

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**THB(T)257****(Question Serial No. 4163)**

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Capital Projects
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (K K LAU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question (Member Question No. 174):

What were the details of the works completed, the detailed expenditure of the works and the number of staff involved for the provision of barrier-free access facilities for public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways under the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme in the past five years? What are the details of the works to be commenced under the UA Programme, the detailed expenditure of the works and the number of staff involved in 2014-15?

Asked by: Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

The Government has been installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways), where technically feasible, for years (i.e. the Original Programme). The Original Programme is to provide lifts or standard ramps to existing public walkways which are not equipped with standard barrier-free access facilities and there is no proper at-grade crossing facilities available within about 100 meters. Currently, there are 158 items which are technically feasible under the Original Programme. The works of these items will be completed by phases from 2014 to 2018.

In August 2012, the Government launched the new policy on UA which aims at further enhancing the barrier-free facilities for existing public walkways. The new policy received overwhelming responses from the public and lift installations at about 250 public walkways were proposed (i.e. the Expanded Programme). The Government consulted the 18 District Councils (DCs) in the first half of 2013 on the priority for implementing these suggestions for retrofitting of lifts. Technical feasibility studies for the three priority projects identified by each DC are largely completed and the Government is consulting DCs concerned on the study findings. After consultation with the DCs, the Government will proceed with the detailed design for the items confirmed to be technically feasible and supported by the district.

The total estimated expenditure for the five years from 2009-10 to 2013-14 was \$268 million. The estimated expenditure for implementation of the UA Programme in 2014-15 is \$639 million. The Highways Department has been deploying existing staff to oversee the delivery of the UA Programme.