

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)212

(Question Serial No. 1544)

Head: (706) Capital Works Reserve Fund - Highways

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (K K LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

According to Subhead 6845TH “Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) Hong Kong boundary crossing facilities (HKBCF) – reclamation and superstructures”, the estimate for 2015-16 is \$7,339.35 million, representing a more than twofold increase over the revised estimate for 2014-15. What is the reason for the significant increase? What is the timetable for using the remaining provision? How can the progress of the project be expedited?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (Member Question No. 30)

Reply:

According to Rule 49 of the Finance Committee Procedures, special meetings of the Finance Committee are convened to examine the annual Estimates of Expenditure prepared by the Government in support of the Appropriation Bill.

Expenditure charged to the Capital Works Reserve Fund do **not** form part of the Appropriation Bill. As such, questions relating to expenditure under the Fund are **not** relevant to the examination of the Estimates of Expenditure or the Appropriation Bill.

Subhead 6845TH “HZMB HKBCF – reclamation and superstructures” involves reclamation and construction of superstructure on the land formed. Superstructure works have commenced in phases since 2014. As more infrastructure works will take place in the coming year, the project expenditure is expected to increase substantially in 2015-16 compared with 2014-15.

As indicated by the Secretary for Transport and Housing at the Legislative Council Panel on Transport on 16 January this year, the Joint Works Committee of the Three Governments (JWC) had advised that it would be very difficult for the entire HZMB project to be completed by end 2016. The JWC and the HZMB Authority will further conduct an

in-depth and objective analysis on the programme of the project. Besides, Mr Li Chun-hong, the Director of the Guangdong Development and Reform Commission, advised at the press conference of the third session of the 12th Guangdong Provincial People's Congress held on 10 February this year that as the HZMB project encountered many unforeseen difficulties and technical problems, it appeared to be very difficult to commission the HZMB by end 2016.

As for the local projects in Hong Kong, according to the current progress, the HKBCF and the Hong Kong Link Road projects may not be completed in time by end 2016. The Highways Department (HyD) is reviewing the anticipated completion dates. Together with its consulting engineers and resident site staff, the HyD will closely monitor the works progress, supervise the contractors, ensure safety and quality of works, and endeavour to implement the projects to dovetail with the commissioning of the Main Bridge.

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