

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1478)

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

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

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

Controlling Officer: Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (POON Kwok-ying)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government plans to allocate \$1 billion to extend the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the overall implementation of the previous round of the LIMSS since its launch; the cumulative numbers of applications received, approvals granted, works completed and works in progress, broken down by 18 districts;
2. the cumulative total financial expenditure, the efficacy of fund utilisation, and the specific ways of handling any unspent funds for the previous round of the LIMSS;
3. the specific allocation plan for this \$1 billion provision and the estimated number of beneficiary buildings in this round of the LIMSS; and
4. whether the current supply of manpower engaged in lift retrofitting and modernisation works in Hong Kong can meet the demand arising from the implementation of this round of the LIMSS; if not, how the works progress will be ensured; and the specific improvement measures in terms of subsidy criteria, application procedures, engineering support and regulatory mechanisms to be introduced in this extended LIMSS as compared with the previous round?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Fu-yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

1. In 2018, the Government, in partnership with the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), launched the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS), with the aim to assist eligible residential and composite buildings in retrofitting aged lifts with modern safety devices or to replace the entire lifts, thereby enhancing the safety standards of aged lifts. The LIMSS was allocated \$4.51 billion, and 2 rounds of applications were invited between 2018 and 2019 with a total of approximately 2 000 eligible applications (involving about 8 000 lifts) received. Subsequently,

some applicants (involving about 590 lifts) chose to withdraw from the LIMSS, bringing the overall number of eligible applications down to 1 808 (involving 7 406 lifts). As at December 2025, a breakdown of the numbers of eligible applications received, cases with an “Approval-in-Principle” Letter granted, works in progress and works completed by 18 districts is as follows:

District	Eligible applications (cases)	“Approval-in-Principle” Letter granted (cases)	Works in progress (cases)	Works completed (cases)
Central and Western	156	148	62	72
Wan Chai	138	134	44	74
Eastern	155	148	59	67
Southern	37	35	19	10
Yau Tsim Mong	398	392	143	208
Sham Shui Po	241	232	63	155
Kowloon City	156	143	63	60
Wong Tai Sin	46	40	14	21
Kwun Tong	79	74	26	38
Kwai Tsing	60	52	21	19
Tsuen Wan	58	50	18	24
Tuen Mun	72	63	21	33
Yuen Long	94	82	32	37
North	28	21	15	3
Tai Po	35	27	12	8
Sha Tin	36	32	14	8
Sai Kung	14	10	3	0
Islands	5	4	2	2
Total	1 808 (7 406 lifts in total)	1 687 (6 051 lifts in total)	631 (2 206 lifts in total)	839 (2 263 lifts in total)

2. As shown in the table above, 6 051 lifts were granted an “Approval-in-Principle” Letter, involving an estimated total amount of approximately \$4.43 billion. Of this amount, the URA disbursed, in accordance with the works progress of each approved case, around \$1.2 billion to the applicants with works completed or currently underway. As for the unspent funds, the URA will deposit them in banks as savings to earn interest for benefitting more eligible applicants.
3. & 4. According to our latest estimate, the \$4.51 billion allocation for the LIMSS is only sufficient to cover the modernisation works for around 6 200 lifts, which means that some 1 200 lifts (involving about 120 applications) currently on the waiting list with lower priority will not be benefitted. To address this, the Government will allocate an additional \$1 billion to deal with the remaining cases. As we are

not launching a new round of the LIMSS, the applicants concerned are not required to submit new applications separately.

When launching the LIMSS, the Government established a system to process applications in an orderly manner to avoid inflating market prices and affecting works quality due to the significant increase in lift modernisation works. Shortly after the implementation of the LIMSS, the COVID-19 epidemic struck. Owing to restrictions imposed by the associated social distancing measures, etc., many participating building owners under the LIMSS were unable to hold owners' meetings in a timely manner to discuss matters relating to modernisation works, which greatly hindered the progress of the LIMSS. With the society gradually returning to normalcy after the epidemic, the relevant procedures and works progress continued to improve.

Based on our assessment, the current number of registered lift workers in Hong Kong is sufficient to meet the manpower demand of the outstanding modernisation works under the LIMSS (including some 1 200 lifts to be benefitted from the additional \$1 billion allocation). Subject to the approval of the additional allocation, all lift modernisation works under the LIMSS are expected to be completed from now onwards in an orderly manner by 2030-31 progressively. We will maintain close communication with trade stakeholders and actively encourage the trade to attract new blood to the industry. In addition, to facilitate elderly owner-occupiers in the remaining cases to apply for additional subsidies, we have simplified the application forms and launched a dedicated mobile app to ease the process. We will also arrange for non-governmental organisations to assist the elderlies, who need further assistance, in applying for subsidies. Meanwhile, the URA will establish closer communication with the residents during the construction period to minimise any inconvenience caused to them by the works.

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