

For information

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Progress Report on the Government's Follow-up Action
on the Equal Opportunities Commission's Formal Investigation Report on
Accessibility in Publicly Accessible Premises
Position as at 30 June 2014

PURPOSE

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services held on 13 December 2010, we undertook to provide, starting from April 2011, quarterly progress reports on the retrofitting programme for upgrading the barrier-free facilities in existing Government and Housing Authority (HA) premises and facilities, following the release of the Equal Opportunities Commission's Formal Investigation Report on Accessibility in Publicly Accessible Premises (EOC Report) on 7 June 2010. This paper sets out the progress of the retrofitting programme as at 30 June 2014.

PROGRESS

The Major Retrofitting Programme Covering about 3500 Government Premises/Facilities

2. The major retrofitting programme covers about 3 500¹ Government premises/facilities. All items had been completed by 30 June 2014. A breakdown of the Government premises and facilities under the major retrofitting programme, and full lists of premises/facilities retrofitted under Class A and Class B are at **Annexes A to C** respectively.

¹ Another 90 government premises and facilities have been grouped under other improvement programmes, such as the Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the refurbishment programme of the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), and upgrading of the barrier-free facilities will be carried out as part of the relevant renovation works.

3. As part of the on-going enhancement of barrier-free facilities in Government premises and facilities, ArchSD will continue to follow up on the construction of accessible lifting platforms and lifts in some other venues under its current mechanism for minor building works.

HA's Retrofitting Programme on Premises / Facilities under its Management

4. HA has also devised a retrofitting programme to improve the accessibility of about 240 premises / facilities under its management, covering public housing estates, commercial centres, carparks and factory buildings. All the improvement works had been completed, except for a small proportion of works under HA's lift modernisation programme that is scheduled for completion by 2016-17. Details of all the completed improvement works are set out in **Annex D**.

Universal Accessibility Programme

5. Besides, the Government has been installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by the Highways Department (HyD)) where technically feasible (i.e. the "Original Programme"). Under the "Original Programme", the Government provides lifts or standard ramps to existing public walkways which are not equipped with standard barrier-free access facilities and there are no proper at-grade crossing facilities available within about 100 meters. Currently, there are 158 items which are technically feasible under the "Original Programme". Investigation work of these items has been completed; and retrofitting works of six items have been completed, 62 other items are under construction and the remaining 90 items are under design. The progress of the relevant retrofitting works is at **Annex E**².

6. In August 2012, the Government launched the new policy on "Universal Accessibility" which aimed at further enhancing the barrier-free facilities for existing public walkways. Apart from the retrofitting works mentioned in paragraph 5 above, the Government consulted the District Councils in the first half of 2013 on the priority for

² Apart from the items under the "Original Programme" mentioned in paragraph 5, Annex E also includes another 42 barrier-free access facilities retrofitting works items. Among these, works of 35 items have been completed while the remaining 7 items are under planning or construction.

implementing the public's suggestions for retrofitting of lifts. The technical feasibility studies for three priority projects identified by each District Council have been largely completed. The Government has also consulted the District Councils on the results of the studies for these items and proceeded with the detailed design for the items confirmed to be technically feasible and supported by relevant District Councils.

Staff Training and Public Education Efforts

7. To dovetail with the appointment of Access Co-ordinators (ACs) in Government bureaux and departments as well as Access Officers (AOs) for individual Government venues in April 2011, the Government has, since early 2011, launched a series of training, including seminars and pilot workshops, in collaboration with EOC for ACs and AOs. Two episodes of training videos have been produced in collaboration with EOC. The videos, together with the existing web-based training package, are uploaded onto the government intranet and Cyber Learning Centre Plus to further enhance the awareness of accessibility in the civil service. Those departments which have frequent interface with the public in their service delivery (such as the Hong Kong Post, Transport Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Housing Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, etc.) continue to organise, in collaboration with EOC and the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI), tailor-made accessibility seminars/workshops for their frontline staff.

8. The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and CSTDI, in collaboration with The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, organised a total of eight rounds of sign language training workshops for frontline staff of government departments since July 2011, to enhance the knowledge of staff in basic sign language and awareness of the deaf culture thereby facilitating the hearing impaired in accessing government services. The latest workshops were held in July and August 2014.

WAY FORWARD

9. This progress report will be uploaded to LWB's website (www.lwb.gov.hk/eng/accessibility) for public information. Since the improvement works under the major retrofitting programme (as referred to in paragraph 2 above) and the retrofitting programme of HA (as referred to in paragraph 4 above) have all been completed and the enhancement works is the ongoing work of the relevant departments, we do not propose to submit further quarterly report. We will continue to enhance the barrier-free facilities in Government and HA premises and facilities and take forward any additional proposals having regard to views and suggestions of stakeholders in accordance with the established mechanism. Members of the public may continue to make use of the Access Co-ordinator and Access Officer Scheme to seek assistance, offer suggestions or lodge complaints in respect of the barrier-free facilities of Government and HA venues. We will also continue to work closely with EOC, the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, the rehabilitation sector and the community in building a barrier-free and inclusive society.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
September 2014