

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)016

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

Question Serial No.

1602

Head : 82 Buildings Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question :

Under the item Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2005-06, the Buildings Department (BD) will formulate the mode of operation of the joint office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to handle public complaints about water seepage problems. Could the Buildings Department elaborate on the details of this mode of operation? How many offices are expected to be established over the territory? What are the implications of this scheme on staffing and expenditure?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply :

To improve inter-departmental coordination in response to public complaints about water seepage, our Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) have set up a joint office, in Shamshuipo on a pilot basis to deal with water seepage complaints for buildings in this district starting from January 2005. The joint office combines FEHD's legal powers and BD's expertise to enhance investigative services to identify the source of seepage, and strengthens the coordination of Government's enforcement actions under both the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) and Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132).

We hope that under the new mode of operation, the processing time for handling complaints will be shortened and the investigations by FEHD and BD will be better co-ordinated. We will conduct a review of the pilot scheme six months after the operation of the pilot joint office.

The pilot office is operated using existing resources from both our Department and FEHD. After the review, we will consider whether and how best the pilot scheme should be extended to cover other districts. Initially, we have earmarked \$13 million, covering costs for staff and outsourcing of investigation work, to cater for the possible expansion of the joint office service to other districts, if the results of our review so justify.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Marco WU

Director of Buildings

6 April 2005

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