

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(T)271

(Question Serial No. 4395)

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:

In the past year, Hong Kong was attacked by typhoons on several occasions. Roads were obstructed by fallen trees in the aftermath of typhoons, affecting the commuting of the public to and from work. In this regard, please advise the Committee of the following -

- (a) What was the number of cases of road obstruction due to fallen trees being handled by the Highways Department (HyD) in the past year?
- (b) Regarding the removal of fallen trees from the roads, what were the times required by the HyD for handling each of the cases in the past year?
- (c) Whether the HyD has adequate manpower and adopted any mechanism to tackle the road obstruction problems due to fallen trees in the aftermath of typhoons?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

- (a) In 2018, the HyD handled a total of 4 852 cases of road blockage due to fallen tree.
- (b) Upon the receipt of reported fallen tree cases, the HyD would conduct site inspection as soon as possible. For urgent cases where the fallen tree blocks traffic or affects road safety, clearance operation would commence within a few hours. Occasionally, fallen trees might affect footpaths or cycle tracks, these cases could generally be cleared within 48 hours. For tree debris on slopes, at remote locations or where it is inaccessible by vehicles, more substantial preparation such as temporary traffic arrangements, deployment of plant and access arrangement would be required, the clearance works for these cases therefore take a longer time. Owing to the unprecedented massive amount of fallen trees over the territory after the passage of the super typhoon Mangkhut, the clearance works have taken a longer time than usual.
- (c) The HyD deploys maintenance contractors under its management to handle the emergency recovery, rectification works and clearance works after typhoon. 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.