

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0915)

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:

According to the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-2024, the Department will follow up the recommendations made in The Ombudsman's direct investigation report on the government's enforcement against unauthorised building works in New Territories exempted houses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the manpower and resources allocated for 2023-24 to execute this task; and
- (b) the increase in manpower and resources allocated for 2023-24 comparing with that for 2022-23; if no increase, the reason?

Asked by: Hon LOONG Hon-biu, Louis (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) Enforcement against unauthorised building works (UBWs) in New Territories Exempted Houses (NTEHs) is currently carried out in accordance with an enhanced enforcement strategy adopted since April 2012 (Note). As committed to the Panel on Development in 2022, the Buildings Department (BD) will review the enforcement strategy (including manpower deployment) in the light of experience gained so far. The recommendations made in The Ombudsman's direct investigation report will also be taken into account in the review overseen by existing staff as part of their overall duties. BD does not compile a breakdown of the manpower and resources incurred solely for this task.
- (b) Enforcement against NTEHs is currently carried out by 39 professional and technical staff of the Village Houses Section of the BD. There is no increase in manpower and resources allocated for 2023-24 comparing with that for 2022-23. As explained in (a) above, BD will review the enforcement strategy (including manpower deployment) in the light of experience gained. It will also continue to streamline operational procedures and explore the use of technologies to improve efficiency with a view to

stepping up the pace of implementing the enhanced enforcement strategy against UBWs in NTEHs.

Note : The enhanced enforcement strategy includes large scale operations for removal of existing UBWs in NTEHs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety (known as First Round Targets), a Reporting Scheme for existing UBWs in NTEHs that constitute less serious contravention of the law and pose lower potential risks to building safety, and immediate enforcement actions against other UBWs in NTEHs which constitute imminent danger or newly erected or found under constructions.

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