

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06  
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

**Reply Serial No.**

**HPLB(PL)080**

**Question Serial No.**

0624

Head: 91 Lands Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Legal Advice

Controlling Officer: Director of Lands

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : In 2004, the percentage of Sale and Purchase Agreements approved by the Lands Department within 13 weeks was only 70%, and the percentage of Deeds of Mutual Covenant (DMCs) approved within 13 weeks was only 68%. However, it is estimated that the percentage of targets in the above two areas to be met in 2005 will drastically increase to 90% and 80% respectively. In this connection, would the Government please advise this Council:

- (a) why only 70% and 68% of the targets were met in 2004?
- (b) why the estimated percentage of targets to be met in 2005 will drastically increase to 90% and 80% respectively?
- (c) what are the measures to increase the percentage of targets to be met?
- (d) whether such measures will incur additional expenditure to the Lands Department?
- (e) whether there is any plan to increase the percentage of the targets in the next few years?

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

- (a) Due to the complexity and special features of some cases, it has taken the Department longer time to obtain clarification and to reach agreement on the form of the Agreements for Sale and Purchase and the provisions in the DMCs.
- (b) We will strive to achieve a higher performance in 2005 through the implementation of improved consent measures and revised DMC Guidelines (see (c) below), and the streamlining of work procedures.
- (c) The improvement measures for Consent Scheme were promulgated on 8.7.2004 to all solicitors and industry professionals. We are finalizing and will issue a revised set of DMC Guidelines later this year. In addition, we will continue to contract out the vetting of DMCs to private solicitors. It is with these measures that we have adjusted our targets upwards.
- (d) No additional expenditure will be incurred.

- (e) We will keep our performance targets regularly in view and will continue to explore measures that would help to speed up the approval process without compromising the interest of purchasers at large.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters PATRICK L C LAU

Post Title Director of Lands

Date 4 April 2005

[TOP](#)