

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)156

(Question Serial No. 2548)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the Joint Office for Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints (JO) set up by the Department with the Buildings Department (BD) for abating environmental nuisances relating to dripping air-conditioners and water seepage, please advise this Committee on:

- a) the proportion of staff deployed by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the BD in JO;
- b) the distribution of responsibilities between staff of the two departments in JO; and
- c) the number of water seepage complaint cases received and successfully dealt with by JO in each of the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon HO Kai-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 48)

Reply:

- a) The manpower to be deployed by the Buildings Department (BD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to operate the Joint Office for Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints (JO) in 2019-20 is as follows –

| | 2019-20 |
|---|----------------|
| Number of professional and technical staff in BD (excluding outsourced consultants) | 82 |
| Number of investigation and coordinating staff in FEHD | 237 |

- b) Generally speaking, JO's investigation of water seepage cases is carried out in 3 stages. FEHD's staff are responsible for the work in Stage I (confirmation of water

seepage conditions) and Stage II (initial investigation including colour water tests of drainage pipes or reversible pressure tests for water supply pipes). If the source of seepage cannot be identified during Stage II investigation, Stage III investigation (professional investigation) will be pursued by BD. At Stage III, BD engages outsourced consultants to assist in carrying out detailed investigation including moisture monitoring at seepage locations, ponding test for floor slabs, water spray test on walls and reversible pressure test for water supply pipes to identify the source of water seepage. On a pilot basis, BD consultants are deploying technologies, such as infrared thermography and microwave tomography, to identify the source of water seepage in some selected cases. If the source of seepage can be identified in any stage of investigation, FEHD's staff will issue "nuisance notice" in accordance with the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) to the responsible party demanding abatement of the nuisance within a specified period.

- c) Statistics on water seepage reports received and reports handled in the past 3 years are provided as follows –

| Number of Cases | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Reports received | 36 376 | 36 002 | 37 684 |
| Cases screened out ⁽¹⁾ | 13 196 | 14 732 | 14 571 |
| Cases with seepage ceased during investigation | 5 385 | 5 448 | 4 757 |
| Cases with source of water seepage identified | 6 846 | 6 253 | 5 729 |
| Cases with source of water seepage not identified and investigation terminated | 3 721 | 4 172 | 3 164 |

Note (1) : These include unjustified cases and withdrawn cases.

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