

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)240

(Question Serial No. 3513)

Head: (82) Buildings Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (YU Tak-cheung)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the implementation of Operation Building Bright 2.0 (OBB 2.0) in collaboration with the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- the units, manpower and resources involved in OBB 2.0 for the coming two years; and
- the division of work between the Bureau and URA.

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (LegCo internal reference no.: 128)

Reply:

To safeguard public safety from hazards caused by building neglect, the Government announced in October 2017 the launching of Operation Building Bright 2.0 (OBB 2.0) at a commitment of \$3 billion to provide technical and financial assistance to eligible building owners for carrying out prescribed inspection and repair works under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS). The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) administers the scheme.

There are two categories of buildings under OBB 2.0. Category 1 buildings are those whose owners are prepared to take up the organisation of the inspection and repair works for their buildings under MBIS. Category 2 buildings cover those which have outstanding MBIS notices but the owners concerned have difficulties in coordinating the inspection and repair works. The Buildings Department (BD) proactively selects Category 2 buildings based on risk assessment and exercises its statutory power to carry out the requisite inspection and repair works in default of owners, and seeks to recover the cost from owners concerned afterwards. Eligible owners of Category 2 buildings may claim subsidies under OBB 2.0 to cover all or part of such cost.

Having regard to the positive responses for OBB 2.0, the Government announced in October 2019 the proposed injection of an additional \$3 billion into OBB 2.0. Together with the original funding of \$3 billion, it is expected that the number of buildings that could benefit from OBB 2.0 would double from some 2 500 buildings to some 5 000 buildings.

The estimated number of eligible buildings under OBB 2.0 to commence the prescribed inspection and repair works in the coming two years are 1 200. Information on the number of units involved in such buildings will only be available when the relevant works are completed and subsidies are ready to be disbursed. The estimated cashflow requirement for OBB 2.0 in the coming two years are \$1.32 billion.

As the Government's partner in implementing OBB 2.0, URA is responsible for administering the scheme and facilitating owners to undertake the rehabilitation works for Category 1 buildings. URA bears the associated costs of staffing, office accommodation and outsourced independent consultancy service fees from its own resources.

The work performed by BD under OBB 2.0 is to be carried out by 194 professional and technical staff of the Mandatory Building Inspection Sections of BD as part of their overall duties. BD is unable to provide a breakdown of the expenditure and manpower incurred solely for this task.

The Buildings Unit of the Development Bureau (DEVB) oversees the implementation of OBB 2.0 as part of its overall duties. DEVB is unable to provide a breakdown of the manpower and resources deployed solely for this initiative.