

**For information on  
28 March 2006**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

**Transfer of Squatter Control Function from Housing Department  
to Lands Department and Strengthening of  
Land Control and Lease Enforcement Work**

**Purpose**

This paper apprises Members of the changes in arrangements on the transfer of the squatter control (SC) and clearance functions of Housing Department (HD) to Lands Department (LandsD).

**Background**

2. A paper informing Members of the Administration's plan to transfer the SC and clearance functions of HD to LandsD, and to strengthen LandsD's capability for land control and lease enforcement work was presented to this Panel on 20 December 2005.

3. In the paper, we proposed to use part of the resources transferred from HD to set up a Central Action Team (CAT) in LandsD to take over the SC function and assimilate it into land control work through revamping the existing land control operations. The remaining resources will be deployed to reinforce the manpower of the District Land Offices for lease enforcement work. We also reported that LandsD and HD were consulting their staff regarding the proposed transfer arrangements.

**Updates on transfer arrangements**

4. The transfer of the SC and clearance functions of HD to LandsD will be implemented on 1 April 2006 as scheduled. Under the original proposal, a CAT would be set up to tackle land control work, including SC, for the whole territory. In the light of the feedback gathered from the first round of staff consultation, it is considered that there are merits to expand the proposed scope of work of the CAT to include lease enforcement. This revised strategy will benefit from unity of command over land control and lease enforcement which are often related, thus achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with enforcement cases straddling both government land and private land.

5. LandsD plans to set up the CAT as soon as possible. A detailed proposal is being formulated for the conduct of staff consultation. Before the establishment of the CAT, the SC Teams to be transferred from HD in 1 April 2006 will be placed under the Estate Management Section of the Lands Administration Office (LAO) of LandsD. Other than carrying out their normal SC duties, they would also assist in detecting unauthorized building works and irregular activities on Government land outside squatter areas. The Clearance Team will join the Acquisition Section of LAO which already carries a clearance function in relation to land acquisition projects.

### **Financial Implications**

6. The revised proposal does not involve any extra funding provision. The proposed changes in organization and establishment in LandsD will be effected by the transfer of posts and resources from HD as well as through internal redeployment.

### **Staff Consultation**

7. Another round of staff consultation will be conducted as soon as a revised CAT proposal is available.

### **Way Forward**

8. The revised CAT proposal will be implemented after further staff consultation. We will review the effectiveness of the new arrangement after its implementation.

**Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau  
Lands Department  
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