

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

**DEVB(PL)297**

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 Buildings Department “completed village by village survey to 2 400 New Territories exempted houses to identify unauthorised building works that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety (First Round Targets) for priority enforcement action.” In 2013-14, what is the amount of resources set aside for the operation concerned? What is the number of houses as First Round Targets in the operation? What is the staffing provision involved and what is the date of commencement of the operation?

Asked by: Hon. TIEN Puk-sun, Michael

Reply:

Since 1 April 2012, the Buildings Department has set up a dedicated Village Houses Section 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.

In view of the substantial scale of the enforcement against the First Round Targets, the above LSO will be conducted in phases and in a systematic manner. As a start, after the setting up of the dedicated Village Houses Section on 1 April 2012, one target village had been selected from each of the nine New Territories districts for a pilot village by village survey which involved about 2 400 NTEHs. We have streamlined the modus operandi in the light of experience. It is assessed that the dedicated section will be able to meet the target of surveying First Round Targets in 8 000 NTEHs in 2013.

The 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. 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, we are not able to provide separate breakdown for the expenditure for conducting the village by village surveys and for the LSO. In 2013-14, these surveys and LSO will be on-going exercises, in continuation of the initiative which commenced on 1 April 2012.

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