

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)324

(Question Serial No. 5805)

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. 356):

1. The Buildings Department will commence preparation for implementing a product certification system for materials used in private building developments. What are the work schedule and estimated expenditure?
2. When does the Department expect to launch or implement the certification system officially?
3. Will the Department incorporate this certification system into the green building certification mechanism in the long term?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

(1) & (2)

The Buildings Department (BD) will commence preparation for implementing a product certification system for materials used in private building developments in 2014. BD has selected two common building products including 'fire door and fire partitions' and 'aluminum windows'. BD is currently considering whether the product certification system should be implemented by acknowledging acceptance of certain existing schemes after necessary amendments to ensure their technical requirements and standards comply with the building safety and health standards under the Buildings Ordinance (BO), or by BD developing a new scheme on its own. BD will consult building stakeholders and the organisations that are operating the existing schemes, and plans to implement the system for the selected building products in 2015.

The research work will be carried out by the existing resources of seven professional and technical staff of the Research and Development Unit of BD as part of their overall duties on research and development of building technologies for compliance with BO. The administrative work on acceptance of product certificates under the system will be handled mainly by the 180 professional and technical staff of the two New Buildings Divisions of

BD as part of their overall duties in the control of new buildings and associated works on private land. We are not able to provide a breakdown of the expenditure involved solely with the development and implementation of the product certification system.

(3)

BD does not operate any green building certification scheme which is of different nature and for a different purpose from a product certification system. A green building certification scheme assesses the environmental performance of buildings having regard to various factors such as energy use, water consumption and indoor air quality. On the other hand, product certification is to ensure a higher level of quality assurance of construction materials through upstream control of factory production and subsequent monitoring by means of regular factory surveillance as well as periodic random sampling and testing of products. Acceptance of building products used in a building development project under a product certification system will be an alternative to the present practice of accepting products that have been tested and assessed by accredited laboratories and certified by the authorised person of the project. A product certification system will enable building owners, building professionals and contractors to select building products with certificates for use in their private building developments with better quality control. BD will review the effectiveness of the product certification system after implementation.