Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2011-12

Reply Serial No.

DEVB(W)119

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Question Serial No.

0048

Head: 60 - Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): 000 Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the performance measure of "issuing road excavation permits to public utilities/road work permits within eight days", the actual percentage of cases meeting the target was 99.9% in 2010 and the planned percentage for 2011 is 85%. The target percentage, however, still sets at 75%. Is the target set too low?

Asked by: Hon. IP LAU Suk-yee, Regina

Reply:

The target of 75% for the performance measure of "issuing road excavation permits to public utilities/road work permits within eight days" was a newly introduced pledge in 2010. It was an improvement of services provided by the Highways Department, and was made possible by adopting an updated and enhanced computerised processing system.

Even though the percentage achieved in 2010 under this new pledge was 99.9%, we have come across applications for excavation permits at busy districts or major trunk roads that required extensive co-ordination among many parties and substantial checking/clarification of works details before permits could be issued. Besides, in order to cope with difficult site constraints and stringent requirements from the public, there are also applications involving more complex road opening methodology or traffic arrangement which require more time to process. As the eight-day performance measure has been adopted for one year only and is still considered to be a challenging one, we therefore maintain the 75% target for observation for another year. Nevertheless, we will strive to achieve an improved percentage of 85% as planned in 2011 and continue to monitor and enhance our performance with a view to setting a higher target and achieving better performance in the coming years.

Signature _____

Name in block letters K K LAU

Post Title Director of Highways

Date 17 March 2011