

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)071

(Question Serial No. 1562)

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

With the widening works for Tuen Mun Road completed in end of 2015, the Government carried out greening works on a large number of noise barriers at many road sections between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan. Greening measures included putting soil and plants into the slots at the concrete base of the barriers. Yet observations reveal that most of the plants withered, leaving behind empty concrete slots which failed to achieve the purpose of greening. In this regard, please provide answers to the following -

- (1) What are the distribution and length of the “green walls” and “green roofs” at various sections of Tuen Mun Road at present?
- (2) According to the original plan, what is the number of plants involved in the greening works for Tuen Mun Road?
- (3) What was the expenditure involved in the widening of Tuen Mun Road and how much of it was related to greening works?
- (4) Prior to deciding on carrying out greening works for Tuen Mun Road, did the Highways Department (HyD) undertake any studies or assessment on the environment and plant species, either by itself or by engaging a consultant? If so, please provide the relevant information. If not, what were the reasons?
- (5) What are the species of the plants chosen for the greening works at Tuen Mun Road?
- (6) What was the cost spent on the maintenance of the greening vegetation at Tuen Mun Road in the past year?
- (7) What was the number of withered plants that were replaced in the past year? What was the overall percentage involved?
- (8) Please provide details on watering, maintenance and management of the greening vegetation by the HyD from end of 2015 to date?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (Member Question No. 12)

Reply:

- (1) Under the Reconstruction and Improvement of Tuen Mun Road project, approximately 1.7 kilometres (km), 0.6km and 1.1km long vertical green (VG) panels were installed on noise barriers under the Eastern section, Tai Lam section and Town Centre section

respectively. Approximately 11 000 square metres of roof green (RG) panels were installed on some noise enclosures under the Town Centre section.

- (2) According to the original plan on greening works for Tuen Mun Road, about 270 000 plants were installed at the VG panels on noise barriers alongside Tuen Mun Road, and about 500 000 plants were installed at the RG panels on the noise enclosures.
- (3) The estimated final contract sum for the Reconstruction and Improvement of Tuen Mun Road project is about \$7,870 million and the cost of the associated greening works (including hard and soft landscaping works) is about \$120 million.
- (4) The greening system including the selection of plant species was designed by our consultant's professional team including landscape architects, engineers and horticulturists, and was installed by specialist landscaping contractors. Before installation of the greening system, trial panel tests had been carried out and the results were found satisfactory.
- (5) The plant species for the VG panels on noise barriers along Tuen Mun Road are *Sansevieria trifasciata* "Hahnii", *Sansevieria trifasciata* "Golden Hahnii" and *Rhoeo discolor* "Dwarf". For the RG panels on noise enclosures, the plant species are *Arachis duranensis*, *Ophiopogon japonicas* cv "Nanus", *Rhoeo discolor* "Dwarf" and *Zoysia japonica*. All these species are commonly used in Hong Kong.
- (6) At present, the greening system and plants under the Eastern section have not been handed over to HyD, and the contractor is still responsible for the regular horticultural maintenance work at its own cost. For the Tai Lam section, the horticultural maintenance work for the greening system and plants is being carried out by HyD's term contractor responsible for high-speed road maintenance. Since there is no separate itemisation for such horticultural maintenance work under the term contract, HyD is unable to provide the horticultural maintenance cost under the Tai Lam section. For the Town Centre section, the annual horticultural maintenance cost in the past year was about \$1.9 million.
- (7) In the past year, the contractors replaced approximately one-tenth of the plants, which were in unsatisfactory condition.
- (8) The contractors will carry out regular horticultural maintenance work for the plants, including fertilisation, weeding and pest control as well as replacement of diseased and dead plants, etc. HyD will continue to monitor the growing condition of plants and follow up with the contractors to ensure their effective performance of horticultural maintenance, inspections and maintenance of the irrigation system so that there will continue to be a suitable growing environment for the plants.

- End -