

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

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Question Serial No.

4919

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

Programme: Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Under the Programme, it is mentioned that the Department “continued the large scale operation on removal of large unauthorised signboards targeting at 120 such signboards in 2012.” Please provide the following information:

- 1) The details of these 120 large signboards, including the irregularities involved, the dates of enforcement, the fees for their removal works, their locations and the buildings involved;
- 2) The remaining number of large unauthorised signboards pending removal; and
- 3) The expected progress of work in 2013-14.

Asked by: Hon. TIEN Puk-sun, Michael

Reply:

1. The 120 large unauthorised signboards targeted for removal under the large scale operation (LSO) carried out by the Buildings Department (BD) in 2012 include projecting signboards with display areas larger than 20 square metres (m²), wall signboards with display areas larger than 40 m² and signboards with projections over street of more than 4.2 metres from the external wall of a building. These target signboards are unauthorised as they were erected without prior approval of building plans and consent to the commencement of building works by the Building Authority as required under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123).

The BD does not have readily available details of the locations of the target signboards and the buildings involved. The distribution of the premises involved in the LSO on removal of large unauthorised signboards in 2012 on geographical basis is tabulated as follows:

Area	Districts	No. of large unauthorised signboards targeted for removal
Hong Kong	Central and Western	14
	Wan Chai	14
	Eastern	8
	Southern	5
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>41</i>
Kowloon	Kowloon City	15
	Kwun Tong	7
	Yau Tsim Mong	21
	Sham Shui Po	13
	Wong Tai Sin	5
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>61</i>
New Territories	Islands	0
	North	0
	Sai Kung	0
	Sha Tin	1
	Tai Po	0
	Tsuen Wan	3
	Tuen Mun	5
	Yuen Long	5
	Kwai Tsing	4
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>18</i>
Total:		120

Removal orders against the large unauthorised signboards targeted were issued from August 2012 onward after completion of investigation. So far, removal orders were issued in respect of 100 of the targeted signboards and 13 of the targeted signboards were removed either by the signboard owners voluntarily or in compliance with the removal orders. We have no information on the removal costs involved. The BD will continue to issue removal orders against the remaining large unauthorised signboards targeted for removal and follow up with the removal orders that have not yet been complied with.

2. We do not have information on the total number of large unauthorised signboards in the whole territory. Nonetheless, the BD is conducting a stock taking exercise to record all unauthorised building works including unauthorised signboards erected on the exterior of private buildings. The stock taking exercise is expected to be completed around the second half of 2013.
3. In 2013-14, the BD will continue the LSO on removal of large unauthorised signboards. In 2013, we plan to issue 250 removal orders and it is expected that 125 large unauthorised signboards will be removed either by the owners voluntarily upon receipt of advisory letters, by the owners in compliance with removal orders, or by the BD's consultants and contractors in default of the signboard owners.

Name in block letters: AU Choi-kai
Post Title: Director of Buildings
Date: 9.4.2013