

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3061)

Head: (82) Buildings Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Buildings and Building Works
Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings (Ms Clarice YU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

The Buildings Department (BD) continued the development of the Electronic Submission Hub (ESH) for accepting electronic applications submitted under the Buildings Ordinance (BO). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the estimated expenditure and staff establishment for the work relating to ESH?
2. When is ESH expected to be launched? Will the implementation of ESH enhance BD's efficiency in processing applications submitted under BO? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 61)

Reply:

1. A sum of \$214.39 million was approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in February 2019 for the development of Electronic Submission Hub (ESH). The development of ESH is carried out by professional and technical staff of the Information Technology Unit (ITU) and the New Buildings Divisions (NBD) of the Buildings Department (BD) as part of their overall duties. To strengthen the manpower support of ITU which oversees, amongst others, development of ESH, 11 time-limited civil service posts including three professional posts (Building Surveyor/Structural Engineer), five technical posts (Survey Officer (Building)/Technical Officer (Structural)), one Systems Manager post and two Analyst/Programmer II posts have been created up to 2023-24. BD is not able to provide a breakdown of the staff establishment under ITU and NBD solely for the implementation of ESH.

2. ESH is being launched in three stages, with Stage 1 (accepting structural plan submissions for building works above ground not requiring cross-departmental referral, excluding alteration and addition works) already launched in June 2022, Stage 2 (covering submissions which will require processing by some organisations or departments including those under the Works Branch of the Development Bureau) launched on 31 March 2023, and its full implementation (Stage 3; accepting all types of plan submissions) scheduled for the second quarter of 2025.

The implementation of ESH will streamline the development approval process by enabling the submission, referral and processing of plans and documents via the electronic platform, with application progress tracking and alert systems for monitoring purposes. It will also improve co-ordination between BD and other departments and organisations under the Centralised Processing System which may share views and comments on the plans and documents electronically, and facilitating early reconciliation of conflicting comments which may arise.

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