Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

S-HPLB(H)001

Question Serial

Oral Question

<u>Head</u>: 62 <u>Subhead</u> 000 - Clearance and Squatter Control

<u>Programme</u>: 6201 - Squatter and Temporary Housing Clearance

and Squatter Control

<u>Controlling Officer</u>: Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

(Housing)

<u>Director of Bureau</u>: Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question: Provide details of the financial provisions of \$378 million, such

as the clearance programme, including the Deep Bay Link Clearance project for construction of Shenzhen Western Corridor and the project for construction of Kowloon Canton Railway Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line in 2003, the number of squatters/structures to be cleared and the number of clearees

involved etc (Reply Serial Nos. HPLB(H)-005 and 007)

Asked by: HON. LI Wah-ming, HON. LAU Wai-hing

Reply: Head 62 provides funds, amounting to \$378 million in 2003-04,

for the Housing Department to carry out its squatter control and

clearance programme, which entails the following activities:

(a) to patrol squatter areas in the New Territories regularly to

detect, deter and demolish any new squatter structures.

Based on rough projections from our past experience, we

estimate some 520 new illegal structures will be

identified and demolished during regular patrols this year;

(b) to maintain and improve the facilities in existing squatter areas, such as setting up and repairing lamp poles, refuse

collection points and toilets etc., before their clearance;

- (c) to carry out clearances for development, safety or environmental improvement purposes. We have recently completed the clearance for the construction of Kowloon Canton Railway Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line. The Deep Bay Link clearance is still in progress. In addition, the Housing Department will also carry out other clearances to be announced in 2003-04. If all on-going and planned clearances proceed on schedule, we expect that some 14 000 structures will be covered, and 7 100 persons will need to be rehoused; and
- (d) to rehouse occupants of illegal rooftop structures affected by the Buildings Department's enforcement actions. We estimate that about 3 200 illegal rooftop structures will be covered in 2003, and about 2 300 persons will need to be rehoused by the Housing Department.

In addition to the above, the Housing Department will also provide temporary shelters and rehouse families affected by natural disasters as they occur.

81% of the total provision under Head 62 is for personal emoluments and the remaining 19% for administrative overheads and operating expenses. There is no separate breakdown for individual clearance projects. Through efficiency savings initiatives and the Second Voluntary Retirement Scheme, we will continue to streamline our operations and reduce the manpower requirements so as to enhance cost-effectiveness.

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Signature	
Name in block letters	C. M. LEUNG
	Permanent Secretary for Housing
Post Title	Planning and Lands (Housing)
Date	31.3.2003