

**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:

In 2012-13, the Buildings Department will “implement a reporting scheme for unauthorised building works in New Territories exempted houses that constitute less serious contravention of the law and pose lower potential risks to building safety”. What are the details of the scheme? Will the public be consulted on the scheme? How much expenditure and manpower will be involved?

Asked by: Hon. LAM Tai-fai

Reply:

The Buildings Department (BD) will set up a dedicated section for implementing an enhanced enforcement strategy against unauthorised building works (UBWs) in New Territories Exempted Houses (NTEHs) in April 2012. Forty-one professional, technical and clerical staff will be allocated to this dedicated section in 2012-13.

The enhanced enforcement strategy includes a large scale operation (LSO) for removal of existing UBWs in NTEHs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety as the first round targets of enforcement, a Reporting Scheme for existing UBWs in NTEHs that constitute less serious contravention and pose lower potential risks to building safety, and immediate enforcement actions against other UBWs in NTEHs which constitute imminent danger, or are newly erected or found under construction.

The Reporting Scheme is designed to curb the emergence of new UBWs and to safeguard the structural safety of NTEHs. Under the Scheme, owners of existing UBWs in NTEHs may submit to the BD the required information on UBWs which were completed before 28 June 2011 and are not included in the list of first round targets. They will also be required to appoint qualified personnel to conduct inspections and verify the safety of the structures concerned. The reporting period will be open for six months from 1 April 2012 to 30 September 2012.

During the period of enforcement against the first round targets, the BD will not take immediate enforcement against the reported UBWs unless they are imminently dangerous. The BD will take priority enforcement action against those UBWs which have not been reported to the BD after the reporting period.

In formulating the enhanced enforcement strategy, the Administration has consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Development and has also taken into consideration the views from members of the public and Heung Yee Kuk.

As the Reporting Scheme is part of the overall responsibility of the dedicated section for a full range of work in relation to the enhanced enforcement strategy, we are not able to provide a breakdown of the total expenditure for the Reporting Scheme alone.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	_____ AU Choi-kai _____
Post Title	_____ Director of Buildings _____
Date	_____ 27.2.2012 _____