

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-THB(T)01****(Question Serial No. S0178)**

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.):

Following up on the questions raised in Reply Serial No. THB(T)56:

- (1) The Highways Department (HyD) states that regular inspections of all public roads will be conducted, including safety inspections on expressways by vehicle once every day and safety inspections on trunk roads once every seven days. What are the details of the mechanism for these road inspections and repairs? Regarding the two types of regular inspections conducted in 2013-14, how many cases of road repairs were recorded? What was the average time required for the repairs for each case? What were the subsequent follow-up actions?
- (2) As regards the customer satisfaction surveys conducted biannually, what are the survey content, purpose, target respondents, sampling method and follow-up mechanism? Has any comprehensive review been conducted on the content, effectiveness etc. of the survey? If yes, what are the results, related recommendations and counter measures? If no, what are the reasons and will there be any review in the future?
- (3) On staffing, what are the details on the posts involved and the implementation schedule regarding the eight time-limited posts to be deleted in 2014-15? Are the six new posts to be created on the civil service establishment or non-civil service contract terms? Will the Bureau restart relevant recruitment exercise, undertake internal deployment or allow non-civil service contract posts to be converted to civil service posts? Of the five professional posts concerned, what are the professions involved?

Asked by: Hon. TSE Wai-chuen, Tony

Reply:

- (1) Safety inspections of high speed roads and other trunk roads are conducted once every day and once every seven days respectively. The inspection aims to identify all defects that are likely to create danger or serious inconvenience to road users. Such defects, when identified, would be made safe or repaired as soon as reasonably practicable and usually within 24 hours. For other defects identified, the HyD will plan and carry out

medium- and long-term maintenance works as necessary, having regard to the need to minimise any impact to the public. As the number of minor maintenance items is numerous, the figures are not readily available.

- (2) The HyD engages independent consultants to carry out bi-annual customer satisfaction surveys to assess the satisfaction level of the general public on the service performance of the HyD, examine the acceptability of standards laid down in the HyD's performance pledges and collect suggestions on areas for improvement. The outcome of the surveys serves as useful reference for the HyD to consider appropriate follow-up actions and to review its performance pledges so as to enhance its overall performance and public acceptability.

The surveys include telephone interviews with about 800 members of randomly selected households in Hong Kong and meetings with about six focus groups (each with six to eight respondents). The results of the past five customer satisfaction surveys indicated that the public are generally very/ quite satisfied.

As part of the survey exercise, the consultant engaged by the HyD for the survey exercise is also required to carry out a methodology review to evaluate the effectiveness of the current mode of customer satisfaction survey and to suggest improvement for future survey methods. At the last survey exercise, the consultant has advised that the current mode of survey, which consists of both telephone interviews and focus group meetings, remains to be appropriate and cost-effective to collect public opinions. The HyD will continue to take into consideration views and recommendations put forward by the consultant and adopt as appropriate in preparing for the next survey.

- (3) The eight time-limited posts were deleted on 1 April 2014. The deleted posts include two Assistant Inspectors of Works, two Works Supervisors I and four Works Supervisors II. All the six new posts are civil service posts, which have been/will be filled by civil servants through internal deployment and new civil service recruits through open recruitment. The five professional posts are in the Engineer Grade.