

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

Question Serial No.

1725

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 of "Departmental Expenses", "Hire of services and professional fees" will be increased from \$70,638,000 in 2004-05 to \$78,570,000 in 2005-06, with a growth rate up to 11.2%. Please explain the reasons concerned and list out the names of the main hired services, detailed contents, amount of money involved and the reasons of hiring.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply :

Compared with the revised estimate of 2004-05, there will be an increase of \$7,932,000 in 2005-06 for the hire of services and professional fees. The main types of hired services are shown below :

Item	Hire of Services and Professional Fees	2004-05 Revised Estimate \$'000	2005-06 Estimate \$'000	Increase/ (Decrease) in Estimate \$'000
(1)	Emergency and investigation works	500	500	-
(2)	Hire of temporary staff	3,800	3,130	(670)
(3)	Outsourcing and Consultancies			
	(a) Outsourcing to private consulting firms	41,893	50,495	8,602
	(b) Outsourcing to Housing Department	24,445	24,445	-
(1)+(2)+(3)	Total: Hire of services and professional fees	70,638	78,570	7,932

The increase is mainly related to the payment for outsourcing under item (3)(a) to private consulting firms. These payments comprise staged payments to consulting firms appointed in 2003 and 2004 and similar payments to consulting firms to be appointed in 2005 for the inspection of buildings involved in large scale removal of unauthorised building works (UBW), surveillance patrols to stop new UBW, and investigation of water seepage defects under the proposed joint office scheme for handling public complaints about water seepage problems.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Marco WU
Post Title	Director of Buildings
Date	6 April 2005

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