

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

**DEVB(PL)088**

Question Serial No.

0620

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

Programme:                      Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer:      Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau:      Secretary for Development

Question:

On 1 April 2011, the Administration commenced a large scale operation (LSO) on inspection of a specified number of sub-divided flats each year in target buildings for rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats. Since the Buildings Department (BD) commenced the LSO, what is the number of buildings inspected in each district? Please list by District Council districts. How many sub-divided flats have been inspected? Of which, how many times have the BD invoked the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) to break into the flats for inspection? How many owners of unauthorised sub-divided flats were served removal orders or instituted legal action to require them to rectify the irregularities? What are the details? Up to now, what is the number of sub-divided flats with irregularities yet to be rectified? What is the expenditure for the manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Wai-king, Starry

Reply:

The large scale operation (LSO) to inspect 150 target buildings per year for rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats (SDFs) was first commenced in April 2011 (it should be noted that not all SDFs have irregularities of building works). The operation was enhanced in April 2012 by increasing the target to inspect 200 buildings per year, including 30 industrial buildings. The strategy of this operation was adjusted by taking into account the fire risk that might be brought about by hawker stalls when choosing the target buildings for the operation in 2012. As a result, 339 old style domestic and composite buildings in the vicinity of hawker stalls were selected, in addition to 30 industrial buildings. From April 2011 to February 2013, a total of 485 target buildings have been inspected with 2 587 SDFs identified.

The distribution of the 485 target buildings on geographical basis is as follows:-

<b>District</b>	<b>No. of target buildings</b>
Central & Western	40
Wan Chai	24
Eastern	39
Southern	4
Kowloon City	22
Kwun Tong	9
Sham Shui Po	149
Wong Tai Sin	9
Yau Tsim Mong	155
North	3
Sha Tin	6
Kwai Tsing	8
Tsuen Wan	7
Tuen Mun	6
Yuen Long	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>485</b>

Up to February 2013, the Buildings Department (BD) has invoked section 22 of the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123) to apply to the Court for warrant to effect entry to four SDFs for inspection under the LSO. The powers under section 22 of the BO were invoked only when the BD's staff had failed to gain access to the premises concerned after repeated attempts.

As at 28 February 2013, 1 229 removal orders had been issued against the irregularities of building works found under the LSO and 45 prosecutions had been instigated against failure to comply with removal orders issued under the LSO. The more commonly found irregularities of building works associated with SDFs are the formation of unauthorised door openings that contravenes the fire-resisting construction requirements of the means of escape, the installation of partition walls that blocks 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 results in overloading of the floor slabs. As the BD is still finalising the inspection results, the BD cannot provide information on the number of SDFs with irregularities yet to be rectified.

The existing resources for 493 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division of the BD have been deployed to carry out the aforementioned LSO. As the LSO 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 either the manpower or the expenditure involved solely for this operation.

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Post Title: Director of Buildings  
Date: 2.4.2013