

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

Question Serial No.

1186

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 :

For “advising on restaurant licence applications within 14 days” and “making existing building records available for public viewing within ten days”, the Buildings Department (BD) could not meet the targets for the 2 consecutive years in 2003 and 2004, and the target of 2005 was only fixed at 95% and 94% respectively, I would like to ask:

1. What were the reasons for not meeting the targets for 3 consecutive years? What were the difficulties encountered therein? Was it because of lack of manpower?
2. Did the Authority concerned consider adopting any measures to resolve the problem in order to enhance the image of the government? If so, what are the specific measures? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply :

**“Advising on restaurant licence applications within 14 days”**

While we endeavour to achieve a 100% target in providing advice to the licensing authority on restaurant licence applications within 14 days, we have set our planned performance target in 2003 and 2004 at 95%. In 2003 and 2004, the rates achieved by BD were 94% and 95% respectively. The planned performance target remains unchanged at 95% for 2005.

We have taken a longer time in processing certain cases mainly because of the difficulties in gaining access to the premises concerned for inspection and the complicated nature of some cases requiring re-inspection or further research of building records. These are not related to lack of manpower.

**“Making existing building records available for public viewing within ten days”**

While we endeavour to achieve a 100% target in making building records available for viewing within ten working days, we have set the planned performance target for 2003 and 2004 at 93%. Of the 30 902 applications received in 2003 and 43 976 applications in 2004, the rates achieved by BD were 95% and 94% respectively. In view of the expected increase in the number of applications in 2005, we have set the planned performance target for 2005 at 94%.

For cases where the 10-day pledge could not be met, the main reasons were:

- (a) the required paper-based building records were being kept for viewing by other applicants or government users and were therefore not available in time for the applicant concerned; and
- (b) the manual handling of the paper-based records caused occasional misplacement of records, thus contributing to the delay.

Manpower resource is not a problem here.

To improve our provision of viewing and copying service for building records, a pilot computerized Building Records Management System (BRMS) has been installed in our Building Information Centre providing instant inspection and copying service of building records in electronic form to members of the public. It also allows concurrent access to the same building records by more than one user, thus improving our performance in meeting the 10-day pledge.

The pilot scheme will be extended to cover the whole territory in early 2006. Upon completion of the BRMS, a web-based retrieval system will also be developed to offer round-the-clock inspection service to members of the public on the Internet.

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