

**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:

The number of buildings targeted for rectification of irregularities associated with sub-divided flats by the Buildings Department (BD) is 150 per year in 2011. The target will be revised to 200 as from 2012. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The actual number of buildings inspected by the BD in 2011 is 116, and the planned number of buildings to be inspected in 2012 is 187 only. What is the reason for not being able to meet the target in these two years?
- (b) What are the details of the resources and manpower involved in the operation? Will the resources and manpower be increased to inspect more buildings?
- (c) Of the 116 buildings actually rectified in 2011, what is their distribution by district, their age and the details of irregularities involved? How many cases have been resolved? How many cases involve irregularities repeatedly identified?

Asked by: Hon. LAM Tai-fai

Reply:

- (a) A large scale operation (LSO) to inspect 150 target buildings per year for rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats has been launched since 1 April 2011. The planned number of buildings to be inspected during the nine-month period from April to December 2011 is therefore three quarters of the annual target of 150 buildings (i.e. around 110 buildings). In 2012-13, additional resources will be provided to the Buildings Department (BD) to strengthen its enforcement work by, inter alia, increasing the number of target buildings to be inspected under the LSO to 200 per year starting from 1 April 2012.

The planned number of buildings to be inspected from January to March 2012 is thus one quarter of the annual target of 150 buildings, while the planned number of buildings to be inspected from April to December 2012 is three quarters of the annual target of 200 buildings. The total planned number of target buildings for 2012 is therefore 187.

- (b) The existing resources for 488 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division of the BD, together with the additional resources for 12 additional professional and technical staff proposed for allocation to the Department in 2012-13, will be deployed to carry out the aforementioned operation. As the LSO for rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats is part of the overall duties of the concerned Divisions of the BD to implement its building safety and maintenance enforcement programme, we are not able to provide a breakdown of the resources and manpower solely for handling this operation.
- (c) The distribution of the 116 target buildings inspected in 2011 on geographical basis is as follows :

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Target Buildings</b>
Central & Western	12
Wan Chai	11
Eastern	13
Southern	4
Kowloon City	16
Kwun Tong	6
Sham Shui Po	12
Wong Tai Sin	2
Yau Tsim Mong	17
North	3
Sha Tin	4
Kwai Tsing	4
Tsuen Wan	4
Tuen Mun	4
Yuen Long	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

The age distribution of the 116 target buildings inspected in 2011 is as follows :

<b>Age of Building (Years)</b>	<b>Number of Target Buildings</b>
Below 30	4
30 to 39	20
40 to 49	53
50 or above	39
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>116</i></b>

BD does not have a statistical breakdown on the distribution of sub-divided flats in these 116 target buildings by the types of irregularities involved. Nevertheless, based on the experience of BD's enforcement action, the most common irregularities found in the sub-divided flats in these 116 target buildings include formation of unauthorised door openings that contravene the fire-resisting construction requirements of the means of escape, installation of partition walls that block the fire escape routes, sub-standard drainage works that result in water seepage and excessive installation of partition walls and/or thickening of floor screeding that result in overloading of the floor screeding.

As at 31 January 2012, BD had issued 170 removal orders against the irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats so identified. Out of these removal orders, 15 orders had been complied with, involving 12 flats with sub-divided cubicles.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ AU Choi-kai

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Director of Buildings

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 27.2.2012