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Panel on Housing

Meeting on 4 June 2012

**Updated background brief on Total Maintenance Scheme
prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
(Position as at 29 May 2012)**

Purpose

This paper sets out the development of the Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS) for public rental housing (PRH), and gives a brief account of the views expressed by Members on the subject.

Background

2. The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) is responsible for managing and maintaining its assets with a view to maximizing their performance and economic life. While the common and external areas in PRH estates are properly maintained, there is room for improvement in the standard of maintenance within the flats. In 2006, HA launched a five-year Total Management Scheme (TMS), which aims at providing comprehensive, customer-oriented maintenance service featuring proactive in-flat inspection and enhanced services upon tenants' requests for repairs.

Total Management Scheme

3. TMS adopts the following three-pronged approach –
- (a) A proactive and comprehensive approach to identify maintenance problems;
 - (b) Prompt response to emergencies and tenants' requests for repairs;
and

- (c) Enhanced promotional and educational programmes.

4. Key features of TMS include -

- (a) In-flat Inspection Ambassadors (IIAs) – to provide one-stop service for inside flat inspection and repairs, educate tenants on home care and maintenance issues, record the maintenance conditions through flat-to-flat inspections, and build up a communication network with tenants;
- (b) Dedicated Task Forces –to handle major maintenance items, including works under the Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme (CSIP), in a expeditious and coordinated manner;
- (c) Estate Improvement Programme – to carry out comprehensive structural investigation for PRH estates aged about 40 years or above under CSIP. Necessary works will be undertaken to enhance the condition of blocks or estates which are structurally safe but require repair;
- (d) TMS System – a computerized system to facilitate the effective management of in-flat inspection records, issuing and processing of works orders and scheduling of inspection and repair works appointments;
- (e) Maintenance Hotline – to enable tenants to make inspection appointments, enquire about the progress of repair works, put forward maintenance requests and lodge complaints;
- (f) Proactive public relations management – to strengthen communication with tenants with wider use of the HA Channel to ensure that policies and issues affecting the tenants are widely publicized. A TMS website has been set up to allow tenants to make enquiries on the one hand, and HA to gauge the tenants' views on maintenance services on the other; and
- (g) Publicity and Tenants Education Programme – to promote TMS through various means of publicity, including pamphlets, posters, and road shows, with a view to winning the support of the tenants and the general public.

It is expected that in-flat inspection for 30 estates can be carried out each year so that all PRH flats will be inspected over a period of five years. The

expenditure for the maintenance and repair works under TMS would be about \$1,257 million per annum, totalling about \$6,300 million over the five-year period.

Overall progress and way forward

5. As at March 2010, the in-flat inspection programme has been rolled out in 160 estates. Of these, inspection and repair service for 105 estates, involving about 366 000 works items, have been completed. The average maintenance cost for each PRH unit was about \$1,100 with an accumulated expenditure of \$5,000 million.

6. With reference to the experience gained and based on the TMS model, HA has implemented the Responsive In-flat Maintenance Services, which provides prompt response to repair requests raised by tenants from time to time with the aid of Personal Digital Assistants and enhanced communications technology.

7. After the completion of the first five-year cycle of the TMS in 2011, HA would conduct a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of various initiatives and a detailed study of the maintenance data collected under TMS.

Deliberations by the Panel on Housing

8. The progress of implementation of TMS was discussed by the Panel at its meetings on 5 February 2007, 8 April 2008, 5 January 2009 and 7 June 2010.

9. While acknowledging that TMS was generally well received by tenants, some Panel members expressed concern on how HA could prevent the recurrence of problems encountered in previous maintenance schemes, such as disputes and poor performance of works contractors etc, under TMS. To ensure quality of works of outside contractors, these members considered it necessary for HA to assess the performance of contractors which should be taken into account in the next tender exercises. HA should also review the practice of awarding the contracts to the lowest bidder lest this would inevitably compromise the quality of works. To minimize the nuisance to the tenants during maintenance works, efforts should be made to coordinate the works among different contractors and sub-contractors with a view to completing the works in a flat within the same day. Temporary rehousing should be considered for residents affected by large-scale in-flat repairs/maintenance works. Transfer to other housing units should be provided for tenants whose flats were in extremely poor condition.

10. Given that there had been much contention on the nature of repairs and the party who should be held responsible for the repairs, some other members enquired about the criteria for determining which elements or service installations should be repaired or replaced. These members opined that HA should review the scope of TMS to include more items (such as sinks, metal gates, main/toilet doors and their frames) as standard fittings so that repair/maintenance works could be carried out on a regular basis rather than on a case-by-case basis at tenants' requests.

11. Panel members also raised questions on the adequacy of IIAs recruited under TMS to carry out in-flat inspections, cost implications associated with the development of computer systems for TMS, long lead time for minor repair works, inclusion of aged estates in TMS, and maintenance problems in Tenant Purchase Scheme estates with a mix of tenure of owners and tenants. They considered that HA should make use of TMS to promote greening and environmental protection initiatives, such as green rooftops and energy conservation, in PRH estates. Barrier-free access and appropriate facilities in common areas and inside individual flats should also be provided to cater for the needs of disabled and elderly residents. Facilities, such as ramps and railings, should be provided in estates with high proportion of elderly residents. Wherever possible, consideration should be given to providing lifts or escalators in some old estates.

Latest development

12. The Administration proposes to brief members on the latest progress of TMS at the Panel meeting on 4 June 2012.

Relevant papers

13. A list of relevant papers is at **Appendix**.

Total Maintenance Scheme

List of relevant papers

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Housing Panel	5 February 2007	<p>Information paper on "Total Maintenance Scheme for Public Housing Estates – Progress Report and Latest Development (January 2007)" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1) 836/06-07(06)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0205cb1-836-6-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1) 1479/06-07) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg070205.pdf</p>
Housing Panel	8 April 2008	<p>Information paper on "Review of the Total Maintenance Scheme" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1) 1161/07-08(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0408cb1-1161-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1) 2025/07-08) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg080408.pdf</p>
Housing Panel	5 January 2009	<p>Information paper on "Progress of Total Maintenance Scheme and Way Forward" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1) 490/08-09(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0105cb1-490-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1) 893/08-09) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20090105.pdf</p>

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Housing Panel	7 June 2010	<p>Information paper on "Progress of Total Maintenance Scheme" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1) 2099/09-10(04)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0607cb1-2099-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Paper on Total Maintenance Scheme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief) (LC Paper No. CB(1) 2099/09-10(05)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0607cb1-2099-5-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1) 2653/09/10) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20100607.pdf</p>