CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2221)

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 number of noise barriers at various road sections between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan. As observed, there was massive withering of vegetation on the greening noise barriers, which failed to achieve the purpose of greening. In this connection, please advise on the following:

1. What were the expenses for the maintenance of greening vegetation at Tuen Mun Road over the past year?
2. What is the frequency of watering and applying fertilizers for vegetation on the greening noise barriers at Tuen Mun Road?
3. What was the quantity of vegetation that was replaced due to withering over the past year? What was the overall percentage involved? Is it on the high side when compared with other greening noise barriers? If so, has the Government conducted any review to find out the cause?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 75)

Reply:

Under the Reconstruction and Improvement of Tuen Mun Road project, vertical green (VG) panels spanning approximately 3.4 kilometres were installed on noise barriers. The Highways Department (HyD) and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) undertake regular maintenance of the vegetation on these panels in different sections of the project.

1. The horticultural maintenance work is carried out under a maintenance term contract. There is no separate itemised breakdown for the cost of such maintenance work.

2. An automatic irrigation system has been installed for VG panels and the plants are irrigated every day for around ten to 20 minutes. As the VG panels are newly constructed,

with their proprietary soil medium supplying the nutrients needed by the plants, fertilisation is unnecessary for the time being.

3. About 303 700 plants were installed in the VG panels and approximately 42 600 plants (14%) were replaced in 2017. The overall percentage involved was within an acceptable range, as the withering of plants was mainly caused by damage to pipelines and driplines, and mechanical breakdowns of the irrigation system. HyD and LCSD will continue to monitor the growing conditions of the plants to ensure the performance of the VG panels.

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