

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head: 82 Buildings Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer: Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

- (a) In the past year, what amount of resources has the Buildings Department (BD) allocated for the inspection of sub-divided flats in target buildings? After inspection, how many owners of sub-divided flats found with irregularities have been issued with removal orders or against whom legal action has been taken requiring rectification of the situation? Please list, by District Council district, the details and the number of sub-divided flats in which the irregularities of sub-dividing works have yet to be rectified;
- (b) Since the commencement of a special operation by the BD on sub-divided flats in April 2011, how many buildings have been inspected in each of the 18 districts? Among them, how many flats has the BD gained access to? How many times has the BD invoked the power under the Buildings Ordinance to break into private flats for inspection of irregularities associated with sub-division of flats? Please provide the details;
- (c) Will the BD allocate more resources or employ more staff for the enhancement of the large scale operation on sub-divided flats? If yes, what are the details? As expected by the BD, what is the estimated expenditure for the aforesaid operation in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

- (a) A large scale operation (LSO) to inspect 150 target buildings per year for rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats has been launched since 1 April 2011. The existing resources for 488 professional and technical staff of the two Existing Buildings Divisions and the Mandatory Building Inspection Division of the Buildings Department (BD) have been deployed to carry out the aforementioned operation. As the LSO is part of the overall duties of the concerned Divisions of the BD to implement its building safety and maintenance enforcement programme, we are not able to provide a breakdown of the manpower solely for handling this operation.

During the nine months from April to December 2011, a total of 116 target buildings were inspected under the LSO and 800 flats were found to have sub-divided cubicles. As at 31 January 2012, 170 removal orders had been issued against the irregularities found, of which 15 orders had been complied with. The most common irregularities found in the sub-divided flats identified include formation of unauthorised door openings that contravene the fire-resisting construction requirements of the means of escape, installation of partition walls that block the fire escape routes, sub-standard drainage works that result in water seepage and excessive installation of partition walls and/or thickening of floor screeding that result in overloading of the floor slabs. As the inspection of some sub-divided flats is still on-going and the BD is still finalising the inspection results of some of the inspected cases, we are not able to provide information on the number of sub-divided flats where irregularities have yet to be rectified.

- (b) The distribution of the 116 target buildings inspected in 2011 on geographical basis is as follows:

<b>District</b>	<b>No of target buildings</b>
Central & Western	12
Wan Chai	11
Eastern	13
Southern	4
Kowloon City	16
Kwun Tong	6
Sham Shui Po	12
Wong Tai Sin	2
Yau Tsim Mong	17
North	3
Sha Tin	4
Kwai Tsing	4
Tsuen Wan	4
Tuen Mun	4
Yuen Long	4

