

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 5152)

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. 57):

The Buildings Department plans to continue the large scale operation (LSO) on removal of large unauthorised signboards and commence a new LSO on removal of signboards that are not validated on target buildings or target streets in 2014-15. In this connection, will the Administration advise this Committee:

- (1) of the estimated number of such signboards in the territory at present;
- (2) of the total number of such signboards removed in 2013-14 and the expenditure involved; and
- (3) of the specific work plan in 2014-15; and of the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. TIEN Pei-chun, James

Reply:

1. According to the preliminary results obtained from the stock taking exercise recently conducted by the Buildings Department (BD) on the numbers and types of unauthorised building works and unauthorised signboards at the exterior of private buildings, there are about 120 000 signboards in Hong Kong. While the majority of the existing signboards are unauthorised, we do not have information on the sizes of these signboards and whether they may or may not be eligible to join the Validation Scheme for Unauthorised Signboards (validation scheme).
2. Under the large scale operation (LSO) for the removal of 250 targeted large unauthorised signboards in 2013, 250 removal orders had been issued by BD. Out of these targeted signboards, 77 had already been removed by the owners by end of February 2014. We have no information on the removal costs involved. BD will continue to monitor the removal progress of the remaining targeted signboards.
3. In 2014-15, BD will continue with the LSO on removal of unauthorised signboards. We estimate that 300 removal orders will be issued and 1 300 unauthorised signboards

will be removed or validated under the validation scheme. The control of existing unauthorised signboards is handled centrally by the Signboard Control Unit (SBCU) of BD commencing in 2014. The 31 professional and technical staff in SBCU will continue to be responsible for LSO on removal of unauthorised signboards as part of their overall duties to deal with all unauthorised, dangerous and abandoned signboards. We are not able to provide breakdown of expenditure solely for LSO on removal of unauthorised signboards.