

**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining
the Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06**

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

File name : S-HPLB(PL)-e1.doc

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
S-HPLB(PL)01	SV09	CHAN Kam-lam	82	Buildings and Building Works
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S-HPLB(PL)04	SV03	WONG Kwok-hing	42	Mechanical Engineering Installations Safety

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HPLB(PL)01

Question Serial No.

SV09

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 : To provide information on the cost and manpower resources incurred in the clearance of illegal rooftop structures, and on how much of the costs so incurred could be recovered from the owners concerned.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply :

In our Department, there are 83 professional and technical officers involved in the clearance of illegal rooftop structures on 700 single staircase buildings each year. The staff cost is \$23.4 million per year.

The work includes inspection of rooftop structures and issue of removal orders. In the event that a removal order is not complied with, the Department may take prosecution action and use court sanction to require the owner to carry out the removal works.

Our department is empowered under the Buildings Ordinance to arrange for the demolition works if an owner fails to comply with an order, and to recover the full cost for demolition and supervision work from the owner. In the past three years, a total amount of \$1.76 million involving 98 cases had been recovered from the owners concerned. The Department is in the process of recovering an outstanding amount of \$1.6 million involving 63 cases.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Marco WU

Director of Buildings

16 April 2005

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-HPLB(PL)02

Question Serial No.

SV06

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 :

To provide information on the number of building repairs carried out under the "repair first and recover costs later" approach, the costs so incurred, and how successful the Administration has been in recovering the costs from the owners concerned.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Sau-shing, Patrick

Reply :

We do not have a breakdown for repairs, building investigations and removal of unauthorised building works carried out by Buildings Department in default of owners. The total number of repairs, building investigations and removals of unauthorised building works carried out by Buildings Department; and the cost incurred and recovered in the past three years are as follows :-

Year	No. of cases completed	Cost incurred \$M	Cost recovered from owners * \$M
2002	140	8.42	8.70
2003	188	5.99	11.17
2004	104	2.83	9.76
Total	432	17.24	29.63

* The cost recovered each year may include arrears for works completed before that year. The Department is in the process of recovering an outstanding amount of \$18 million involving 670 cases.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Marco WU

Director of Buildings

18 April 2005

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-HPLB(PL)03

Question Serial No.

SV05

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 : To provide information on the number of cases in the past few years where enforcement against unauthorised permanent attachments to structures has been successful, and on the costs and manpower resources so incurred.

Asked by : Hon. TO Kun-sun, James

Reply :

We understand that the focus of the question is on unauthorised permanent attachments to ground floor shops, i.e. unauthorised shopfront extensions. In this connection, the number of unauthorised shopfront extensions removed by our Department in the past three years are as follows :-

Year	No. of unauthorised shopfront extensions
2002	129
2003	108
2004	339

The number of such type of unauthorised structures removed formed part of the 40,000 unauthorised building works (UBWs) removed annually during the past three years. The enforcement work against UBWs was carried out by a total of 386 professional and technical officers. As the removal of shopfront extensions constituted only part of this enforcement work, it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the staff costs for removing unauthorised shopfront extensions.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

CHEUNG Hau-wai

Director of Buildings (Atg)

15 April 2005

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HPLB(PL)04

Question Serial No.

SV03

Head : 42 Electrical and Mechanical Services Department Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Mechanical Engineering Installations Safety

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : To advise whether the Administration would reconsider requiring lift mechanics to be registered so as to enhance the safety of lifts

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

In our reply to Hon. KWONG Chi-kin's question on the subject of registration of lift mechanics (Administration's reply no. [HPLB\(PL\)051](#) attached), we advised Members that there was no need to set up a registration scheme for lift mechanics at this stage and we would continue to monitor the situation and maintain our dialogue with the trade on this issue. In fact, this is an item on the agenda of our regular liaison meetings with the lift and escalator workers' union and contractor associations. We will keep up our communication with the lift and escalator workers' union and contractor associations over the subject and keep under review the need for a registration system for lift mechanics in the light of changing circumstances.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date 15 April 2005

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06

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

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)051

Question Serial No.

0056

Head : 42 Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Mechanical engineering installations safety

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : EMSD will promote safety on mechanical engineering installations in 2005-06, so will the department increase the number of inspections of lifts and escalators? Moreover, will EMSD consider requiring the lift mechanics to be registered so as to enhance the safety of lifts? If a registration system is to be introduced, what will be the resources required?

Asked by : Hon. KWONG Chi-kin

Reply :

It is our target to carry out 5000 inspections in 2005 and we will conduct more inspections whenever appropriate.

In 2004 more than 95% of the lift and escalator incidents were relatively minor ones relating to passengers' behaviour such as kids' fingers/hands pinched in the gap between lift doors and the door frame and passengers falling on escalators. In response to this, apart from inspections, EMSD will strengthen its public education and publicity through regularly distributing leaflets, posters and other material to the public, organizing safety talks, safety carnival and outreaching programme for kindergartens and schools to promote the safe use of lifts and escalators, so as to prevent incidents caused by passengers' behaviour.

We have reviewed the need for introducing a scheme for the registration of lift and escalator workers. Under the present system and legislation, lifts and escalators are required to be maintained and tested by registered lift/escalator contractors and engineers to ensure safety. In addition, registered lift/escalator contractors should employ competent lift/escalator workers to perform lift/escalator work independently or supervise others to perform the work. These competent workers should possess apprentice certificates or higher qualification or have four years working experience/training with a registered lift/escalator contractor. The current regulatory regime pertaining to lifts and escalators safety is considered effective as reflected by the annual incident rate due to equipment failure (no. of incidents/no. of lifts and escalators) being kept below 0.04% for the past 3 years. Hence we consider that there is no need to set up a registration scheme for lift/escalator workers at this stage. However, we will continue to monitor the situation and maintain our dialogue with the trade on this issue as appropriate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date 2 April 2005

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