

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2006-07
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HPLB(PL)06

Question Serial No.

S55

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 : Regarding the Reply Serial No. HPLB(PL)051:

- (a) How much would be spent on the purchase of new equipment items (e.g. infrared system) for detecting water seepage? How many items of this kind would be purchased? Are they adequate in number to cater for the needs of the whole territory?
- (b) What are the details of the \$12 million-contract for outsourcing the investigation work of water seepage? If the pilot joint office, that was previously launched, is deemed to be a success, why there is a need to outsource the work to private consulting firms? Please provide the comparison between these two arrangements in terms of the efficiency, success rate and days shortened for completing an investigation? Why nearly half of the annual operating cost (i.e. \$26 million) is to be spent on the outsourcing arrangement? Please give the reasons.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

- (a) A list of testing equipment items used by the pilot Joint Office (JO) in Shamshuipo and those to be purchased under the expanded JO programme for detecting water seepage is shown in the table below.

Testing Instruments	Unit Price (\$)	Pilot JO		Expanded JO	
		No.	Total Expenditure (\$)	No.	Total Expenditure (\$)
Infra-red thermo imager	200,000	1*	200,000	-	-
Moisture meter (model BLD 5800)	9,000	2*	18,000	-	-
Moisture meter (model BLD 5360)	4,000	10*	40,000	107	428,000
Fluorescent Dye UV Lamp Set	2,100	4*	8,400	41	86,100

* The equipment used by the Pilot JO will continue to be used under the expanded JO programme.

We consider the number of equipment items adequate to cater for the work of the JO which will cover the whole territory.

- (b) The BD and FEHD will extend the JO model to the whole territory with an additional provision of \$80M to implement a three-year programme starting from April 2006. The expanded JO will need sufficient manpower to handle an increasingly large number of water seepage complaints received each year. With the total annual operating cost of \$26M, BD intends to employ a total of 48 building professional/technical officers to undertake investigation as well as enforcement work. A budget of \$12M will be set aside for outsourcing part of the investigation work to private consulting firms with the aim to compare the effectiveness and efficiency of the two arrangements. An evaluation of the relative effectiveness and efficiency of the two arrangements will be conducted in due course. FEHD will meet the manpower requirement through internal redeployment.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

CHEUNG Hau-wai

Director of Buildings

20 March 2006

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