

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

DEVB(PL)073

Question Serial No.

2814

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

Programme: Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding unauthorised building works (UBWs) in New Territories exempted houses (NTEHs), please provide the following:

- a) Under the Reporting Scheme for UBWs in NTEHs, what is the ultimate number of reported cases received by the Department? What is the percentage these cases constitute among all the cases involving UBWs? Please list the respective number by districts in the New Territories.
- b) What is the provision of resources and manpower for the large scale operation to remove UBWs in NTEHs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety? What is the estimated number of UBWs to be removed?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Hak-kan

Reply:

- (a) At the end of the reporting period on 31 December 2012, the Buildings Department (BD) had received under the Reporting Scheme for unauthorised building works (UBWs) in New Territories exempted houses (NTEHs) 18 034 reporting forms, which involved more than 30 000 UBWs. The reporting forms are now being processed by the consultants commissioned by the BD for verifying the information provided, auditing the information on site, categorising the reported UBWs and entering the records into the BD's information system. Since the analysis is in progress, we are not able to provide at this stage a breakdown of the number of reported cases by districts in the New Territories. As the BD does not have the total number of UBWs in NTEHs, the BD is not able to provide the percentage that these cases constitute among all the cases involving UBWs.
- (b) Since 1 April 2012, the BD has set up a dedicated Village Houses Section to implement the enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs which includes a large scale operation (LSO) to remove existing UBWs in NTEHs that

constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety (known as First Round Targets), a Reporting Scheme for existing UBWs in NTEHs that constitute less serious contravention of the law and pose lower potential risks to building safety, and immediate enforcement actions against other UBWs which constitute imminent danger or are newly erected or found under constructions. The dedicated Village Houses Section comprises 41 professional, technical and clerical staff. In 2013-14, the annual operating cost of the section is estimated at \$33 million, made up of \$25 million in staff cost and associated departmental expenditure and \$8 million in consultancy fees. In the LSO, the BD adopts a phased approach in surveying individual villages in the New Territories for identifying the First Round Targets for priority enforcement action. The number of UBWs to be removed will depend on the outcome of these surveys to be conducted in the coming years.

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