

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

Head: 82 Buildings Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

- (a) Regarding the maintenance of private slopes and among the repair orders issued to the owners of these slopes, how many did the Buildings Department (BD) appoint consultants or contractors for the owners in each of the past five years? Under what circumstances will the BD appoint the professionals concerned for the owners of private slopes? What are the criteria for the selection of the consultants or contractors? On average, how long does it take the contractors to complete all the slope improvement works after their appointment? Have there ever been any consultants or contractors not re-appointed due to their poor performance? If yes, please provide the details.
- (b) In each of the past five years, how long on average did it take the owners of private slopes to complete the repair works after having received the Dangerous Hillside Orders (DHOs)? Among the owners, how many of them completed the slope repair works and rendered the slopes structurally safe meeting the relevant standards before the repair orders expired?
- (c) At present, how many DHOs are not yet complied with after the expiry date? Please list out the respective number of repair orders not complied with in 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years and 10 years or above after the expiry date?
- (d) Has the Government any plans to review the staff establishment of the Slope Safety Section? Will more resources be allocated to enhance the supervision of compliance with the DHOs? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

- (a) The primary responsibility to upkeep the stability of private slopes rests with the slope owners who should engage professionally-qualified persons to regularly inspect and, if necessary, repair or upgrade their slopes. The Government has been providing both financial and technical support to owners of private slopes to assist them in discharging their slope maintenance responsibility.

For those slopes that have become or are liable to become dangerous, the Buildings Department (BD) will issue a dangerous hillside order (DHO) to the concerned owners requiring them to engage professionally-qualified persons to inspect and repair the slope. If a DHO is not complied with by the owner within a specified period, the BD may appoint its consultant and contractor to carry out the inspection and any required repair or upgrading works on behalf of the owners (i.e. defaulted works), and subsequently recover the costs plus supervision charges from the owners. In the past five years (i.e. from 2007 to 2011), the BD awarded a total of 18 consultancy agreements for carrying out the defaulted works in respect of 55 DHOs.

In line with the established procedures, the selection and appointment of consultants and contactors for the carrying out of defaulted works are conducted through tendering exercises. The major consideration in selecting such consultants and contractors include the candidates' qualification and their relevant work experience. Since all the 18 consultancies are still ongoing, largely due to the fact that slope repair works often require a long period of time to complete and that multiple private slopes are often involved in each of the consultancies, we do not have information on the average time of completion of works. In the past five years, no consultant or contractor has been barred from re-appointment due to poor performance.

- (b) We do not have statistics on the average time taken by owners of private slopes in complying with DHOs. From 2007 to 2011, the BD issued a total of 661 DHOs. During the same period, 209 DHOs had been complied with.
- (c) As at 1 February 2012, 683 DHOs were not yet complied with. The requested breakdown is as follows:

Number of Years	Number of DHOs
1 to 3	305
4 to 6	195
7 to 9	98
10 or above	85
<i>Total</i>	683

- (d) To enhance the BD's enforcement action in relation to DHOs, the Slope Safety Section of the BD will be provided with additional manpower resources starting from 2012-13. The additional manpower provided to the section will enable the BD to accelerate its work in clearing the outstanding DHOs.

Signature _____

Name in block letters AU Choi-kai

Post Title Director of Buildings

Date 28.2.2012