

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2004-05
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)032

Question Serial No.

0900

Head : 82 Buildings Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question :

Regarding the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004-05, it is stated that the Administration will carry out blitz operations to clear the unauthorized building works (UBW) on the external walls of 1 000 target buildings, and select 700 single-staircase buildings for clearance of illegal rooftop structures. What is the cost likely to be involved in the above building safety improvement actions? According to the Administration's estimation, what proportion of cost can be recovered from the owners? Furthermore, how much manpower is expected for completing these tasks and urging owners or occupiers of buildings with UBW to carry out removal works at their own expense?

Asked by : Hon. CHU Yu-lin, David

Reply :

In 2004-2005, the Buildings Department (BD) will select 1,000 buildings for clearance of external unauthorized building works (UBW) under blitz operations. Some of the work in the operations will be outsourced to private consultant firms, and the estimated outsourcing cost amounts to \$18 million. In addition, a total of 365 professional and technical officers in the department are responsible for these operations, along with their duties to take other enforcement actions under the Buildings Ordinance. As the carrying out of blitz operations forms only part of the duties of these BD staff, it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the estimated expenditure in BD staff costs devoted to these operations.

BD has also set a target to clear illegal rooftop structures on 700 single-staircase buildings in 2004. A total of 91 professional and technical officers in the department are responsible for carrying out these clearance operations. The staff cost involved is \$25.3 million.

There is no provision under the Buildings Ordinance for recovering the cost of the enforcement work incurred in the above operations where the owners carry out removal works at their own expense. In the event that orders served for the removal of UBW are not complied with, the department will take prosecution actions to urge the owners to carry out the removal works themselves. There are 23 officers responsible for taking prosecution actions, and the staff cost involved is \$10 million. Alternatively, BD may remove the UBW on behalf of the owners in default. In the latter circumstances, the department may recover the cost of removal from them.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Marco WU
Post Title	Director of Buildings
Date	26.3.2004