

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2010-11

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

Reply Serial No.

DEVB(PL)086

Question Serial No.

0144

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 performance measures in respect of buildings and building works, the target of “responding to emergencies outside office hours within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.” is 100%. However, the actual figures in 2008 and 2009 (85.7% and 66.7% respectively) could not meet the target. Are there any measures to help improve the situation?

Asked by : Hon. IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina

Reply :

The target of responding to emergencies outside office hours within three hours applies to cases occurring in the remote areas in the New Territories.

In 2008, the Buildings Department (BD) handled 1 222 emergency cases, out of which 14 cases fell under the category of the pledged response time of three hours. Amongst these 14 cases, two could not meet the three-hour pledge. As a result, the performance in this category was 85.7%. One of the cases occurred when an extraordinary large number of emergency cases was received within a short period of time during which the red and black rainstorm warning signals were hoisted. The other case happened in Cheung Chau when the ferry service was suspended during the hoisting of typhoon signal No. 8.

In 2009, BD handled 971 emergency cases out of which six cases fell under the category of the three-hour pledge. Amongst these six cases, two could not meet the target. As a result, the performance in this category was 66.7%. One of the cases occurred in a remote village in Tai O, Lantau Island and the traffic condition was poor at the time. The other case happened in Lamma Island when the ferry service was suspended during the hoisting of typhoon signal No. 8.

Adequate manpower has been deployed in the BD to deal with emergency cases. All of the four cases failing to meet the three-hour pledge in 2008 and 2009 were due to extraordinary inclement weather, remoteness of the sites concerned and/or the suspension of ferry service. The BD has established procedures for handling emergency cases as stipulated in its "Emergency Handbook" which all duty officers are required to follow. The Department will continue to keep its procedures under periodic review and provide training to its staff for handling emergency cases. Deployment of staff to deal with emergency cases during inclement weather is one of the key areas that the Department will closely monitor.

Signature _____

Name in block letters AU Choi-kai

Post Title Director of Buildings

Date 19 March 2010