

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09  
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

**Reply Serial No.**

**DEVB(PL)042**

Question Serial No.

0085

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

Programme:                      Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer:                      Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau:                      Secretary for Development

Question :

Under the targets on responding to emergencies during and outside office hours for 24-hour emergency services, will the Administration inform this Committee:

- (1) the details of the work, manpower and expenditure involved?
- (2) the average time required for responding to emergencies during and outside office hours in 2007?
- (3) whether consideration will be given to shortening the target response time, and to match the response time during office hours for cases in the New Territories with those in urban areas, and to match the response time outside office hours for cases in other areas in the New Territories with those in urban areas/new towns in the New Territories?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

- (1) Emergency cases are dealt with by existing staff of the Buildings Department (BD). Officers responsible for different geographical districts would carry out emergency inspections during office hours as part of their normal duties in the respective districts. Designated officers are put on a duty roster to perform emergency duties outside office hours on a rotational basis. As emergency services are part and parcel of the Department's duties, there is no breakdown of the expenditure incurred in this area.
- (2) The average response times for BD's staff to attend to emergency cases during and outside office hours in 2007 were 0.88 hour and 0.9 hour respectively.

- (3) The BD thoroughly reviewed the procedures in handling emergency incidents and shortened the performance pledge times for conducting inspections to emergency incidents during and outside office hours in August 2005. Instead of pledging to respond to an emergency incident in three hours irrespective of its location, the BD pledges to inspect emergency incidents in urban areas within one and half hours, in the new towns of the New Territories within two hours, and in other areas of the New Territories within three hours upon receipt of the emergency reports during office hours. For emergency reports received outside office hours, the BD will inspect the sites within two hours for cases in urban areas and new towns of the New Territories, and within three hours for cases in other areas of the New Territories.

The above revised pledge times have taken into account the longer travelling time required for staff to attend to emergency incidents in different areas of the New Territories both during and outside office hours. We consider the current pledge times appropriate and will continue to monitor our provision of emergency services.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>CHEUNG Hau-wai</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Buildings</u>
Date	<u>26 March 2008</u>