

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)123

(Question Serial No. 0387)

Head: (82) Buildings Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (AU Choi-kai)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question (Member Question No. 4):

In 2014-15, there will be an increase of 215 non-directorate posts in the Buildings Department. Please advise this Committee:

1. of the five major work areas where more additional manpower will be allocated and the estimated number of additional staff to be allocated to these five work areas; and
2. with widespread public concern over unauthorised building works and the irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats, which will result in an increase of reported cases to be handled, whether the Administration has made proper estimation when allocating manpower; if yes, of the details; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon. LO Wai-kwok

Reply:

1. Among the 215 new posts to be created in the Buildings Department (BD) in 2014-15, 193 posts, comprising 58 professional staff, 110 technical staff and 25 supporting staff, will be deployed to the two Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division of BD. They will mainly be engaged for enhancing BD's various building safety and maintenance enforcement programmes such as the enforcement action against unauthorised building works (UBWs) and sub-divided flats (SDFs) as well as the implementation of the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme. The remaining 22 posts will be assigned for strengthening services in the approval of building plans and related applications for private development projects (five posts, comprising two professional staff, two technical staff and one supporting staff) and the Joint Office to tackle reports on water seepage through a "one-stop" approach (17 posts, comprising two professional staff, 12 technical staff and three supporting staff).

2. The handling of reports on UBWs and SDFs, including investigation and follow-up action, is carried out by the 576 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division of BD as part of their overall duties to implement BD's building safety and maintenance enforcement programme. We are thus not able to provide a breakdown of the manpower involved solely for handling reports on UBWs and SDFs. Whilst the existing professional and technical manpower will continue to be deployed for handling reports on UBWs and SDFs in 2014-15, additional resources as mentioned above will be allocated to enhance BD's building safety and maintenance enforcement programme. We will closely monitor the work progress of handling reports on UBWs and SDFs and the adequacy of resources.