

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)303

(Question Serial No. 6182)

Head: (82) Buildings Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses
Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (HUI Siu-wai)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

- (1) Regarding repair orders issued in connection with maintenance of private slopes, how many of them involved appointing consultants or contractors on behalf of the owners by the Department in each of the past two years (i.e. 2014 and 2015)? Please list the respective annual expenditures involved.
- (2) Did the Department successfully recover the full cost from the owners concerned in all these cases of the period from 2013-14 up to now? If not, what is the progress? Were any amounts written off? What are the details and reasons?
- (3) At present, how many dangerous hillside orders have not yet been complied with (or the required repair has not yet been completed) for one to three years, four to six years, seven to nine years, and ten years or above after the specified time?
- (4) What are the details of redeploying resources to clear the backlog of outstanding repair orders, including the estimated increase in staff establishment and expenditure for such work in the coming year?

Asked by: Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Member Question No. 200)

Reply:

- (1) The Buildings Department (BD) engages consultants and contractors to carry out the required slope investigation and repair works in the event of default by owners. The costs of such works plus supervision charges and a surcharge levied by the BD will be recovered from the owners afterwards. Such works were carried out in respect of 11 dangerous hillside orders (DHOs) in 2014 and 12 DHOs in 2015. The amount paid to consultants and contractors was \$12.5 million in 2014-15 and \$8.8 million in 2015-16 (up to December 2015).

- (2) From 2013-14 up to the end of 2015, the amount of costs recovered and written off in relation to the carrying out of slope investigation and repair works in the event of default by owners is as follows –

	Amount of cost recovered from owners (\$ million)	Amount of cost written off⁽¹⁾ (\$)
2013-14	3.8	751
2014-15	7.8	3,086
2015-16 (up to December 2015)	1.0	2,610

Note ⁽¹⁾: The reasons for writing off the cost include that the owner has deceased without a probate and the whereabouts of the owner is not known.

- (3) Up to end February 2016, statistics on outstanding DHOs based on the overdue period are tabulated below –

Overdue period	Number of DHOs
less than 1 year	91
1 to 3 years	258
4 to 6 years	183
7 to 9 years	114
10 years or above	115
Total	761

- (4) The work in relation to the safety of private slopes is currently handled by the 54 professional and technical staff of the Slope Safety Section (SSS) of the BD and the estimated expenditure for 2015-16 is \$44 million. While there is no increase in the staff establishment in 2016-17, depending on the workload associated with the issue of new DHOs, the SSS will deploy available resources to clear the backlog of outstanding orders.

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