

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)038

(Question Serial No. 0811)

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:

Road facilities are often criticised for being poorly managed. Yet the Highways Department (HyD) stated that on expressways and streets with high traffic flow, inspection and removal of overgrown vegetation, cleansing of traffic signs and inspections on railings, barriers and planters, etc. are carried out at least two to four times per year. Please inform this Committee on:

- (1) How many roads are currently categorised as not belonging to expressways or “streets with high traffic flow”? What tasks are included in the routine management of these roads?
- (2) The public often make complaints about traffic signs being blocked by roadside vegetation, and about structures of highway noise barriers, Government-funded bus interchanges, footbridge etc. being covered in dust. However, “the key performance measures” are only related to the frequency of these management duties, but not their effectiveness. What are the current cleansing duties involved for these locations? How can it be proved that with the budget for the coming year, the related complaints concerned can be effectively dealt with?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yan, Albert (Member Question No. 34)

Reply:

- (1) The HyD has employed term contractors for the maintenance of all public roads, including the cleansing of street furniture. The total length of roads in Hong Kong is about 2 100 kilometres (km), out of which about 140 km are expressways and about 120 km are classified as roads with high traffic flow which need more frequent inspections and routine maintenance. Routine maintenance works (like cleansing of street name plates, traffic signs, directional signs, railings, barriers and planter walls) for the other roads of 1 840 km in length are conducted at half-yearly intervals.

- (2) The HyD is responsible for the maintenance of vegetation along expressways and at roadside slopes, as well as the cleansing of highway structures and street furniture. Such maintenance works include regular pruning of overgrown vegetation affecting traffic, cleansing of noise barriers, footbridges, and street furniture within public transport interchanges which are under the HyD's maintenance. The above maintenance works are outsourced to district-based term maintenance contractors. There are clear specifications under the maintenance contracts about the required standards of the maintenance works. The HyD monitors the performance of the contractors regularly to ensure that their works meet the required standards.

- End -