

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)1996/04-05(06)

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**Meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works  
on 13 July 2005**

**Safety of aluminium windows**

**Background brief**

**Introduction**

In view of the recent spate of incidents of loosing window components falling onto the street, the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel) has scheduled to discuss the issue of safety of aluminium windows at its meeting on 13 July 2005. This paper provides a summary of members' concerns on the subject.

**Measures to ensure safety of aluminium windows**

2. At present most installation and alteration of windows, including aluminium windows or steel windows, are regarded as exempted building works under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123). For large windows and window walls in high-rise buildings, the structural details are required to be submitted to the Buildings Department (BD) for approval.
3. BD provides general guidelines on the proper design and installation of aluminium windows for the reference of building professionals and registered contractors. In particular, a practice note on "Aluminium Windows" was issued by BD for building professionals and contractors.
4. According to the Administration, the defects causing the detachment of aluminium windows could easily be spotted by visual inspection. BD therefore appeals to the building owners to carry out regular inspections and timely maintenance of their building facilities, such as aluminium windows. BD published a "Building Maintenance Guidebook" in June 2002, which included guidelines on how to prevent the failure of aluminium windows.

### **Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003**

5. For the purpose of strengthening regulation of minor building works, the Administration proposed to designate the installation and alteration of windows which posed a greater potential risk as minor works under the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003 (the Bill). During the course of scrutiny, the Bills Committee then formed to study the Bill identified a lot of operational difficulties with the proposed regulatory regime of household minor works, such as installation of windows and erection of metal supporting frames for air-conditioning units. The difficulties could not be resolved by the measures proposed by the Administration. In view of the far-reaching impact of the proposed minor works regime on the general public and minor works contractors and having considered the time available before the expiry of the then legislative term, members of the Bills Committee considered it prudent not to go ahead with the proposed minor works regime hastily. The Bills Committee decided to excise the proposed minor works regime from the Bill. The Administration was urged to further consult the industry and re-introduce the revised minor works regime at the current legislative term. The Bill, without the provisions on minor works, was passed by the Council on 23 June 2004.

### **Deliberations by the PLW Panel**

6. At the meeting of PLW Panel on 27 January 2004 at which the subject of safety of aluminium windows was discussed, members expressed the following views and concerns:

- (a) measures should be put in place to monitor the quality of imported aluminium windows from the Mainland. The Administration should directly monitor the quality of these windows instead of relying on building professionals and registered contractors;
- (b) there must be adequate site supervision to ensure that window frames were securely and rigidly fixed in accordance with the practice note issued by BD; and
- (c) publicity and public education should be strengthened on the proper installation and maintenance of aluminium windows. BD should seek assistance of the Home Affairs Department in promoting the safety and maintenance of aluminium windows through the Owners' Corporations (OCs).

## **Latest developments**

7. In view of the spate of incidents involving the detachment of aluminium windows in June 2005, the Administration has announced a series of measures to enhance the safety of aluminium windows, which included:

- (a) The Housing Department (HD) will spend \$68 million to add a third screw to aluminium windows in 140 000 public rental housing flats at 213 Harmony blocks built before 2000;
- (b) HD will launch 20 inspection teams to check and repair windows;
- (c) BD will issue letters to over 1.3 million private households reminding them to inspect and maintain windows; and
- (d) The Housing Society will help owners of buildings without OCs or mutual aid committees to arrange for window inspection.

8. A list of the relevant papers with their hyperlinks in the LegCo website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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## Safety of aluminium windows

## List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Planning, Lands and Works	27 January 2004	LC Paper No. CB(1)830/03-04(01) ( <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/plw/papers/plw0127cb1-830-1e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/plw/papers/plw0127cb1-830-1e.pdf</a> )  LC Paper No. CB(1)1313/03-04 ( <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl040127.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl040127.pdf</a> )
Bills Committee on Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003		LC Paper No. CB(1)2001/03-04 <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/hc/papers/hc0604cb1-2001e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/hc/papers/hc0604cb1-2001e.pdf</a>