(Question Serial No. 4263)

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:

How many applications for rebuilding small houses and squatter structures were received by the Lands Department (LandsD) respectively in the past five years? What are the respective numbers of backlog cases and cases under processing at present? How long does it take on average for LandsD to process an application for rebuilding a small house or a squatter structure? What are the estimated expenditure and manpower required for handling these applications in 2020-21?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Tanya (LegCo internal reference no.: 229)

Reply:

Over the past five years (2015 to 2019), the number of applications received for rebuilding New Territories exempted houses (NTEHs) including small house was 3,117. As at end of December 2019, the number of rebuilding applications being processed was 2,152 and no application was pending processing.

In general, for straightforward cases, the Lands Department (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.

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 five years (2015 to 2019), the number of applications received for rebuilding squatter structures for domestic use was 25. As at end of December 2019, the number of rebuilding applications being processed was 34 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.

The abovementioned 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 these applications.