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Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment

Session No. : 7

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**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2010-11**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment
Session No. : 7**

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2010-11
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ENB01

Question Serial No.

S020

Head : 44 Environmental
Protection Department

Subhead (No. & title): 700 General
non-recurrent (Item 974 Review of
the Air Quality Objectives and
Development of a Long Term Air
Quality Strategy for Hong Kong –
Feasibility Study)

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment / Director of Environmental
Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment

Question : On 22.3.2010, Hong Kong was affected by the sandstorm coming from northern China and the air pollution index (API) in the Eastern District was as high as 495. The Administration indicated that when the API was over 500, people's health would be severely damaged. In the past, the Administration had communicated and co-operated with Guangdong Province on air quality issues, but Hong Kong's being swept by the sandstorm shows that we should promote further studies/co-operation with the Central Government on the prevention of desertification. Would the Administration please advise this Committee whether additional resources have been reserved in the Review of the Air Quality Objectives Study (Item 974 under Subhead 700 General non-recurrent) for conducting studies on the prevention of desertification? And whether there are any resources to tackle emergency situations like the sandstorm?

Asked by : Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply :

Sandstorms in northern China normally do not have significant impacts on local air quality. The episode experienced on 22 March 2010 was unprecedented. In the wake of the episode, the Government will step up monitoring of the meteorological data and air quality of places in the vicinity and inform the public if there are indications that sand plumes in the vicinity will likely approach Hong Kong and cause significant adverse impacts on local air quality. All the relevant Government Departments will also be alerted for necessary responses. These efforts would be undertaken through existing resources.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

ANISSA WONG

Post Title _____

Permanent Secretary for the Environment /
Director of Environmental Protection

Date _____

1 April 2010