

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

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Question Serial No.

1949

Head : 82 Buildings Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Question :

Regarding the system for “retrieval of building plans and records in the form of electronic images on the internet”, will the Government inform this Committee the details of the system, including its expenditure and implementation timetable? How will the system improve the efficiency of building works? How will the Government ensure the accessibility of the system?

Asked by : Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply :

The Buildings Department currently provides service for the public to view and copy records of existing buildings in its Building Information Centre. The Department maintains an internal computer system to manage the records. In 2009-10, the Department will upgrade the system to provide the service via the Internet. Members of the public will be able to inspect records of existing buildings and place orders for hard copies of such records online.

The system covers the building records of all completed private buildings in Hong Kong, except pre-war buildings of which the Building Authority has no records. The system also does not include records of Government buildings and New Territories Exempted Houses which are not covered by the Buildings Ordinance.

The existing computer system was set up with a funding of \$50.3 million approved by the Finance Committee in July 2003. The estimated expenditures for upgrading the system to enable the provision of services via the Internet and annual maintenance of the system are \$8.7 million and \$0.8 million respectively.

The new system is being rolled out in phases. The “professional launch” targeting at building professionals including authorised persons, registered structural engineers and registered geotechnical engineers was rolled out in January 2009. The Department will monitor the performance of the system, and plan to roll out the system for members of the public in the second half of 2009.

The system can greatly improve the efficiency of the retrieval of building records by enabling round-the-clock online access. In addition, multiple users can gain access to the same building records simultaneously.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>AU Choi-kai</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Buildings</u>
Date	<u>18 March 2009</u>