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No problems with TMV stage one

THE CHINESE will pay for any poor workmanship arising from stage one of the Te Mato Vai (TMV) project, says deputy prime minister Mark Brown.

Brown said they were currently doing testing on materials quality and workmanship done by the contractor of stage one project, the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC).

He said material quality had been confirmed as meeting standards signed under contract of the project which is to deliver quality drinking water in Rarotonga.

However Brown said there might have been some joints that may need to be replaced, adding if there was any sort of replacement that all would be done by the contractor CCECC.

The stage one involved replacing the inner and outer ring mains and cross mains, then connecting the new ring mains to the rest of the existing pipe network.

"There is no leakage coming through from stage one, which was the Chinese component, and that's completed within budget," said Brown, who is also the Finance minister.

"There have been concerns raised about the quality of the materials that were used but that's been sent away for testing and has come back and confirmed that that's the standard of material that was contracted for.

"A few certain types of joints are not meeting pressure tests and I expect a full report on the extent of this shortly."

There are rumours doing the rounds that 70 per cent of the water main rings when inspected following the completion of stage one were found to be leaking.

However Brown said the figure of 70 per cent leakage was the situation with the original asbestos cement ring main and they have been totally replaced with polyethylene terephthalate (PET) pipes.

"That was the whole purpose of Te Mato Vai which was to upgrade the ring mains. We got sufficient water in our intake but most of it is lost through leakage," he said.

"Now we are improving the intakes. This is stage two and this is where we are seeing contracts are being firming up and as design is being also confirmed,

we can now get the actual costing, not just the estimates that were provided four years ago.

"And of course with the delays in the project, it means that cost has gone up ... the cost of supply, materials have gone up but it's within the estimate order that we anticipated so any cost increase are within that 50 per cent estimate and they are all associated with stage two."

Brown had earlier stated an extra \$30 million above its initial budget of \$60 million was within the Te Mato Vai project proposal design.

He said the \$60 million

referred to in the project proposal was a fifth-order estimate of what the project would cost. The fifth-order estimates have a plus or minus of 50 per cent, he added.

"An additional \$20-\$30 million above this fifth-order estimate is within the project proposal design," Brown earlier said.

He also said the government was confident they would not have to borrow extra money to meet the additional expense incurring from the project.

■ **Rashneel Kumar**

Enjoying themselves away from the television

