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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2016-17

Reply Serial No.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

THB(H)029

(Question Serial No. 1781)

Head: (62) Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
(Stanley YING)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under Programme (2), the provision for 2016-17 is \$10 million (14.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2015-16. It is stated that this is mainly due to the increase of 10 posts for implementing the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance. What are the details of the estimated expenditure to be incurred and the duties of these 10 posts? Will the Government set any performance targets or indicators for regulating the sale of first-hand properties, such as setting specific time frames for responding to enquiries and handling complaints, and stating in the Estimates the number of inspections on sales offices conducted each year? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Che-cheung (Member Question No. 34)

Reply:

Under Programme (2) Private Housing, the estimated recurrent expenditure for 2016-17 is \$10 million higher than the revised estimate for 2015-16. This is mainly due to the increase of 10 posts for implementing the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance (the Ordinance). The new posts will be created in the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority (SRPA), including Building Surveyor, Estate Surveyor, Executive Officer, Housing Manager and Survey Officer grades. They will be mainly responsible for conducting investigations and collecting evidence under the Ordinance.

The SRPA has not set any quantifiable performance indicators on its work because there are practical difficulties in setting such indicators. The number of compliance checks/inspections to be conducted by the SRPA in a financial year depends mainly on the number of sales brochures, price lists, documents containing the sales arrangements and registers of transactions which are made available to the public by vendors of first-hand residential

properties, the number of printed advertisements published, and the number of sales offices and show flats during that period of time. The number of enquiries and complaints to be handled by the SRPA depends on the number of enquiries and complaints received during that period of time. The number of investigations to be carried out depends on the number of suspected contraventions of the Ordinance during that period of time. Educating stakeholders and the public on matters relating to the provisions of the Ordinance is the routine work of the SRPA.

The SRPA follows the Housing Department's procedures and guidelines for handling enquiries and complaints. In short, unless an enquirer or a complainant requests for a verbal reply, the SRPA will issue a reply in writing. The SRPA will send a reply as soon as possible and within 10 calendar days upon receipt of an enquiry or a complaint which is simple. The SRPA will make all efforts to send a substantive reply within 21 calendar days upon receipt of an enquiry or a complaint which is complicated. If a substantive reply to an enquiry or a complaint cannot be issued within 21 calendar days, the SRPA will inform the enquirer or the complainant the progress of the case in writing on a monthly basis.

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