

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(W)238****(Question Serial No. 5240)**

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

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

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (CHUNG Kum Wah, Daniel)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question (Member Question No. 16):

What is the 2014-15 estimate for the Drainage Services Department (DSD)'s duty visits or exchange activities in the Mainland? Please provide information on the themes of the duty visits or exchange activities in the Mainland planned for 2014-15. How will the Administration prevent activities irrelevant to official duties from taking place during duty visits outside Hong Kong? And how will the Administration prevent applications for revising visit destinations from becoming a mere formality?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yuk-man

Reply:

In 2014-15, when there are operational needs, officers of DSD will undertake duty visits or exchanges and attend regional and international conferences in the Mainland relating to planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of drainage and sewerage infrastructures. There are no specific plans for the time being.

Duty visits, if publicly funded, are subject to control under the relevant regulations and guidelines to ensure effective monitoring and proper use of public funds. There is control on aspects, such as duty visits should only be conducted when there are strong operational reasons; all duty visits should obtain prior approval formally and should avoid non-official activities; the officers concerned should provide all necessary information in respect of the proposed visit as far as possible when submitting the application; if there are any subsequent changes to the arrangements, the officers concerned should inform the approving officers as soon as possible who should then assess whether re-consideration of the applications is needed.