

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

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)047

Head : 82 Buildings Department Subhead (No. & title) : 000 –
Operational
expenses

Question Serial No.

0613

Programme : Buildings and Building Works

Controlling Officer : Director of Buildings

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : The estimated expenditure of the Buildings Department in 2004-05 is \$803,900,000, which represents a 9.3% increase over the revised estimate of \$735,700,000 for 2003-04. The operational expenses have increased by 12.7% from \$664,980,000 in 2003-04 to \$749,540,000 in 2004-05. The Buildings Department explains in the Estimates that the increase is mainly due to the additional provision for accelerating enforcement action against unauthorized building works, clearing outstanding removal orders and stepping up actions against drainage defects in private buildings and unauthorized building works in rear lanes and blackspots. However, only one non-directorate post will be created in the Buildings Department in 2004-05. Can the Administration advise this Council:

1. how can the Buildings Department step up the above actions, and what are the staffing requirement and expenditure involved;
2. of the respective numbers of staff responsible for taking enforcement actions on unauthorized building works, clearing outstanding removal orders and stepping up actions on drainage defects in private buildings and unauthorized building works in rear lanes and blackspots; and
3. whether the existing manpower is sufficient to cope with the above work. If yes, how does the Buildings Department ensure that the staff concerned will not be overstressed by the work. If no, why does the Buildings Department not provide additional manpower for this?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Fu-wah

Reply :

(1) & (2) The increased financial provision of \$68.2 million (9.3% higher than the revised estimate for 2003-04) will be used for carrying out the following work:-

- (a) \$11.5 million for accelerating enforcement actions on unauthorised building works (UBW);
- (b) \$31.3 million for clearing outstanding removal orders and associated work; and
- (c) \$25.4 million for stepping up actions against drainage defects in private buildings and unauthorised building works in rear lanes and blackspots.

The additional manpower involved in carrying out the three areas of work mentioned above are respectively in the form of:

- (a) outsourced consultants;
- (b) 135 contract staff; and
- (c) 79 contract staff and 38 staff from the Housing Authority.

(3) The additional staff and outsourcing arrangement together with the existing manpower of the Buildings Department are sufficient to cope with the above work.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Marco WU
Post Title	Director of Buildings
Date	25.3.2004