

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**DEVB(PL)173****(Question Serial No. 1193)**

Head: (91) Lands Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Land Administration
Controlling Officer: Director of Lands (Ms. Bernadette LINN)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question (Member Question No. 30):

In 2014-15, what amount of resources and manpower will the Lands Department deploy to strengthen land control and lease enforcement work? How much of the resources and manpower will be spent on the enforcement against unauthorised structures on private agricultural land? What are the changes in resource and staffing arrangements as compared with 2013-14? In 2013-14, on how many occasions was enforcement action taken against unauthorised structures on private agricultural land? How many pieces of agricultural land were involved? How many unauthorised structures were affected and how large in size were the structures? How many occupiers were affected and what was the rehousing arrangement? What is the estimated number of such enforcement actions to be taken in 2014-15? How many unauthorised structures will be targeted and how many occupiers are expected to be affected?

Asked by: Hon. TSE Wai-chuen, Tony

Reply:

In 2013-14, government land control work is mainly put under the portfolio of 213 posts, involving staff cost of \$78.06 million. These posts will continue to be deployed on this aspect of work in 2014-15, involving an estimated staff cost of \$80.96 million.

In 2013-14, lease enforcement work is mainly put under the portfolio of 81 posts, involving staff cost of \$31.08 million. These posts will continue to be deployed on this aspect of work in 2014-15, involving an estimated staff cost of \$32.21 million. As enforcement against unauthorised structures on private agricultural land is part of the lease enforcement work, there is no separate breakdown on the number of staff and staff cost deployed solely for this particular type of cases. Apart from these 81 posts, in the Estimates for 2014-15, we have earmarked provisions for the creation of a total of 13 non-directorate posts amounting to \$6.17 million to help step up enforcement action against unauthorised structures on private agricultural land.

In the calendar year of 2013, there were a total of 528 cases involving 537 agricultural lots with warning letters issued against the unauthorised structures. The Lands Department has

no readily available information on the details of the number and size of the unauthorised structures involved. Until the Department proceeds to re-enter the land, the lots would remain private agricultural land and it remains the responsibility of the lot owners concerned to purge the breaches by vacating and removing the unauthorised structures.

The Department will step up enforcement action against unauthorised structures on private agricultural land by various measures including, amongst others, demolition of structures under construction and proceeding with re-entry if breaches are not purged in good time after registration of warning letters in the Land Registry. It is too early to assess how the stepped up action would impact on the number of new cases and the total number of cases requiring follow up action in 2014-15.