香港特別行政區政府
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

房屋及規劃地政局
香港花園道美利大廈
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Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
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24 October 2005

Clerk to Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Anita Sit)

Dear Ms Sit,

Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Safety of Aluminium Windows

The safety of aluminium windows was discussed at the Panel meeting held on 13 July 2005. At the meeting, Members requested the Administration to provide further information on:

(a) the age of the buildings involved in aluminium window failures; and
(b) whether heavy rainfall would lead to upsurge in the number of aluminium windows failures.

The requested information is provided below.

Age of buildings involved in window failures

A total of 75 window falling reports were received by the Buildings Department (BD) in the first nine months of 2005. All buildings involved in these reported cases are of 10 years or more of age (see table below).

Age of 75 buildings where windows failure occurred

Age of Buildings (in years)	**0-3**	**4-6**	**7-9**	**10-12**	**13-15**	**16-18**	**19-21**	**21+**
No. of cases	0	0	0	3	8	8	10	46
Percentage of total	0	0	0%	4%	11%	11%	13%	61%

Effects of rain

In carrying out a review on the causes of window failures, BD has taken into account the findings of a consultancy study commissioned by the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS). The study was conducted in August/September 2005 to analyse the window failure cases reported to BD during January 2004 to July 2005. It focused on the relationship between window failures cases and the weather data including rainfall values and daily mean wind speed at the time of window failures and the effects of continuous raining on window failures. The consultant's initial analysis indicates that no causal relationship can be observed between heavy rainfall and the occurrence of window failure. It is also noted that while rain water trapped in the lower parts of window frames may cause corrosion of rivets and thus a higher possibility of window failure, regular maintenance of windows may alleviate such corrosion effects.

Causes of window failure and way forward

According to BD’s observation, most of the window falling cases involved failures in hinges connecting the windows frames and/or sashes. Such failures are believed to be mainly caused by a lack of proper maintenance of windows.

In response to the spate of window falling incidents this year, BD has promptly put in place measures to promote window safety, including issuing a revised Practice Note for Authorized Persons and Registered Structural Engineers to update guidelines on the design and installation of aluminium windows, stepping up publicity and seeking HKHS’s assistance in

helping owners conduct window inspection. The Government is also considering appropriate measures to solve the problem in the long run. In the second-stage Building Management and Maintenance Consultation, we will seek the public's views on, among others, the appropriate measures to enhance window safety. We will take into account the public views in determining the way forward.

Yours faithfully,

(Ms Agnes Ho)
for Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

c.c. Director of Buildings (Attn: Mr ST Lam)
AA/SHPL
SEO(A)