

Concern about fire risks and difficulties faced by households in the “three-nil” buildings and subdivided units in the district

Reply from the Buildings Department (BD):

Questions 1

BD has not compiled statistics on the number of sub-divided flats (SDFs) and number of occupiers lived in SDFs.

Questions 2 to 3

Apart from responding to reports, BD also takes enforcement action against building irregularities associated with SDFs through large scale operations. Where actionable building irregularities associated with SDFs are identified, BD will issue removal orders to the owners concerned and instigate prosecution against the owners who fail to comply with the orders.

In November 2020, BD launched a one-off special operation to inspect the conditions of common means of escape of domestic and composite buildings aged 60 or above and take appropriate enforcement actions under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) to ensure fire and building safety. The inspection was generally completed on 31 December 2020. Based on the inspection findings and according to the current enforcement policy against unauthorised building works (UBWs), BD is in the process of issuing removal orders under the BO to the owners concerned in an orderly manner, requiring removal of the UBWs or rectification of the irregularities. Total 266 target buildings in the Central and Western District have been inspected under this special operation.

BD has not compiled statistics on the number of “3-nil” buildings inspected under the operation.

Questions 4

The owners of old buildings (whether they are “3-nil” buildings or not) may encounter difficulties in coordinating the removal or rectification works. After issuing the removal orders, BD will arrange its in-house Social Services

Teams to provide assistance to those owners and occupants in need, including assisting them to apply for financial assistance schemes (in particular building rehabilitation assistance schemes administered by the Urban Renewal Authority) where applicable, referral to relevant departments, etc.

(Received on 17 May 2021)

C&WDC Secretariat

May 2021