

Laying of the Report Report No. 67 of the Director of Audit on the results of value for money audits was laid in the Legislative Council ("LegCo") on 23 November 2016. The Public Accounts Committee ("the Committee")'s supplemental report (Report No. 67A) on Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report was tabled on 12 April 2017.

2. **The Government Minute** The Government Minute in response to the Committee's Report No. 67A was laid in LegCo on 24 May 2017. The latest position and the Committee's further comments on these matters are set out in paragraphs 3 to 5 below.

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats
(Part 4 of P.A.C. Report No. 67A)

3. Hon Kenneth LEUNG declared that he was a former member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HKHA"); and Hon SHIU Ka-fai declared that he was currently a member of HKHA and engaged in the trading business of construction materials.

4. The Committee was informed that:

In-flat maintenance of public rental housing ("PRH") flats

- the Housing Department ("HD") had taken the following measures to improve the access rate of Total Maintenance Scheme ("TMS") inspections, in particular for those flats which were inaccessible in two consecutive inspection cycles of individual estates under TMS:
 - (a) when arranging in-flat inspection for inaccessible flats, the In-flat Inspection Ambassadors ("IIAs") would make at least one visit on Saturday or during other non-office hours as far as possible;
 - (b) IIAs would make inspection appointments during non-office hours if the progress of inspection of individual block was behind schedule;
 - (c) HD had enhanced the information system to strengthen the monitoring of inaccessible flats status and follow up; and

- (d) HD would continue to adopt various measures to improve the access rate of TMS inspections, including inspecting the general condition of the flats when providing Responsive In-flat Maintenance Services ("RIMS") to tenants;
- HD had reviewed works orders issued under RIMS and concluded that the increase in works orders was related to aging and increasing number of public housing units. HD had enhanced the information system to analyse the number and trend of works orders to achieve better resource planning and strengthen the monitoring of RIMS;
 - HD had reviewed RIMS service standards. The existing nine service standards would be revamped to focus on service quality and operational effectiveness;
 - HD had completed the review on existing measures for verifying the effectiveness of water seepage repairs under RIMS and TMS. HD would update and implement the relevant guidelines accordingly;
 - HD had put in place established guidelines to frontline staff on works inspection and acceptance, such as compulsory inspections at critical stages required for spalling concrete repair and waterproofing works. To enrich the technical knowledge of frontline staff, HD had strengthened the coaching provided to IIAs. At the same time, HD had strengthened technical training for newly recruited IIAs to ensure consistent standards for site inspections. HD would also step up the site audit checks, in particular for works by contractors with persistent unsatisfactory performance. On the other hand, HKHA had put in place established procurement policies to manage its contractors through list management. Under the Preferential Tendering Opportunities arrangement, eligible contractors would be allotted with tendering opportunities to district term maintenance contracts based on their past performance scores. Contractors with lower scores would be given less or even zero tendering opportunity. For contractors of serving district term maintenance contracts with sub-standard performance, the contract period would be shortened from three to two years. HD would strictly enforce such contractual requirement to further improve the service quality of contractors;

Follow-up actions on PRH's water sampling tests for lead

- the Water Supplies Department had completed the study on relevant issues for developing an appropriate sampling protocol for Hong Kong, including the study on metal parameters, and developed the sampling protocol for monitoring the drinking water quality;
- taking into consideration the advice made by the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water and the International Expert Panel on Drinking Water Safety, overseas experiences and practices, the deliberations with relevant Bureaux/Departments, as well as the views gauged from other experts and industry stakeholders during consultations, the Government had finalized the details of the "Action Plan for Enhancing Drinking Water Safety in Hong Kong" and announced it to the public on 21 September 2017. The Action Plan adopted a multi-pronged approach to further enhance the drinking water safety in Hong Kong, including the enhancement of the current water quality monitoring programme by collecting random water samples using a two-tier sampling protocol from consumers' drinking taps annually for water quality monitoring (i.e. the Enhanced Water Quality Monitoring Programme). The concerned sampling protocol was applicable to all premises including PRH estates for testing of drinking water;
- at the LegCo Panel on Housing meeting held on 4 December 2017, the Administration briefed members on the arrangements for testing of drinking water of PRH estates under the Enhanced Water Quality Monitoring Programme and the latest progress of the follow-up actions in respect of the excess-lead-in-water incident. The Panel requested the Administration to provide the relevant results of the water sampling tests that had been conducted for the concerned PRH estates;
- having consolidated experiences from the trial works for replacing non-compliant pipes inside flats of the 11 affected PRH estates, HKHA's contractors had started works inside flats for the remaining affected PRH developments since April 2017. HKHA would continue to monitor the quality and progress of the rectification works and update the public and LegCo on the latest progress of works;

Management of asbestos-containing materials ("ACMs") in PRH estates

- HD's registered asbestos consultant had issued guidelines for assessment of the condition of ACMs. The new guidelines were targeted for implementation in 2017-2018;
- to enhance the monitoring mechanism of ACMs and to raise the awareness of tenants on asbestos, HD had conducted half-yearly condition surveys, including in-flat inspections of balcony grilles of the flats concerned and at the same time raising the tenants' alertness and prompting reporting to HD on any defects noted. Fixing warning labels for asbestos grilles at staircases and lobbies and labelling for other ACMs such as in-flat balcony grilles and chimneys were targeted for completion by the end of 2017-2018;

Replacement of laundry pole-holders

- HD had stepped up the monitoring mechanism of work progress of the 2014 programme for replacing laundry pole-holders in monthly meetings. The programme was progressing well in the past months; and

Enhancing fire safety of old PRH estates

- HD had maintained close liaison with the enforcement authorities, i.e. the Buildings Department and the Fire Services Department to monitor the progress of implementation of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572) in PRH estates and to resolve problems arisen during implementation. Since November 2016, HD had been submitting fire safety proposals for individual estates to the enforcement authorities and all proposals were expected to be submitted by March 2019. By the end of September 2017, the Buildings Department and the Fire Services Department would complete inspections to about 150 PRH blocks. Upon acceptance by the enforcement authorities, HD would proceed with the improvement works.

5. The Committee wishes to be kept informed of further development on the subject.