

Dear Editor,

‘World’ city has much poorer roads than elsewhere in region

We refer to the two letters by C. Thomasson (*World’ city has much poorer roads than elsewhere in region, September 24 and Simple queries unanswered, October 18*). Mr Thomasson expressed dissatisfaction over the quality of surfacing of many roads in Hong Kong and asked where the responsibility lies in cases where damage is caused to vehicles through inferior road surfacings.

We note Mr Thomasson’s dissatisfaction over the quality of surfacing of many roads in Hong Kong. In our letter of September 20, we briefly described that our road resurfacing works are subject to close construction supervision and relevant laboratory testings against workmanship and materials quality, ensuring their compliance with stringent contract specifications. We also explained that for some sections of Tuen Mun Road (which was built in the 1970s), resurfacing was done every two years, and for the other sections, resurfacing was less frequent.

Nevertheless, we understand that there is always room for improvement and we will continue to strive for better road surfacing quality. As Mr Thomasson is aware of, our Research and Development Division is working on this front. We have dedicated team of staff to conduct ongoing review on the design and actual performance of asphaltic pavements. We have exchanges with experts locally and overseas, keeping ourselves abreast of the latest technologies and applications available in the market and around the world. We are particularly interested in products allowing fast application and durability, so as to addressing the local constraint of limited construction hours for busy roads. Our Research and Development Division and road maintenance teams will continue to seek improvement in material specifications and quality control measures with a view to improving the performance of the surfacing of our roads.

We wish to assure that Highways Department engages qualified contractors to carry out road maintenance works in accordance with established standards. If anyone alleges negligence in relation to damage sustained as a result of inferior road surfacings, we will deal with such allegation or claim in accordance with established procedures and in appropriate cases, claims will be referred to the insurers of our contractors.

Should Mr Thomasson wish to exchange with us further on the topic, we would invite him to call our Mr K H Tong, Senior Engineer of Research and Development Division, at 2762 3440.

Thank you for your attention.

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