

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)037

(Question Serial No. 1280)

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Capital Projects
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Daniel K W CHUNG)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

A few years ago, the Government launched the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme to retrofit barrier-free access facilities at public walkways. Will the Department advise this Committee on the following:

- (a) As at February 2018, how many projects under the UA Programme are (1) completed, (2) under construction, (3) to be commenced in 2018-19 and (4) unable to be commenced in 2019?
- (b) Please set out the amount of expenditure in respective years since the commencement of the UA Programme. What is the estimated expenditure for 2018-19 under the Programme?
- (c) According to available information, the Department is currently inviting the 18 District Councils (DCs) of the territory to nominate not more than three existing walkways in each district for implementation in the next phase of the UA Programme and has relaxed some restrictions. What are the earliest commencement dates of projects of the next phase? Will the Department consider further expanding the Programme in future to allow more walkways in each district be incorporated into the UA Programme?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 21)

Reply:

The Government has been installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by the Highways Department (HyD)), where technically feasible, (now known as the "Original Programme" under the UA Programme introduced in August 2012) in response to the recommendation of the Equal Opportunities Commission. In parallel, the Government invited the 18 DCs in the first half of 2013 to prioritise the new items in their districts proposed by the public through the "Expanded Programme" of the UA Programme. Under the "Expanded

Programme”, each DC selected three public walkways for implementation. Currently, we are pressing ahead with the implementation of a total of 202 items under the UA Programme. As at 28 February 2018, 76 items were completed, 114 items were under construction. The remaining 12 items will commence construction as soon as possible upon completion of detailed design and other related work.

From December 2016 to September 2017, the Government again invited the 18 DCs each to further nominate not more than three walkways for implementation under the next phase of the UA Programme (referred to as the “Next Phase”). The walkways eligible for consideration by the DCs are no longer confined to public walkways maintained by the HyD, provided that certain criteria are met. The HyD has engaged consultants to carry out the investigation and design for the 48 items selected under the “Next Phase”. We anticipate that the construction works for these items will commence progressively starting from 2019.

Given the considerable number of walkways in hand for implementation under the UA Programme, we would first focus on the implementation of the items mentioned above. In the course of delivering the “Next Phase”, we will consolidate experience and, depending on the actual circumstances in the future, explore if there is any scope for further expanding the ambit of the UA Programme.

The expenditures on the UA Programme in 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 were \$6.6 million, \$28.5 million, \$232.2 million, \$554.3 million, \$779 million, \$801.9 million and \$862.2 million (estimate) respectively, covering the costs for conducting technical feasibility studies /investigation works, design, construction works and supervision of construction. The estimated expenditure in 2018-19 is \$736.6 million.

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