

TLB022

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2305)

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) District and Maintenance Works, (4) Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (YAU Kwok-ting)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

There has been a significant decrease in both actual expenditures and approved estimates for electricity (Subhead 272) and highways maintenance (Page 549) under Operational Expenses in 2025-26. The estimates for electricity will decrease further in 2026-27. It is clearly inconsistent with the fact that the Highways Department is carrying out or planning to carry out numerous infrastructure and railway projects, as well as taking over major infrastructure such as the Tai Lam Tunnel and Central Kowloon Bypass during the year. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon BOK Kwok-ming, Aaron (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

The Highway Department's (HyD) revised estimate under Subhead 272 Electricity for public lighting in 2025-26 is 10.2% lower than the actual expenditure in 2024-25 and 12.9% lower than the approved estimate in 2025-26. It is mainly due to the decrease in fuel cost adjustments charged by the two power companies and the decrease in electricity consumption resulting from the HyD's constant promotion of energy-saving measures of road facilities. The HyD will in 2026-27 further formulate an energy-saving target of decreasing 2% of electricity expenses. It is expected that expenditure in the aspect of electricity supply will decrease further in 2026-27.

Regarding highway maintenance, the revised estimate for 2025-26 is 4.1% more than the actual expenditure in 2024-25, but 7.7% less than the original estimate for 2025-26. This adjustment is mainly due to changes in the completion dates of certain new road works and relevant projects, resulting in corresponding adjustments to the dates and expenditures for their handover to the HyD for maintenance. The HyD took over major infrastructure projects, such as the Tai Lam Tunnel and the Central Kowloon Bypass (Yau Ma Tei Section), in 2025. Besides, the HyD has reserved provisions for the required expenditures on electricity supply and highway maintenance for these projects in the approved estimate for 2025-26. However, due to the reduction in fuel cost adjustments, as well as the deferred handover of various road works and relevant projects (including the transport infrastructure in

the Diamond Hill Development Area, the installation of lifts under the Universal Accessibility Programme, and the Wan Chai Development Phase II etc.) for the HyD's maintenance, the revised estimate for 2025-26 has been reduced accordingly.

Subhead 000 Operational expenses and Subhead 272 Electricity for public lighting cover only the recurrent expenditure of the HyD and do not include the expenditure required for carrying out infrastructure and railway works.

- End -