

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

Reply Serial No.

DEVB(PL)085

Question Serial No.

0583

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

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Question :

Has the Buildings Department (BD) increased its resources so as to find out, by conducting site inspections, the specific conditions of unauthorised building works (UBWs) in existing buildings over Hong Kong, including the distribution, number and safety conditions of illegal rooftop structures, abandoned advertisement signboards and UBWs on external walls of the buildings. How much estimated resources will be required if such site inspections are conducted?

Asked by : Hon. TO Kun-sun, James

Reply :

Since April 2001, the Government has adopted a multi-pronged approach in tackling the problem of UBWs, including immediate removal of dangerous and new UBWs, identifying about 1 000 target buildings per year for large-scale operations to remove UBWs on their external walls, and enhancing public awareness on the problems of UBWs and owners' responsibilities to safeguard building safety through publicity and education programmes.

The BD has been provided with adequate resources to remove not less than 40 000 UBWs per year. To stop the erection of new UBWs, teams of consultants commissioned by the BD will perform regular patrol duties and will carry out inspections within 48 hours upon receipt of reports from the public. The programme to remove illegal rooftop structures on single staircase buildings is also continuing.

As part of the enforcement exercise to remove UBWs on external walls of buildings, the BD removes about 1 600 abandoned signboards annually. As a special measure for 2009 and 2010, the BD is embarking on a 12-month special operation to remove 5 000 abandoned signboards on top of its annual target. The special operation has just commenced in March 2009. It will help expedite the removal of abandoned signboards attached to buildings.

The BD has no plan to carry out comprehensive surveys on the distribution, number and conditions of unauthorised building works in Hong Kong. In line with the above mentioned comprehensive strategy, the BD will continue to focus on the removal of high risk UBWs in common areas of target buildings in the coming years.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u> AU Choi-kai </u>
Post Title	<u> Director of Buildings </u>
Date	<u> 17 March 2009 </u>