

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

Reply Serial No.

DEVB(PL)091

Question Serial No.

0589

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

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Question :

Among the over 1 700 pre-1973 composite buildings inspected since July 2007, how many of them have been found to have irregularities in contravention of the law? How many have rectified such irregularities? What is the estimated amount of resources available annually in the coming years to follow up the repair and improvement works so that these buildings will comply with legislative requirements?

Asked by : Hon. TO Kun-sun, James

Reply :

All of the 1 747 buildings inspected in 2007 and 2008 (including 353 buildings inspected before the commencement of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O) (Cap. 572) in July 2007) were found not up to the current standards of fire safety construction. Such buildings thus require a variety of improvement works, the scale of which will be commensurate with the degree of risk of the individual buildings.

Most of the required improvement works are in the common part of a building and necessitate the co-ordinated efforts of all owners to agree on the extent and cost of such works. It will require more time if there is no owners' corporation in the building. Normally a period of not less than one year will be allowed for owners to comply with the fire safety directions. Currently, only the directions issued by end 2007 have expired. The Buildings Department (BD) and the Fire Services Department (FSD) have been carrying out inspections to ascertain the progress of upgrading works.

Following the commencement of the FS(B)O in July 2007, the BD has planned to inspect, in collaboration with the FSD, 840 buildings per annum with an annual provision of \$25 million for the BD. The BD will deploy additional provision of \$8.8 million, with 22 civil service posts (comprising six professional and 16 technical posts), to speed up the implementation programme starting from July 2009. As such, the annual target of inspection would be enhanced to 1 000 buildings for 2009 and 1 150 buildings for a full year from 2010 onwards.

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