

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)310

(Question Serial No. 5781)

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

Question (Member Question No. 342):

1. The Buildings Department commenced a one-year joint operation on 8 April 2013 with the Fire Services Department to inspect the common means of escapes at 6 500 old-style commercial/residential and domestic buildings. Please provide the breakdown of the following information by District Council district and building type:
 - i. number of buildings inspected;
 - ii. number of buildings not up to standard;
 - iii. number of removal orders issued;
 - iv. number of cases of outstanding orders relating to failure to improve conditions of building within the specified time;
 - v. number of prosecution cases; and
 - vi. number of convicted cases.
2. When does the Department expect the inspections of all the 6 500 buildings and all the follow-up actions to be completed?
3. What are the staffing provision and ranks of the staff responsible for the above joint operation? Has the Department assessed whether it would have sufficient manpower to handle the above work and follow-up actions? If there is a shortage of resources, will the Department consider increasing manpower? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

1. The Buildings Department (BD) and the Fire Services Department launched a one-year joint operation in April 2013 to inspect the common means of escape of some 6 500 old-style domestic and composite buildings. Up to February 2014, BD had inspected 6 132 target buildings (TBs), with 138 TBs identified to have fire safety irregularities that warranted priority enforcement actions. The distribution of TBs inspected, TBs warranting priority enforcement, removal orders issued and

outstanding removal orders, on geographical basis, are as follows:

District	TBs inspected*	TBs warranting priority enforcement	Removal orders issued	Outstanding removal orders
Central & Western	766	6	0	0
Eastern	334	7	2	2
Southern	351	0	0	0
Wan Chai	645	8	0	0
Kowloon City	1 141	41	9	8
Kwun Tong	129	2	0	0
Sham Shui Po	797	42	6	4
Yau Tsim Mong	1 054	23	11	10
Wong Tai Sin	134	2	1	1
Islands	52	0	0	0
Kwai Tsing	30	0	0	0
North	195	5	0	0
Sai Kung	45	0	0	0
Sha Tin	52	0	0	0
Tai Po	72	1	0	0
Tsuen Wan	139	1	0	0
Tuen Mun	42	0	0	0
Yuen Long	154	0	0	0
Total	6 132	138	29	25

Note:

* BD does not keep separate statistics for different types of TBs.

Up to February 2014, BD had not instigated any prosecution against failure to comply with these removal orders.

2. The joint operation is targeted to be completed by April 2014. TBs warranting priority enforcement under the Buildings Ordinance are being followed up by issuing removal orders. Parallel enforcement action under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance is also being taken through issuing of fire safety directions (FSDns) to require the carrying out of fire safety improvement works. Up to end February 2014, BD had issued 76 FSDns to the owners of ten TBs warranting priority enforcement. As the inspection on TBs is still ongoing, we cannot assess accurately when all the follow-up action will be completed.
3. Existing resources from the Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division were temporarily redeployed to form a dedicated team comprising 14 professional and technical staff in BD to carry out the task. The subsequent enforcement action against TBs with fire safety irregularities will be carried out by the existing resources of 576 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings

Divisions, the Mandatory Building Inspection Division and the Minor Works and Signboard Control Section of BD as part of their overall duties to implement BD's building safety and maintenance enforcement programme. We are not able to provide a breakdown of the manpower involved solely for the subsequent enforcement action on those TBs warranting priority enforcement. We will closely monitor the work progress of the operation and the related staffing requirement.