

**Meeting between LegCo Members and
Tsuen Wan District Council (TWDC) members on 23 January 2003**

**Issues referred to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
and Panel on Housing**

(A) Concerns and suggestions raised by TWDC members at the meeting—

TWDC members expressed concern about the fire hazards associated with illegal rooftop structures (IRS) in single staircase buildings which were common in the older areas of Tsuen Wan. While recognizing the difficulties and losses which IRS residents might face as a result of clearance, they urged for early clearance of IRS on grounds of safety. They pointed out that since statutory orders for the removal of IRS were served on rooftop owners rather than IRS occupiers, problems of illegal occupation had to be dealt with. They also drew attention to the difficulties faced by rooftop owners in removing IRS and evicting the occupiers of IRS which were built without owners' consent. They requested that the Buildings Department should coordinate with the Housing Department to ensure that rehousing could be tied in with clearance exercises and that suitable compensation arrangements should be worked out.

(B) LegCo Members' response at the meeting—

Some LegCo Members attending the meeting pointed out that IRS occupiers were reluctant to move out as rehousing would not be offered in the absence of statutory orders. The current arrangement had in fact discouraged voluntary removal of IRS occupiers and would need to be looked into. Some Members said that owners could apply to the Lands Tribunal for recovery of the rooftop premises if the premises were leased or illegally occupied.

Some Members also advised that the Administration had recently relaxed the rehousing policy such that clearerees with proof of two-year residence in 1982-surveyed IRS prior to service of statutory orders were now eligible for rehousing to public rental housing (PRH), subject to their meeting of other eligibility criteria such as residence rule, domestic property restriction and Comprehensive Means Test.