

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**THB(T)056****(Question Serial No. 2699)**

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: - (2) District and Maintenance Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (K K LAU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question (Member Question No. 23):

In 2013, the Highways Department (HyD) recorded an achievement rate of 100% in various performance indicators, including repairing holes on road surface, carrying out safety inspections on expressways by vehicle once every day, and carrying out safety inspections on trunk roads once every seven days, etc. However, the increasingly serious problem of damages to many public roads in recent years has made a certain impact on drivers, and even posed threats to road safety. Obviously, road users' degree of satisfaction on road repairs is different from the performance of the Government. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- (1) - Regarding public road repairs, what were the manpower and provision allocated for such work in 2013-14? Will additional manpower and provision be allocated in 2014-15? If yes, what are the number of staff, the posts involved and the amount of additional funding? If no, what are the reasons?
- (2) - How will the HyD address the serious problem of damages to public roads, including whether a comprehensive review and revision of the performance indicators will be carried out? Has the HyD assessed the serviceable life of trunk roads?

Asked by: Hon. TSE Wai-chuen, Tony

Reply:

Maintaining the structural integrity of road pavements, with particular emphasis on safety and serviceability, is the responsibility of the HyD. In this connection, the HyD conducts regular inspections of all public roads, and records the service condition of various road components including road pavements. If any road defects involving road safety concerns are identified during the course of inspections or through investigation of complaints, the HyD will arrange urgent short-term repairs. Based on the identified road service condition, the HyD will also plan and carry out medium- and long-term maintenance works as necessary, having regard to the need to minimise any impact to the public. Through planned maintenance works, road pavements are generally maintained in a serviceable condition.

In 2013-14, a total of 964 staff and \$1,278 million were allocated under the District and Maintenance Works Programme. In 2014-15, an addition of \$36.9 million will be allocated, and six new posts (five professional and one technical staff) will be created upon the lapse of eight time-limited posts. Road maintenance constitutes only a portion of District and Maintenance Works. There is no separate breakdown in expenditure and staff establishment solely dedicated for road maintenance.

The HyD carries out bi-annual customer satisfaction surveys to gauge the views of the public on the service provided by the HyD. Based on the outcome of these surveys, the performance pledges of the HyD are revised as and when necessary and practicable.