

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**DEVB(PL)130**

**(Question Serial No. 0466)**

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:

With regard to the matter to “continue the review of various building regulations, standards and codes of practice with a view to modernising building design and construction standards”, will the Department inform this Committee of the following:

1. What progress did the Department make on the initiative in the past year? Has it set the working target for this year? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. Which regional, national or international standards will the Department make reference to during the review? Will it set its own standards?
3. Will the Department invite stakeholders to participate in the review? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon SHEK Lai-him, Abraham (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The Buildings Department (BD) reviews the various building regulations, standards and codes of practice from time to time with a view to keeping abreast of latest international building technological advancements and enhancing the standards of building construction. The reviews may make reference to relevant national and international standards and may involve commissioning of consultancy studies, stakeholders' consultation and seeking comments from technical committees set up for the review of various codes of practice. In general, BD will consult the industry through the established Building Sub-Committee of the Land and Development Advisory Committee and the Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers Committee and will form technical committees when conducting reviews on the legislative proposals and codes of

practice. These committees comprise representatives of professional institutions and other stakeholder associations of the building industry, academia and relevant government departments.

In 2020, BD completed the reviews and promulgated several amendments to or new edition of codes of practice, covering barrier free access, building works for lifts and escalators, dead and imposed loads, mandatory building inspection scheme and mandatory window inspection scheme, precast concrete construction, site supervision as well as the structural use of concrete and glass.

In respect of legislative amendments, the Building (Minor Works)(Amendment) Regulation 2020, came into operation on 1 September 2020, has included more minor works items under the Minor Works Control System (MWCS) to facilitate the public to carry out such works lawfully. The Building (Construction) Regulation, came into operation on 1 February 2021, has comprised performance-based provisions for facilitating innovation and advancement in building technology as well as providing flexibility in building design.

In February 2021, BD completed the reviews and promulgated amendments to the Code of Practice for Foundations and the Code of Practice on Access for External Maintenance. BD will continue the consultancy study to formulate a new code of practice for seismic-resistant building design standards in Hong Kong (Code) that would set out the detailed guidelines for design and construction of seismic-resistant features on buildings. Having sought the preliminary views on the draft Code from stakeholders of the building industry in accordance with the established consultation mechanism in 2020, the final draft of the Code is being prepared. Furthermore, BD is working on the following legislative amendment proposals —

- (a) To introduce technical amendments to the Buildings Ordinance and the Building (Minor Works) Regulation to expand the coverage of the validation scheme under the MWCS. We target to submit the legislative amendments within the current legislative session.
- (b) To amend the Building (Standards of Sanitary Fitments, Plumbing, Drainage Works and Latrines) Regulations by replacing the prescriptive requirements with performance-based requirements to cater for advancement in building technology and introducing higher standards for the design of drainage systems of new buildings, along with the issue of a new code of practice for drainage works. In order to achieve early implementation of some enhanced design standards of drainage system and to allow the industry sufficient time to familiarise with the enhancements, BD is consulting the stakeholders of the building industry in accordance with the established consultation mechanism so as to implement some of the proposed enhanced design standards through a Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers (PNAP). BD will draw on the experience of implementing the PNAP after it comes into effect in preparing the legislative amendments, with a target to submit the legislative amendments in the next legislative session.

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