CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2335)

Head: (60) Highways Department

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

Programme: (4) Technical Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

1. In Subhead 272 Electricity for public lighting, the revised estimate is roughly $230 million, which has decreased by more than 12% when compared to the approved estimate. What are the reasons for the significant reduction of the revised estimate? Also, what are the reasons for the further 2% reduction in the 2026-27 Budget?

2. Adopting environmentally friendly energy in public facilities promotes the reduction of carbon footprint in Hong Kong. What are the ratios of adopting environmentally friendly energy for the roads and other public facilities under the ambit of the Highways Department (HyD)? What are the main areas for using environmentally friendly energy? Are there any plans to further implement the application of environmentally friendly energy within the year? If yes, what are the details and expenditures? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAM Ming-fung, Lothair (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

1. Subhead 272 Electricity for public lighting covers the electricity expenditure for all road facilities, including street lighting, traffic signals, lifts and escalators at footbridges and subways, and ventilation equipment at public transport interchanges. The revised estimate for 2025-26 was 12.9% less than the approved estimate, mainly due to the reduction in fuel cost adjustments charged by the two power companies and the Highways Department's (HyD) constant promotion of energy-saving measures for road facilities to reduce electricity consumption. For 2026-27, the HyD has further set an energy-saving target to reduce electricity expenditure by 2%.

2. To continuously promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, the HyD considers the adoption of renewable energy technologies in road and relevant public facility projects wherever reasonably practicable. In recent years, the HyD has installed solar panels and photovoltaic (PV) systems on suitable road structures, such as footbridges, subways, covered walkways, and noise enclosures. These systems convert solar energy into electricity to power various road facilities (including facilities such as lighting, escalators

etc.). The solar panel systems installed on road structures generate a total of approximately 60 000 kWh of energy every year. In 2026-27, the construction expenditure for photovoltaic (PV) systems is approximately $1.7 million. In addition to installations on highway structures, the HyD has also installed PV panels and solar thermal water heating system on the rooftop of the Kai Tak Administration Building under the Central Kowloon Bypass project. They can generate over 20 000 kWh of energy annually.

The HyD will continue to explore other technically and financially feasible options for adopting green energy in road and relevant public facility projects.

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