

## **Legislative Council Panel on Housing**

### **Building Control Issues for Tenants Purchase Scheme Estates**

#### **Purpose**

At the meeting with Legislative Council Members on 29 November 2001, some Kwai Tsing District Councillors indicated concern about whether owners of Tenants Purchase Scheme flats would need to carry out rectification works to ensure compliance with the Buildings Ordinance as such flats are exempted from statutory building controls until sold by the Housing Authority. This paper informs Members of the actions taken by Housing Department in this respect so far.

#### **Building Control Actions**

2. Although buildings constructed by the Housing Authority are exempted from the Buildings Ordinance, their design and construction are in general consistent with the principles of the prevailing building regulations at the time of construction. The buildings are safe in all respects. However, as these flats are subject to the control of Buildings Ordinance once sold under the Tenants Purchase Scheme, Housing Department has established a Building Control Unit with the delegated authority from the Buildings Department to oversee the safety aspects of these buildings. The Unit works closely with the Buildings Department to address any Buildings Ordinance compliance issues of these estates. Expenses for any essential modification works identified will be borne by the Housing Authority as appropriate.

3. The Housing Department engaged an independent consultant in May 2002 to assess the fire safety level of Tenants Purchase Scheme flats. The consultant has confirmed that the overall fire safety level of these buildings is comparable to that of similar private buildings of the same age which were in full compliance with the prevailing statutory requirements at the time of construction. However, to further enhance the fire safety of these buildings, Housing Department has decided to replace the hollow entrance doors for about 50 000 flats located at “dead ends” of fire escape routes with fire-resistant solid-core doors, which will also enable the doors of these buildings to be in compliance with the then prevailing fire resistance statutory requirements. The door replacement programme is expected to be completed by June 2004 at a total cost of about \$130 million.

4. The Housing Department has also been actively taking enforcement actions under the Buildings Ordinance on complaint cases relating to unauthorized building works carried out by owners of Tenants Purchase Scheme flats. Of the 715 complaints received, most of the complaints have been satisfactorily resolved though 57 cases have been referred to Buildings Department for prosecution and further enforcement actions would be required for 66 outstanding cases.

Housing Department  
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