

Legislative Council Panel on Housing

Provision of Metal Gateset for Flat Entrance in Public Rental Housing Estates

Purpose

This paper provides Members with background information on the provision of flat entrance metal gateset in public rental housing (“PRH”) estates.

Background

2. A policy objective of the Housing Authority (“HA”) has been to provide PRH estates with functional and cost-effective facilities. After extensive public consultation and deliberation, the Building Committee (“BC”) of the HA approved in June 2003 the policy of not providing new PRH estates with entrance metal gateset. The major reasons were –

- (a) According to the Building (Construction) Regulations 2000 and the Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction 1996, provision of entrance metal gateset was not a statutory requirement and solid core flush doors had been provided in PRH flats according to the relevant provisions;
- (b) The major security measures in PRH estates included ground floor security gates with digital lock, 24-hour security guards, closed-circuit television and door phone systems etc. Entrance metal gateset was only an ancillary installation; and
- (c) The HA did not provide entrance metal gateset to PRH flats converted from the Home Ownership Scheme or the Private Sector Participation Scheme. While more than 90% of the tenants of these PRH flats applied to the Housing Department for installing entrance metal gateset at their own cost, no complaints were received so far.

3. The HA has subsequently fine-tuned the policy on two occasions. In January 2004, the BC decided to install entrance metal gateset in the three reception estates¹ for tenants affected by the Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme (“CRP”). In August 2007, the Subsidised Housing Committee (“SHC”) of the HA decided to grant a non-accountable ex-gratia allowance to

¹ They are Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 1, Shek Pai Wan Estate Phases 1 & 2 and Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phases 2 & 3.

households affected by the HA-initiated clearance projects outside the CRP who chose to be rehoused in PRH flats not provided with entrance metal gateset. The fine-tuning of the policy in both cases was based on the same consideration that households were affected by the HA-initiated clearance projects which merited different treatment from those allocated flats through voluntary transfer or the Waiting List applicants.

4. A total of 78 800 flats in 27 PRH estates were completed between 2003 and 2008 which are not provided with entrance metal gateset. Among the 76 000 occupied flats, tenants of about 65 900 units have installed entrance metal gateset at their own cost² while tenants of the remaining 10 100 units (including new tenants) chose not to do so.

5. In the past few years, tenants and concern groups appealed to the HA from time to time for reviewing the arrangement. In mid-2008, the HA conducted a survey among new tenants of PRH estates without the provision of entrance metal gateset. According to the results, the majority (94.2%) indicated that despite the high-standard security systems provided by the HA, they would install entrance metal gateset at their own cost, mainly for the purpose of security enhancement.

6. As a caring landlord, and upon careful consideration of various factors, the BC decided on 20 March 2009 to resume the provision of entrance metal gateset for new PRH development projects completed after January 2009. Nevertheless, tenants must always keep the entrance doors of their flats closed for the sake of fire safety.

Way Forward

7. At the meeting held on 19 May 2009, the SHC discussed the new arrangement and the circumstances of existing tenants. There will be further discussion at the meeting on 31 July 2009. We welcome any views from Members on the issue.

Transport and Housing Bureau June 2009

² This includes the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance recipients who installed entrance metal gateset with the special grants from the Social Welfare Department.