

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

DEVB(PL)099

Question Serial No.

3227

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 the removal orders issued against unauthorised buildings works (UBWs) in New Territories exempted houses, please provide the following information:

- (1) What were the categories of irregularities involved in the 161 removal orders issued last year, and the details of follow-up action taken after these removal orders were issued?
- (2) Among the 400 removal orders expected to be issued this year against the UBWs mentioned above, what are the progress of conducting the building condition surveys and the categories of irregularities involved?
- (3) What are the staffing provision and expenditure at present for enforcing these removal orders, and the changes in the staffing provision and expenditure this year?

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

1. Since 1 April 2012, the Buildings Department (BD) has set up a dedicated Village Houses Section comprising 41 professional, technical and clerical staff to implement the enhanced enforcement strategy against unauthorised building works (UBWs) in New Territories exempted houses (NTEHs). 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 (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 in NTEHs which constitute imminent danger or are newly erected or found under construction. A total of 161 removal orders were issued in 2012 requiring the owners concerned to demolish UBWs in NTEHs. Of the 161 removal orders against UBWs in NTEHs, 122 of them were issued against First Round Target UBWs under the LSO. The majority of these UBWs are enclosed roof-top structures which cover more than 50% of the roofed-over area of the NTEHs. The other 39 removal orders were issued

against UBWs in NTEHs which were newly erected or found to be under construction. The owners are normally given 60 days for compliance with the order. Where an owner fails to comply with the requirements of a removal order without a reasonable excuse, the BD will instigate prosecution against the owner concerned.

2. As the 2013 surveys for identification of First Round Target UBWs have yet to be conducted, we are unable to advise on the categories of the irregularities involved at this stage.
3. There is no change in the establishment of the dedicated Village Houses Section in 2013-14. As the LSO is part of the overall responsibility of the Village Houses Section which undertakes the full range of work in relation to the enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs, we are unable to provide a breakdown of the total expenditure solely for enforcing the removal orders issued under the LSO.

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