

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****THB(T)018****(Question Serial No. 3175)**

Head: (60) Highways Department

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

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Jimmy P M CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

When typhoon Mangkhut ripped through Hong Kong last year, the Government failed to react immediately to the unexpected road traffic situations in various districts. To date, some of the public roads and facilities (especially those in remote areas) have not yet restored to original condition.

Will the Government inform this Committee of the expenditures on handling emergency incidents in the past five years and the details of the usage? Making reference to the experiences in previous years, has the Government increased the estimate to support the new response measures for emergency incidents? Please advise the details.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

After the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut, the Highways Department (HyD) cleared and reopened all strategic roads and the roads leading to/from bus depots on 18 September 2018 (typhoon signal was downgraded to No. 3 at 5:20 am on 17 September 2018). Most other roads blocked by fallen trees were cleared for vehicular traffic on or before 22 September 2018. The HyD also removed all blockages to carriageways and cycle tracks by October 2018 and November 2018 respectively.

The repair works of a section of village access at Cheung Chau is still ongoing. The site concerned had been fully occupied for stabilisation works of an adjoining slope, which was also damaged during the typhoon, till February 2019. The HyD commenced the repair works of the village access in early March 2019 and will complete the works by May 2019.

In the past five years, the expenditures for carrying out emergency works are summarised in the table below –

Financial Year	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Expenditure (\$ million)	2.3	1.8	1.7	1.3	13.1

The emergency works mainly involve the removal of fallen trees, repair of carriageway and traffic signs, and removal of obstacles and debris on roads. In 2018-19, about \$11 million was used for the urgent tree removal works, as well as the road and slope repair works after the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut.

After the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut, the HyD's contractors had deployed a substantial amount of labour, plant and equipment to handle the emergency recovery and rectification works. The HyD is conducting a review with the contractors on the level of emergency stand-by resources (e.g. labour, plant and equipment) to be provided so as to enhance the response time and handling capacity during the initial recovery stage after a typhoon attack. The HyD will continue to strive for more effective preparation for and response to natural disasters so as to enhance the department's capability in handling post-disaster recovery and repair works.

- End -