

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)089

(Question Serial No. 0598)

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

Question:

The estimated expenditure for 2018-2019 is \$1.5706 billion, 12.2% higher than that for last year.

In this connection, please list:

- 1) the posts concerned and their job nature; and
- 2) the expenditure details of the posts.
- 3) For the launch of Operation Building Bright 2.0, has the Government conducted any reviews and formulated any new measures to prevent irregularities of works or bid-rigging?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 34)

Reply:

- 1) The 125 posts to be created in 2018-19 in the Buildings Department (BD) comprise 50 professional posts (Senior Building Surveyor/Senior Structural Engineer/Building Surveyor/Structural Engineer), 46 technical posts (Senior Survey Officer (Building)/Senior Technical Officer (Structural)/Survey Officer (Building)/Technical Officer (Structural)), 21 clerical posts and eight posts of other grades.

Among the 125 posts, 52 posts will be engaged in enhancing building safety including strengthening enforcement actions and supporting the implementation of Operation Building Bright 2.0 (OBB 2.0); 30 posts will be engaged in coping with the increased workload in processing new building plans; 15 posts will be allocated to the Joint Office set up by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and BD to strengthen the manpower to tackle public reports on water seepage; four posts will be engaged in implementing the Electronic Submission Hub project; 18 posts will be engaged in coping with the workload arising from the implementation of the Three-Runway System project; and the remaining six posts will be engaged in coping with the additional workload arising from the regulation of private columbarium.

- 2) The total notional annual mid-point salary value of the 125 posts to be created in BD in 2018-19 is \$70,723,560.
- 3) Apart from the regular efforts against bid-rigging in building repair and maintenance contracts, the following measures will be put in place for OBB 2.0:
 - (a) participating buildings whose owners are prepared to take up the organisation of the inspection and repair works must participate in Urban Renewal Authority (URA)'s "Smart Tender" Building Rehabilitation Facilitation Services scheme (save for those where the owners concerned have already invited tenders for building repair and maintenance contracts as of 20 December 2017). Under "Smart Tender", the URA will line up an independent consultant to offer advice to owners covering the general scope of works needed and a relevant cost estimate. Property owners can use the electronic tendering (e-tendering) platform for engaging contractors where the identity of tenderers would remain anonymous until tender opening. A "DIY tool-kit" will also be provided to owners to guide them in organising the works. "Smart Tender" will provide pertinent information to property owners to make an informed decision in the repair works required for their buildings and the value-for-money of the returned tenders;
 - (b) the current "Smart Tender" is applicable to procurement of works contracts only. The URA is considering how best to provide additional information for owners to consider the reasonableness of prices for consultancy tenders. The URA is also exploring in conjunction with stakeholders the feasibility of extending the e-tendering platform for procurement of consultancy. If it is found feasible, the extended service may be available from the second half of 2018 onwards;
 - (c) all buildings joining OBB 2.0 will be automatically registered for the RenoSafe Scheme operated by the Police. Under the Scheme, officers of the Anti-Triad Squads would pay visits to participating buildings, offering them services including a dedicated hotline for enquiry and crime reporting as well as public education materials relating to building repair works, etc. Moreover, Police officers will be present at the meetings of owners' organisations or owners' committees on a need-basis during the works tendering process to give advice on bid-rigging; and
 - (d) awareness of owners is of essence in detecting and reporting susceptible bid-rigging cases. The URA will organise briefings for all buildings joining OBB 2.0 in which education on bid-rigging would be highlighted.

In addition, the URA targets to launch a Building Rehabilitation Platform in the second half of 2018. The initiative aims to provide a one-stop platform to property owners and practitioners with the participation of relevant professional bodies, societies, government departments and enforcement agencies. Practical guidelines and standard tender and contract documents on procurement of consultancy and works contract, reference cost on typical building repair works, as well as a list of service providers are under development and would be provided on the platform in stages. As with “Smart Tender”, the platform aims to provide the pertinent information to owners, assisting them to make an informed decision on procurement of building repair works.

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