

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-DEVB(PL)11

(Question Serial No. S0067)

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:

With reference to Reply Serial No. DEVB(PL)140, the Administration said that 3 884 sub-divided flat (SDFs) had been identified in earlier investigations and, as follow-up, 1 421 removal orders had been issued with 394 orders complied with. In view of the low compliance rate, will the Administration consider stepping up enforcement in the current year, such as escalating the call for dealing with unauthorised building works in SDFs issued with removal orders, if yes, what will be the policy for that? Regarding SDFs in industrial buildings, what is the inspection target for the current year?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The Buildings Department (BD) has been conducting large scale operations (LSOs) with the objective of rectifying irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats (SDFs) since April 2011. Up to February 2014, 1 421 removal orders had been issued and registered in the Land Registry as an encumbrance to property title. The outstanding removal orders are at various stages of follow-up. Where a removal order has not been complied with after the specified period, BD will issue reminders and, if necessary, warning letters to the owners to urge them to comply with the order. In case the owners encounter genuine difficulties in arranging the rectification works, an extension of time may be granted on a case-by-case basis where justified to allow them more time to comply with the order. Prosecution will be initiated if the owners fail to comply with the orders without reasonable excuse. BD will also consider engaging its consultants and contractors to carry out the required rectification works in the owners' default and recover the cost of such works plus supervision charge and surcharge from the owners afterwards where circumstances warrant.

Among the 215 new civil service posts to be created in BD in 2014-15, 193 posts comprising 58 professional staff, 110 technical staff and 25 supporting staff will be deployed to the two Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division of BD. They will mainly be engaged in enhancing BD's various building safety and maintenance enforcement programmes, including enforcement against irregularities associated with SDFs.

Additional resources will also be provided in 2014 for forming dedicated backlog clearance teams in order to clear the outstanding orders in a systematic manner.

With additional resources allocated to enhance the inspection in industrial buildings to identify SDFs for domestic use, the number of target industrial buildings will be increased to 60. As the additional resources will be available from 1 October 2014, the planned target for 2014 is 38 industrial buildings.