

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

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Question Serial No.

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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 Administration indicated that 18 034 applications were received after the launch of the "Reporting Scheme for Unauthorised Building Works (UBWs) in New Territories exempted houses". When will the Administration categorise the reported UBWs and assess their risks? What are the expenditure and manpower involved? When will the Administration take priority enforcement action to remove other UBWs that have not been reported? What are the expenditure and manpower involved? What is the estimated time required to remove all the UBWs that have not been reported?

Asked by: Hon. TO Kun-sun, James

Reply:

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 for removal of existing UBWs in NTEHs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety, 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.

At the end of the reporting period on 31 December 2012, the BD have received under the Reporting Scheme 18 034 reporting forms which involve more than 30 000 UBWs. These reporting forms are now being processed by the outsourced consultants commissioned by the BD for verifying the information provided, auditing the information on site, categorising the reported UBWs and entering the records into BD's information system. The BD will then analyse the information collected and formulate further follow-up action plan.

Upon completion of the processing of the reporting forms submitted under the Reporting Scheme, priority enforcement action will be taken in response to public reports on those UBWs which have not been reported under the Reporting Scheme. As both the enforcement action against these unreported UBWs as well as the categorisation and risk assessment of the reported UBWs are part of the overall responsibility of the Village Houses Section which undertakes the 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 respective tasks.

We do not have an estimate on the number of UBWs in NTEHs and hence are unable to accurately assess the time span of the enforcement against all the unreported UBWs at this stage. Our target is to deal with all UBWs in NTEHs progressively and systematically. We will closely monitor progress and, where appropriate, make improvements in the light of operational experience to enhance efficiency for early completion of the enforcement work.

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