

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(W)101

(Question Serial No. 0845)

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 announced in paragraph 235 of the Budget Speech that \$1 billion will be allocated to extend the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS), while the Works Branch of the Development Bureau mentions in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27 under Programme (6) that it will continue to oversee the implementation of the LIMSS. In this regard, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

- (a) What are the numbers of applications received and approved, the number of lifts involved, the age of the buildings involved and the amount of subsidy granted each year since the implementation of the LIMSS?
- (b) What are the respective numbers of lift modernisation/replacement works under planning, in progress and completed in 2025, and as projected in 2026? Has the Bureau set any targets to accelerate the progress of the works, and what is the expected time of completion for the works currently in progress?
- (c) It was mentioned in the paper submitted by the Bureau and the Urban Renewal Authority to the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Development in October 2025 (LegCo Paper No. (1)1477/2025(01)) that applications involving 8 200 lifts had been received under the LIMSS; however, as the subsidy amount was larger than expected, at that time the funding was only sufficient to cover around 6 066 lifts, most of which were already granted “Approval-in-Principle” letters. With the allocation of an additional \$1 billion, will the approval process for the approximately 2 134 lifts where no progress has yet been made be automatically initiated, or will new applications be required? Including those 2 134 lifts, how many lifts are expected to be subsidised under the new round of allocation?
- (d) Has the Government assessed the number of lifts to be subsidised each year and the cash flow required if the LIMSS is regularised in the future?

Asked by: Hon Ng Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

- (a) 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). 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). The numbers of eligible cases in the two rounds of application were 1 087 (involving 4 516 lifts) and 721 (involving 2 890 lifts) respectively. As for the approval progress, currently 1 687 cases (involving 6 051 lifts) have been granted an “Approval-in-Principle” Letter (including those with modernisation completed), involving an estimated total amount of approximately \$4.43 billion.

The above lifts with approval for modernisation granted are generally of the same age as those of the buildings concerned. Details are as follows:

| Age of the Lift (Years) | Number of Lifts |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 20-29 | 226 |
| 30-39 | 1 585 |
| 40-49 | 2 525 |
| 50+ | 1 715 |
| Total | 6 051 |

- (b)&(c) 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.

As mentioned above, currently a total of 6 051 lifts have been granted an “Approval-in-Principle” Letter, of which the works for 2 263 lifts have been completed; 2 206 are in progress; and 1 582 are under planning. It is anticipated that the works in progress or under planning will be completed by 2028-29.

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.

- (d) Subject to the approval of the allocation of an additional \$1 billion, it is anticipated that all lift modernisation works under the LIMSS will be completed from now onwards in an orderly manner by 2030-31 progressively. We have no plan to regularise the LIMSS at this stage given that it involves the allocation of public resources and shall be considered in a comprehensive manner.

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