

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2011-12

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

Reply Serial No.

**DEVB(PL)103**

Question Serial No.

3306

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

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Question :

The Financial Secretary mentioned in his Speech that a barrier-free environment would be provided for the disabled in order to help them live independently and integrate into the community. Please advise:

- (a) the respective numbers of existing private buildings and government buildings to which the Design Manual 1997 and Design Manual 2008 do not apply; and
- (b) whether assessment has been made on the expenditure to be required if the private and government buildings mentioned in (a) above were to comply with the standards set out in the Design Manual 1997 or Design Manual 2008 . If yes, how much is the estimated expenditure? If no, will an assessment be made? What will be the manpower and expenditure required for the assessment concerned, and which department will be responsible for the work?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily

Reply :

- (a) The Design Manual issued in 1997 was not applicable to the some 34 000 private buildings constructed before the implementation of the Design Manual in 1997, and the Design Manual issued in 2008 was not applicable to another some 7 000 private buildings constructed after the implementation of the Design Manual in 1997 but before the implementation of the Design Manual in 2008. It is the established policy of the Government and the Housing Authority (HA) to comply with the prevailing requirements in the Design Manuals and, where practicable, achieve standards beyond the statutory requirements in the provision of barrier-free access and facilities.

- (b) The Design Manuals issued in 1997 and 2008 have no retrospective effect on private buildings constructed before the implementation of the Manuals. The Government has no plan to assess the expenditure required for existing private buildings to retrospectively comply with the requirements stipulated in the Design Manuals issued in 1997 or 2008.

As regards Government buildings, to speed up the progress of upgrading the barrier-free facilities in existing Government premises and facilities which have a frequent public interface to the latest design standards, the Architectural Services Department and other works departments, in collaboration with managing departments of these premises and facilities, will implement a major retrofitting programme covering about 3 700 Government premises and facilities. Works in 85% of these premises and facilities will be completed by June 2012 and the remainder by June 2014.

In tandem, the HA has also devised a retrofitting programme to improve the accessibility of the properties under its management. Most of the improvement works at 155 public rental housing estates, 23 commercial centres and 119 car parks will be implemented by 30 June 2012. To strike a balance between the progress of improvement works and service interruption and nuisances to tenants, the HA will schedule some of the improvement works for completion by 30 June 2014. To tie in with HA's lift modernisation programme, a small proportion of improvement works will be completed by 2016-2017.

The estimated total expenditure for the retrofitting programmes for the Government and HA venues is around \$1.3 billion.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters     AU Choi-kai    

Post Title     Director of Buildings    

Date     18.3.2011