and publicity efforts launched in 2024-25 and planned for 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

At present, there are about 74 500 lifts and 10 900 escalators in Hong Kong. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has been enhancing the safety level of lifts and escalators through multi-pronged measures, of which public education and publicity campaigns are an integral part. The EMSD will develop targeted public education initiatives and publicity campaigns based on the results of inspections and investigations into the incidents of lifts and escalators, as well as the statistical data and nature of relevant incidents. Our reply to the Honourable Member's question is as follows:

- (a) As the above public education and publicity campaigns are carried out by officers of different divisions of the EMSD, who also undertake other duties, their payroll cost has been subsumed under the daily operating costs of the EMSD. Therefore, we do not have the breakdown of the manpower and expenditure on this area of work.
- (b) In 2024-25, the EMSD produced and disseminated various publicity materials, including promotional videos on television and social media, radio broadcasts and the departmental newsletter, in order to enrich the public's knowledge about lift and escalator safety. In addition, the EMSD from time to time conducted outreach

activities in schools and elderly centres to provide information on lift and escalator safety to students and the elderly. In 2024, the EMSD organised a total of 286 outreach activities and 45 public briefing sessions and seminars, attracting the participation of over 14 000 and 3 600 persons respectively. Since most of the lift and escalator safety incidents involved human factors and improper use of lifts or escalators, the EMSD plans to further raise the public's safety awareness in using lifts and escalators, and will closely collaborate with the MTR Corporation Limited to implement targeted improvement measures and run relevant publicity campaigns having regard to the causes of the lift or escalator incidents in 2025-26. Moreover, the EMSD will utilise innovation and technology, such as interactive virtual reality equipment, to educate the public about the ways to use lifts and escalators in a safe manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)097

(Question Serial No. 0419)

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (YAU Kwok-ting)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The “hectares of land provided with vegetation maintenance service” from 2019 to 2024 reported by the Highways Department (HyD), have remained constant at 1 101 hectares. Meanwhile, “expenditure on vegetation maintenance for roadside slopes and expressways” increased by almost 200% from \$44 million in 2019 to \$131 million in 2024. Please advise this Committee on the following:

1. The area of land provided with vegetation maintenance services remained the same for many consecutive years. What are the reasons? Did HyD evaluate on whether there was urgency to carry out all the vegetation maintenance services? Or that some maintenance works could be postponed?
2. Regarding the “hectares of land provided with vegetation maintenance service”, what was the expenditure in each of the past 10 years?
3. What are the reasons for the significant increase of almost 200% in the “expenditure on vegetation maintenance for roadside slopes and expressways”?

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

Reply:

1. The main areas of vegetation maintenance for which the Highways Department (HyD) is responsible include vegetation within the areas of the registered slopes/retaining walls and expressways under its purview, as well as the vegetation on the landscape decks/noise enclosures on the public roads without pedestrian walkways or vehicular accesses under its purview. There are no significant changes in the relevant areas each year.

The HyD conducts at least two routine inspections and one tree risk assessment for the trees under its purview every year in order to carry out the necessary tree maintenance works on a timely basis, including pest control, pruning and removing branches or the

entire tree that pose a threat to the public safety, etc. To ensure that the trees are in good condition and at the same time, protect the public safety, vegetation maintenance works are required to be carried out regularly without any delay.

2. The expenditures on vegetation maintenance services incurred by the HyD over the past 10 years are as follows:

Year	Actual expenditures (\$ million)
2015	55.5
2016	54.8
2017	55.0
2018	52.5
2019	44.3
2020	62.6
2021	78.7
2022	83.4
2023	82.4
2024	131.0

3. The increase in the “expenditure on vegetation maintenance for roadside slopes and expressways” incurred by the HyD from 2019 to 2024 is mainly due to the constant increase in material costs and salaries, and also other reasons listed as follows:

- (i) Strengthening of vegetation maintenance works and optimisation of roadside planting areas

In respect of the high density and higher risk of failure of the Eucalyptus trees planted in early years, the HyD has included the “Eucalyptus Programme” in its regular tree maintenance works since 2019 and allocated extra resources for additional re-inspections for the Eucalyptus trees on both sides of the San Tin Highway according to plans every year, in order to identify the trees with potential risk as early as possible and arrange for risk mitigation works in time. Besides, the HyD has progressively replaced the aged shrubs along both sides of the North Lantau Highway since 2023 to optimise the planting areas on the sides of the road going to and from the Hong Kong International Airport. It is anticipated that the works will be completed in the fourth quarter of 2025.

- (ii) Cleansing and greening of the registered slopes and designated planting areas

During the COVID-19 epidemic between 2020 and 2022, the HyD was required to strengthen the cleansing and greening works of the registered slopes and designated planting areas under its purview.

- (iii) Improvement measures on tree management

The Development Bureau established the Task Force on Roadside Tree Planting and Maintenance (Task Force) in September 2022. At the end of 2022, the Task Force recommended a series of improvement measures on tree management, among which included the strengthening of risk assessment of large trees. The relevant requirement

was implemented in the “Guidelines on Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement” (10th Edition) and put into effect on 1 November 2023. The improvement measures included widening the scope of the “Individual Tree Risk Assessment” under the “Tree Basis Assessment”. The HyD is required to carry out risk assessments and evaluations for more trees under its purview, as well as adopt risk mitigation measures on a timely basis to protect public safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)098

(Question Serial No. 0458)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the investigation and design for the in-situ reprovisioning of Tsuen Wan Water Treatment Works:

1. What is the latest progress of the in-situ reprovisioning of Tsuen Wan Water Treatment Works? What is the current expenditure on the investigation and design of this project? When are the works expected to carry out?
2. Based on current estimation, what is the cost required for the in-situ reprovisioning works?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Tsuen Wan Water Treatment Works (TWWTW) was commissioned in 1957. In view of the ageing of facilities and adopting the rudimentary raw water treatment process of direct filtration, coupled with the ineffectiveness in tackling the odour problem arising from the algal growth promoted by climate change (e.g. increase in sunshine duration and carbon dioxide), the Water Supplies Department (WSD) proposed to carry out in-situ reprovisioning works for TWWTW to enhance its treatment and filtration capacity.

1&2.

In June 2023, the WSD awarded a consultancy contract with a lump sum fee of \$48 million for the investigation, design and construction for the in-situ reprovisioning of TWWTW. The design work is at its preliminary stage. As at March 2025, the expenditure made by the WSD on the project was about \$16 million. The WSD will formulate a strategy and timetable for implementing the project in accordance with the progress of the consultancy study and the prioritisation and overall arrangement of various government projects. The WSD will estimate the cost of the above in-situ reprovisioning works upon completion of the detailed design in future.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)099

(Question Serial No. 0412)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Water Supplies Department is developing flushing water resources to cope with the supply requirements. Would the Government inform this Committee of the relevant estimated expenditure and manpower arrangement, as well as the specific measures to be taken, the implementation timetable and the target results?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

Seawater has been used for flushing in Hong Kong since the late 1950s. Up till now, the seawater supply network has been extended to cover about 85% of Hong Kong's population. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) currently supplies a total of about 300 million cubic metres per annum of seawater to customers, conserving an equivalent amount of fresh water which is about 20% of the annual total water consumption in Hong Kong. The WSD is further extending the seawater supply system to Shui Chuen O Estate in Sha Tin, Tung Chung New Town and its extension. It is expected to supply seawater progressively starting from the second half of 2025.

Apart from seawater, the WSD is also actively taking forward various projects for supplying recycled water (including reclaimed water, treated grey water and harvested rainwater) for flushing and other non-potable uses. The Shek Wu Hui water reclamation plant has started to supply reclaimed water to some areas in Sheung Shui and Fanling in phases since March 2024 to replace the current use of fresh water for flushing. We will also extend the supply of reclaimed water to Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Areas in accordance with their development programmes. The WSD commissioned the first phase of the grey water recycling system at Anderson Road at the end of 2024. Treated grey water will be supplied for flushing and other non-potable uses progressively starting from 2025 to tie in with the development progress of the area and its population intake. The Government also plans to take forward the project for supplying reclaimed water in the Northern Metropolis.

The above projects are expected to increase the coverage of seawater and recycled water supply networks to about 90% of the population by 2030. The estimated expenditure of the WSD on the projects for the development of seawater and recycled water in 2025-26 is about \$200 million. There are 10 professional staff and 2 technical staff involved in overseeing the consultants and contractors in carrying out the projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)100

(Question Serial No. 0413)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Water Supplies Department will continue to implement smart water meters for suitable new developments. Would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the WSD's selection criteria for new developments suitable for installing smart water meters and the specific assessment standards;
- (2) the application situation of smart water meters in the past 3 years, whether the proportion of accurate water meters has increased, and how will the Government assess the effectiveness of the scheme?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) is introducing an advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system in suitable new developments. AMI system not only improves the accuracy of meter reading, but also provides customers with timely water consumption data and other useful information, thereby enhancing their awareness of water conservation and prevention of water leakage. In the long run, the comprehensive introduction of AMI system can save the manual meter reading work.

- (1) Since 2018, the WSD has mandated the installation of AMI system in larger-scale new public and private developments. At present, AMI system consists of wired smart water meters, a data transmission pipeline network, data concentration units, a backup battery system and a data transmission system. In general, all land grant provisions of new private developments, as well as all new public and government developments, require the adoption of AMI system. The WSD will assess factors such as the technological compatibility and cost-effectiveness of installing smart water meters in different developments before deciding the most suitable AMI system to be used. Meanwhile, the WSD will continue to explore more cost-effective solutions of smart water meters, including exploring the use of wireless smart water meters to enhance the cost-

effectiveness of the overall system and expedite the installation of smart water meters in existing buildings.

- (2) All smart water meters and conventional mechanical water meters used by the WSD must pass the department's stringent technical requirements and accuracy tests. Therefore, the proportions of accurate water meters of both types are similar. Compared to manual meter reading, using smart water meters not only enhances the accuracy of meter reading, but also provides other benefits including supporting system analysis, controlling water loss in water supply network and private water pipes, promoting water conservation among consumers and reducing meter reading cost, etc. As at the end of February 2025, the WSD has received a total of about 132 000 smart water meter applications from new developments. These smart water meters will be in use progressively along with the completion of the buildings. About 16 200 smart water meters are currently in operation. With the increase in the number of smart water meters installed, the WSD will conduct an effectiveness review of the AMI system in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)101

(Question Serial No. 3012)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

On the Government's plan to promote the use of grey water, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the Government's measures to enhance public awareness and acceptance on the use of grey water;
- (2) whether the Government has plans to collaborate with private sector in promoting the use of grey water;
- (3) other than the grey water treatment plant at Anderson Road, whether the Government has concrete timeline on the long-term development of infrastructures for supplying grey water?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The Government has been implementing the Total Water Management Strategy to ensure water security and support the sustainable development of Hong Kong. One of its key initiatives to contain fresh water demand growth is to expand the use of recycled water (including reclaimed water, treated grey water and harvested rainwater) for non-potable uses. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) commissioned the first phase of the grey water recycling system at Anderson Road at the end of 2024. Treated grey water will be supplied for flushing and other non-potable uses progressively starting from 2025 to tie in with the development progress of the area and its population intake.

- (1) A Water Resources Education Centre named "H2OPE Centre" was set up by the WSD in 2019 to provide information on various water resources (including recycled water) and water conservation to the general public so as to foster a culture of cherishing water in society. We also make use of media interviews and social media to disseminate information on the use of recycled water. Apart from that, we plan to distribute leaflets to customers before the commissioning of the grey water recycling system at Anderson Road, informing them of the arrangement of the supply of recycled water.

- (2) In line with the Government's policy on green buildings, works departments would as far as practicable install on-site rainwater harvesting or grey water recycling systems in government buildings in public works projects, setting an example for private developments to adopt these water-saving measures. Besides, we have been working with the Hong Kong Green Building Council to promote the use of grey water in more private buildings through the Building Environmental Assessment Method (BEAM) Plus certification. Buildings with grey water recycling system or rainwater harvesting system will be eligible for credits under BEAM Plus to encourage private developers to install these systems in lieu of using fresh water for non-potable uses.
- (3) The WSD has dedicated its efforts towards promoting the use of recycled water for flushing and other non-potable uses to further reduce fresh water consumption. Depending on the actual situation of individual areas, we will expand the supply of recycled water to new development areas and those areas still using fresh water for flushing whenever technically feasible and cost-effective. The Government is currently planning to supply recycled water to the Northern Metropolis for flushing and other non-potable uses.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)102

(Question Serial No. 1437)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Last year, the Legislative Council passed the Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 to strengthen the power of the Water Authority in evidence collection and information disclosure, and to increase the penalty level for water overcharging. Regarding the enforcement work of the Water Supplies Department (WSD) against subdivided units (SDUs), would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the number of cases investigated by the WSD in respect of suspected overcharging for water in SDUs in the past 3 years; among them, the number of cases which were prosecuted and successfully convicted; the maximum and minimum fines for the convicted cases;
- (2) the number of proactive inspections conducted by the WSD against overcharging for water in SDUs in the past 3 years;
- (3) with the upcoming launch of the regulatory regime on Basic Housing Units, whether the WSD has reserved additional resources and manpower to step up enforcement against SDUs?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

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

- (1) From 2022 to 2024, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) investigated a total of 411 cases on suspected overcharging SDU tenants for water, including 115 cases which are still under investigation. Of the 296 cases for which investigations were completed, 264 cases were not pursuable due to insufficient evidence, 24 cases have been successfully

prosecuted and convicted, and 8 cases are pending hearing. The fines for the convicted cases ranged from \$1,000 to \$22,000.

The enforcement power of the WSD has been strengthened since the Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 came into effect on 19 April 2024. From 19 April 2024 to January 2025 (i.e. about over 9 months), a total of 305 cases on suspected overcharging for water were investigated. The WSD has completed the investigation of 228 cases and prosecuted 9 cases. All prosecution cases were successfully convicted by courts and the other 77 cases are still under investigation. The WSD can handle more than 200 cases each year after the legislative amendment, a 4 to 5 times increase compared to around 40 cases per year before the legislative amendment. Therefore, the effectiveness on the investigation work has been enhanced after the legislative amendment.

- (2) From 2022 to 2024, the WSD conducted proactive inspections on about 8 000 SDUs, trying to identify suspected cases of overcharging for water for further investigation.
- (3) The WSD will deploy existing manpower and resources to inspect SDUs and follow up on the suspected cases of overcharging for water in order to support the regulatory regime on Basic Housing Units.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)103

(Question Serial No. 2152)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Fresh water resources in Hong Kong have always been in short supply. During 1963 to 1964, water rationing was imposed with only 4 hours of supply in every 4 days, which seriously affected people's livelihood and economic activity. With the care of the Central Government, the supply of Dongjiang (DJ) water to Hong Kong since 1965 has resolved our problem of water shortage and water rationing, laying a solid foundation for our rapid economic and social development. In commemorating the 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) (i) the events to be organised by the Water Supplies Department (WSD); (ii) their dates, target audiences, estimated attendances and estimated expenditures;
- (b) (i) the manpower, (ii) grades, ranks and posts, (iii) expenses on salary, operation and equipment and (iv) consultancy fee (if any) of the WSD in organising the above activities;
- (c) the revised estimate for purchase of fresh water by the WSD in 2024-25 is about \$5.158 billion and the estimate in 2025-26 is about \$5.282 billion; apart from that, whether the Government has provided/will provide financial and technical support to the Mainland local governments to ensure a stable and quality supply of DJ water in the past 5 years and in 2025 as anticipated; if yes, of the details; and
- (d) apart from the events to commemorate the 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong, (i) the regular programmes of the WSD on promoting water conservation among the public and their gratitude for the source of benefit; and (ii) the target audiences, expected numbers of participants and expenditures?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

Since 1965, our country has been providing uninterrupted, reliable and stable supply of Dongjiang (DJ) water to Hong Kong, offering a long-term solution to our water shortage problem and helping Hong Kong to develop into an international metropolis. Currently accounting for about 70% to 80% of the fresh water consumption in Hong Kong, DJ water is the cornerstone of Hong Kong's prosperity, stability and long-term development. We are very grateful for our country's long-term support and care for Hong Kong.

- (a) 2025 marks the 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong. To commemorate and celebrate this remarkable milestone, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has launched a series of promotional events under the theme “Dongjiang River – An Inseparable Bond, Our Blessed Origin” in phases since September 2024. Through a wide range of events, we hope to deepen the understanding of people from all walks of life, particularly the youth, on the history and current situation of DJ water supply to Hong Kong, so that they can recognise our country’s continuous support to the long-term development of Hong Kong through this large-scale water supply scheme. The details of the major events organised by the WSD as at March 2025 are tabulated below. The additional expenditure of the WSD involved is about \$2.5 million.

	Programme	Event period	Participants	Estimated attendance
1	Roving exhibition	November 2024 to April 2025	Public	60 000
2	Kindergarten and primary school education (including colouring and drawing competitions and thematic talks)	April 2024 to July 2025	Kindergarten and primary students	20 000
3	Mainland study tours for secondary and primary students	September 2024 to December 2025	Secondary and primary students	4 000
4	Local study tours	October 2024 to March 2025	Public	4 000
5	Running competition for 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong	November 2024	Public	450
6	Waterworks photo-taking challenge	January 2025 to May 2025	Public	4 000

Besides, the WSD has held the Commemoration Ceremony of the 60th Anniversary of DJ Water Supply to Hong Kong on 31 March 2025, and has organised the International Water Pioneers Summit and launched the large-scale art installations exhibition on 1 April 2025. We are also preparing to roll out a television programme for DJ water and mainland study tours on national water engineering projects, culture and technology, etc. As the events are co-organised with water professionals, industry associations and other organisations which will cover or sponsor most of the costs involved, we are unable to confirm the total expenditure of the events at this moment.

- (b) In March 2024, the WSD has set up a dedicated team to organise various commemorative and celebration events for the 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong. The team comprises about 30 professional staff. Since the staff concerned take the preparation work as an additional duty, it is difficult to provide a breakdown of the salary expenses involved in the preparation work. Besides, the WSD has engaged an event

organising consultant to assist in launching the relevant events. The consultancy fee involved is about \$500 000 which has been included in the total estimated expenditure mentioned above.

- (c) Between 2020 and 2025, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) did not provide any financial support to the Mainland Government except paying the water price as required under the current DJ water supply agreement. On the technical front, the HKSAR Government has been maintaining close liaison with the Guangdong Provincial Government to conduct technical exchanges through regular meetings including the Hong Kong/Guangdong Water Supply Business Meeting, the Hong Kong/Guangdong Water Supply Operation and Management Technical Cooperation Sub-Group Meeting, and the meeting of the Special Panel on the Protection of DJ Water Quality.
- (d) The WSD has been committed to promoting the “Cherish Water Campus” Integrated Education Programme in kindergartens and primary schools. Over 460 kindergartens and 450 primary schools have joined the programme so far. The WSD has also launched the Cherish Water Ambassador Scheme for secondary students to deepen their understanding on the importance of cherishing water resources, fulfil and publicise the habits of cherishing water through an array of events. In 2023-24, for example, the programme attracted over 350 students from more than 50 secondary schools to join. Moreover, a Water Resources Education Centre named “H2OPE Centre” was set up in Tin Shui Wai to provide more information on water resources and water conservation to the general public so as to foster a culture of cherishing water in society. The H2OPE attracted over 34 000 visitors in 2024, setting a record high.

To reduce domestic water consumption, the WSD has set up promotional booth at public rental housing estates since 2014 to help interested residents to register for the installation of flow controllers for water faucets and showers. Installation works have been completed for about 206 000 households. The scheme has now been extended to private households with installation works completed for about 30 000 private households. Besides, the WSD has distributed a pair of flow controllers for water faucets to consumers who have joined the “Let’s Save 10L Water 2.0” Campaign or who have successfully applied for e-Bill service. About 324 000 consumers have received flow controllers through the above arrangements so far.

To promote water cherishing culture to commercial and industrial sectors, the WSD has launched the Enterprises Cherish Water Campaign since 2022 to publicise water conservation through initiatives including signing of charter, appointment of cherish water manager, recognition programme, etc. The campaign has received overwhelming response with over 1 000 premises joining this year.

In 2025-26, the estimated expenditure of the WSD regarding the above regular promotional programmes on water conservation is about \$10 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)104

(Question Serial No. 2153)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 under Programme (1) that the Water Supplies Department (WSD) will continue with the implementation and enhancement of the Water Intelligent Network (WIN). In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the (i) staffing and (ii) expenses on salary, operation and equipment in establishing the WIN by the WSD in the past 3 years and in 2025-26 as anticipated;
- (b) the (i) aggregate numbers and (ii) locations of District Metering Areas (DMAs) and Pressure Management Areas (PMAs) of the WIN which has been/will be established by the WSD in the past 3 years and in 2025-26 as anticipated (broken down by District Council district);
- (c) the (i) lengths and (ii) locations of water mains replaced by the WSD in the past 3 years and in 2025-26 as anticipated (broken down by District Council district);
- (d) the estimated time of completion for establishing a total of about 2 400 DMAs and PMAs of the WIN by the WSD;
- (e) (i) the number of water main burst incidents in each of the past 3 years; (ii) among them, the number of incidents occurred in districts with established WIN; (iii) whether the WSD has analysed the respective numbers of cases in (ii) which (1) the WIN has not detected any sign of water main bursts and (2) the WIN has detected the signs of water main bursts but repair works have yet to conduct (please set out in table form by District Council district)?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

Since 2015, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has implemented multi-pronged measures to maintain the healthiness of the water supply network and reduce the risk of water main bursts or leaks through the establishment of the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) and the implementation of the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains based on the "Risk-based Asset Management Programme for Water Mains". Through the above-mentioned multi-pronged measures and with efforts over the years, the number of annual main burst cases has

been greatly reduced from around 2 500 in 2000 to around 40 cases in 2023 and to 27 cases in 2024. The leakage rate of fresh water mains has also dropped from over 25% in 2000 to around 13.4% in 2024.

- (a) There are 6 permanent and supernumerary posts in the WSD responsible for overseeing the consultants and contractors in establishing the WIN, including 1 assistant director, 1 chief engineer, 1 senior engineer and 3 engineers. Since the staff concerned have other duties to handle as well, the Government does not keep separate statistics on the salary expenses involved in the above work.

(b)&(d)

Regarding the WIN, by the end of March 2025, we have completed the establishment of about 2 400 District Metering Areas (DMAs) and related Pressure Management Areas in the fresh water distribution networks over the territory, covering approximately over 80% of the fresh water distribution networks. The WIN helps to strengthen management of leakage in water supply network with the strategy of “divide and conquer” and continuous monitoring, and to implement appropriate measures including active leakage detection, pressure management, speedy repair of water main leaks and replacement or rehabilitation of water mains, etc. The WSD has now commenced the enhancement of the WIN, focusing on the following two aspects:

- 1) The WSD will expand the monitoring area of the WIN to include fresh water trunk mains and the remaining part of the fresh water distribution mains (covering approximately 20% of the fresh water distribution networks) that are currently not covered by the WIN by adding sensors to monitor water flow and pressure at strategic locations to provide more comprehensive coverage of the fresh water supply network.
- 2) On the other hand, the WSD has started upgrading the functions of the existing WIN, which includes upgrading the sensors used for monitoring the water flow and pressure in phases to collect real-time data with a view to speeding up detection of any abnormal conditions in the pipe network.

The above expansion and upgrading work are expected to be completed in phases starting from the second quarter of 2025, with the entire project scheduled for completion by 2027.

The numbers of new DMAs established under the WIN across the territory by district in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of new established DMAs			
	2022	2023	2024	2025 (projected as at the end of March)
Central & Western	6	5	11	1
Eastern	10	6	13	2
Islands	13	10	30	1
Southern	10	6	21	0
Wan Chai	2	2	17	5
Kowloon City	2	1	42	1
Sham Shui Po	8	5	6	1
Wong Tai Sin	5	11	12	0
Kwun Tong	4	3	28	1
Yau Tsim Mong	0	2	20	2
North	17	30	21	7
Sai Kung	4	5	7	7
Sha Tin	33	9	43	1
Tai Po	31	3	13	2
Kwai Tsing	5	6	8	3
Tsuen Wan	5	19	10	1
Tuen Mun	16	6	12	6
Yuen Long	31	81	83	10
Total	202	210	397	51

- (c) The WSD has implemented the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains by introducing factors such as age of use, materials, past records of bursts or leaks and surrounding environment, for assessing the risk of water main bursts or leaks so as to replace or rehabilitate specific sections of water mains with higher risk progressively with a view to maintaining the healthiness of the water supply network and reducing the risk of water main bursts or leaks. In 2022, 2023 and 2024, the WSD has replaced or rehabilitated approximately 34 km, 52 km and 50 km of water mains respectively. Starting from 2025, the WSD will progressively carry out the improvement works for a total of 250 km of water mains in various districts across the territory. The lengths of the water mains (by District Council district) are tabulated as follows:

District	Length of water mains planned to start in 2025 or after (km)	Detailed design in progress (km)
Central & Western	13	0.5
Eastern	19	0
Islands	5	2.5
Southern	14	1
Wan Chai	5	4.5
Kowloon City	15	8.5
Kwun Tong	4	1
Sham Shui Po	10	0
Wong Tai Sin	1	0.5
Yau Tsim Mong	16	6
North	14	7.5
Sai Kung	32	0
Sha Tin	17	4.5
Tai Po	9	6
Kwai Tsing	6	1
Tsuen Wan	9	5
Tuen Mun	5	0
Yuen Long	6	1.5
Total	200	50

- (e) The numbers of burst cases of government fresh water mains in 2022, 2023 and 2024 were 18, 21 and 13 respectively.

Among the above fresh water main burst cases, 6 of which occurred in districts with established WIN, including Southern, Islands, Tai Po and Kowloon City districts. Among them, 2 cases were caused by the disturbance of the road excavation works nearby, while the remaining 4 cases involved sudden bursts of aged asbestos cement pipes. The WSD is improving the prioritisation mechanism under the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains by increasing the weighting assigned to factors including the possibility of leaks or bursts of water mains with aged materials and used more than 60 years, and the severity of the consequences for incidents occurring in water mains located at major road sections, with a view to reassessing the risk of all water main bursts or leaks. Other leakage cases of government fresh water mains detected by the WIN during the same period have been analysed through the WIN management computer system using the data collected to continuously monitor the network condition, prioritise the follow-up work and set out the most effective network management measure such as active leakage detection, pressure management, speedy repair of water main leaks and replacement or rehabilitation of water mains. The relevant leakage points have not developed into water main burst incidents. The WSD will continue to implement multi-pronged measures to maintain the healthiness of the water supply network and reduce the

risk of water main bursts or leaks by using the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) to monitor leakage in the network and implementing the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains based on the “Risk-based Asset Management Programme for Water Mains”.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)105

(Question Serial No. 2156)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Water Supplies Department states that its aim is “to develop water resources and to plan, design, construct, operate and maintain water supply system in order to provide round-the-clock supplies throughout the year to meet the demands of the territory”. However, it is noted that remote villages within the territory of Hong Kong such as Tung Ping Chau and Po Toi Island have not yet been supplied with treated water. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) Up to now, in the whole territory, what are the number of villages with inhabitants which have not yet been supplied with treated water and the number of population affected (broken down by District Council district)?
- (b) Regarding the villages mentioned in (a), what are the measures taken by the Government to ensure the supply of clean drinking water to local villagers? What are (i) the number of times of delivering potable water to the villages, (ii) the manpower involved and (iii) the expenditures on salary, operation and equipment in 2024-25?
- (c) What are (i) the numbers of villages newly established with treated water supply network, (ii) the numbers of beneficiaries, and (iii) the project expenditures involved in the past 5 years and in 2025 as anticipated (broken down by District Council district)?
- (d) The Government has mentioned in the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy Report released in 2021 that it will study the feasibility of Shenzhen's supplying water and electricity to Tung Ping Chau, yet it did not give an account of the progress in the Action Agenda for the Northern Metropolis in 2023. Is there any progress on the study? If yes, what are the details and implementation timetable? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Government has always been committed to improving the water supply infrastructure in remote rural areas and outlying islands, and will also review and improve various water supply facilities in a timely manner according to the actual conditions of the areas concerned.

- (a) According to the latest information, there are 16 villages in Hong Kong which have inhabitants but do not have treated water supply. Their estimated populations are as follows:

Villages without treated water supply and their estimated populations

District Council	Village Name	Estimated Population ^(Note 1)
Tai Po	Lai Chi Chong	10
	Tung Sam Kei	1
	Sham Chung	10
	Tung Ping Chau	10
Tsuen Wan	Luk Ken (Lantau)	8
	Tai Chuen (Northeast Lantau)	12
	Tso Wan (Northeast Lantau)	30
Islands	Tai Long (South Lantau)	60
	Po Toi Island	10
	Fan Lau (West Lantau)	10
	Num Shue Wan (Lantau)	200
	Cheung Sha Lan (Lantau)	80
Tuen Mun	Tin Fu Tsai	30
Sai Kung	Tung Lung Chau	22
North	Kap Tong	4
	Mui Tsz Lam	40

Note 1: The information on estimated populations is provided by the Home Affairs Department (HAD).

- (b) It is learned that the above villages are equipped with facilities for supplying stream water, well water or for collecting rainwater which have been in use for many years. Most of these facilities are under the maintenance of the HAD and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department regularly monitors the water quality to ensure the water is suitable for potable consumption after boiling. In the event of depletion or insufficiency of the water sources, the Government will provide timely assistance, including delivering potable water to meet the need of the villagers. When deciding whether to supply treated water to these villages, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) will take into account the actual circumstances of the villages and consider factors such as population, cost effectiveness, technical feasibility and water safety risk in relation to water demand.

In 2024-25, the Government has delivered potable water for 4 times to the villagers of Tin Fu Tsai, one of the aforementioned villages. There was an average of 3 staff involved in each delivery and the total expenditure was about \$190 000.

- (c) In 2021, the Government completed the laying of water mains supplying treated water for Mui Tsz Lam (Sha Tin District) with a population of about 240. The project expenditure involved was about \$27.7 million. In 2022, the Government commenced the laying of water mains supplying treated water for Tai Long (Islands District) with a population of about 60. The project involved an expenditure of about \$29.4 million and is expected to complete by 2025. The Government is preparing to conduct a consultancy study on the construction of water supply system in Mui Tsz Lam (North District), which is expected to commence in 2025. The above projects were carried out to tie in with the development of the villages, taking into account whether the water demand is sufficient without causing potential water quality risk.
- (d) Regarding the feasibility study of Shenzhen's supplying water to Tung Ping Chau, if treated water supply system is to be constructed in Tung Ping Chau which has sparse population, irrespective of whether the submarine pipeline is constructed from Shenzhen or Hong Kong to Tung Ping Chau, low water consumption may lead to stagnant water in water mains and hence resulting in deterioration of water quality. Preliminary study shows that the per capita capital cost for the construction of treated water supply system for Tung Ping Chau is very high. Factors such as cross-boundary project and management should also be considered for the proposed submarine pipeline. At this stage, Shenzhen and Hong Kong will maintain regular contact and continue to explore the feasibility of supplying water to Tung Ping Chau.

Meanwhile, a non-governmental organisation is piloting the use of domestic seawater filter device to provide an alternative water source for the villagers of Tung Ping Chau. The organisation will collect and monitor the operational data of the devices for analysis. If the result is desirable, we would consider extending the application of such technology to other villages.

Regarding the supply of electricity, according to the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the Government has approved the proposal of CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP) to supply electricity to Tung Ping Chau using solar energy system under its Development Plan for 2018-2023 and requested CLP to maintain close communication with local residents.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)106

(Question Serial No. 2180)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 under Programme (3) that the Water Supplies Department (WSD) will “continue to step up prosecution and inspections against overcharging for water in subdivided units (SDUs) with strengthened enforcement power pursuant to the Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance 2024”. On preventing SDU tenants from being overcharged for water, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the numbers of (i) inspections on SDUs conducted/to be conducted by the WSD, and among them, the numbers of inspections jointly operated with (ii) the Rating and Valuation Department or (iii) the Buildings Department in the past 3 years and in 2025 as anticipated;
- (b) the numbers of SDUs with separate water meters installed/to be installed by the WSD in the past 3 years and in 2025 as anticipated;
- (c) since the launch of service of non-routine water bill in October 2023, (i) the number of bills issued and (ii) the number of SDUs involved;
- (d) the number of (i) complaints received, (ii) prosecutions and (iii) court convictions in respect of overcharging for water by SDU owners in the past 3 years;
- (e) (i) the staffing, (ii) grades, ranks and posts, and (iii) expenses on salary, operation and equipment involved in the SDU inspections conducted by the WSD in 2024-25 and in 2025-26 as anticipated?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

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

- (a) From 2022 to 2024, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) conducted proactive inspections on about 8 000 SDUs, trying to identify suspected cases of overcharging for water for further investigation. Amongst them, about 7 400 SDUs were jointly inspected with the Rating and Valuation Department.
- (b) From 2022 to 2024, the WSD installed separate water meters for over 1 000 SDUs. The WSD will continue with the relevant publicity and promotional activities, which are expected to encourage more SDU owners to install separate water meters in 2025.
- (c) As at the end of February 2025, the WSD has issued 4 non-routine water bills involving 3 units.
- (d) From 2022 to 2024, the WSD investigated a total of 411 cases on suspected overcharging SDU tenants for water, including 115 cases which are still under investigation. Of the 296 cases for which investigations were completed, 264 cases were not pursuable due to insufficient evidence, 24 cases have been successfully prosecuted and convicted, and 8 cases are pending hearing.

The enforcement power of the WSD has been strengthened since the Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 came into effect on 19 April 2024. From 19 April 2024 to January 2025 (i.e. about over 9 months), a total of 305 cases on suspected overcharging for water were investigated. The WSD has completed the investigation of 228 cases and prosecuted 9 cases. All prosecution cases were successfully convicted by courts and the other 77 cases are still under investigation. The WSD can handle more than 200 cases each year after the legislative amendment, a 4 to 5 times increase compared to around 40 cases per year before the legislative amendment. Therefore, the effectiveness on the investigation work has been enhanced after the legislative amendment.

- (e) At present, there are 34 staff posts in the WSD responsible for handling SDU inspections and following up on the investigations of suspected overcharging for water, including 2 engineers, and 32 inspectors and works supervisors. Since the above staff have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available. Therefore, we are unable to provide the relevant statistics.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)107****(Question Serial No. 2563)**Head: (194) Water Supplies DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Water Supplies (WONG Yan-lok, Roger)Director of Bureau: Secretary for DevelopmentQuestion:

With the scenic environment, reservoirs in Hong Kong are well-positioned for further development into popular spots for leisure activities. Regarding the way to unleash the potential of reservoirs for leisure use while ensuring water quality, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please tabulate the numbers of fishing licenses issued by the Water Supplies Department (WSD) in 2022, 2023 and 2024.
2. Please tabulate the numbers of visitors hiring the pleasure boats in Wong Nai Chung Reservoir from 2021 to 2024.
3. The WSD currently manages 9 irrigation reservoirs. Will the Government consider introducing more water-friendly leisure facilities and developing more popular spots for leisure activities in some suitable irrigation reservoirs?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)Reply:

There are no natural lakes, large rivers or abundant underground water source in Hong Kong. To meet Hong Kong's fresh water demand, we need sufficient water storage facilities (i.e. impounding reservoirs) to collect and store rainwater, and temporarily store part of the water imported from Dongjiang in Guangdong Province. Currently, there are 17 reservoirs of this kind in Hong Kong. With the peaceful and scenic environment, these reservoirs are very popular outing and fishing spots for the public. Therefore, we are pleased to allow the public to fish and engage in outing activities around the reservoirs on the condition that fresh water sources stay free from pollution.

1. The numbers of fishing licenses issued by the Water Supplies Department (WSD) in 2022, 2023 and 2024 are as follows:

2022	2023	2024
8 530	4 531	4 919

2. The Wong Nai Chung Reservoir has not been a waterworks for storage of water for potable purpose since the 1980s, after its conversion to the existing Wong Nai Chung Reservoir Park by the former Urban Council for opening to the public. The Wong Nai Chung Reservoir Park is now under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). According to the LCSD, the latest contract of the light refreshment and boat hiring business at Wong Nai Chung Reservoir Park commenced on 1 July 2024, with a contract period up to 30 June 2027. The operator has equipped with 2 rowing boats and 15 pedal wheel boats for hire during the business hours on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Currently, the daily patronage of Wong Nai Chung Reservoir Park during Sundays or public holidays is about 2 000. The LCSD has also arranged renovation of the facilities of the venue and works for beautification and improving the landscape with a view to attracting the public.
3. Irrigation reservoirs are located within the gathering grounds to provide irrigation water to local farmers. Apart from irrigation purpose, most irrigation reservoirs are also used for water collection, transferring harvested rainwater to downstream water treatment works for treatment. Since local yield is still one of Hong Kong's major sources of fresh water, the WSD has to retain the irrigation reservoirs to safeguard the sustainability of water supply. As the irrigation reservoirs fall within the gathering grounds, the WSD is pleased to cooperate with relevant departments to allow the public to engage in leisure activities around the reservoirs on the condition that fresh water sources stay free from pollution.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)108

(Question Serial No. 2582)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: Not Specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the visiting arrangement of the Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir (Ex-SSPSR), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide the Government's estimated expenditures on the Ex-SSPSR in 2024-25 and 2025-26, including the expenditures on maintenance, management, organising guided tours and publicity and promotion, etc.
2. Please provide the monthly number of visitors of the Ex-SSPSR from 15 December 2021 to 31 July 2024 and, among them, the number of tourists (non-local residents).
3. Starting from 1 August 2024, no booking is required for the public to visit the Ex-SSPSR. Please provide the monthly number of visitors and, among them, the number of tourists.
4. Please provide the monthly number of guided tour participants, the number of participants under individual/group application and the proportion of tourists from August 2024 to February 2025.
5. What plans and budget does the Government have in 2025-26 to enhance the publicity and promotion of the Ex-SSPSR so as to make the Ex-SSPSR a popular tourist spot?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, the expenditure on operation and maintenance of the Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir (Ex-SSPSR) was about \$6 million and the expenditure on the provision of guided tour service was about \$1.4 million. The estimated expenditure in 2025-26 is similar to that in 2024-25. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has promoted and publicised the visiting arrangement through various channels such as the departmental website and social media. As the relevant expenditure is part of the WSD's publicity expenditure, no additional expenditure is involved.

2-4.

The monthly number of visitors of the Ex-SSPSR from 15 December 2021 to February 2025 are set out in Table 1 to Table 5 respectively. The WSD does not have separate statistics on the number of tourists or non-local residents.

The numbers of guided tour participants under individual or group application from August 2024 to February 2025 are set out in Table 6.

5. Since December 2021, the WSD has allowed restricted opening of this historical building and arranged guided tours for visit by the public so that they can learn about and appreciate its historical background and interior architectural features, with a view to enhancing the awareness of historical waterworks structures and heritage conservation. Such arrangement is well received by tourists and local residents. The WSD will continue to promote and publicise the visiting arrangement through different channels such as the departmental website and social media.

Table 1: Number of visitors from 15 to 31 December 2021

2021	Number of visitors
December	482

Table 2: Number of visitors in 2022

2022	Number of visitors
January	151
February	0*
March	0*
April	0*
May	1 041
June	1 753
July	1 745
August	1 652
September	2 078
October	2 134
November	4 610
December	5 154
Total number of visitors	20 318

* In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WSD suspended the guided tours to the Ex-SSPSR from February to April 2022.

Table 3: Number of visitors in 2023

2023	Number of visitors
January	4 868
February	3 991
March	4 987
April	5 499
May	4 965
June	5 393
July	4 582
August	4 489
September	3 127
October	3 649
November	4 167
December	4 783
Total number of visitors	54 500

Table 4: Number of visitors from January to July 2024

2024	Number of visitors
January	3 126
February	3 840
March	4 195
April	3 416
May	3 684
June	2 602
July	1 085
Total number of visitors	21 948

Table 5: Number of visitors after the implementation of new opening arrangement in August 2024 (included the figures for the same period in Table 6)

Month	Number of visitors
August 2024	11 779
September 2024	8 450
October 2024	14 017
November 2024	12 474
December 2024	16 485
January 2025	10 518
February 2025	11 998

Table 6: Number of guided tour participants (booking required) after the implementation of new opening arrangement in August 2024

Month	Number of visitors	
	Individual application	Group application
August 2024	482	349
September 2024	459	410
October 2024	412	526
November 2024	550	434
December 2024	564	401
January 2025	496	211
February 2025	497	313
Note: The above attendance records are included in the figures for the same period in Table 5.		

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)109

(Question Serial No. 1498)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding waterworks facilities such as water treatment works, pumping stations or pump houses, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number and ranks of staff in the Water Supplies Department (WSD) responsible for the work related to water treatment works, fresh water pumping stations or pump houses, seawater pumping stations or pump houses, fresh water and seawater pumping stations or pump houses, fresh water service reservoirs and seawater service reservoirs, their number and ratio of permanent and supernumerary posts, the salary expense by rank and total salary expense;
2. whether the WSD has adopted innovative technology to promote smart water treatment works, pumping stations or pump houses in order to enhance control and improve water quality; if yes, of the details and expenditure on the relevant technology projects; if no, of the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

Fresh water supply mainly involves 3 key processes, viz. collection of raw water, water treatment and distribution. Raw water from the impounding reservoirs and Dongjiang (DJ) is delivered by large transfer mains and tunnels to water treatment works for treatment. Treated water is then pumped through large trunk mains or tunnels to service reservoirs and then flows via the distribution network to customers. The flushing water system is completely separated from the potable water supply system. Seawater is directly pumped from the aqueducts of pumping stations to the customers with surplus water delivered to and stored at the service reservoirs.

1. As at the end of February 2025, there are 809 permanent and supernumerary posts in the Water Supplies Department (WSD) responsible for the work related to water treatment works, fresh water pumping stations or pump houses, seawater pumping stations or pump houses, fresh water and seawater pumping stations or pump houses, fresh water service reservoirs and seawater service reservoirs. The posts comprise 25 engineers, 15 senior

waterworks inspectors, 84 waterworks inspectors/assistant waterworks inspectors, 327 works supervisors, and 358 senior artisans/artisans and staff of other posts. Since the staff concerned have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available.

2. To ensure drinking water safety, the WSD has adopted various innovative technologies (including Ultraviolet (UV) Disinfection Technology, Integrated Treatment Information and Tele-alert System and Smart Trunk Transfer Support System) to improve water quality. The details and expenditure on the projects are as follows:

(i) UV Disinfection Technology

The WSD adopted the UV disinfection technology for the first time in Cheung Sha Water Treatment Works of Lantau Island in early 2023. The cost for purchasing, installing, testing and launching the system is about \$1.2 million. The WSD also adopted the UV disinfection technology in the in-situ reprovisioned Sha Tin Water Treatment Works (South Works) which is expected to commission in the first quarter of 2027. The WSD will also consider adopting the relevant disinfection technology when reprovisioning or constructing other water treatment works in future.

(ii) Integrated Treatment Information and Tele-alert System

This smart monitoring and automatic alert system for water treatment process is developed by the WSD and centrally driven by 4 automation features, i.e. automatic sampling and detection, automatic data collection and integration, automatic recording and analysis, and automatic alert. Vast amount of water quality data can be analysed in real time for timely judgement and corresponding actions based on the analysis results. The capital invested by the WSD so far is about \$3 million.

(iii) Smart Trunk Transfer Support System

Developed by the WSD, local universities and Mainland expert team, this new intelligent system utilises artificial intelligence technology to optimise the operation of the pumping stations and reservoirs of the DJ water supply system. Up till now, the total investment on the system is about \$11 million. The first phase of the system commenced trial operations in November 2024 and is expected to save 3% to 6% of energy used by the DJ water supply system each year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)110

(Question Serial No. 1508)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Using water-saving devices is one of the Government's initiatives to promote water conservation. Would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number and proportion of government buildings and schools installed with water-saving devices;
2. the installation timetable for government buildings and schools not yet installed with water-saving devices;
3. the number of government buildings and schools recording an increase in water consumption after installing water-saving devices, their proportion and the details of such increase;
4. the number and proportion of free water-saving devices received from the Water Supplies Department by the public for their premises in the past 5 years, with a breakdown by public housing, subsidised housing, private housing or other types of accommodations;
5. referring to the above question, the change in water consumption of the public after receiving water-saving devices.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

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

1&2.

Starting from February 2018, all new buildings, including government buildings and schools, are required by the WSD to use water-saving devices (showers for bathing, water

taps, urinal flushing valves and water closets) registered under WELS with prescribed water efficiency grading. To further promote the use of water-saving devices, as at the end of 2024, the WSD has retrofitted the water-consuming devices with the above water-saving devices for about 4 000 (over 95% of total) government buildings and venues and schools built before February 2018. For the remaining (about 5%) government buildings and venues and schools, the relevant authorities either have their own plans for installing water-saving devices or are unable to install the water-saving devices due to actual operational needs. Those venues are therefore not included in the retrofitting plan of the WSD.

3. The WSD has conducted general survey and analysis on a random basis. It is estimated that government buildings and venues and schools can save an average of around 1.3% of water consumption within a year after installing water-saving devices. However, we do not collect statistics for individual buildings.
4. To promote water conservation, the WSD has set up promotional booth at public rental housing estates since 2014 to help interested residents to register for the installation of flow controllers for water faucets and showers. Installation works have been completed for about 206 000 households. The scheme has now been extended to private households with installation works completed for about 30 000 private households. Besides, the WSD has distributed a pair of flow controllers for water faucets to consumers who have joined the “Let’s Save 10L Water 2.0” Campaign or who have successfully applied for e-Bill service. About 324 000 consumers have received flow controllers through the above arrangements so far.
5. The WSD has conducted general survey and analysis on a random basis in respect of the change in household water consumption after installing flow controllers. It is estimated that each household can save an average of about 14 litres of water per day after installing flow controllers, which is about 3% of daily per capita water consumption.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)111

(Question Serial No. 1510)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the effectiveness of Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (WELS) in water conservation, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. please provide in table form the numbers of products in each water efficiency grade for all plumbing fixtures and water-consuming devices under the WELS;
2. the numbers of products registered or having a change of grade for all plumbing fixtures and water-consuming devices under the WELS in each of the past 5 years;
3. the number and ranks of staff in the Water Supplies Department responsible for matters relating to the WELS, their number and ratio of permanent and supernumerary posts and the relevant expenditure.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

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

1. As at the end of 2024, the numbers of products of the 6 types of plumbing fixtures and water-consuming devices under the register of WELS and their respective water efficiency grades are tabulated below:

	Water Efficiency Grade ^(Note)				Total
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	
Showers for bathing	896	77	19	4	996
Water taps	2 354	525	70	0	2 949
Washing machines	882	16	0	0	898
Urinal equipment	275	25	5	2	307
Flow controllers	107	41	5	1	154
Water closets	740	328	83	0	1 151

Note: The water efficiencies of the products under WELS are rated to different grades according to their types and water consumptions. Grade 1 is the most water efficient whereas grade 4 is the least water efficient.

- The numbers of products of the 6 types of plumbing fixtures and water-consuming devices registered under WELS in each of the past 5 years from 2020 to 2024 are tabulated below. None of the products required registration to apply for a change of grade.

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Showers for bathing	56	69	87	91	68
Water taps	349	483	375	253	287
Washing machines	66	69	35	40	54
Urinal equipment	15	46	40	27	23
Flow controllers	11	10	3	6	7
Water closets	232	472	160	124	139

- On manpower, there are 3 permanent posts in the WSD involved in the work of the WELS, including 1 chief engineer, 1 senior engineer and 1 engineer. Since the above staff have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available. Therefore, we are unable to provide the relevant statistics.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)112

(Question Serial No. 1511)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

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

1. the numbers of water main bursts and leaks, the amount of water involved, the relevant emergency and non-emergency repair expenditures in the past 5 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts across the territory;
2. the average and longest time taken to handle each case of water main bursts and leaks;
3. the number and ranks of staff in the Water Supplies Department responsible for emergency repair of water mains, their number and ratio of permanent and supernumerary posts, the salary expense by rank and total salary expenses

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

Since 2015, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has implemented multi-pronged measures to maintain the healthiness of the water supply network and reduce the risk of water main bursts or leaks through the establishment of the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) and the implementation of the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains based on the "Risk-based Asset Management Programme for Water Mains". By the end of March 2025, the WSD has established the WIN and set up about 2 400 District Metering Areas (DMAs) in the fresh water distribution network over the territory. It helps to strengthen management of leakage in water supply network with the strategy of "divide and conquer" and continuous monitoring, and to implement appropriate measures including active leakage detection, pressure management, speedy repair of water main leaks and replacement or rehabilitation of water mains, etc. Through the above-mentioned multi-pronged measures and with efforts over the years, the number of annual main burst cases has been greatly reduced from around 2 500 in 2000 to around 40 cases in 2023 and to 27 cases in 2024. The leakage rate of fresh water mains has also dropped from over 25% in 2000 to around 13.4% in 2024.

1. The numbers of fresh water main bursts and leaks in the past 5 years by District Council district are set out in Table 1 and 2. In order to resume fresh water supply to minimise the impact on the public, the WSD would complete the repair of fresh water mains bursts or leaks promptly. However, under normal circumstances, there is no flow meter installed near the location of the burst or leak. Therefore, the WSD did not measure the amount of water involved in the relevant cases. The annual expenditure on the repair of fresh water mains is about \$66 million.

Table 1: Number of fresh water main burst cases by district in the past 5 years

District	Burst case				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Central & Western	1	2	2	2	1
Eastern	2	1	1	1	0
Islands	0	0	2	4	1
Southern	1	0	1	1	2
Wan Chai	3	2	1	0	1
Kowloon City	0	1	0	1	3
Kwun Tong	2	1	0	0	0
Sham Shui Po	0	0	0	1	1
Wong Tai Sin	0	0	0	0	0
Yau Tsim Mong	1	0	2	1	0
North	0	0	0	2	1
Sai Kung	1	1	0	3	1
Sha Tin	3	1	3	0	0
Tai Po	2	0	2	1	0
Kwai Tsing	1	1	1	0	1
Tuen Mun	0	3	1	1	0
Tsuen Wan	1	2	2	2	1
Yuen Long	1	0	0	1	0
Total	19	15	18	21	13

Table 2: Number of fresh water main leak cases by district in the past 5 years

District	Leakage cases				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Central & Western	311	320	258	216	355
Eastern	179	140	132	149	129
Islands	564	512	526	511	484
Southern	260	276	303	296	287
Wan Chai	181	273	257	196	194
Kowloon City	217	204	174	164	162
Kwun Tong	112	120	139	142	149
Sham Shui Po	117	139	149	115	129
Wong Tai Sin	65	63	56	65	65
Yau Tsim Mong	234	315	299	290	201
North	302	439	505	651	507
Sai Kung	457	559	557	635	570
Sha Tin	362	258	151	203	266
Tai Po	711	441	207	239	300
Kwai Tsing	79	107	75	110	104
Tuen Mun	310	300	353	384	387
Tsuen Wan	139	122	140	191	206
Yuen Long	1 514	1 565	1 456	1 494	1 420
Total	6 114	6 153	5 737	6 051	5 915

The expenditures on water main improvement works carried out by the WSD (including the expenditure on fresh water and salt water main improvement works) in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 (as at 10 March 2025) were about \$860 million, \$1.15 billion, \$880 million, \$680 million and \$610 million respectively.

- In the past 5 years, the average time taken to repair fresh water main bursts and leaks was about 5 hours. The longest time taken was about 12 days as the case required the handling of congested underground utilities and the arrangement of diversion of water

supply or temporary water supply facilities during the repair of the concerned fresh water mains.

3. There are 632 permanent and supernumerary posts in the WSD responsible for the relevant work, including 29 engineers, 3 chief technical officers, 25 senior waterworks inspectors, 133 waterworks inspectors/assistant waterworks inspectors, 274 works supervisors, and 168 artisans and staff from other posts. Since the above staff have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available. Therefore, we are unable to provide the relevant statistics.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)113

(Question Serial No. 1512)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the unlawful taking of water, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number and ranks of staff in the Water Supplies Department (WSD) responsible for handling the unlawful taking of water, their number and ratio of permanent and supernumerary posts, the salary expense by rank and total salary expense;
2. the number of reports and complaints received by the WSD, the number of convicted cases and the amount of water which was unlawfully taken in the past 5 years;
3. whether the WSD has adopted innovative technology to facilitate the monitoring and identification of unlawful taking of water in the past 5 years; if yes, of the details and expenditure on the relevant technology projects, and the number of cases identified using technology; if no, of the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has always been deeply concerned about the problem of unlawful taking of water and has strived to curb such behaviour through on-going publicity and education initiatives. The WSD also looks out for signs of unlawful taking of water in its daily operations. Upon discovery of unlawful taking of water and with sufficient evidence in hand, the WSD will initiate prosecution under the law.

1. There are 29 permanent and supernumerary posts in the WSD responsible for handling the unlawful taking of water, including 1 senior engineer, 2 chief waterworks inspectors, 1 senior waterworks inspector, 6 waterworks inspectors, 8 assistant waterworks inspectors and 11 consumer services inspectors. Since the above staff have other duties to handle as well, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available. Therefore, we are unable to provide the relevant statistics.

2. The information on unlawful taking of water in each of the past 5 years is as follows:

Year	Number of reports and complaints (Note)	Convicted cases	
		Number of cases	Unlawful taking of water (cubic metres)
2020	316	62	334
2021	351	109	9 728
2022	254	54	15 316
2023	234	36	588
2024	250	27	1 479

Note: The reports and complaints of unlawful taking of water received by the WSD has been included in the above table. In addition, since it takes time to conduct investigations and collect evidence, the “convicted cases” of a particular year may not necessarily be the “reports and complaints” received in that year.

3. The WSD is exploring the application of new technology solutions, such as installing smart water meter systems for areas with high risk of unlawful taking of water and individual customers. The system can monitor the water consumption of the area in real time, analyse the water consumption pattern of the customers with a computer system and compare the total water consumption with total water intake of the area. In case abnormal water consumption is identified, the WSD will conduct investigation and collect evidence. New technology applications help to monitor the unlawful taking of water and enhance enforcement effectiveness. As the relevant technology application is still at the research stage, we are unable to provide the expenditure and number of cases involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)114

(Question Serial No. 1513)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the quantity of overflow from reservoirs, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. please state in table form the number and quantity of overflow from each reservoir across the territory in each of the past 5 years;
2. please state in table form the number of repairs for each reservoir across the territory, the details and relevant expenditure in each of the past 5 years;
3. whether the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has adopted innovative technology to reduce the overflow from reservoirs in the past 5 years; if yes, of the details and expenditure on the relevant technology projects; if no, of the reasons;
4. the number and ranks of staff in the WSD responsible for handling matters relating to the reservoirs, their number and ratio of permanent and supernumerary posts, the salary expense by rank and total salary expense.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The overflow from impounding reservoirs in Hong Kong occurs in small and medium impounding reservoirs built between the 19th century and the mid-20th century. As these impounding reservoirs were designed to meet the water demand at that time, they have relatively small storage capacities. Overflow occurs in these reservoirs when the rainwater collected exceeds their capacities during heavy rainstorms. Therefore, impounding reservoirs are designed with overflow facilities, and overflow is in fact an operational need.

1. Overflow was locally collected rainwater naturally discharged from small and medium reservoirs during heavy rainstorms. The occurrences of overflow from relevant reservoirs or reservoir groups in terms of number of days in the year and the respective total quantities in the past 5 years are tabulated below:

Year	Overflow Instance/Overflow Quantities from Reservoirs or Reservoir Groups (days)/(million cubic metres)					
	Tai Tam	Kowloon	Aberdeen	Tai Lam Chung	Shek Pik	Lower Shing Mun
2020	35/6.01	71/3.25	53/3.44	3/0.63	6/0.87	0
2021	57/12.96	18/1.51	41/3.58	0	7/2.67	0
2022	45/4.43	7/0.20	60/2.83	8/1.49	5/2.77	0
2023	67/22.27	64/6.99	72/5.99	15/4.23	16/6.22	1/1.30
2024	61/8.10	0	59/1.94	0	0	0

2. Maintenance of a reservoir mainly includes the upkeep of relevant facilities such as drainage systems, road signs, landscaping and safety facilities. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) carries out a total of about 70 to 100 maintenance works for all reservoirs each year. As improvement works, such as installation of additional piezometers, improvement of existing pipeworks and addition of greening facilities, may also be involved during the maintenance works, we do not maintain the breakdown of the expenditure involved.
3. All reservoirs of the WSD are installed with water level sensors to measure water levels and transmit real-time data to the regional control centre. Duty officers in the control centre can monitor the water levels of the reservoirs instantly and adjust the amount of water delivered to the water treatment works when necessary. We also implement measures to reduce the quantity of overflow from reservoirs. For example, more water will be drawn from the storage of small and medium reservoirs before the rainy season so as to release as much capacity as possible for rainwater collection during the rainy season and maintain low water level to reduce the possibility of overflow from reservoirs. However, overflow may still occur in small and medium reservoirs when there is heavy rainfall within a short period of time which may lead to a rapid rise in water levels of these reservoirs. We will continue to keep in view the latest technological development in the market to help reduce the quantity of overflow from reservoirs.
4. Currently, the headworks sections of each region under the WSD are responsible for the control, management, maintenance and repair of waterworks (including reservoirs) in each region. There are 167 permanent and supernumerary posts involved in the above work, including 15 engineers, 8 senior waterworks inspectors, 31 waterworks inspectors/assistant waterworks inspectors, 2 technical officers, 67 works supervisors, and 44 artisans and staff of other posts. Since the staff concerned also handled other duties, we do not keep separate statistics on the salary expenses involved in handling matters relating to the reservoirs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)115

(Question Serial No. 1514)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the progress of establishing the Water Intelligent Network (WIN), would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number and ranks of staff in the Water Supplies Department responsible for the WIN, their number and ratio of permanent and supernumerary posts, the salary expense by rank and total salary expense;
2. the details of updating the WIN in each of the past 5 years, such as the frequency of system upgrade, the new monitoring areas and their locations, the lengths of new water mains and the relevant expenditure;
3. the number of water main leaks detected through the WIN, the number of leakage areas and the quantity of fresh water loss in each of the past 5 years;
4. the average and longest time taken to rehabilitate the water mains after detecting the leakage through the WIN in the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

Since 2015, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has implemented multi-pronged measures to maintain the healthiness of the water supply network and reduce the risk of water main bursts or leaks through the establishment of the Water Intelligent Network (WIN) and the implementation of the Risk-based Improvement of Water Mains based on the "Risk-based Asset Management Programme for Water Mains". By the end of March 2025, the WSD has established the WIN and set up about 2 400 District Metering Areas (DMAs) in the fresh water distribution network over the territory. It helps to strengthen management of leakage in water supply network with the strategy of "divide and conquer" and continuous monitoring, and to implement appropriate measures including active leakage detection, pressure management, speedy repair of water main leaks and replacement or rehabilitation of water mains, etc. Through the above-mentioned multi-pronged measures and with efforts over the years, the number of annual main burst cases has been greatly reduced from around 2 500 cases in 2000 to around 40 cases in 2023 and to 27 cases in 2024. The leakage rate of fresh water mains has also dropped from over 25% in 2000 to around 13.4% in 2024.

1&2.

As at the end of March 2025, the WSD has completed the establishment of about 2 400 DMAs. The numbers of new established DMAs under the WIN across the territory in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 (as at the end of March) by District Council district are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of new established DMAs					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (as at the end of March)
Central & Western	9	0	6	5	11	1
Eastern	1	8	10	6	13	2
Islands	6	13	13	10	30	1
Southern	1	6	10	6	21	0
Wan Chai	0	3	2	2	17	5
Kowloon City	1	2	2	1	42	1
Sham Shui Po	0	26	8	5	6	1
Wong Tai Sin	3	2	5	11	12	0
Kwun Tong	26	4	4	3	28	1
Yau Tsim Mong	1	0	0	2	20	2
North	0	1	17	30	21	7
Sai Kung	1	2	4	5	7	7
Sha Tin	18	28	33	9	43	1
Tai Po	14	0	31	3	13	2
Kwai Tsing	6	4	5	6	8	3
Tsuen Wan	6	5	5	19	10	1
Tuen Mun	4	2	16	6	12	6
Yuen Long	0	0	31	81	83	10
Total	97	106	202	210	397	51

In 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25, the estimated expenditures on new established DMAs of the WIN were about \$100 million, \$120 million, \$180 million, \$190 million and \$250 million respectively.

In 2024-25, there are 6 permanent and supernumerary posts in the WSD responsible for overseeing the consultants and contractors in establishing the WIN, including 1 assistant director, 1 chief engineer, 1 senior engineer and 3 engineers. Since the staff concerned have other duties to handle as well, the Government does not keep separate statistics on the salary expenses involved in the above work.

3&4.

In 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024, the numbers of leakage cases of government fresh water mains detected by the WSD through the WIN were 520, 660, 880, 1 037 and 1 221 respectively, while the respective quantities of fresh water loss reduced to about 22 000,

33 000, 63 000, 75 000 and 120 000 cubic metres per day. The time taken from detecting water main leaks to repairing the water mains depends on various factors such as the implementation of temporary traffic arrangement, congested underground utilities or other obstructions in the leakage area and suspension of water supply, etc. In 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024, the average time taken to repair the fresh water mains was about 5 hours. The longest time taken was about 12 days as the case required the handling of congested underground utilities and the arrangement of diversion of water supply or temporary water supply facilities during the repair of the concerned fresh water mains.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)116

(Question Serial No. 1515)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (3) Customer Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the meter reading work of the Water Supplies Department (WSD), would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the current number and ranks of meter readers in the WSD, the salary expense by rank and total salary expense;
2. the current number of water meters in each of the 18 districts across the territory;
3. the number of cases of water meter anomalies identified by meter readers of the WSD in each of the past 5 years and the relevant details;
4. the number of injury-on-duty cases of meter readers in the WSD in each of the past 5 years and the relevant medical expenses;
5. whether the WSD has replaced or upgraded the water meters with smart water meters to facilitate recording and checking of water meters; if yes, of the relevant details, timetable and expenditure each year, and the number of manpower released from the adoption of relevant technology; if no, of the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

Apart from the daily meter reading work, meter readers of the Water Supplies Department (WSD) also conduct general on-site inspections for customers. In case water meter anomalies are found (including meter not registering but water is expected to be in use, blurred meter cover glass, meter pointers not in the proper position, dirty dial with difficulty in reading the digits, etc.), meter readers will record the cases in the computer system for arrangement of follow up or investigation.

The WSD is introducing an automatic meter reading (AMR) system in suitable new developments. AMR system not only improves the accuracy of meter reading, but also provides customers with timely water consumption data and other useful information, thereby enhancing their awareness of water conservation and prevention of water leakage. In the long run, the comprehensive introduction of AMR system can save the manual meter reading work.

1. There are 147 permanent posts in the WSD responsible for the relevant work, including 5 chief meter readers, 10 senior meter readers and 132 meter readers. The notional annual salary cost at mid-point is around \$47 million. Since the staff concerned also handle other duties including the investigations on water meter anomalies and recording works mentioned above, no separate breakdown of the salary expenses involved is available.
2. As at 31 December 2024, the numbers of water meters in various districts of Hong Kong are as follows:

District	Number of water meters (’000) ^{Note 2}
Central and Western, Wan Chai, Southern and Eastern Districts of Hong Kong Island	530
Kwun Tong, Sham Shui Po, Yau Tsim Mong, Wong Tai Sin and Kowloon City Districts of Kowloon	980
North, Tai Po, Sha Tin and Sai Kung Districts of New Territories East	790
Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long, Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun Districts of New Territories West	900
Islands District	90
Total	3 290

Note 2: The numbers of water meters are rounded to the nearest ten thousand.

3. The numbers of relevant cases in the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Case type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (As at the end of February 2025)	Total
Meter not registering	20 503	15 509	15 876	11 981	1 776	65 645
Blurred meter cover glass	457	473	351	384	66	1 731
Pointers not in the proper position	1 662	1 438	2 130	999	176	6 405
Dirty dial	36	52	53	95	72	308
Total	22 658	17 472	18 410	13 459	2 090	74 089

4. Currently, the Government provides medical treatment to government employees suffering from injury-on-duty (IOD) or occupational diseases under the Employees’ Compensation Ordinance (Cap. 282) (ECO) through free medical out-patient and hospitalisation services under the auspices of the Hospital Authority and the Department

of Health which are generally available to members of the public. The Government also allows employees on IOD to seek direct treatment from registered private medical practitioners immediately after the injury and be reimbursed for the medical expenses for the treatment so incurred. Also, such government employees may receive Chinese medicine treatment provided by registered Chinese medicine practitioners, the cost of which is reimbursable up to the maximum limits prescribed under the ECO.

The numbers of IOD cases of meter readers in the WSD and the relevant medical expenses reimbursed in the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at the end of February 2025)
Number of IOD cases	3	5	4	13	2
Relevant medical expenses reimbursed	\$0	\$2,400	\$2,940	\$2,100	\$0

- Since 2018, the WSD has mandated the installation of smart water meter system in all new public and private developments. About 16 200 smart water meters (including new developments and existing consumers) are currently in operation, accounting for about 0.5% of all water meters across the territory. As at the end of February 2025, the WSD has received a total of about 132 000 smart water meter applications from new developments. These smart water meters will be in use progressively along with the completion of the buildings. For new buildings, the WSD is only responsible for the provision of smart water meters. The relevant expenditures on constructing and installing smart water meters are borne by the developers. The WSD does not have information on the relevant expenditures. The relevant installation cost is similar to that of a conventional mechanical water meter. The WSD is exploring the use of wireless smart water meter technology to enhance the cost-effectiveness of the overall system and expedite the installation of smart water meters in existing buildings. As the study is still in progress, we are unable to provide the exact figures regarding the installation timetable and expenditure at this stage. Given the relatively small number of smart water meters that are currently in operation, we are unable to assess the manpower saved after the adoption of the relevant technology.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)117

(Question Serial No. 3390)

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

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

Programme: (3) Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding local tree management, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the number of trees managed by the tree management departments of the Government;
2. of the current number of tree management personnel as well as the establishment and actual number of personnel with professional qualifications in arboriculture in government departments;
3. of the number of tree failure reports received and the resulting number of casualties per year;
4. of the number of tree failures caused by storms and typhoons last year and the number of cases with relief work completed;
5. of the number of trees planted per year;
6. of the staff establishment and the estimated expenditures of the Inspection Squad of the Tree Management Office;
7. further to the above question, whether the Government will set indicators for annual tree audits and site patrols; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
8. regarding the introduction of a registration scheme for tree management personnel, of the registration situation and the percentage of tree management personnel who have registered?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 54)

Reply:

1&2.

The number of trees managed by the core tree management departments and the number of their tree management staff (including staff of departments and contractors) as at end-2024 are tabulated below:

Core tree management department	Number of trees ^(Note 1)	Number of tree management staff ^(Note 5)	
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) ^(Note 2)	28 000	87	(87)
Architectural Services Department	140 000	228	(143)
Civil Engineering and Development Department ^(Note 3)	32 700	127	(118)
Drainage Services Department	18 800	105	(27)
Highways Department	574 000	223	(145)
Housing Department	84 800	190	(182)
Lands Department (LandsD)	Not applicable ^(Note 4)	177	(61)
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	539 000	321	(321)
Water Supplies Department	148 700	44	(18)

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

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

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

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

Note 5: The figures include only staff involved in day-to-day tree management, but exclude those temporarily deployed on a need basis. The figures also exclude management-level staff of the departments involved in tree management (particularly at the strategic level). The figures within brackets indicate the number of tree management staff with professional qualifications in arboriculture (including the qualification of Certified Arborist of the International Society of Arboriculture, etc.). Any staff member with multiple qualifications in arboriculture is counted as 1 staff member only.

3&4.

The annual number of tree incidents reported in the past 5 years are set out in the table below:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1. Number of tree incidents	358	295	271	383	537 ^(Note 7)
Number of tree incidents involving casualties	16	13	20	17	13
2. Number of fallen trees after the issue of a Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above	1 041	2 065	1 322	4 790 ^(Note 6)	808

Note 6: There was a significant increase in the number of fallen trees in 2023 due to the impacts of Super Typhoon Saola and Severe Typhoon Koinu in September.

Note 7: There was an increase of tree incidents in 2024 due to the impacts of heavy showers and severe squally thunderstorms in April and May.

When the Hong Kong Observatory changes the Gale or Storm Signal No. 8 or above to the Strong Wind Signal No. 3, or when the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is cancelled, the tree management departments will immediately start inspections in various districts and take timely mitigation measures which include removing fallen trees and those that have not fallen but have become unstable due to heavy wind and rain, removing hanging broken branches, stabilising leaning trees back to an upright position and supporting them with cables and supports, and cordoning off trees yet to be handled, to ensure public safety. After typhoons last year, tree management departments have completed all follow-up actions, including the removal of about 800 fallen or hazardous trees, and implementation of risk mitigation measures for about 1 000 trees, such as stabilisation of trees, trimming of dangling broken branches, etc.

5. The number of trees planted will be adjusted in the light of the actual circumstances such as the type, scale and progress of public works each year. The annual number of trees planted by government departments in the past 5 years are set out in the table below:

Year	Number of trees planted by government departments ('000)
2020	262
2021	333
2022	329
2023	287
2024	261

6&7.

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

In 2025-26, the dedicated Inspection Squad comprises civil service posts of two Senior Field Officers, five Field Officers I, five Field Officers II and three part-time Senior Field Officers employed under the Post-retirement Service Contract Scheme. The total annual staff cost for the dedicated Inspection Squad is estimated at \$8.5 million

8. The Government launched the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel in December 2020, which encourages all in-service arboriculture practitioners to register on a voluntary basis in order to uplift the standard of arboriculture practitioners. The Registration Scheme covers five types of arboriculture practitioners, namely arborists, tree risk assessors, tree work supervisors, tree climbers and chainsaw operators. As at end-2024, about 950 practitioners have registered under the scheme. About 60% contractor staff are registered practitioners. To promote the Registration Scheme, the Development Bureau has instructed departments to specify in their new works and maintenance contracts that arboricultural work should be carried out by registered tree management personnel.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)118

(Question Serial No. 3801)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Project Strategy and Governance

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

In August 2024, the Development Bureau established the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) and injected funding of \$10 million for its initial operation. In respect of the development of the BTRi under item 22 of Programme (5), please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The BTRi will adopt a self-financed operation strategy, emphasising that it will collaborate with academic institutions, research institutes, government departments and private organisations and more to carry out various projects and research to generate revenue. The BTRi has been established for 6 months. What are the specific sources of revenue, including projects that have been implemented and revenue generated, and what is the financial planning for the coming 3 years?
2. Please provide details of the staff establishment of the BTRi, including the number of staff in service, and the number of posts to be created and their duties.
3. It has been over a year since the DEVB started the strategic study on construction costs in the fourth quarter of 2023. Is the BTRi involved in this study? If yes, what is the specific work? For example, the expected completion date of the study and the specific timetable for the implementation of the recommendations of the study.

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The construction industry in Hong Kong has been facing challenges of declining productivity, relatively high construction costs and ageing labour force. To address these challenges, the Development Bureau (DEVB) established in August 2024 the Building Technology Research Institute (BTRi) as a limited company wholly owned by the Financial Secretary Incorporated, aiming at spearheading the construction industry in strengthening innovative applications to enhance productivity, cost-effectiveness and site safety performance. The BTRi's focus of work has 3 major development directions, namely driving applied research and development, reviewing and uplifting standards, and providing accreditation, certification and testing. Since its establishment, the BTRi has been developing its business in these areas and is

gradually building a professional team to promote innovation in the construction industry so as to reduce local construction cost.

In November 2024, the BTRi signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Guangdong Provincial Academy of Building Research, the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore, and 3 local universities, namely the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, to collaborate and promote innovative applications to address the pressing challenges facing the construction industry. The BTRi will continue to strengthen co-operation with relevant local and overseas institutions to enhance the applied research capabilities of the BTRi and establish its leading position in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and even internationally.

It is stated in the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address that we will review and enhance Hong Kong's building standards, which have been in place for many years, through the BTRi by making reference to overseas building standards and Guobiao (GB), in order to facilitate local application of high-quality and cost-effective construction materials from the Mainland and overseas. Also, local application of high-quality GB construction materials and technologies will also be beneficial for GB to explore international markets. We will also closely liaise with our counterparts in the Guangdong Province to take forward the formulation of the GBA Construction Standards.

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

1. The DEVB has injected funding of \$10 million for the initial operation of the BTRi, including employment of staff, renting offices and general operating expenses. The BTRi generates revenue through collaboration with local universities, government departments, private organisations and more to carry out various research and related business. These projects include some research projects, feasibility studies of innovative technology and a number of projects which are under negotiation. In addition, the BTRi also generates revenue through implementing the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme. With all income generated from these business activities, it is expected that the BTRi can gradually achieve a fiscal balance within the next 3 years.
2. As at today, the BTRi has about 13 staff, including 4 managerial level staff, 4 researchers and 5 clerical staff. We anticipate that the BTRi will employ about 12 new staff in 2025-26, comprising mainly researchers and clerical staff.
3. The DEVB commenced a strategic study in the fourth quarter of 2023 to examine in-depth the reasons for the high construction costs in Hong Kong. The study has identified the major reasons for the high construction costs in Hong Kong and put forward recommendations in respect of 4 major directions, namely (1) optimising the project procurement model to reduce risk premium; (2) reviewing the design standards and requirements to increase cost-effectiveness; (3) applying advanced technologies and construction methods to uplift productivity; and (4) streamlining the approval process to boost work efficiency. Regarding the review of the design standards and promotion of application of advanced technologies and construction methods, the BTRi is rendering full support to the DEVB to take forward research projects on all fronts. The BTRi is reviewing the design standards that have been used in Hong Kong for many years, mainly including some items that have greater impact on the construction cost

with a view to enhancing cost effectiveness. The research project is expected to be completed in 2025. In addition, the BTRi will continue to promote innovative applications in the industry, such as the application of ultra-high performance concrete by piloting in public works projects with a view to implementing and establishing innovative construction materials, technologies and so on. This can achieve high cost effectiveness in design, thereby reducing the high construction costs in Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)119

(Question Serial No. 3987)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Among the various existing community isolation facilities constructed using Modular Integrated Construction (MiC), how many units have been completed and are under construction? Since such construction modules can be disassembled and reused, how many sets of modular containers have been relocated for reuse? What are the expenditures involved in relocating and reusing these modular containers? Please provide specific figures by the above housing category.

Asked by: Hon Hong Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

Since early 2022, Hong Kong has been severely affected by the fifth wave of the epidemic. At that time, Hong Kong urgently needed more isolation, treatment and related facilities to cope with the demand for isolation and treatment of a large number of confirmed patients. With the support of the Central Government, the Government constructed community isolation facilities (CIFs) at 9 locations respectively (i.e. the CIFs located in Yuen Long Tam Mei, San Tin, Tsing Yi, the Hong Kong Port Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, Ma Sik Road in Fanling, Hung Shui Kiu, Kai Tak and Penny's Bay, and the CIFs located in the Loop which were funded by and constructed with assistance of the Central Government).

With the subsiding epidemic situation in early 2023 and gradual resumption of social normalcy, the Government on one hand maintains the city's capacity to respond to changes in the epidemic situation, and on the other hand makes subsequent arrangements for community isolation and treatment facilities, while taking into account Hong Kong's economic, livelihood and social needs. The Government has earlier announced the use of CIFs in Yuen Long Tam Mei, San Tin, Tsing Yi and Kai Tak for other purposes, while the CIFs in the Loop, Hung Shui Kiu, the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Ma Sik Road in Fanling were transferred for releasing the sites for their original planned uses.

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

The specific numbers of units in the above 9 completed CIFs are as follows:

Location of community isolation facilities	Number of units
Yuen Long Tam Mei	about 2 000
San Tin	about 700
Tsing Yi	about 1 200
Hung Shui Kiu	about 550
Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge	about 400
Ma Sik Road in Fanling	about 350
The Loop	about 4 000
Kai Tak	about 2 700
Penny's Bay	about 9 700

After modifications, the Yuen Long Tam Mei CIF, San Tin CIF and Tsing Yi CIF are now used as centralised quarters for imported labour for the construction sector, venue for holding training courses and trade tests for the construction industry and a base for youth development and national education respectively. To facilitate facility modification works, a total of 245 CIF units requiring removal have been transferred to various construction sites of government public works projects for reuse.

As for the CIF sites released from Hung Shui Kiu, Hong Kong Port Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, Ma Sik Road in Fanling and the Loop, a total of about 1 150 CIF units have been transferred to various construction sites of government public works projects for reuse, while about 750 CIF units are temporarily stored at Tseung Kwan O Area 137 Fill Bank. The Government will reuse these units in other suitable public works projects to ensure full utilisation of resources. In addition, the Government is transferring the 3 400 CIF units within the Loop for future reuse.

On 16 October 2024, the Government announced the plan to convert the Kai Tak CIF into a youth development facility, which includes setting up a “Youth Post” hostel for exchange in culture, arts and sports. The Home and Youth Affairs Bureau has just finished assessing the tenders for the “Youth Post” hostel and selected the operating organisation for the youth development facility.

The settlement of payments for the transfer fees for the above CIFs is underway, the specific expenditure requires further consolidation and confirmation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)120

(Question Serial No. 4204)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the first 3 buildings of Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park in the Loop are about to complete. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

As regards the sites of the other 5 buildings, the Government said that the community isolation facilities at the southern end of the Loop had been transferred to construction sites of government public works projects for reassembly and reuse in March 2024 so as to release the sites concerned for innovation and technology purposes. Please provide the relocation fees, reassembly costs and quantity of facilities received by construction sites of government public works projects.

Asked by: Hon Hong Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

To tie in with the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone, the Government announced the release of the 5 hectares of land of the CIFs in the Loop for the construction of 5 buildings in batch one under Phase 1 of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park on 5 January 2024. The original 600 CIF units on the 5 hectares of land have been transferred to various construction sites of government public works projects for reuse. As the overall settlement of payments for the relevant transfer fees (including successive transfer of facilities from other locations) is currently underway, the specific expenditure requires further consolidation and confirmation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)121

(Question Serial No. 3989)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (6) Intra-Governmental Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It has been known from a public hearing held by the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Council that works consultants and contractors given “very poor” and “poor” ratings were engaged again. Will the Government advise this Committee how it will make improvements to achieve both the objectives of value for money and site safety?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

To ensure that public works projects can be completed on schedule and within budget, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has put in place a management mechanism to manage works consultants and contractors on the approved lists in an effective manner. At present, we will reflect the performance of consultants and contractors in their quarterly performance reports at various stages of the delivery of public works projects. Such performance ratings will also affect their chances of winning future tenders. Where necessary, we may take appropriate regulating actions against those consultants or contractors with poor performance in accordance with the mechanism, including suspension from tendering or even removal from the approved lists, etc.

Moreover, the DEVB introduced a new measure in July 2023 such that, if a contractor on the approved list is involved in a serious site safety incident, the contractor can be immediately suspended from tendering in the relevant category of public works contracts.

The above mechanism is effective in handling public works consultants and contractors who have committed serious irregularities or whose performance has been highly unsatisfactory. The DEVB will review the performance assessment system for consultants and contractors from time to time, and will introduce enhancement measures where necessary to encourage them to improve their performance, thereby enhancing safety and cost-effectiveness in the delivery of public works projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)122

(Question Serial No. 3521)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Government and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million to continue the provision of on-the-job training subsidies to trainees enrolling in part-time construction-related degree programmes over the next 2 academic years. It is anticipated to benefit about 1 000 trainees. Please provide the following information on:

- (a) the Government's and CIC's shares of the funding;
- (b) the numbers of trainees enrolling in existing part-time construction-related degree programmes in the past 3 years; and
- (c) the percentage of trainees obtaining on-the-job training subsidies in 2024/25 academic year and the timetable for subsidy assessment.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 49)

Reply:

- (a) To attract more young people to join the construction industry, it is mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget that the Government and the Construction Industry Council will jointly allocate funding totalling about \$95 million (of which the Government will make a commitment of \$47.3 million) to continue to provide on-the-job training subsidies for higher diploma graduates enrolling in part-time construction-related degree programmes over the next two academic years (i.e. the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years). It is anticipated to further benefit 1 000 trainees.
- (b) The Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong under the Vocational Training Centre, and the School of Professional Education and Executive Development of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University started to implement the pilot scheme for part-time construction-related degree programmes in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years respectively, and the actual number of participating trainees receiving subsidies has reached 1 000.

Over the past three academic years, the numbers of enrollment in the relevant part-time degree programmes are as follows:

Part-time degree programme in construction-related professions participating in the pilot scheme	2022-23 academic year	2023-24 academic year	2024-25 academic year
	Number of enrollment	Number of enrollment	Number of enrollment
Electrical, Mechanical and Environmental Engineering	250	390	344
Civil Engineering	73	134	125
Surveying	120	109	142
Building Engineering and Management	45	62	71
Landscape Architecture and Management	57	45	51
Total	545	740	733

Note: Some students who have enrolled in the above programmes have not participated in this pilot scheme.

- (c) In 2024-25 academic year, about 60% trainees enrolling in the relevant programmes could receive on-the-job training subsidies. The reasons for the remaining trainees' not eligible for the subsidies include not working in construction-related sectors, failing to provide proof of employment status, not meeting the requirement of continuous employment, etc. Participating institutions must ensure that trainees receiving subsidies meet the relevant requirements, such as regular class participation, continuous employment, etc. before disbursing subsidies to them every quarter. Participating institutions and we will complete subsidy assessment and disburse allowances to trainees within an average of three to six months.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)123

(Question Serial No. 3971)

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned under the programme that the Vocational Training Council (VTC) will, starting from 2025-26, provide an examination fee subsidy to Hong Kong residents who passed the examinations under the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” (OEMC) arrangement. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Given the extension of the OEMC arrangement to the construction industry, what are the progress and the proposed OEMC examination fee for the construction industry?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

1. The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address states that the Development Bureau (DEVB) is collaborating with the Guangdong Province and the Macao Special Administrative Region to formulate GBA standards of the skill levels of skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector, and will take forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement. Skilled workers and technicians in the construction sector who pass the examinations adopting the GBA standards can concurrently obtain vocational skill certificates issued by the three places. The arrangement aims at enhancing the training quality of the construction industry in the GBA and nurturing talents.

The DEVB, in collaboration with Guangdong and Macao, is taking forward the relevant work. In March 2025, we have announced the GBA standards and taken forward the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” arrangement for skilled workers in the first two pilot trades (i.e. painter and bricklayer). As for technicians, we plan to establish and promote the GBA standards for the first pilot position (i.e. civil engineering works supervisor) in mid-2025 and details will be announced later in due course. The accredited examination authorities of the three places will announce the examination arrangements and fees required in due course. Subsequently, Guangdong, Hong Kong

and Macao will take forward the above arrangement for other major trades/positions of the construction industry in an orderly manner taking into account the implementation experience and the situations of various trades/positions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)124****(Question Serial No. 3329)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Energizing Kowloon East

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Established in June 2012, the Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) comprises professionals of different sectors. It is responsible for steering and monitoring the transformation of Kowloon East into the second core business district of Hong Kong. In connection with Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 under the Programme of EKEO, will the Government provide this Committee with the following details:

1. Please provide relevant details regarding “taking forward the recommendations of the planning and engineering studies on the Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay Action Areas and the future commercial use of the Lai Yip Street site”, including details of specific plans, implementation timetable and progress;
2. Please provide relevant details regarding “enhancing walkability and connectivity in Kowloon East through taking forward the remaining improvement proposals recommended under the feasibility studies on Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas”, including details of specific plans, implementation timetable and anticipated results;
3. Please provide relevant details regarding “implementing quick-wins and short term improvement measures recommended under the comprehensive pedestrian environment improvement review in Kowloon East, and plan on the provision of further external pedestrian linkages to the nearby residential areas”, including details of specific plans, implementation timetable and long term planning; and
4. At present, EKEO is in the third “5-year plan”. Will the Government consider adjusting the composition and functions of EKEO in the next “5-year plan”, for example, by including representatives of the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, and Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau in addition to the existing officers from the Development Bureau and planning departments, so as to optimise inter-departmental and further realise the original intention of promoting collaborative development when EKEO was first established.

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

1. The Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) has always strived to unleash the development potential of Kowloon East through land use reviews to increase the supply of commercial land. The waterfront site in Kwun Tong Action Area is mainly planned for commercial development with a commercial floor area of about 80 000 square metres, which can provide office, shop, services, restaurant and hotel, etc. The development will also provide public transport facilities, public carpark, social welfare facilities and public open space as required by the Government. Kowloon Bay Action Area is primarily planned as a commercial hub. After deducting the 2 completed commercial developments, it will provide about 400 000 square metres of additional commercial floor area. The development can provide office, hotel, retail, food and beverage, and other ancillary facilities. It also encourages the provision of arts, cultural and creative uses underneath the Kai Fuk Road Flyover. The development will also provide public open space and public transport facilities, etc., as required by the Government. The waterfront proximity site at Lai Yip Street, with a total of about 23 000 square metres of commercial floor area, is proposed for commercial uses, with the flexibility for hotel use. Arts, culture and creative industries uses are also encouraged. Relevant statutory planning procedures have been completed. The Government will closely monitor market situation and development, and roll out sites in a paced and orderly manner.
2. EKEO is proactively taking forward the remaining improvement proposals recommended under the feasibility studies on pedestrian environment improvement in Kowloon Bay, Kwun Tong and San Po Kong Business Areas to further enhance walkability and connectivity in Kowloon East. Up till now, the short-term improvement proposals for Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong Business Areas have been completed. The remaining short-term proposals for San Po Kong Business Area, including improvement works of back alley environment, junctions and pedestrian crossings, are being implemented as planned. As for medium- and long-term improvement proposals, including a series of footbridges and pedestrian subways, some have been completed and opened for use, and some have proceeded to the construction stage. The Government will take forward the remaining improvement proposals in order of priority.
3. EKEO has commissioned the Civil Engineering and Development Department to conduct a Kowloon East pedestrian environment improvement review feasibility study to review the overall pedestrian environment and connectivity in Hong Kong's second core business district (CBD2), and study the feasibility of extending the pedestrian network to the residential areas in Kowloon East's hinterland, so as to further enhance the pedestrian environment and connectivity in Kowloon East. Relevant departments are reviewing the proposals recommended in the study and the funding arrangements, which include a series of short-, medium- and long-term improvement measures. The short- and medium-term measures include the addition of pedestrian wayfinding systems in the Kowloon East CBD and the hinterland in the vicinity, improvement to back alley environment, enhancement of pedestrian facilities, and addition of pedestrian crossings, etc. We expect to consult related stakeholders in mid-2025.

4. EKEO is established under the Development Bureau to steer and monitor the development of Kowloon East, so as to promote and strengthen Kowloon East as an attractive CBD2 in Hong Kong. In fact, to support the development of Hong Kong on all fronts, various policy bureaux are promoting policies and measures under their respective purviews. EKEO will continue to foster cross-bureau and cross-departmental collaboration in pursuing the development initiatives in Kowloon East.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)125

(Question Serial No. 3988)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: Not Specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

How will the Architectural Services Department promote awareness of site safety in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

In 2025-26, the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) will continue to promote awareness of site safety and health in construction projects within its purview, including conducting routine and surprise site inspections, performing independent site safety audits, providing safety training and safety briefings, organising and participating in safety promotional schemes (such as major site safety forums, the Site Safety Model Worker Award Scheme, Construction Safety Week and the Considerate Contractors Site Award Scheme), and fully adopting the Smart Site Safety System and the Design for Safety in new construction projects. Besides, the ArchSD is making sustained efforts to foster wider application of innovative construction methods and technologies in works contracts, such as Modular Integrated Construction, Multi-trade Integrated Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing, as well as prefabricated steel reinforcing bar products. Innovative technologies such as drones and robots will also be widely adopted in maintenance and refurbishment works to enhance site safety performance and improve the site working environment. Furthermore, in projects within its purview, the ArchSD will provide site safety advice for contractors, thereby promoting awareness of occupational safety and health among the relevant parties. Project staff in charge of works contracts (including staff of the ArchSD, consultants and contractors) will also closely supervise and monitor on-site implementation of occupational safety and health measures.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)126

(Question Serial No. 4002)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding refurbishment projects for public toilets in Hong Kong, will the Government inform this Committee whether it is necessary to draw on the “reserve for risks” in the event of project delay, and of the percentage of such reserve over the total budget?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)

Reply:

In general, the Architectural Services Department reserves about 10% of the estimated project cost as “contingencies” in the project estimates for each public toilet refurbishment project to address unforeseen project risks. In the event of project delay, it will be handled in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract. If the responsibility for causing the delay lies with the Government for reasons such as providing additional facilities at the request of relevant departments, the Government will bear the cost incurred by such delay and such cost may be covered by the “contingencies”. On the contrary, if the responsibility for causing the delay lies with the contractors for reasons such as poor site management or inadequate manpower resources, the contractor will bear the cost thus incurred at their own expense.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)127

(Question Serial No. 3532)

Head: (25) Architectural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: Not specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

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

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 60)

Reply:

Out of the new public toilet projects completed by the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) in the past 5 years, a total of 10 unisex toilets were constructed, including 2 in the North District, 2 in Tai Po District, 2 in the Eastern District, 1 in the Southern District and 3 in the Islands District. During the same period, the ArchSD completed refurbishment of a total of 123 unisex toilets located across various districts in Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, the New Territories and outlying islands.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)128

(Question Serial No. 3780)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (5) Greening and Technical Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

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

- (a) the annual sediment disposal volume for the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), as well as the names of the major sediment disposal projects (please list separately the locations for disposal of uncontaminated and contaminated sediment);
- (b) the details of the various locations for disposal of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment (including (i) the remaining capacity, (ii) the environmental monitoring results, and (iii) an overview of the operation) (to be tabulated);
- (c) whether the Government has any plans to provide more locations for disposal of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment;
- (d) whether the Government has estimated the annual sediment disposal volume in the coming three years, as well as the names of the major sediment disposal projects (please list separately the locations for disposal of uncontaminated and contaminated sediment).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 70)

Reply:

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

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

Year	Sediment disposal volume (contaminated sediment)	Sediment disposal volume (uncontaminated sediment)	Major sediment disposal project
2022	About 0.20 million m ³	About 0.94 million m ³	Central Kowloon Route and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels
2023	About 0.29 million m ³	About 0.38 million m ³	Central Kowloon Route and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels
2024	About 0.14 million m ³	About 0.18 million m ³	Yuen Long Effluent Polishing Plant and general maintenance dredging works for navigation channels

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

Facility	Location	Remaining capacity	Environmental monitoring result	Current operation status
For disposal of contaminated sediment	To the east of Sha Chau	About 2.04 million m ³	The regular environmental monitoring result indicated that the facility had no unacceptable impact on the nearby environment.	Based on the current forecast, the facility may operate until 2027.
For disposal of uncontaminated sediment	To the south of Cheung Chau, to the east of Ninepin Group, to the east of Tung Lung Chau and to the south of Tsing Yi	About 43.94 million m ³ in total	The regular environmental monitoring result indicated that the facilities had no unacceptable impact on the nearby environment.	Based on the current forecast, the facilities may operate beyond 2034.

- (c) In order to cope with the demand for disposal of marine sediment in a sustainable manner, we are currently considering a number of options, including planning a new contaminated sediment disposal facility in the waters to the west of Lamma Island and studying the feasibility of treatment method by mixing contaminated sediment with other materials for reuse in backfilling and reclamation projects, as construction material.
- (d) Based on the current information, we anticipate that the average annual sediment disposal volume of contaminated and uncontaminated sediment in the coming 3 years (from 2025 to 2027) will be about 0.54 million m³ and 0.53 million m³ respectively. The major sediment disposal projects will include various navigation channel improvement works and other dredging works. We will keep reviewing the estimated sediment disposal volume based on the latest information of sediment disposal projects to ensure that the marine disposal facilities have adequate capacity to meet the demand.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)129

(Question Serial No. 3781)

Head: (33) Civil Engineering and Development Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (3) Provision of Land and Infrastructure

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

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

- (a) the existing mechanism for handling marine pollution caused by marine works;
- (b) the number of marine pollution incidents caused by marine works for each year over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) whether the Government has imposed any penalties on the responsible parties for the marine pollution incidents caused by marine works over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) and the details;
- (d) regarding the impact of marine pollution caused by marine works on the fisheries industry, the compensation mechanism put in place by the Government. If there is such a mechanism, has the mechanism been activated over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25)?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 71)

Reply:

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

Reports, affecting the contractors' chances of being awarded public works contracts in the future. If necessary, the CEDD will also provide information to assist the relevant law enforcement agencies in conducting investigations and carrying out the necessary follow-up work.

(b), (c) and (d)

Regarding the impact of marine pollution caused by marine works on the fisheries industry, the affected parties may lodge claims against the relevant project office taking forward the marine works as follow-up actions. In the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), there were no marine pollution incidents caused by marine works under the CEDD's purview.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)130

(Question Serial No. 3439)

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the supervision of the implementation of the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS), will the Government advise this Committee:

1. of the current progress of the LIMSS;
2. whether the Government has assessed the effectiveness of the LIMSS; if yes, the details; if no, the reasons for that;
3. whether the Government has any plans to launch a new round of the LIMSS to meet the demand, given that the LIMSS has been closed for application for long and received an enthusiastic response from the public; if yes, the details; if no, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 125)

Reply:

Since 2019, the Government has allocated a total of \$4.51 billion for launching the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS) to subsidise eligible owners of private residential or composite buildings to carry out lift modernisation works. The Government has commissioned the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to administer the LIMSS. The LIMSS invited two rounds of application. A total of about 2 000 applications were received, involving about 8 200 lifts. As some applicants later withdrew their applications or failed to provide the required information resulting in their applications not being considered, the number of eligible applications was about 1 850, involving around 7 700 lifts as at February 2025. A risk-based approach has been adopted to determine the priorities for granting subsidies to all lifts of the eligible applications.

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

1. As at February 2025, the URA has granted “approval-in-principle” to the modernisation works of 5 708 lifts in total, among which the works of 1 672 lifts have been completed. The modernisation works of the remaining lifts are gradually proceeding and making good progress. It is anticipated that the modernisation works of the above 5 708 lifts will be substantially completed in 2028-29. The Steering Committee comprising representatives of the Development Bureau, the URA and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department will continue to review the progress of the LIMSS regularly.

2-3.

Given the greatly higher-than-estimated number of cases involving replacement of lifts (instead of replacement of individual components only) and elderly owner-occupier applicants (where this kind of owners would receive higher subsidies) among the approved cases, the average amount of subsidy granted for each case is higher than the estimate. Therefore, the LIMSS will eventually benefit the modernisation works of about 5 800 aged lifts of higher risk based on the current estimate. The LIMSS has been very effective, not only setting a positive example for the community, but also raising public awareness of lift safety. In general, lifts are safe for use irrespective of whether they are new or aged as long as there are proper regular examination and maintenance. Furthermore, considering the current fiscal situation of the Government and the principle of proper allocation of public resources, we have no plan to launch a new round of the LIMSS. Nonetheless, we will continue to review the progress of the LIMSS and make optimal use of the remaining funds, if confirmed to have any, to subsidise as many applicants on the waiting list as possible for to carry out lift modernisation works. At the same time, we encourage building owners who have not benefited from the LIMSS to actively consider applying for other existing subsidy schemes that can cover lift modernisation works according to the actual needs of their buildings, so as to identify suitable solutions for them.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)131

(Question Serial No. 3394)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

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

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

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

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

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 58)

Reply:

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

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

Year	Fresh water consumption (million cubic metres)	DJ water	
		Supply quantity (million cubic metres)	Percentage in fresh water consumption
2022	1 066	810	76%
2023	1 068	820	77%
2024	1 060	818	77%

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

	2022 (Note)	2023	2024
Number of randomly selected premises (Number of samples)	460 (1 385)	661 (1 987)	644 (1 933)

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

According to the test results of the sampling protocol under the Enhanced Programme in the past 3 years, with the exception of the case of lead exceedance found in the drinking water in 1 non-domestic premises in 2022 due to the cleansing and maintenance problem of the inside services, the drinking water of all premises randomly selected for monitoring complied with the Hong Kong Drinking Water Standards. Follow-up work on the exceedance case was completed in the same year.

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

To expand the supply of lower grade water, the WSD commissioned the first phase of grey water recycling system at Anderson Road at the end of 2024. Treated grey water will be supplied for flushing and other non-potable uses progressively starting from 2025 to tie in with the development progress of the area and its population intake. In addition, the WSD began to supply reclaimed water to Sheung Shui and Fanling in phases from March 2024 to replace the current temporary mains fresh water for flushing. We will also extend the supply of reclaimed water to Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Areas (NDAs) in accordance with their development programmes. Besides, the WSD is now extending the salt water supply system to Shui Chuen O Estate in Sha Tin, Tung Chung New Town and its extension. It is expected to supply salt water for flushing progressively starting from the second half of 2025.

4. Currently, villages in the New Territories still using fresh water for flushing are mainly located in Yuen Long, North, Tai Po, Islands, Sai Kung and Tuen Mun districts. Some of these remote villages are generally scattered, with low density and distant from the seafront, etc. To supply salt water for flushing there, it is necessary to construct water mains of long distance and pumping stations, which do not constitute the most cost-effective and energy efficient solution. As mentioned above, the Government is constructing salt water flushing systems for Tung Chung New Town and its extension so that the systems could supply salt water to these areas including the nearby villages for flushing by phases. Moreover, the Government is striving to supply reclaimed water by phases for flushing in NDAs and those areas still using fresh water for flushing. The reclaimed water supply network being proposed or constructed in NDAs such as Kwu Tung North and Fanling North, Yuen Long South, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen and the existing towns such as Sheung Shui and Fanling areas will cover the consumers residing in about 40 villages. Upon the completion of development in other NDAs, we anticipated that the reclaimed water supply network would cover more villages located in the NDAs, thereby further reducing the fresh water demand for flushing.

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

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

District	Burst cases					
	Fresh water main			Salt water main		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Central & Western	2	2	1	2	1	1
Eastern	1	1	0	0	1	1
Islands	2	4	1	0	0	0
Southern	1	1	2	2	0	2
Wan Chai	1	0	1	1	0	3
Kowloon City	0	1	3	2	0	0
Kwun Tong	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sham Shui Po	0	1	1	1	1	2
Wong Tai Sin	0	0	0	1	4	0
Yau Tsim Mong	2	1	0	0	0	2
North	0	2	1	0	0	0
Sai Kung	0	3	1	0	0	0
Sha Tin	3	0	0	2	1	0
Tai Po	2	1	0	1	1	0
Kwai Tsing	1	0	1	1	1	0
Tuen Mun	1	1	0	3	3	2
Tsuen Wan	2	2	1	2	0	0
Yuen Long	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	18	21	13	18	13	14

7. In the past 3 years (i.e. 2022, 2023 and 2024), the leakage rates of government fresh water mains were 14.4%, 14% and 13.4% respectively.
8. Since 2015, the WSD has implemented the “risk-based asset management programme for water mains” by introducing factors such as age of use, materials, past records of bursts or leaks, surrounding environment, etc. for assessing the risk of water main bursts or leaks so as to replace or rehabilitate specific sections of water mains with higher risk progressively with a view to maintaining the healthiness of the water supply network and reducing the risk of water main bursts or leaks. As at the end of 2024, a total of

approximately 540 km long water mains has been included in the “risk-based asset management programme for water mains”. Amongst them, approximately 235 km long water mains have been replaced or rehabilitated while the improvement works for the rest are underway or will be progressively carried out.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)132

(Question Serial No. 3489)

Head: (194) Water Supplies Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not Specified

Programme: (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the promotion of public education on the history of Dongjiang (DJ) water supply, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of education programmes, the types of programmes, the attendance and the expenditure involved in the past 3 years up to the present;
2. in view of the 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong this year, whether the Government has reserved resources for organising celebration events; if yes, of the details; if no, of the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 124)

Reply:

1. Over the years, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) has been implementing various public education programmes relating to water conservation to enhance the public understanding on water resources, including the history and current situation of Dongjiang (DJ) water supply to Hong Kong. A Water Resources Education Centre named "H2OPE Centre" was set up in Tin Shui Wai by the WSD to provide information on water resources and water conservation to the general public. It includes an exhibition about the history and current situation of DJ water supply to Hong Kong that enables the public to understand the importance of DJ water to Hong Kong. The H2OPE Centre has received nearly 100 000 visitors in the past 3 years. Besides, the WSD has been implementing the "Cherish Water Campus" Integrated Education Programme in kindergartens and primary schools to educate students to conserve water. At present, over 460 kindergartens and 450 primary schools are participating in the programme. In 2024, the WSD revamped the teaching materials of the programme with enriched content covering the DJ water supply to Hong Kong, thereby deepening students' understanding of our country's care and support for Hong Kong. As the above teaching materials and exhibition about DJ water are included in the water conservation promotion work, we do not have a breakdown of the expenditure on the public education programmes relating to DJ water.

2. 2025 marks the 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong. To commemorate and celebrate this remarkable milestone, the WSD has launched a series of promotional events under the theme “Dongjiang River – An Inseparable Bond, Our Blessed Origin” in phases since September 2024. Through a wide range of events, we hope to deepen the understanding of people from all walks of life, particularly the youth, on the history and current situation of DJ water supply to Hong Kong, so that they can recognise our country’s continuous support to the long-term development of Hong Kong through this large-scale water supply scheme. The details of the major events organised by the WSD as at March 2025 are tabulated below. The additional expenditure of the WSD involved is about \$2.5 million.

	Programme	Event period	Participants	Estimated attendance
1	Roving exhibition	November 2024 to April 2025	Public	60 000
2	Kindergarten and primary school education (including colouring and drawing competitions and thematic talks)	April 2024 to July 2025	Kindergarten and primary students	20 000
3	Mainland study tours for secondary and primary students	September 2024 to December 2025	Secondary and primary students	4 000
4	Local study tours	October 2024 to March 2025	Public	4 000
5	Running competition for 60th anniversary of DJ water supply to Hong Kong	November 2024	Public	450
6	Waterworks photo-taking challenge	January 2025 to May 2025	Public	4 000

The WSD has completed a number of large-scale celebration events including the Commemoration Ceremony of the 60th Anniversary of DJ Water Supply to Hong Kong and the International Water Pioneers Summit. We are also hosting a large-scale art installations exhibition and preparing to launch a television programme for DJ water and a mainland study tour on national water engineering projects, culture and technology. As the events are co-organised with water professionals, industry associations and other organisations which will cover or sponsor most of the costs involved, we are unable to provide the total expenditure of the events at this moment.

- End -