

**For discussion  
on 12 April 2016**

## **Legislative Council Panel on Housing**

### **Security Issues Relating to Metal Gates of Public Rental Housing Units**

#### **Purpose**

This paper aims to brief Members on the background of the metal gates of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s public rental housing (PRH) units; and the response regarding the security concerns arising from the recent burglary cases in some PRH units in Tin Shui Wai.

#### **Background**

2. HA has a stock of over 750 000 PRH units at hand. HA has always strived to provide effective security measures for the tenants and three tiers of security measures are administered in most public housing estates<sup>1</sup>. The first tier consists of security gates with digital locks at the entrances and staircases of domestic blocks, provision of 24-hour security guard attendance, and CCTVs installed inside lifts and at the main entrances of blocks with inter-communication system, which are monitored by security guards at the counter at ground floor lobbies; the second tier is the metal gate for each PRH unit and the third is the entrance door of each PRH unit. The locksets of entrance timber doors and metal gates of PRH units are of different key combinations. Metal gates of PRH units are not prescriptive statutory requirement and are not designed as the main line of security. The unit entrance doors should be closed for fire safety purposes. Under normal circumstances, it would be difficult for burglars to overcome all three tiers of security measures without being noticed by tenants in the PRH blocks and security guards.

3. The above three-tier security measures have proven to be effective. There is no indication that such three-tier security measures or the design of metal gate locks had led to more burglary cases in public housing estates than other buildings.

---

<sup>1</sup> The few exceptions are those low rise PRH blocks in rural area and some old PRH blocks without a lift lobby.

4. Recently, there were reports that some PRH units in Tin Shui Wai were burgled with the metal gates undamaged. These were individual incidents. The thieves might have used universal keys to break in. Also, a PRH tenant claimed that the metal gates of other PRH units could be opened by his/her own metal gate key. After thorough investigation, the locksets in question were found damaged due to normal wear and tear after long-term usage. HA had replaced the locksets in question swiftly after the receipt of reports and would conduct inspection and repair in accordance with the circumstances of individual cases.

### **Security in Public Housing Estates**

5. Apart from the above-mentioned three-tier security measures for public housing estates, it is also crucial for tenants to be aware of and adopt effective theft prevention measures, which include:

- to ensure all the windows and doors are locked before leaving home;
- to keep the door keys safe, and not to leave spare keys in places easily noticed;
- not to label the house keys with home address; and
- to keep an eye out for strangers in the neighbourhood and report any unusual activity to the Police, etc.

### **Way Forward**

6. In response to security concerns of PRH tenants, HA will closely monitor the situation, continue to solicit feedbacks and suggestions from the Estate Management Advisory Committee to enhance the security control in public housing estates and collaborate with the Hong Kong Police Force to promote crime prevention in public housing estates.

7. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

**Transport and Housing Bureau**  
**April 2016**