

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

**DEVB(PL)108**

Question Serial No.

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

3103

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Question :

Under "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2011-12", the Buildings Department (BD) will launch a community monitoring programme to encourage the public to report building safety problems. Please advise on:

- (a) the details of the programme, and the resources and manpower involved;
- (b) how the BD will follow up such reports from the public.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

- (a)&(b) Building safety is a highly complex and multi-faceted issue. Tackling the problem of building neglect requires the co-operation of all members of the community. As such, the Buildings Department (BD) will work in partnership with building owners, building professionals and contractors as well as other members of the community by leveraging on the self-awareness of all stakeholders involved to properly observe building safety.

The "community monitoring programme" aims to mobilise members of the community to play a part to report building safety problems. For example, if a security guard of a building suspects that unauthorised building works (UBWs) are being carried out in a flat unit, he should report the case to the building management office or owners' corporation as well as the Buildings Department (BD). Members of the public can report building safety problems to the BD through the existing hotline (2626 1616), the 1823 Call Centre, e-mail (enquiry@bd.gov.hk), facsimile (2537 4992) or in writing. In addition, an on-line reporting system through the BD's website is being developed.

Upon receipt of a report, staff of the BD will take appropriate follow-up actions. In most cases, this involves a site inspection to ascertain the condition of the concerned building. If actionable UBWs or dilapidation are found during the inspection, the BD will issue statutory orders to the owners concerned requiring removal of the UBWs or repair of the building and register the orders in the Land Registry as an encumbrance of the property title. In the event that an owner fails to comply with the statutory order without reasonable excuse, the BD will consider instigating prosecution against the owner and carrying out the works required by the order in default of the owner.

As regards the resource and manpower implications, these reports will be handled by the existing 477 professional and technical staff of the Existing Buildings Divisions (EBDs) of the BD together with the additional resources of 124 professional and technical staff proposed to be allocated to the Department in 2011-12 as part of their overall duties to implement the Department's building safety and maintenance enforcement programme. In addition, the BD will continue to outsource part of the inspection and investigation work involved to private sector consultants. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of the manpower and expenditure involved solely in implementing the "community monitoring programme".

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters     AU Choi-kai    

Post Title     Director of Buildings    

Date     17.3.2011