

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

**Reply Serial No.**

**DEVB(PL)077**

Question Serial No.

0963

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 "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10", the Government said that it will continue to develop a "performance-based regulatory system to facilitate modern and innovative building design". In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee the criteria for "modern and innovative building design"? Have the criteria been announced yet? If yes, please provide the details; if not, the date of announcement.

Asked by : Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply :

The performance-based regulatory system being developed by the Buildings Department (BD) aims to transform certain prescriptive standards stipulated in the existing regulations under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) to performance requirements. The new system will specify the required outcome or performance to be achieved rather than prescribe the process, means or methods by which the specified outcome or performance can be achieved. For example, the minimum gradient of a drain is currently prescribed in the relevant regulations in order to achieve self-cleansing effect. In adopting a performance-based approach, the designer can demonstrate by calculation that the flow rate of the proposed gradient of the drain can achieve self-cleansing effect, instead of having to strictly follow the prescriptive minimum gradient. The new system will provide greater flexibility for building professionals to propose alternative and innovative designs to comply with the relevant safety and health performance requirements.

A Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers (PNAP) was first issued in late 2003 to provide for performance requirements as an alternative to the prescriptive standards for prescribed windows for habitable rooms, kitchens and offices as set out in the Building (Planning) Regulations.

In the meantime, BD has commissioned consultants to carry out studies on various aspects of planning, safety and construction requirements of buildings, including lighting and ventilation, fire safety, sanitary and drainage system and structural requirements. Most of the studies have been completed and legislative amendments to the relevant building regulations are being formulated in consultation with the industry. We plan to introduce the legislative amendments by phases starting late 2009.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

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AU Choi-kai

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Director of Buildings

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17 March 2009