

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)269

(Question Serial No. 3434)

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (4) Technical Services
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (Jimmy P M CHAN)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the technical standards for road constructions and maintenance, please inform this Committee of the following -

- (1) Has the Administration conducted inspection upon completion of construction or maintenance by the contractors to check whether the actual road conditions comply with the relevant standards?
- (2) Road users complained that there are inconveniences of all kinds in the actual use of the roads (e.g. it is not possible for buses which are currently 12.8 metres in length to use some of the roundabouts and the buses have to reverse) while some criticised that the road designs are not suitable for use. Has the Administration consulted the views of the users when designing the roads?
- (3) Comparing with some overseas regions, roads in Hong Kong are rugged and uneven. Has the Government made references to road construction standards overseas and adopted appropriate materials and workmanship to make our roads flat and smooth?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 70)

Reply:

- (1)
The Government attaches great emphasis on quality control of road construction and maintenance works.

For road construction works, works departments will engage professional engineering consultants and resident site staff to design and supervise the construction of the projects. The consultants have to follow the requirements set out by the Government and ensure that the construction carried out by the contractors are in strict accordance with relevant contract specifications. All completed road works projects will be inspected by the consultants or the Highways Department (HyD) to ensure that the works comply with the specified requirements and standards.

For road maintenance, the HyD currently arranges contractors through eight maintenance contracts to conduct regular inspection of public roads in the territory and repair wear and tear as well as damaged road surfaces. The HyD is responsible for supervising and auditing the contractor's works to ensure that the completed works comply with the specified standards under the maintenance contracts.

(2)

Due to various site constraints, roads in Hong Kong are normally designed for vehicles up to 12 metres long, which is the maximum overall length of buses as stipulated in the First Schedule of "Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles) Regulations" (Cap. 374A). The design is able to cater for the great majority of vehicles on the roads. If an application for the use of 12.8-metre-long buses to operate on a specific route is received from a franchised bus operator, the Transport Department will, based on the results of trial runs, review and consider whether the road conditions along the proposed route are suitable for the operation of such buses on a case-by-case basis.

(3)

While up-keeping our road surfaces is a challenging task given the heavy traffic in Hong Kong, we strive to maintain the roads in safe and proper conditions for public use. In addition to regular maintenance and systematic re-surfacing, we have been collaborating with local universities to make use of state of the art materials to improve road pavement with reference to overseas experience. We also carry out tests on surface regularity for repaired road sections to ensure compliance with the required standards.

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