

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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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. 56):

The Buildings Department plans to continue the large scale operation in 2014-15 for removal of unauthorised building works in New Territories exempted houses that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee:

1. of the number of cases completed and being processed up to now in relation to the above building works; and the expenditure involved; and
2. of the specific work plans for 2014-15; and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. TIEN Pei-chun, James

Reply:

On 1 April 2012, the Buildings Department (BD) established a dedicated Village Houses Section (VHS) 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 (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. Our reply to the questions is set out below.

1. Under LSO for removal of First Round Targets, BD inspected 2 400 and 8 927 NTEHs in 2012 and 2013 respectively. BD issued 161 and 328 removal orders against UBWs in NTEHs in the respective years. Of these removal orders issued, 85 orders have been discharged up to 28 February 2014.

In 2012-13 and 2013-14, the expenditure for VHS was about \$22 million and \$31 million respectively; and for hiring consultancy services for LSO to identify First Round Targets and the Reporting Scheme was about \$2.2 million and \$7.4 million respectively. Since LSO for removal of First Round Targets is part of the overall responsibility of VHS which undertakes the full range of works in relation to the enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs, BD is unable to provide a breakdown of the manpower and expenditure involved solely for LSO to identify First Round Targets.

2. In 2014-15, BD will continue to implement the enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs using the existing manpower of VHS. It is targeted to inspect 5 000 NTEHs for identifying First Round Targets and to complete the processing of the report forms submitted under the Reporting Scheme by mid-2014. The estimated expenditure for VHS is about \$30 million, and for hiring consultancy services for LSO to identify First Round Targets and the Reporting Scheme is about \$5.6 million.