

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 5470)

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. 68):

Regarding removal orders issued for unauthorised building works (UBWs) in New Territories exempted houses, will the Administration advise this Committee:

1. of the number of UBWs removed since the operation commenced (broken down by year); and
2. whether it will consider increasing manpower to speed up the removal of UBWs; if yes, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

On 1 April 2012, the Buildings Department (BD) established a dedicated Village Houses Section comprising 41 professional, technical and clerical staff 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 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. Our reply to the questions is set out below.

1. Under the enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs, BD issued 161 and 328 removal orders in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Up to 28 February 2014, 85 removal orders have been discharged.
2. Given the large number of UBWs in NTEHs, BD adopts a pragmatic approach in tackling UBWs in NTEHs through categorisation of UBWs and prioritisation of enforcement. The enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs implemented since 1 April 2012 has been running smoothly and effectively. There is

currently no plan to increase the manpower for the above enhanced enforcement strategy. We will continue to closely monitor the progress and make improvements in the light of operational experience to enhance the efficiency in tackling UBWs in NTEHs.