

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

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)023

Question Serial No.

2432

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 :

In May 2006, the Government indicated that inspection had been carried out for 66 large shopping malls or commercial buildings over the past ten years. Irregularities were found regarding some facilities for people with a disability in these buildings, and 66 advisory letters were issued. In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) Whether additional resources will be allocated for inspection in 2007-08, in order to strengthen the inspection teams or increase the frequency of inspection? If so, please specify the items that will be allocated additional resources and the expenditure involved. If not, please give the reasons.
- (b) Whether the current practice of inspecting 15 buildings each year is considered adequate to curb irregularities? Is there a need for increase of financial provision?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply :

To ensure that the approved facilities for people with disabilities in private buildings will not be removed or altered after the buildings are completed and occupied, we take the initiative to select commercial buildings for focused inspections each year. In selecting the target buildings, we will consult the concerned groups and make reference to the reports on access for people with disabilities published from time to time by relevant stakeholders. The number of commercial buildings inspected has increased from 5 to 15 starting 2004.

The Buildings Department (BD) also takes follow-up actions against irregularities reported by the public. In the event of any such approved facilities being found to have been altered or removed, BD will take enforcement actions under the Buildings Ordinance with a view to reinstating the facilities. The Department has redeployed additional staff to set up a dedicated team to inspect and follow up any irregularities identified during the inspections.

Past experience reveals that focused inspection is an effective and efficient way to address irregularities in respect of approved facilities for people with disabilities in private buildings. We will keep in view our inspection programme and resource requirements for this area of work in liaison with the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>CHEUNG Hau-wai</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Buildings</u>
Date	<u>16 March 2007</u>

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