

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-THB(T)02

(Question Serial No. S0063)

Head: (60) Highways Department

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

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

According to Reply Serial No. THB(T)025 and the reply given by the Director of Highways (DH_y) at the Special Finance Committee Meeting held on 18 April 2018, the \$269.6 million expenditure for the maintenance of the Hong Kong section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) in 2018-19 is actually the expenditure for the operation and maintenance of the HZMB Hong Kong Link Road (HKLR) and Hong Kong Port (HKP) in 2018-19. In this connection, will the Government advise me on the following:

- (1) Have the HZMB HKLR and HKP projects been completed? If so, please provide the dates of completion. If not, what will be the anticipated dates of completion for these two projects?
- (2) At the meeting, the DH_y stated that the maintenance expenditure concerned is the maintenance expenditure for the entire 2018-19, which covers, inter alia, payment to the contractor before the commissioning. Please advise how much of the \$269.6 million is set aside for the maintenance expenditure after the commissioning (i.e. when the HZMB Hong Kong section is in full operation) and how much is for the payment to the contractor before the commissioning?
- (3) What are the respective expenditures for the maintenance of the HZMB HKLR and HKP when the HZMB Hong Kong section is in full operation without cessation throughout a financial year?
- (4) At the meeting, the DH_y claimed that the maintenance expenditure included the cost for electricity and lighting. But according to the Estimates under Head 60, highways maintenance is subsumed under Subhead 000 of Head 60 whereas electricity for public lighting is under Subhead 272. What are the reasons for the electricity bills of the HKP and HKLR to be booked under maintenance expenditure?
- (5) At the meeting, the DH_y replied that the maintenance expenditure is mainly related to the operation of the HKP. But according to the reply of the Government, the maintenance expenditure for the HKLR in 2018-19 amounts to \$143.9 million. Out of the \$143.9 million, how much is for the maintenance expenditure before the commissioning and how much is for such expenditure after the commissioning?

- (6) Whether the repair cost for wear and tear is included in the maintenance expenditure for the HZMB Hong Kong section in 2018-19? If so, what is the amount for the year?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chi-chuen

Reply:

The Highways Department (HyD) is responsible for maintenance of public roads. The HyD engages contractors to undertake routine inspections and, where necessary, arrange appropriate maintenance works to public roads, so as to keep them in safe and serviceable conditions for road users. The same applies to the road systems on the HZMB HKLR and the HKP.

HKLR is a 12km-long strategic link with expressway standard connecting the HKP with the HZMB Main Bridge at the boundary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Maintenance of HKLR cannot be directly compared with other ordinary roads in Hong Kong as some marine viaducts of the HKLR have unprecedentedly long span structures (up to 180m span). Also, there are over 150 viaduct piers (with some of them situated at nearly 50m above sea water level). The maintenance cost of the HKLR covers daily inspection and cleansing of road carriageways, routine maintenance of the marine and land viaducts, regular monitoring of the structural health of the viaducts, electricity cost for highways depots for the HKLR, etc.

As for the HKP, its maintenance cost covers the management, operation and maintenance of most of the common facilities on the 130 ha-HKP, including the Passenger Clearance Building with an area of over 90 000 m². The cost also includes general traffic and crowd control on the HKP, cleansing, maintenance of the landscape area, electricity cost for several ancillary buildings of the HyD, etc.

The maintenance cost covers that for normal wear-and-tear maintenance. There is no breakdown on this.

“Subhead 272 Electricity for public lighting” is for paying electricity bills for all highways facilities including public lighting, traffic signals, lifts and escalators for footbridges and subways, and ventilation systems for public transport interchanges, etc. The cost for electricity for road lighting at the HZMB HKLR and HKP is charged under Subhead 272. Electricity cost charged under “Subhead 000 Operational Expenses” is for paying electricity bills for several buildings in the HKP, for which the HyD has taken up the maintenance responsibility. An example is the Passenger Clearance Building.

The commissioning date of the HZMB will be announced once confirmed. As the commissioning date is not yet determined when preparing the estimates for the financial year 2018-19, a twelve-month operation of HZMB HKLR and HKP has been assumed for budgetary purpose. Against this background, the maintenance cost for the HZMB HKLR and the HKP in 2018-19 is \$143.9 million and \$125.7 million respectively.

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