

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**THB(T)255**

**(Question Serial No. 4173)**

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:

In respect of the Department's work to maintain the integrity of the road network with particular emphasis on safety and serviceability, please provide the following information:

- (1) In the past three years, how many cases of complaints related to road subsidence did the Department receive? What was the number of injuries involved in these cases? What were the locations? (Please set out in a list) What was the total expenditure involved in the repairs of the road sections concerned?
- (2) In the past three years, did the Department monitor the subsoil conditions of footpaths regularly as well as carry out the same in response to the foundation works of individual construction sites? How did the Department identify road sections for inspection and what was the total number of inspections carried out? What was the number of locations where maintenance and repair works had to be carried out as a result of the inspections? (Please set out in a list the locations involved)
- (3) What is the total number of staff currently engaged in monitoring the subsoil conditions of footpaths? What is the average time required for completing the inspection for a road section?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (Member Question No. 2)

Reply:

- (1) From 2012 to 2014, the Highways Department (HyD) received from the public a total of 37 reports/complaints on subsidence of carriageways and footpaths under its ambit. In most of the cases, the causes of road subsidence were complicated, and were mainly related to erosion of soil underground caused by damaged underground conduits (such as sudden burst of water mains and collapse of drainage pipes) or works of construction sites nearby. Out of the 37 cases, the HyD carried out maintenance works for 22 cases at a total cost of about \$1.4 million. The remaining cases were followed up by other relevant parties.

The details of the 37 reports/complaints are listed below –

Year	Location by District	Number of reports/complaints received	Number of injuries
<b>(A) Carriageway</b>			
2012	Central and Western	1	0
2013	Yau Tsim Mong	1	0
	Central and Western	4	0
	Wan Chai	1	3
	Tuen Mun	1	0
	Yuen Long	1	0
2014	Central and Western	7	0
	Wan Chai	2	0
	Kowloon City	7	0
	Kwun Tong	1	0
	Tuen Mun	6	0
<b>(B) Footpaths</b>			
2012	—	0	—
2013	—	0	—
2014	Wan Chai	1	1
	Yau Tsim Mong	2	0
	Kowloon City	1	0
	Tsuen Wan	1	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>4</b>

- (2) The HyD conducts regular inspections of footpaths under its ambit once every one to three months, depending on their locations and pedestrian flow. Appropriate maintenance is arranged to keep the footpaths in a safe and serviceable condition for road users. In addition, the HyD conducts detailed inspections of footpaths once every six months to check their surface and structural condition. Data collected will be used for planning medium- and long-term maintenance works for footpaths. Despite our preventive efforts and maintenance works, road subsidence may still occasionally occur as a result of erosion of soil underground, commonly caused by damaged underground conduits or works of construction sites nearby. From 2012 to 2014, apart from the five cases of subsidence of footpaths as stated in (1) above, the HyD did not find any case of subsidence of footpaths through its regular inspections.
- (3) The HyD has 370 in-house professional and technical staff responsible for monitoring and supervising its contractors in carrying out regular inspections and maintenance works for public roads including footpaths. The time required for the inspection of individual road sections depends on various factors, such as the extent of the area concerned, road conditions and traffic situation.

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