

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)286

(Question Serial No. 4635)

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 “inspection of sub-divided flats in target buildings and rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats”, would the authorities inform this Committee:

- a) of the number of reports received in the past three years and the number of such reports with irregularities found during inspection;
- b) of the number of sub-divided flats inspected with irregularities of building works found, of the most common irregularities found, and of the number of sub-divided flats with irregularities that have not yet been rectified in 2018-19;
- c) whether increasing manpower to speed up rectification of sub-divided flats and inspect more sub-divided flats has been considered; if so, of the details; if not, of the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (LegCo internal reference no.: 120)

Reply:

- a) The Buildings Department (BD) received 10 862 reports on sub-divided flats (SDFs) from 2016 to 2018 from members of the public or other government departments, among which BD identified SDFs in 5 006 reports. Among these 5 006 reports, 237 SDFs were found to be associated with building irregularities that had to be followed up by the issue of removal orders.
- b) Apart from responding to reports, BD also takes enforcement action against building irregularities associated with SDFs through large scale operations (LSOs).

In 2018-19 (as at end December 2018), BD inspected 1 432 SDFs in total in response to reports from members of the public or other government departments and through LSOs. 98 SDFs were so far found to be associated with building irregularities which had to be followed up by the issue of removal orders while further assessment or detailed investigations were still being conducted for some cases. As at end December 2018, the building irregularities associated with 95 of these SDFs were not yet rectified. BD would continue to follow up these cases.

The commonly found building irregularities associated with SDFs are the formation of unauthorised door openings that contravene the fire-resisting construction requirements of fire escape routes, the erection of partition walls that block fire escape routes, sub-standard drainage works that result in water seepage and excessive installation of partition walls and/or thickening of floor screeding that result in overloading of the floor slabs.

- c) BD has implemented improvement measures to speed up the enforcement actions against building irregularities identified in SDFs, such as upgrading its Building Condition Information System to enhance monitoring of the progress of enforcement action, streamlining its operation procedures, redeployment of resources and re-adjusting its work priorities as appropriate. In addition, BD has been allocated additional resources in the past years to cope with various operation needs, including clearance of outstanding cases in relation to SDFs.

Enforcement action against building irregularities associated with SDFs is carried out by 434 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings Divisions of BD as part of their overall duties to implement BD's building safety and maintenance enforcement programmes. There will be no change in manpower in BD for enforcement actions related to SDFs in 2019-20. We are not able to provide a breakdown of the manpower involved solely for carrying out enforcement action in relation to SDFs.

- End -