

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2010-11

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

Reply Serial No.

**DEVB(PL)111**

Question Serial No.

0647

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 the 24-hour emergency services in respect of buildings and building works, the percentage of actually responding to emergencies outside office hours within three hours for cases in other areas in the New Territories was only 66.7% in 2009. Please explain :

- (a) what are the reasons for the poor performance in 2009; and
- (b) as the actual performance of such work had not met the targeted 100% since 2007, with 87.5% in 2007, 85.7% in 2008, and 66.7% in 2009, what enhanced measures will be taken by the Department to meet this target; if there will be such measures, will the review of the existing rotational based staffing arrangement be included as one of the measures?

Asked by : Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply :

- (a) 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 2009, the Buildings Department (BD) handled 971 emergency cases, out of which six cases fell under the category of the pledged response time of three hours. Among these six cases, two could not meet the three-hour pledge. 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.

(b) Adequate manpower has been deployed in the BD to handle emergency cases. The BD has established system and procedures for handling emergency cases as stipulated in its “Emergency Handbook” which all duty officers are required to follow. The system is assigned with sufficient duty and back-up officers for attending to emergencies. The two cases failing to meet the three-hour pledge in 2009 were due to the remoteness of the sites concerned and/or extraordinary inclement weather coupled with suspension of ferry service. The Department will continue to keep its system and procedures under periodic review and provide training to its staff for handling emergency cases.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters     AU Choi-kai    

Post Title     Director of Buildings    

Date     19 March 2010