

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)075

(Question Serial No. 2649)

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:

In one of the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24, the Government will, in collaboration with the Urban Renewal Authority, implement the Building Drainage System Repair Subsidy Scheme to assist owners of old and dilapidated domestic buildings to repair and/or upgrade the drains of their buildings. Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide a breakdown by Legislative Council geographical constituency of the numbers of eligible buildings under the scheme; among them, the respective numbers of Category 1 buildings and Category 2 buildings; the number of target buildings which have commenced repair works; the number of beneficiary households; and the details of the implementation timetable of the entire scheme.
2. The target number for 2023 is substantially lower than the actual number in 2022. What are the reasons?
3. Will the Government consider providing additional resources to expand the scope of the scheme?
4. What are the amount of resources and the staff establishment involved for implementation of the scheme?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

1. The Building Drainage System Repair Subsidy Scheme (DRS) was launched on 1 May 2021 at a commitment of \$1 billion. The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) is Government's partner in administration of the DRS. There are two categories of buildings under the DRS. Category 1 buildings are those whose owners are willing and able to organise among themselves to take up the investigation and repair works.

Category 2 buildings are those with outstanding orders and/or outstanding notices under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme but the owners concerned have difficulties in co-ordinating the requisite drainage investigation and repair works. The Buildings Department (BD) proactively selects Category 2 buildings on a risk basis and exercises its statutory power to carry out the required works in default of owners concerned.

DRS is expected to benefit over 3 000 buildings across six years starting from May 2021. We do not have a breakdown of these buildings by Legislative Council geographical constituency as the actual outturn depends on, amongst others, response of eligible owners in the territory.

As of end December 2022, the numbers of applications granted approval-in-principle to join as Category 1 buildings, Category 2 buildings selected by BD, and the Category 1 and Category 2 buildings with drainage investigation and repair works commenced by District Council districts are tabulated below. We do not compile separate statistics based on Legislative Council geographical constituency.

District	Number of Category 1 buildings		Number of Category 2 buildings	
	Applications granted approval-in-principle	Drainage investigation and/or repair works commenced	Selected by BD	Drainage investigation and/or repair works commenced
Central and Western	92	57	106	101
Eastern	56	38	55	51
Islands	0	0	0	0
Kowloon City	89	43	221	206
Kwai Tsing	27	22	3	1
Kwun Tong	43	32	15	14
North	6	0	20	19
Sai Kung	0	0	1	1
Sha Tin	16	15	3	3
Sham Shui Po	154	109	316	306
Southern	15	5	8	8
Tai Po	7	2	17	16
Tsuen Wan	29	16	47	41
Tuen Mun	13	12	7	7
Wan Chai	54	41	53	50
Wong Tai Sin	21	17	25	24
Yau Tsim Mong	195	119	339	311
Yuen Long	42	31	8	7
Total :	859	559⁽¹⁾	1 244	1 166⁽²⁾

Note ⁽¹⁾: About 58 200 domestic units are involved in the 559 Category 1 buildings.

Note ⁽²⁾: About 29 400 domestic units are involved in the 1 166 Category 2 buildings.

2. The planned number of buildings targeted for drainage investigation and repair as default works under DRS Category 2 in 2023 is lower than the actual number of buildings targeted in 2022 because there are fewer outstanding statutory orders involving common drains in 2023, from which the buildings may be selected by BD for conducting default works.
3. The Government has committed \$1 billion for DRS. With an estimated balance of around \$862 million as at end-March 2023, we do not see a need to provide additional resources for the scheme at the moment. Nevertheless, depending on the community's response and operating experience, we may consider if there is room to refine the scheme.
4. URA is responsible for administering the scheme under the "all-in-one" Integrated Building Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme and absorbs the associated administrative cost with its own resources. URA does not have a breakdown of the expenditure and manpower incurred solely for administering the DRS.

Under DRS, BD may exercise its statutory power to carry out the works in default of owners by mobilising its default works consultants and government contractors and seek to recover the cost from owners afterwards. Such owners could also benefit from the DRS. To this end, some \$50 million out of the \$ 1 billion committed for DRS has been set aside for BD to procure services for a period of six years from 2021-22 to assist in the administration of the default works.

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