

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)380

(Question Serial No. 3627)

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

Question:

Regarding matters on small houses and land control in the New Territories, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) How many small house applications were received by the Lands Department (LandsD) in the past three years? What are the numbers of backlog cases and cases under processing? How long does it take on average for LandsD to process a small house application?
- (2) How many cases were in breach of the requirements governing New Territories exempted houses in the past three years? What are the estimated expenditure and manpower required for handling such cases in 2019-20?
- (3) How many applications for rebuilding small houses or squatter structures were received by LandsD respectively in the past three years? What are the respective numbers of these applications under processing? How long does it take on average for LandsD to process an application for rebuilding small house or squatter structure? What are the estimated expenditure and manpower required for handling this task in 2019-20?

Asked by: Hon WU Chi-wai (LegCo internal reference no.: 84)

Reply:

- (1) Over the past three years (2016 to 2018), the Lands Department (LandsD) received a total of 3 776 small house applications. As at end of December 2018, the number of small house applications being processed was 8 223 and the number of applications pending processing was 2 574. For straightforward applications, the processing may be completed within 24 weeks from the date of interview with the applicant. For non-straightforward applications, , such as those associated with local objections, land title or boundary problems or requirements imposed by relevant regulatory authorities

which will need to be satisfied first, the processing time may be longer depending on the nature and complexity of the issues involved.

- (2) The numbers of confirmed cases of breach of development conditions of New Territories exempted houses (NTEHs) in the past three years (2016 to 2018) are set out below:

Year	Number of confirmed cases involving breach of development conditions of NTEHs
2016	87
2017	58
2018	201

Cases involving breach of development conditions of NTEHs are handled by the existing staff of LandsD as part of their lease enforcement work. We are unable to provide a breakdown of the resources deployed solely for handling breach of development conditions of NTEHs.

- (3) Over the past three years (2016 to 2018), the number of applications received for rebuilding NTEHs including small house was 1 783. As at end of December 2018, the number of rebuilding applications being processed was 2 133 and no application was pending processing.

In general, for straightforward cases, LandsD takes around eight months to approve an application for rebuilding NTEHs. For complicated cases, the processing time will be longer depending on the nature and complexity of the issues involved such as local objections, land title or boundary problems or requirements imposed by other regulatory authorities.

Rebuilding applications are processed by the existing staff of LandsD as part of their overall duties. We are unable to provide a breakdown of the resources deployed solely for processing rebuilding applications.

As regards squatter structures in the New Territories, for the purpose of this reply, they include those structures covered by the Squatter Control Survey in 1982 and other licences such as Government Land Licences or Modification of Tenancy Permits.

Over the past three years (2016 to 2018), the number of applications received for rebuilding squatter structures for domestic use was 10. As at end of December 2018, the number of rebuilding applications being processed was 36 and no application was pending processing. Processing of applications for rebuilding of squatter structures for domestic use within their existing dimensions is, in general, completed within 48 weeks. For complicated cases, the processing time will be longer depending on the nature and complexity of the issues involved.

Applications for rebuilding squatter structures for domestic use are processed by the existing staff of LandsD as part of their overall duties. We are unable to provide a breakdown of the resources deployed solely for processing these applications.

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