

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(PL)137****(Question Serial No. 0145)**Head: (82) Buildings DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Buildings and Building WorksControlling Officer: Director of Buildings (YU Tak-cheung)Director of Bureau: Secretary for DevelopmentQuestion:

The Buildings Department will enhance enforcement action against unauthorised signboards. It is expected that the number of removal orders for unauthorised signboards issued will increase by almost 20% in 2020-21. Please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The number of removal orders issued and compliance with removal orders for unauthorised signboards in each of the past five years.
2. The expenditures and effectiveness of the study on the use of information technology to enhance enforcement action against dangerous signboards in the past year and the coming financial year.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 190)Reply:

1. The number of removal orders for unauthorised signboards issued and complied with in the past five years are tabulated below –

Year	Number of removal orders ⁽¹⁾ issued	Number of removal orders complied with ⁽²⁾
2016	719	538
2017	1 019	668
2018	999	741
2019	921	1 044
2020	929	679

Note ⁽¹⁾: Some removal orders may involve other unauthorised building works.

Note ⁽²⁾: The figures do not necessarily correspond to the removal orders issued in the same year.

The Buildings Department (BD) will continue to take enforcement action against unauthorised signboards in response to public reports and through its large scale operations, viz., removing/validating unauthorised signboards and removing dangerous/abandoned signboards.

2. BD would step up the application of technologies to regulate signboards, including utilising artificial intelligence (AI) and three-dimensional images to develop a defective signboard diagnostic system (DSDS), utilising AI to assist in the setting up of a legal signboards database, and using big data in the public realm to identify new businesses that may require erection of signboards so that the BD may actively approach them for publicity.

The relevant studies on new technologies involve a number of consultancy contracts which are currently underway. The consultancy study to develop the DSDS will be completed in May 2023. Separately, the legal signboard database is expected to be launched in Q3 2021 by phases with the first batch of legal signboards information uploaded. The remaining consultancy study to identify new businesses using big data will be completed in December 2021.

The estimated expenditure for the above three consultancy studies in the current and next financial years is as follows –

Financial Year	Estimated Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	1.3
2021-22	2.0

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