

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0924)

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:

1. Among the estimated increase of 3.8% in the overall expenses in the new financial year, what are the amount/percentage of expenditure and manpower to be utilised on the work to take enforcement action against unauthorised building works (UBWs)?
2. What is the additional number of UBWs cases that the Department will handle with the budget provision? To what extent can the efficiency in case handling be enhanced?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

1. The increase of 3.8% in estimated financial provisions is mainly due to the increased requirement for salaries and personnel-related expenses, a net increase of seven posts and increased expenses on hire of services and professional fees in 2023-24. Among the increased provisions, four new time-limited posts (two professional and two technical posts) with an estimated annual expenditure of \$3.15 million will be deployed to handle unauthorised building works (UBWs) relating to misconnection of drains in buildings for improving the near-shore water quality and reducing malodour in priority coastal areas of Victoria Harbour.
2. Besides attending to around 30 000 reports from members of the public about UBWs in 2023-24, it is estimated that the Buildings Department (BD) will handle not less than 100 additional cases involving misconnection of drains in buildings during the year, depending on the number of referrals from the Environmental Protection Department.

BD will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach to enhance the efficiency in tackling UBWs. In addition to taking enforcement action, instigating prosecution, imposing surcharge on default works, implementing subsidy schemes for building rehabilitation, and providing support to owners through its in-house Social Services

Teams, BD will continue to enhance its public education and publicity campaign on building safety to foster a building care culture in the community.

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