

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)298

(Question Serial No. 5807)

Head: (82) Buildings Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (CHEUNG Tin-cheung)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the Department's actions on unauthorised building works (UBWs), would the Government inform this Committee:

What was the number of staff specially tasked with handling of UBWs in the Department in 2016-17? Will additional manpower be expected in 2017-18? If so, what is the number of additional staff, and what respective percentages do the net increase in posts, civil service posts converted from non-civil service contract positions, and professional and technical posts account for? Is there any change in the number of additional posts as compared with the number of additional posts originally applied for? What is the change in the ratio of the manpower concerned to the workload in 2017-18 as compared with 2016-17?

What were the estimated and actual numbers of removal orders and warning notices issued and irregularities removed and rectified, the number of backlog removal orders, and the numbers of prosecutions instigated against non-compliant removal orders in 2016-17? In the coming two years, will additional manpower be required to clear the backlog cases concerned?

Asked by: Hon YIU Chung-yim (Member Question No. 5)

Reply:

Enforcement action against unauthorised building works (UBWs) is carried out by the 633 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings Divisions, the Mandatory Building Inspection Division and the Minor Works and Signboard Control Section of the Buildings Department (BD) in 2016-17 as part of their overall duties to implement the BD's building safety and maintenance enforcement programmes. In 2017-18, 47 additional professional and technical posts will be created to assist in the implementation of the above-mentioned programmes. The creation of these posts does not involve the conversion of non-civil service contract positions into civil service posts. We do not compile statistics on the manpower involved solely for the enforcement action against UBWs, or the change in the ratio of the manpower concerned to the workload.

The estimated and actual numbers of removal orders, warning notices, UBWs removed and prosecutions in 2016 are tabulated as follows –

	2016	
	Estimate	Actual
No. of removal orders issued	12 000	12 901
No. of warning notices issued	(see Note 1)	351
UBWs removed	28 000	26 430
No. of prosecutions instigated against non-compliance of removal orders	3 300	3 362

Note 1: No estimate was provided from 2016 as the number of warning notices issued is no longer a key performance indicator in enforcement work against UBWs in the Controlling Officer's Report.

There were about 60 000 outstanding removal orders issued against UBWs as at end 2016. In the coming years, the BD will continue to closely monitor the progress and staffing requirement of the enforcement programmes and bid for additional resources if necessary under the established procedures.

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