

LCQ13: Road management and repair works

Following is a question by the Hon Kam Nai-wai and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Ms Eva Cheng, in the Legislative Council today (November 9):

Question:

Regarding road maintenance, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) of the number of complaints or reports received about roads in need of maintenance in each of the past five years, together with a breakdown by the channel through which the complaint or report was made and the 18 District Council districts; of the time normally needed for the relevant government departments to handle the complaints or reports and repair the roads concerned upon receipt of such complaints or reports;
- (b) of the respective details of the manpower, budget, actual expenditure, random checks and monitoring work involved in road maintenance and handling of the relevant complaints or reports in each of the past five years; and
- (c) whether any mechanism is in place at present to check and monitor road conditions; if so, of the details of the manpower, budget, actual expenditure, random checks and monitoring work involved in each of the past five years; if not, the reasons for that, and how it ensures that roads are in good conditions?

Reply:

President,

The reply to the three parts of the question is as follows:

- (a) According to the record of the Highways Department (HyD), there were 5 551, 5 153, 6 446, 5 678 and 5 750 complaints or reports received about roads in need of maintenance between 2006 and 2010, and the breakdown by the 18 District Council districts and the channels through which the complaints or reports were made are listed in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

According to the performance pledge set by the HyD, the Department will reply to public complaints or enquires within seven working days upon receipt. For complicated cases involving other departments, initial replies will be provided within seven working days, while detailed replies will be provided after obtaining information from the relevant departments.

If a case concerns road safety (such as obstacles on expressways or pot holes on carriageways, cycling tracks and footpaths), the HyD undertakes to clear the obstacles on expressways within eight hours upon receipt of the reports concerned, and complete the repair works of pot holes on carriageways, cycling tracks and footpaths within 48 hours to ensure the safety of road users.

(b) and (c) At present, the HyD adopts road management and repair works contract approach to engage qualified contractors for carrying out the routine road inspection, repair and maintenance works, so that the roads can be ensured to be kept in good conditions. The contract requires contractors to deploy staff to carry out regular safety inspections for the roads. Expressways carrying high-speed traffic and high traffic throughput are inspected daily; while trunk roads and other primary distributor roads in urban areas are inspected weekly. This kind of safety inspection aims to identify, as early as possible, defects that are likely to pose dangers or cause inconvenience to the public, and arrange for repair works and follow up actions.

In addition, contractors also conduct detailed inspections for all types of road once every six months. This kind of detailed inspection aims to determine the detailed surface and structural conditions of footpaths and collect relevant data for planning mid- and long-term repair works so that maintenance could be done in an organised manner for preventive purpose.

To ensure that the contractors' performance and quality of inspection, repair and maintenance satisfy the requirements, the HyD will conduct audits, on a sampling basis, on the road sections which have been inspected by the contractors. Apart from auditing the roads inspected by contractors on a sampling basis, the HyD also carry out surprise inspections of contractors by conducting independent inspections in each district without advance notice. Any defects found on the road facilities or defect reports received from the public will be brought to the attention of the contractors immediately so that they can take follow-up actions and arrange for repair works. The HyD will monitor the progress of repair works to ensure that damaged facilities will

be rectified as early as possible.

The manpower, budget and actual expenditure involved in road repair works and handling of complaints or reports concerned by the HyD in each of the past 5 years are listed in Table 3.

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