

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

TLB029

(Question Serial No. 0314)

Head: (60) Highways Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (YAU Kwok-ting)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

Regarding the repair and maintenance works and road improvement works of public carriageways and road facilities carried out by the Highways Department, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

- (1) According to the Government's knowledge, what were the numbers of traffic accidents caused by poor carriageway surfaces over the past 3 years?
- (2) What were the frequencies, manpower and expenditures for site inspections on busy trunk roads and road sections? Please list the relevant information in a table, categorised by the 18 districts.
- (3) As at 2025, is there any information on the progress of adopting more durable and environmental materials to improve road surface conditions? If yes, what were the item and programme details? If not, will relevant studies or trials be commenced in the future?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- (1) Over the past 3 years, the Highways Department (HyD) did not receive any cases regarding traffic accidents caused by poor carriageway surfaces.
- (2) The HyD has in place a regular road inspection mechanism, through which term contractors are engaged to carry out the relevant works. Expressways carrying high-speed traffic and high traffic are inspected daily, other trunk roads are inspected every week while ordinary roads are inspected every 1 to 3 months respectively. When road damage is identified, appropriate repair works would be arranged by contractors in a timely manner.

As at 31 March 2025, the HyD has an establishment of 1 139 staff members under the Programme of District and Maintenance Works, who are tasked with district administration and road maintenance works. Apart from works related to road

maintenance (including regular road inspections), the relevant manpower is also responsible for planning and managing road maintenance programmes and supervising maintenance works, managing the emergency control centres to deal with emergencies such as landslips, washouts and fallen trees, as well as co-ordinating road excavation works carried out by public utilities. Besides, the relevant manpower is required to handle other district administration works, which include providing advice on road matters relating to land sale, public and private sector development plans and provision of access, as well as the implementation of minor road improvement works. There is no separate breakdown of the staff establishment for on-site road surface inspections in respect to the busy trunk roads and road sections.

The road maintenance expenditures of the HyD from 2023 to 2025 are \$1.7291 billion, \$1.6559 billion and \$1.6576 billion respectively. Road inspection is a part of the HyD's overall road maintenance works and the HyD does not maintain a breakdown of figures by districts.

- (3) The HyD attaches great importance to the quality of road works and has been continuously researching and introducing more durable bituminous materials for paving, so as to enhance road quality and reduce maintenance frequency and resource consumption. Since 1 April 2025, the HyD has fully adopted "Highly Modified Stone Mastic Asphalt (HMSMA)", a highly modified bituminous material that has better anti-deformation, anti-aging and anti-fatigue performance than the existing bituminous materials, for road paving at suitable locations. For the repair works of high speed road surfaces, the HyD would adopt Highly Modified Friction Course (HMFC) material, which exhibits high permeability and can rapidly drain rain water from road surfaces, thus reducing the opportunities of traffic accidents caused by slippery road surfaces. Also, such material can reduce the noise generated while cars rolling over the road surfaces, creating a quieter road environment. The HyD will continuously research and introduce more durable bituminous material for road paving, thereby enhancing road surface quality and reducing repair frequency, and at the same time creating a better driving environment for drivers.

The HyD has recently introduced road surface material namely "Ultra-thin Overlay (UTO)" from Chinese Mainland. The bitumen used possesses higher viscosity and elasticity than the highly modified bitumen currently used in Hong Kong and the aggregates used called Diabase which is stronger and have higher abrasion resistant than the commonly used granite. The UTO is suitable for repairing both bituminous and concrete pavements. With a thickness of only about 20 mm, it reduces resource consumption and shortens construction time. The HyD successfully completed on-site trials paving schemes at two locations on Hong Kong Island in December 2025, namely Shing Tai Road in Chai Wan and the Wong Chuk Hang Road Flyover and the trials achieved satisfactory results. In future, the HyD will apply this material at suitable locations based on actual site conditions and needs, so as to continuously enhance road surface quality.

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