

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0421)

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:

The Buildings Department stated that it would continue to collaborate with the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority in speeding up the rehabilitation of old buildings by providing technical and financial assistance to owners in need and complete the implementation of the Operation Building Bright in 2015-16. Will the authorities inform this Committee:

- (1) of the number of owners provided with financial assistance and the expenditure involved in 2014-15; and
- (2) of the estimated number of owners provided with assistance and the estimated expenditure involved in 2015-16?

Asked by: Hon TIEN Pei-chun, James (Member Question No. 19)

Reply:

Operation Building Bright (OBB) is a special one-off measure launched in 2009 amidst the financial tsunami. It aims to achieve the dual objectives of creating more job opportunities for the construction sector as well as improving building safety.

There are two categories of buildings under OBB, namely Category 1 and Category 2 target buildings. Category 1 target buildings are those which owners' corporations (OCs) are prepared to carry out repair works on a voluntary basis. The OCs of Category 1 target buildings have to apply for participating in OBB. There were a total of two rounds of application for Category 1 target buildings, which were closed on 6 June 2009 and 24 December 2010 respectively. Category 2 target buildings are those that have difficulties in coordinating repair works, such as buildings without OCs. They are selected by the Steering Committee of OBB comprising representatives from the Buildings Department (BD), the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority. Owners of Category 2 target buildings do not need to apply for joining OBB.

In summary, up to 31 December 2014, a total of 3 079 target buildings were included for assistance under OBB. Among these buildings, 2 094 buildings had completed repair works; 956 buildings had repair works or procurement procedures underway; and the remaining 29 buildings, which were Category 2 target buildings, were pending the appointment of Authorized Persons, owners' confirmation for carrying out repair works voluntarily or BD's arrangement for repair works.

Our reply to the question is as follows –

- (1) The works and the release of OBB subsidy to owners may span over several years. We do not keep separate statistics on the number of owners provided with financial assistance under OBB for a particular year. From the inception of OBB in 2009 to 31 December 2014, the total number of household units provided with financial assistance was 96 310, involving a total amount of \$1,521 million released.
- (2) For the year of 2015, it is estimated that another 36 970 household units will be provided with financial assistance. Around \$722 million has been earmarked for these household units.

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