

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)289

(Question Serial No. 3375)

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:

Provision for 2019-20 is \$83.8 million (5.38%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018-19. The provision is increased to cope with the workload arising from processing new building plans. In this regard, would the authorities inform this Committee:

1. whether the manpower for “processing new building plans” will be strengthened; if so, of the number of staff and expenditure;
2. whether the authorities are satisfied with the present efficiency in “processing building plans”; whether there is any room for improvement; if so, of the details; if not, of the reasons.

Asked by: Hon SHEK Lai-him, Abraham (LegCo internal reference no.: 73)

Reply:

1. To cope with the increasing workload arising from processing of building plan submissions including projects adopting Modular Integrated Construction and transitional housing projects, the manpower in the Buildings Department (BD) will be strengthened by the creation of 30 new non-directorate posts in 2019-20, comprising 12 professional posts (Building Surveyor / Structural Engineer), 10 technical posts (Survey Officer (Building) / Technical Officer (Structural)), seven clerical posts and one motor driver post. The increase in expenditure is about \$16.4 million per annum.
2. BD has been reviewing the plan approval process regularly with a view to improving the efficiency of plan processing and facilitating the preparation of plans that meet BD's requirements. To this end, BD has implemented various measures such as adopting a curtailed check system and putting in place a pre-submission enquiry mechanism to facilitate registered building professionals in confirming the design principles of their projects at an early stage so that they may avoid abortive

preparation work and fast track processing for simple alteration and addition works. In addition, BD has been working in partnership with registered building professionals to improve its services and to provide as far as practicable facilitation in the building plan approval process. Specifically, BD regularly reviews and issues practice notes and circular letters as guidance to practitioners and has set up various communication platforms with industry stakeholders, such as Building Sub-committee under the Land and Development Advisory Committee, the Authorised Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers Committee (APSEC) and APSEC discussion forum, as well as Technical Committees on various codes of practice.

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