

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

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(W)06

Question Serial No.

S94

Head : 60 - Highways Department Subhead :

Programme : (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Highways

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : According to the reply in Reply Serial No. ETWB(W)043, the term contracts on vegetation maintenance of the Highways Department do not specify the number of workers for the works nor the minimum wages of labourers. How could the Government ensure the workers' wages and benefits in these outsourced contracts would not be exploited by the contractor companies? Would the Administration consider incorporating the relevant provisions in those non-technical works contracts involving greening, cleanliness and hygiene? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply : Maintenance of vegetation on roadside slopes and along high speed roads forms part of our road maintenance works. Like all works contracts, we have adopted an open system for competitive tendering on the basis of a set of performance-based specifications. Any unreasonably low bids indicative of a reduced labour or material input will not be accepted. The current arrangement has generally been satisfactory.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MAK CHAI KWONG

Post Title Director of Highways

Date 17 March 2006