

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)261

(Question Serial No. 3432)

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:

In the past two years, the authorities did not fully meet the targets set for processing building plans and processing within 28 days applications for consent to commence building works. Again, the targets are only set at 90% this year. Will the authorities inform this Committee of the reasons for not meeting the targets, the improvement measures to be taken to meet the targets, and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (Member Question No. 71)

Reply:

To facilitate applicants in obtaining approval, if an application can be approved subject to minor amendments or further particulars to be furnished, the Building Department (BD) allows the authorized person (AP) and registered structural engineer (RSE) to make such amendments or furnish the required particulars instead of rejecting the application. For the purpose of computing the processing time, before 1 November 2013, these cases were taken to be approved within the target time frame, regardless of the time taken by the AP and RSE to make such necessary amendments or furnish such required particulars. From 1 November 2013 onwards, such time incurred on the part of the AP and RSE has been taken into account in computing the processing time. Therefore, the actual performance in 2013 and 2014 as well as the planned targets in 2015 in processing building plans and consent to commence building works of less than 100% only reflect the revised methodology of computing the processing time.

To strengthen services in the approval of plans and related applications for private development projects, four new posts comprising one Building Surveyor, one Structural Engineer, one Survey Officer (Building) and one Technical Officer (Structural) will be created in the New Buildings Divisions of the BD in 2015-16. The above increase in manpower involves an expenditure of about \$1.8 million per annum. Furthermore, the BD has commenced a benchmarking exercise jointly with the industry on plan submission quality with a view to facilitating their preparation of plans for approval.

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