

**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT OF THE
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
ON
REPORT NO. 67 OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT
ON
THE RESULTS OF
VALUE FOR MONEY AUDITS**

April 2017

P.A.C. Report No. 67A

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Procedure

The Committee's Procedure The practice and procedure, as determined by the Committee in accordance with Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure, are as follows:

- (a) the public officers called before the Committee in accordance with Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure, shall normally be the Controlling Officers of the Heads of Revenue or Expenditure to which the Director of Audit has referred in his Report except where the matter under consideration affects more than one such Head or involves a question of policy or of principle in which case the relevant Director of Bureau of the Government or other appropriate officers shall be called. Appearance before the Committee shall be a personal responsibility of the public officer called and whilst he may be accompanied by members of his staff to assist him with points of detail, the responsibility for the information or the production of records or documents required by the Committee shall rest with him alone;
- (b) where any matter referred to in the Director of Audit's Report on the accounts of the Government relates to the affairs of an organisation subvented by the Government, the person normally required to appear before the Committee shall be the Controlling Officer of the vote from which the relevant subvention has been paid, but the Committee shall not preclude the calling of a representative of the subvented body concerned where it is considered that such a representative could assist the Committee in its deliberations;
- (c) the Director of Audit and the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury shall be called upon to assist the Committee when Controlling Officers or other persons are providing information or explanations to the Committee;
- (d) the Committee shall take evidence from any parties outside the civil service and the subvented sector before making reference to them in a report;
- (e) the Committee shall not normally make recommendations on a case on the basis solely of the Director of Audit's presentation;
- (f) the Committee shall not allow written submissions from Controlling Officers other than as an adjunct to their personal appearance before the Committee; and

Procedure

- (g) the Committee shall hold informal consultations with the Director of Audit from time to time, so that the Committee could suggest fruitful areas for value for money study by the Director of Audit.

2. **Confidentiality undertaking by members of the Committee** To enhance the integrity of the Committee and its work, members of the Public Accounts Committee have signed a confidentiality undertaking. Members agree that, in relation to the consideration of the Director of Audit's reports, they will not disclose any matter relating to the proceedings of the Committee that is classified as confidential, which shall include any evidence or documents presented to the Committee, and any information on discussions or deliberations at its meetings, other than at meetings held in public. Members also agree to take the necessary steps to prevent disclosure of such matter either before or after the Committee presents its report to the Council, unless the confidential classification has been removed by the Committee.

3. A copy of the Confidentiality Undertakings signed by members of the Committee has been uploaded onto the Legislative Council website.

4. **The Committee's Report** This Report contains the Public Accounts Committee's supplemental report on Chapter 1 of Report No. 67 of the Director of Audit on the results of value for money audits which was tabled in the Legislative Council on 23 November 2016. Value for money audits are conducted in accordance with the guidelines and procedures set out in the Paper on Scope of Government Audit in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region - 'Value for Money Audits' which was tabled in the Provisional Legislative Council on 11 February 1998. A copy of the Paper is attached in **Appendix 2**. The Committee's Report No. 67 was tabled in the Legislative Council on 15 February 2017.

5. **The Government's Response** The Government's response to the Committee's Report is contained in the Government Minute, which comments as appropriate on the Committee's conclusions and recommendations, indicates what action the Government proposes to take to rectify any irregularities which have been brought to notice by the Committee or by the Director of Audit and, if necessary, explains why it does not intend to take action. It is the Government's stated intention that the Government Minute should be laid on the table of the Legislative Council within three months of the laying of the Report of the Committee to which it relates.

Committee Proceedings

Meetings The Committee held a total of five meetings and three public hearings in respect of the subjects covered in this Report. During the public hearings, the Committee heard evidence from a total of 19 witnesses, including one Director of Bureau and six Heads of Department. The names of the witnesses are listed in **Appendix 3** to this Report.

2. **Arrangement of the Report** The evidence of the witnesses who appeared before the Committee, and the Committee's specific conclusions and recommendations, based on the evidence and on its deliberations on the relevant chapter of the Director of Audit's Report, are set out in Part 4 below.

3. The video and audio record of the proceedings of the Committee's public hearings is available on the Legislative Council website.

4. **Acknowledgements** The Committee wishes to record its appreciation of the cooperative approach adopted by all the persons who were invited to give evidence. In addition, the Committee is grateful for the assistance and constructive advice given by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, the Legal Adviser and the Clerk. The Committee also wishes to thank the Director of Audit for the objective and professional manner in which he completed his Report, and for the many services which he and his staff have rendered to the Committee throughout its deliberations.

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

A. Introduction

The Audit Commission ("Audit") conducted a review to examine the Housing Department ("HD")'s maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing ("PRH") flats.

2. Hon SHIU Ka-fai declared that he was engaged in the trading business of construction materials, and was currently a member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA").

Background

3. HA is a statutory body responsible for implementing a public housing programme to meet the housing needs of low-income families that cannot afford private accommodation. As at 31 March 2016, HA provided 756 272 PRH flats in 215 estates. To ensure a safe and pleasant living environment for the tenants, as well as sustain the lifespan and economic value of the PRH estates, HD, as the executive arm of HA, has introduced various maintenance and improvement programmes. The recurrent expenditure of such programmes totaled about \$3,090 million in 2015-2016.

In-flat maintenance of public rental housing flats

4. In 2006, HA launched the Total Maintenance Scheme ("TMS") to improve the standard of maintenance within all PRH flats by proactively inspecting the in-flat conditions and providing comprehensive repair services. The objectives of TMS are to provide customer-oriented maintenance services and, together with other planned maintenance programmes, lengthen the lifespan of HA's assets. The first TMS cycle commenced in 2006 and completed in 2011, covering 177 estates at a cost of \$912 million. The second cycle was launched in 2011 with the inspection frequency revamped in 2014 under which inspections would be carried out every 10 years for estates aged between 10 and 30 years, and every five years for those estates aged over 30 years.¹ As at March 2016, the first five years of the second TMS cycle had been rolled out to 134 estates, with inspections and repair works completed in 120 estates at a cost of \$732 million.

¹ As at 31 March 2016, there were 26 estates (90 365 flats) aged 10 years and less, 116 estates (352 231 flats) aged between 10 and 30 years, and 73 estates (313 616 flats) aged more than 30 years.

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

5. To further enhance the maintenance services, HA adopted the TMS model to implement the Responsive In-flat Maintenance Services ("RIMS") progressively in PRH estates in 2008. RIMS provides a responsive, professional, and customer-oriented in-flat maintenance service to tenants' daily works requests. In 2011, RIMS was extended to all PRH flats of all estate types.² The expenditure under RIMS was \$500.1 million in 2015-2016.

Follow-up actions on public rental housing's water sampling tests for lead

6. In July 2015, a Legislative Council ("LegCo") Member announced that water samples from a PRH estate (i.e. Kai Ching Estate) had been found to have lead in excess of the World Health Organization ("WHO")'s provisional guideline value ("PGV").³ From July to November 2015, HA and the Administration completed water sampling tests for all PRH estates and found that water samples from 11 PRH developments had lead content above the WHO's PGV.⁴ The Administration and HA had respectively commissioned three investigations on the cause of excess lead in drinking water of PRH developments and to recommend control/monitoring measures to prevent recurrence of similar problems. The three investigations were the Task Force on Investigation of Excessive Lead Content in Drinking Water ("the Task Force"),⁵ the Review Committee on Quality Assurance Issues Relating to Fresh Water Supply of Public Housing Estates ("the Review Committee")⁶ and

² The estate types include PRH/Interim Housing, Tenants Purchase Scheme, Buy or Rent Option Scheme and Home Ownership Scheme.

³ WHO produces reference values on water quality and human health in the form of guidelines that are used as the basis for regulation and standard setting in developing and developed countries worldwide. PGV of lead in drinking water set out in WHO's Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality published in 2011 is 10 micrograms per litre.

⁴ The 11 PRH developments were Ching Ho Estate Phase 1, Choi Fook Estate, Hung Hom Estate Phase 2, Kai Ching Estate, Kwai Luen Estate Phase 2, Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase 1, Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2, Tung Wui Estate, Un Chau Estate Phases 2 and 4, Wing Cheong Estate and Yan On Estate. They were all completed after 2005.

⁵ The Task Force was set up by the Administration in July 2015 to carry out an investigation to ascertain the causes in relation to incidents of lead in drinking water in PRH estates, and recommend measures to prevent recurrence of similar incidents in future. The Task Force published its final report in October 2015.

⁶ The Review Committee was set up by HA in July 2015 to review the arrangements for quality control and monitoring in relation to the installation of fresh water supply systems in PRH estates. The Review Committee published its final report in January 2016.

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the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water ("the Commission of Inquiry").⁷

7. Both the Task Force and the Commission of Inquiry concluded that leaded solder and/or poor workmanship was the direct cause of excess lead found in drinking water in all the 11 PRH developments.⁸ In their final reports, the Task Force, the Review Committee and the Commission of Inquiry made a number of recommendations with regard to the safety of drinking water in PRH estates and other developments in Hong Kong.

Management of asbestos-containing materials ("ACMs") in public rental housing estates

8. Asbestos is a proven carcinogen when inhaled. Before the health hazard of asbestos was recognized, it had been widely used for fire-proofing and insulation purposes. Legislative control over ACMs in Hong Kong is provided for under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311) ("APCO") and the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulation (Cap. 59AD). HD had banned the use of ACMs in constructing public housing since 1984 and put in place procedures in handling ACMs in 1988. It also conducted a comprehensive survey on ACMs in PRH estates in 1989. According to HD, the most common building components with ACMs were the balcony/lobby grilles and roof tiles of HA's older properties.

Replacement of laundry pole-holders

9. Some 550 000 PRH flats in estates completed before 2005 were installed with laundry pole-holders for drying laundry. Laundry pole-holder design had been replaced by laundry racks for PRH estates completed between 2005 and 2010 and by parallel type laundry rods for PRH estates completed from 2011 onwards. There had been safety concerns over the use of laundry pole-holders by tenants. To encourage the change of laundry pole-holders to laundry racks, HA launched in 2004-2005 a one-off subsidy scheme under which each household was only

⁷ The Commission of Inquiry was appointed by the Chief Executive in Council in August 2015 under the Commission of Inquiry Ordinance (Cap. 86) to ascertain the causes of excess lead found in drinking water in PRH developments, review and evaluate the adequacy of the regulatory and monitoring system of drinking water, and make recommendations with regard to the safety of drinking water. The Commission of Inquiry issued its report in May 2016.

⁸ According to the Task Force, solder materials could seep into the pipes due to poor workmanship by overheating for an extended period of time and/or applying excessive solder.

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required to pay \$200 (about half the cost) for replacing the pole-holders with laundry racks. According to HD, up to February 2014 about 55 000 PRH flats had carried out the replacement works. To enhance the quality and safety of PRH flats, HA in February 2014 approved the replacement of laundry pole-holders with laundry racks at a total estimated cost of \$520 million.

Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates

10. Under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572) ("FS(B)O") which came into effect in 2007, owners of domestic and composite buildings with three storeys or above built on or before 1 March 1987 should comply with the specified fire safety requirements. According to HD's implementation programme in 2014, there were 62 PRH estates involving 238 034 flats built on or before 1 March 1987 which required the upgrading of their fire safety construction/fire service installations⁹ to meet the requirements under FS(B)O. Two estates (Ping Shek and Fuk Loi) had been selected as pilot projects for fire safety construction/fire service installations, which were scheduled for completion in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 at a total estimated cost of \$27.2 million. For the remaining 60 estates, the fire safety construction would be carried out in two phases. Phase I fire safety construction covering the blocks with slab block design in 51 estates were targeted for completion by 2020-2021. Review on budget and programme for Phase II fire safety construction covering the other blocks with non-slab block design would be conducted upon confirmation of the scope by 2016. All fire service installation works for 60 estates were scheduled for completion within Phase I. The total estimated cost of Phase I works and related consultancy fee was \$851.7 million.

The Committee's Report

11. The Committee's Report sets out the evidence gathered from witnesses. The Report is divided into the following parts:

- Introduction (Part A) (paragraphs 1 to 14);
- In-flat maintenance of public rental housing flats (Part B) (paragraphs 15 to 29);

⁹ Fire safety construction refers to structurally built fire safety elements. Examples are means of escape and fire fighting access. Examples of fire service installations are fire alarm system, fire hydrant and hose reel system.

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- Follow-up actions on public rental housing's water sampling tests for lead (Part C) (paragraphs 30 to 56);
- Management of asbestos-containing materials in public rental housing estates (Part D) (paragraphs 57 to 80);
- Replacement of laundry pole-holders (Part E) (paragraphs 81 to 86)
- Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates (Part F) (paragraphs 87 to 95); and
- Conclusions and recommendations (Part G) (paragraphs 96 to 98).

Public hearings

12. The Committee held three public hearings on 10 and 23 December 2016 and 13 January 2017 respectively to receive evidence on the findings and observations of the Director of Audit's Report ("Audit Report").

Opening statement by Secretary for Transport and Housing

13. **Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung, Secretary for Transport and Housing**, made an opening statement at the beginning of the Committee's public hearing held on 10 December 2016, the summary of which is as follows:

- HD was managing around 756 000 PRH flats in 215 estates to meet the housing needs of low-income families that could not afford private accommodation. Proper maintenance and improvement works could keep the housing stock sustainable and also maintain its property value. Regular review of the effectiveness of the maintenance and improvement works was very important; and
- HA generally agreed with the observations and comments made by Audit. Most of the recommendations had either been implemented or would be taken on board as appropriate, and HA would continue to review the maintenance and safety-related improvement works for PRH estates for further enhancement.

The full text of Secretary for Transport and Housing's opening statement is in ***Appendix 4***.

14. **Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong, Director of Housing** also made an opening statement at the beginning of the Committee's public hearing held on 10 December 2016, the summary of which is as follows:

- the objectives of TMS were to upkeep the building conditions together with other maintenance programmes, and to provide proactive maintenance service for tenants. Corresponding to these two objectives, HD had been collecting relevant data directly to evaluate the effectiveness of TMS, which were summarized in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 of the Audit Report. Firstly, TMS had greatly improved the physical quality of the buildings. Secondly, the overall satisfaction rate of respondents in HD's regular customer surveys had been around 80%. HD considered that the above findings were more direct in assessing the effectiveness of TMS;
- the purpose of performance verification of surprise check was not to assess the effectiveness of the programme, but to monitor and alert staff and contractors with a view to achieving continued improvement of their quality of works through a more stringent assessment standard;
- regarding the issue of the records of inter-departmental meetings chaired by himself in reviewing water sampling tests result for lead, the Audit Report pointed out that HD had not kept meeting records for the first seven meetings held from 20 July to 7 August 2015 ("the seven inter-departmental meetings"). During the seven meetings, water samples from six affected PRH developments were discussed, including 37 samples with excess lead, and five discarded samples. While there were no records of the meetings, the raw data of the water samples discussed at the meetings were maintained by the Water Supplies Department ("WSD") and the Government Laboratory, and in emails among the departments. The relevant departments had kept records of these five discarded samples, including reasons for discarding these samples, although there was no written record of the reason for discarding one of these five samples; and
- HA had a wide range of businesses and a large portfolio. These businesses involved a large number of workflows and records. With the long history of HA, many of these records were old, and hence had created a huge "legacy" issue. HD had to study what records to keep, what technology to use and how to migrate the historical records to the new information technology systems. HD welcomed the Audit Report's discussion on various record issues.

The full text of Director of Housing's opening statement is in *Appendix 5*.

B. In-flat maintenance of public rental housing flats

15. The Committee noted from paragraph 2.16 of the Audit Report that the overall access rate for TMS in-flat inspections was 78.4% from 2011 to March 2016. In particular, of the 80 965 inaccessible flats, 24 455 (30%) flats were inaccessible in both the first TMS cycle and the first five years of the second TMS cycle. In this regard, the Committee enquired:

- measures to improve the access rate, including enhancements in the home visit arrangements, and inspections on Sundays and public holidays taking into account working needs of tenants during weekdays and Saturdays;
- whether consideration would be given to enhancing the linkage between TMS and RIMS so as to better make use of the opportunity arising from tenants making repair requests under RIMS to conduct TMS inspection;
- whether HD would consider introducing an incentive scheme (for example, giving awards to the block with the highest access rate) to encourage tenants giving access for inspection, and to set a performance target on access rate for TMS; and
- whether penalty would be imposed on those repeatedly uncooperative tenants, including deducting points under the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement or enforcing the Tenancy Agreement.

16. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his reply dated 22 December 2016 (*Appendix 6*) that:

- HD believed that promoting participation of the scheme had to be in step with the priority of the matter. When TMS was introduced, tenants might not find their flats with maintenance or safety problems requiring inspection and repairs. The access rates achieved in the first and second TMS cycle at 77.6% and 78.4% respectively were considered relatively high. Nevertheless, HA agreed that having flats inaccessible in both two cycles was not ideal, and would explore

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various improvement measures such as better appointment arrangement, and introducing regulating measures appropriately at various degree. However, HD did not have any objective basis for setting a target of mandatory access rate in a duly responsible manner;

- TMS and RIMS were designed for different purposes. TMS was a preventive maintenance service while RIMS was aimed at providing quick responses to tenants' prompt requests. In the request for RIMS, tenants were generally concerned on whether their requested repair items could be completed expeditiously. It might cause inconvenience to them if comprehensive inspection and other repair works were conducted at the same time;
- in view of the positive feedback from tenants and the overall access rate being close to 80%, HD had not pursued any incentive scheme under the principle of best use of public resources; and
- according to HD's practice note, HD would arrange in-flat inspections on Sundays or public holidays upon request by tenants and subject to available resources. However, defect items were often found during in-flat inspections and TMS was aimed at carrying out immediate repairs in one go so as to minimize re-appointment to repair and further inconvenience to tenants. To comply with statutory requirement, no mechanical tools could be used on Sundays and public holidays for general building works unless Noise Permit had been obtained. Nevertheless, HD was open on whether to conduct in-flat inspections on Sundays and public holidays, and would review the appointment and related arrangements to cater for tenants' actual situation.

17. The Committee noted that warning letters had been issued to uncooperative tenants refusing access for in-flat inspections, and asked for the number of letters issued during the first five years of the second TMS cycle, follow-up actions taken on the remaining uncooperative tenants and the results after the issuance of warning letters.

18. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** advised in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that 872 warning letters had been issued from 2011 to 2016. Based on the nature of the scheme, HD had been adopting a persuasive approach to increase the access rate. Warning letter would not be issued when the first visit attempt failed. Three attempts to visit each PRH flat would be made by

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the In-flat Inspection Ambassadors ("IIAs"). It would then be further followed up by the Estate Office. Within six months after the completion of TMS for individual block, HD would still try to contact those inaccessible flats. Besides, reminder notices would be sent to the tenants after each attempt of visit, inviting them to make appointment with the Public Relation Officer at the ground floor lobby. Issuance of warning letters would be considered as the last resort. Estate frontline staff would consider issuing warning letters according to their individual estate situation. Through various efforts and issuance of warning letters, the overall access rate had generally been increased. As an example to illustrate the effectiveness of issuing warning letters, **Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing, Deputy Director (Estate Management) of Housing Department** said at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 that after warning letters were issued by the Estate Office to the uncooperative tenants in Ching Ho Estate, an estate with a relatively low access rate for in-flat inspections, the access rate had significantly improved to 90%.

19. The Committee noted in paragraphs 2.19(b) and 2.22 of the Audit Report that the performance of IIAs was unsatisfactory and that their turnover rate was high, and asked the Administration how it would address the issues.

20. **Director of Housing** responded at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that a more stringent standard had been adopted to audit IIAs' service performance. The performance score of individual IIA did not meet the service standard mark of 65, probably due to the relatively high turnover rate of IIAs in TMS teams. TMS teams achieved total scores of 60 to 90 marks for each estate against the passing mark of 60. HD would continue to strengthen the training and improve IIAs' service standard. In addition, although their turnover rate was relatively high, their average tenure was over 18 months. About a quarter of them had worked for more than three years. More than 30% of the resigned IIAs were recruited by HD in other permanent posts. Besides, as the in-flat repair works were highly repetitive, new recruits of IIAs could conduct in-flat inspection and site monitoring after a short training period, and the effect of staff turnover on the overall operation was thus confined.

21. As regards the suggestions of recruiting retired persons or housewives as IIAs and converting IIA posts into civil service posts to reduce the high turnover rate of IIAs, **Director of Housing** said at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 that in the recruitment of IIAs, HD had no restriction on age or gender. Applicants would be considered once meeting the admission requirements. Regarding the conversion

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of IIA posts to permanent civil service posts, HD would need to consider the allocation of limited human resources.

22. In view of the effectiveness of education booth to promote TMS and solicit tenants' cooperation (paragraph 2.20 of the Audit Report), the Committee enquired why such booths were not set up in 22 estates under the Tenants Purchase Scheme ("TPS") and other three estates on outlying islands, and what had been done to address the concerns of the Owners' Corporations ("OCs") of TPS estates about the booths.

23. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that in establishing an education booth in the common areas of a TPS estate, approval must be obtained from the OCs concerned. From past experience, various reasons had been given by OCs of TPS estates to refuse the setting up of education booths in the common areas of their estates. For the relatively smaller PRH estates on the outlying islands, the mini-version of an education booth set up next to the TMS's service counter was already effective for education and publicity purpose. HD would continue to persuade OCs to allow the setting up of education booths in TPS estates.

24. The Committee noted from paragraphs 2.28 and 2.40 of the Audit Report that works orders issued under RIMS had increased by 55% from 2011-2012 (270 815) to 2015-2016 (420 155) and that there were some repeated orders involving same works types and locations within a short period of time. The Committee enquired about the reasons for the increase in works orders under RIMS despite the implementation of TMS which aimed to provide proactive maintenance service to PRH flats, and measures to enhance the quality of contractors' repair works to ensure the prudent use of public money.

25. In reply, **Deputy Director (Estate Management) of Housing Department** said at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that:

- during the first two years after the commencement of RIMS, the volume of works in 2012-2013 increased by 19% comparing with that in 2011-2012, and 16% in 2013-2014. In 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the increases were only 5.4% and 7% respectively. Tenants' sense of

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maintenance had been successfully raised during the early stage of the scheme but the volume of works became stable at relatively lower levels at later stage;

- reasons for the increase in RIMS works orders were ageing of PRH stock, in which the proportion of PRH stock of over 30 years old had increased from 24% in March 2011 to over 40% in March 2016, and the increase in PRH stock where the number of PRH flats had increased by 4.6% from 2011-2012 to 2015-2016;
- works items shown on works orders were general categorization descriptions which were applicable to various repair items under the same category of works. Therefore same works items involving different repair items were recorded; and
- to enhance the quality of works, HD would strictly execute the contractual requirements. Should defects be found in the material, workmanship etc., HD would immediately instruct the contractors to rectify swiftly until the required standard would be met. During the review on RIMS, HD would make use of the data in the information system to assist in trade and trend analysis, and identify suspected repetitive repair items.

26. Similarly, the Committee noted from paragraph 2.37 of the Audit Report about the unsatisfactory repair works under TMS in that from 2014 to 2016, on average, about three items of TMS repair works in each of 118 flats (89% of the 133 flats inspected) inspected by Surprise Check Teams required replacement/rectification works. The Committee enquired what measures had been taken to improve the situation and about the mechanism in place to monitor contractors' performance, including imposing penalty on persistently under-performing contractors.

27. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that:

- for the 133 flats mentioned, there were about 2 800 detailed repair items. There were 385 undesirable detailed repair items which was about 14%;

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

- the main purpose of the surprise check was not for measuring effectiveness, but to monitor and alert site staff and contractors with a view to continuously enhancing their quality of works. Therefore, a stringent standard was adopted;
- a mechanism on routine inspection and work certification was in place. For some crucial work procedures, 100% inspection would be conducted. Besides, sampling audits on the works and monitoring procedures would be conducted regularly; and
- HA managed the contractors through a list management system. Tendering opportunities of works contracts were based on contractors' past performance. Contractors with less satisfactory performance would have a reduced opportunity in tendering or even not eligible to submit tender. For contractors with awarded contracts, if their performance score in the Building Works Maintenance Assessment Scoring System was lower than 60 in any one of the first five quarters since contract commencement or was lower than 65 on average, the contract period of their District Maintenance Contract would be shortened from three to two years. In the past five years, there were four District Maintenance Contracts with contract period shortened from three to two years.

28. According to paragraphs 2.31 and 2.41 of the Audit Report, the Performance Verification Team conducted performance verifications of RIMS in 131 of 202 estates, 85 of them were each selected twice or more from 2011 to 2015, and yet the remaining estates were not selected within the period. In addition, there existed a great discrepancy on the ratings given by the Performance Verification Team and the In-flat Technical Teams on two works orders. The Committee enquired about the measures to improve the situation.

29. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that HD adopted a risk-based sampling method and focused on those estates suspected with performance issue or with higher potential risk. Hence some estates might not be selected. HD would continue to adopt random sampling in parallel with risk-based sampling as they should be complementary to each other. In addition, RIMS had been implemented in all PRH estates with over 400 000 works orders issued each year. With the participation of a large number of In-flat Technical Teams and various local frontline

staff responsible for monitoring and final inspection of routine maintenance works, discrepancy might probably occur in output assessment. To ensure the quality and consistency of maintenance works service, HD would conduct regular performance verification, and would continue to provide training for In-flat Technical Teams to enhance their inspection skills.

C. Follow-up actions on public rental housing's water sampling tests for lead

30. The Committee was concerned about the omission of two non-compliant samples, thus reducing the number of non-compliant samples from 93 to 91 when the water test results were reported to LegCo and HA (paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of the Audit Report).

31. **Director of Housing** explained at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that six samples were taken from the non-domestic facilities in Kai Ching Estate, including the two non-compliant samples stated in the Audit Report. The water sampling tests concerned were conducted after Kai Ching Estate was already announced as an "affected estate". As the water sampling exercise for PRH estates involved a large number of water samples, in the process of collating and compiling the tallies, the two said samples were omitted from the total number of water samples found with excess lead. In spite of the said discrepancy, the information previously announced, including the total number of samples taken for PRH estates and the total number of affected PRH estates, remained unchanged.

32. The Committee expressed concern that HD had not prepared meeting notes for the seven inter-departmental meetings chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) held from 20 July to 7 August 2015 to review the water sampling test results and follow-up actions to be taken. In this regard, the Committee enquired:

- whether it was a conscious decision made at the seven inter-departmental meetings not to keep meeting records;
- reasons for deviating from the practice of the Administration of keeping formal records for important meetings; and

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- how Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) could accurately report to Secretary for Transport and Housing the decisions and deliberations made at the seven inter-departmental meetings if no formal records were kept.

33. **Director of Housing**¹⁰ replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that:

- the fact that there were no meeting records for the seven inter-departmental meetings was not a decision made after consideration or discussion. Director of Housing himself raised this matter at the eighth meeting, and records of the decisions of the inter-departmental meetings were maintained thereafter;
- the water sampling data and the follow-up work for estates found to have excess lead in water dealt with by the seven inter-departmental meetings were basically announced and implemented immediately after each meeting. It was not possible or necessary to announce the information and implement follow-up actions based on meeting records;
- although there were no meeting records, departments had kept the primary records of the samples dealt with by the seven inter-departmental meetings, including the reasons for discarding individual samples, and they were available for examination; and
- during the time between the inter-departmental meetings and the press conferences or publication of the press releases, the relevant departments would examine their drafts and verify the information to be announced, including the water sampling test results and follow-up actions to be taken. Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) would report progress to Secretary for Transport and Housing and the information to be announced to the media eventually would also be submitted to Secretary for Transport and Housing beforehand.

¹⁰ Director of Housing, in his capacity of Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing), chaired the inter-departmental meetings to discuss and coordinate matters relating to the sampling of drinking water in PRH developments.

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34. The Committee had requested information relating to the seven inter-departmental meetings. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided the main documents and records of the seven inter-departmental meetings to the committee on 22 December 2016. A summary of matters discussed, decisions made and follow-up actions agreed to be taken for each meeting is provided in Appendix 6. He supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that:

- in general, the meetings took place as follows:
 - (a) before each meeting, members of the inter-departmental meeting were notified to attend the meetings by HD through email;
 - (b) the water sampling data of relevant estates were provided by WSD to members of the inter-departmental meeting before each meeting. At the inter-departmental meetings, WSD reported on the water sampling test results and provided professional advice or other supplementary information on the water sampling data. Attendees reviewed the relevant data and discussed follow-up actions; and
 - (c) in order to keep the public and affected tenants abreast of the extent of the excess lead in drinking water in PRH estates, announcements were made after the inter-departmental meetings through press conferences or press releases, providing information such as the number of samples taken for the relevant estates, and the number of non-compliant samples, as well as the follow-up actions to be taken; and
- the seven inter-departmental meetings mainly dealt with water sampling data of individual estates and the follow-up actions needed to be taken for the affected estates. The meeting basically adopted most of the water sampling test results, discussed a small number of cases among them, and discarded five samples on professional grounds. For the five discarded samples, the relevant meetings were held on 23 July and 3 August 2015, with the primary records kept by relevant departments.

Apart from HD, WSD, the Department of Health ("DH") and the Government Laboratory also provided their internal correspondence relating to the seven inter-departmental meetings to the Committee on 26 January 2017.

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35. The Committee enquired about the subject officer who should be responsible for preparing the minutes or assigning officers to prepare the minutes for the seven inter-departmental meetings, and whether other directorate officials of HD attending the meetings had taken the initiative to prepare the minutes or reminded the subject officer of the need to do so.

36. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 13 January 2017 that he himself was the subject officer and had the responsibility to prepare the minutes for the seven inter-departmental meetings. As the meetings were held at a time of "crisis", the focus of the meetings was discussing water sampling test results and appropriate follow-up actions in a prompt manner. It was only until the eighth inter-departmental meeting did he realize the need for recording the discussion and decisions made at the meeting for future reference. He admitted that it was less than satisfactory that meeting notes had not been prepared for the first seven inter-departmental meetings.

37. The Committee asked Director of Housing whether he, as an experienced government official, had chaired any other inter-departmental meetings before, and whether minutes/notes had been prepared for these meetings.

38. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing held on 13 January 2017 that he himself had chaired a number of other inter-departmental meetings before, and minutes/notes were usually prepared for the vast majority, if not all, of these other inter-departmental meetings.

39. The Committee noted that Deputy Director (Estate Management) of Housing Department and Ms Connie YEUNG, Assistant Director (Estate Management) 3 were present at the seven inter-departmental meetings. In reply to the enquiry of the Committee, they both said at the public hearing on 13 January 2017 that they were responsible for estate management. It had not come to their mind of the need to prepare minutes during the seven inter-departmental meetings. **Deputy Director (Estate Management) of Housing Department** added that his focus at the seven inter-departmental meetings was to provide assistance to tenants affected by the "excess lead in drinking water" incident. He was not responsible for taking minutes, and had not reminded Director of Housing of the need to prepare the minutes.

40. Noting that high-level inter-departmental meetings had been convened by the Chief Secretary for Administration to discuss the handling of the incident, the Committee requested the provision of information relating to the meetings held between July and August 2015, including the dates of meetings, agendas and discussion items of the meetings. The Committee also enquired how Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) reported the discussion results of the seven inter-departmental meetings to the high-level inter-departmental meetings if no meeting records had been prepared.

41. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided the requested information relating to the high-level inter-departmental meetings in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6). He said that Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) did not consult any senior management on the decisions made in respect of water samples at the inter-departmental meetings. The high-level inter-departmental meetings chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration mainly coordinated the follow-up actions in relation to the incident, such as blood test arrangements for those in need, coordinating the work among different departments, etc., and did not intervene in operational matters such as water sampling.

42. As important decisions were made at the seven inter-departmental meetings on 42 non-compliant water samples, which had a significant bearing on the classification of the relevant PRH development as an affected estate or otherwise, the Committee enquired how the Administration could ensure transparency and accountability of the decisions made without formal records of the seven inter-departmental meetings.

43. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that:

- it was unsatisfactory that no meeting records were maintained, but for the purpose of reporting to the public, the relevant departments had kept primary records of all of the water samples, which were available for examination;
- water samples were discarded based on objective reasons and analyses, with a view to achieving a more scientific sampling method. There was no cover-up whatsoever. At the same meeting at which the

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decision to discard these samples was made, other non-compliant samples were confirmed. Therefore, discarding these samples had no effect on the decision to announce the relevant estates as affected estates. This showed that the Administration was not trying to reduce the number of affected estates when deciding to discard individual samples; and

- as stated in the Commission of Inquiry's report, the Commission of Inquiry did not accept that HD deliberately adopted measures in order to limit the scope of the problem. The fact that once a single flat was affected, the whole estate would be classified as an "affected estate" was a cautious approach.

44. At the request of the Committee, **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided HD's Records Management Policy in *Appendix 7*.

45. The Committee noted from paragraph 3.10 of the Audit Report that Technical Review Meetings to review preliminary results and Final Conclusion Meetings to conclude results were held on two consecutive days starting from the sixth meeting held on 6 August 2015. The Committee enquired about the rationale for adopting this arrangement and whether it would delay the implementation of follow-up actions.

46. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** replied in his letter dated 26 January 2017 (Appendix 7) that the first inter-departmental meeting was held on 20 July 2015 to review water sampling test results and coordinate follow-up actions. The date of meetings largely hinged on the progress of water sampling. After consolidating experiences, HD considered that the water sampling tests could be reviewed in a more systematic and efficient manner. Starting from 6 and 7 August 2015, HD held a Technical Review Meeting and a Final Conclusion Meeting on two consecutive days to discuss the same batch of water samples. From end-September 2015 onwards, HD started conducting water sampling for PRH estates completed before 2005. As the Task Force found that leaded solder used on water pipe joints was the cause of excess lead in drinking water, and as the water pipes in PRH estates completed before 2005 were connected mechanically and no soldering had been used in general, there would be one fewer risk factor leading to excessive lead in drinking water. Therefore, HD conducted a water screening test for PRH estates completed before 2005. Since fewer samples were involved, starting from the meeting on 30 September 2015, only Final Conclusion Meetings were held.

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47. The Committee noted from paragraph 3.25 of the Audit Report that 9.96 million bottles of bottled water were distributed to tenants at a cost of \$60 million, and enquired for cost details. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided the breakdown on the bottled water procured and cost details in Appendix 7.

48. The Committee noted from paragraphs 3.17 and 3.19 of the Audit Report that water sampling tests were not conducted for 54 493 PRH flats in 39 TPS estates under the ownership and management of HA. The Committee enquired about the justifications for not conducting water sampling tests for TPS estates and any follow-up actions taken to ensure the safety of drinking water for HA tenants living in TPS estates.

49. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and supplemented in his reply dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that the nature of TPS and Home Ownership Scheme estates was more akin to private residential buildings and the decision to conduct water sampling tests rested with the OCs concerned. Under mixed ownership of TPS estates, some units were owned by HA, while some were privately owned. In terms of estate management, the common areas in TPS estates were managed by OCs or the management committees, while the landlords were responsible for the maintenance matters inside individual units. Given the above circumstances, there were practical and technical difficulties in conducting water sampling tests for units occupied by HA tenants. As different units within the building block shared the same water supply system, the water quality inside HA rental units would be affected by the water supply system outside these units. HA did not have the right to decide on matters relating to properties which were not under its ownership. Nevertheless, the Administration believed that given the wide and sustained publicity of the incident, OCs of TPS estates along with owners of private housing had been alerted to the risk of excess lead in water and had presumably been making decisions as they deemed fit.

50. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that the 39 TPS estates were all completed before 2005. Leaded solder used on water pipe joints was the cause of excess lead in drinking water, and as the water pipes in PRH estates completed before 2005 were connected mechanically and no soldering had been used in general, there would be one fewer risk factor leading to excessive lead in drinking water. In addition, in response to Audit's enquiries, HD had gathered that the majority of TPS estates (32 out of 39 estates) had conducted water sampling tests on their own. Among the

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remaining seven estates, two of the OCs had discussed whether to conduct water sampling tests, and decided not to do so.

51. The Committee noted from paragraph 3.15 of the Audit Report that the Administration would engage an international expert panel on developing an appropriate sampling protocol, and sought details regarding its composition, work progress, areas of expertise of individual panel members and total fees involved.

52. **Mr Enoch LAM Tin-sing, Director of Water Supplies** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (*Appendix 8*) that:

- the Expert Panel was set up by the Development Bureau ("DevB") on 1 June 2016 to provide expert advice on matters including water quality standard, water quality regulatory and monitoring regime, water sampling protocol, etc. The Panel comprised three overseas members (from the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada) and two local members. The details of the expertise of individual members were provided in Appendix 8;
- as at December 2016, the Panel had held three meetings for in-depth discussions on various issues related to drinking water safety. Panel members had been briefed on the general water supply system and drinking water safety system in Hong Kong, and had conducted site visits to better understand the typical plumbing system of PRH developments and private housing estates in Hong Kong. Panel members had provided expert advice regarding drinking water safety, particularly a holistic plan including drinking water quality standards, the formulation of a territory-wide compliance monitoring programme and water safety plans. DevB and WSD were currently reviewing the advice of the Panel in consultation with the overseas expert consultants. The work progress of the Panel was satisfactory with a target to complete the work by March 2017; and
- in regard to the expenditure for the work of the Panel, a sum of \$1.2 million had been set aside in the 2016-2017 and the expenditure up to the end of October 2016 was about \$0.47 million.

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53. According to paragraphs 3.29 and 3.30 of the Audit Report, 2 138 of the 29 077 domestic premises in the 11 affected PRH developments had not been installed with water filters as at July 2016. The Committee enquired about the follow-up actions that had been done to encourage these households to install water filters, and the party responsible for the maintenance of these filters.

54. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that:

- since the "excess lead in drinking water" incident, HA had been holding the contractors accountable and had requested them to install filters for households free of charge, and to replace or clean the filter cartridges for households regularly. After rectification works in the common areas and inside flats were completed, the contractors would conduct water sampling tests in accordance with the Water Authority's requirements to ensure the safety of drinking water before the removal of water filters. Prior to the removal of water filters, the contractors would continue to regularly clean or replace the filter cartridges for tenants; and
- tenants had not installed water filters for various reasons, including slower water outflow rate and some tenants could not be contacted. HD had been providing tenants with tips on the use of filters to address the reduced water outflow rate after installation of filters. As regards those households with whom HD had difficulty in getting in touch for the installation of water filter, the contractors had been trying to contact them outside working hours including Sundays. HA and the contractors would continue to communicate with tenants, including posting notices at lobbies and distributing newsletter to tenants' mailboxes to encourage households whose premises had not been installed with water filters to consider installing water filters.

55. With reference to paragraphs 3.26 to 3.28 of the Audit Report, the Committee enquired about the progress of the permanent rectification works of replacing non-compliant water pipes at the contractors' own expense in the 11 affected PRH developments, and the timetable for completion of works for common areas and inside domestic units.

56. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 10 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 22 December 2016 (Appendix 6) that the contractors had started replacing the non-compliant water pipes in the common areas of the 11 affected PRH estates since March 2016 and the progress was generally satisfactory. On the whole, the contractors had completed more than half of the works in the common areas. The actual time required for the works for each estate varied and would be subject to weather conditions, allocation of manpower and other resources, etc. Regarding works inside flats, as the furnishing and pipe routings inside tenants' flats varied from one to another, HD would conduct a trial for works inside flats to test contractors' method and the arrangements on a small scale first. A trial for works inside flats started at Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase 1 on 17 October 2016. In the light of the experience from the trial, the contractors would work out a more detailed work plan and timetable for works inside flats for the remaining affected PRH developments. HA would, in consultation with the contractors, inform tenants of the details.

D. Management of asbestos-containing materials in public rental housing estates

57. The Committee noted from paragraph 4.3 of the Audit Report that HA was exempted from the requirement of submitting asbestos investigation reports or asbestos abatement plans on maintenance, repair, handling or abatement of balcony/staircase asbestos cement grille panels. The Committee enquired about the mechanism for HD to monitor ACMs in PRH estates under its management.

58. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (*Appendix 9*) that in 1997, the Administration exempted HA from submitting asbestos investigation reports or asbestos abatement plans on maintenance, repair, handling or abatement of six types of ACM in HA's properties under section 69(1) of APCO. HD in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") and the Labour Department ("LD"), had established an inter-departmental Asbestos Working Group ("AWG") to formulate asbestos management strategies for PRH estates and compiled an Asbestos Management Manual to ensure compliance with relevant ordinances and regulations. A copy of the Asbestos Management Manual is in Appendix 9.

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59. In reply to the Committee's enquiry on the work of AWG, including the respective roles of HD, EPD and LD in the daily operational work of managing and monitoring ACMs in PRH estates, **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that HD was mainly responsible for the day-to-day management and monitoring of ACMs, while EPD and LD advised on the relevant ordinances and regulations. The terms of reference of AWG are provided in Appendix 9.

60. The Committee also noted that EPD had issued guidance on the content of the statutorily required operation and maintenance plan of ACMs, including the clear identification and labeling of ACMs. In this regard, the Committee enquired:

- whether HD had followed the guidelines to identify and label all ACMs in PRH estates;
- measures taken by HD to ensure that workers, tenants and other stakeholders were fully informed of the locations and physical conditions of ACMs; and
- whether HD had reviewed its Asbestos Management Manual after the issuance of EPD's guidelines to ensure that HD's guidelines could align with the requirements of EDP's guidelines.

61. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that:

- the majority of ACMs were cementitious with asbestos fibres bonded in cement and such bonded materials had very low possibility of releasing asbestos fibres into the air. Encapsulated balcony grilles inside flats had been labeled with a triangular mark, which was agreed by AWG. There were no warning labels for the other ACMs such as staircase/lobby grilles or chimneys in PRH estates;
- HD staff were aware of the location of ACMs. They would issue works orders to maintenance contractors and monitor their works. The balcony grille encapsulation had been labeled with a triangular mark. HD had distributed pamphlets to tenants, posted notices at G/F lobbies and kept asbestos records in estate management offices.

HD had further uploaded asbestos information to the HA/HD website in 2009 for public inspection; and

- the guidelines issued by EPD under the Code of Practice on Asbestos Control were not a statutory requirement. HD had been maintaining close communication with EPD through AWG to ensure an effective ACM management mechanism would be implemented in PRH estates in accordance with the Asbestos Management Manual.

62. In reply to the Committee's concern on the proper labeling of all ACMs in PRH estates, **Director of Housing** said at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that HD would label all ACMs in the estates and the label design would follow EPD's proposed design in the guidelines. At present, HD had installed these new warning labels for all asbestos containing staircase/lobby grilles. Labels would be installed for other ACMs such as balcony grilles and chimneys in due course. HD would also implement enhancement measures in the management of ACMs in PRH estates as highlighted in paragraph 4.25(e) of the Audit Report.

63. In response to the Committee's comments that the message on ACMs warning label in EDP's guidelines should be conveyed more effectively so that tenants and workers would be alerted about the existence of ACMs and take necessary precautions, **Director of Environmental Protection** advised in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (*Appendix 10*) that the ACM warning label currently adopted by EPD was designed with reference to international standards. EPD considered that the message contained in the warning label could clearly alert all parties of the potential harm arising from asbestos.

64. According to paragraph 4.23 of the Audit Report, HD's consultant's condition surveys were conducted only once in the past five years whereas EPD's guidelines advised that a registered asbestos consultant should be appointed to carry out a comprehensive re-inspection of all ACMs at least once every two years. The Committee asked if HD would enhance its own practice in this regard.

65. **Director of Housing** said at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that as far as the monitoring of ACMs was concerned, EPD's

Code of Practice on Asbestos Control recommended inspection at least once every two years, but HA would inspect ACMs once every half year and had a three-tier monitoring mechanism. Firstly, the condition of ACMs in PRH estates was inspected through routine and half-yearly inspections. If irregularities were found, follow-up actions would be taken immediately. Secondly, random checks would be conducted to the asbestos inspection records by the Research and Development Unit. Thirdly, HD would appoint an independent registered asbestos consultant to carry out occasional review as an additional measure. The monitoring mechanism would also be discussed at AWG meetings from time to time.

66. The Committee enquired whether front-line staff had received proper training on conducting the half-yearly condition surveys and the assessment criteria adopted in determining whether ACMs were in poor condition or not to trigger further assessment, i.e. localized damage exceeded 10% of the total area or length of the ACM unit or scattered damage exceeded 5% of the total area or length of that ACM unit, were a reliable and realistic assessment of ACMs.

67. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that the condition of ACMs in PRH estates was mainly inspected by the regional Assistant Clerks of Works. At the time of appointment, they were required to have obtained a diploma or higher certificate in construction studies and three years of relevant working experience. During inspections, they checked whether the damaged ACMs had exceeded 5% or 10% of the ACM area according to the Asbestos Management Manual. If there was any problem, they would report to the supervisors for further instructions. This was the first tier of ACM monitoring mechanism of HD. The 5% or 10% assessment criterion was developed by the asbestos consultants in the 1990s during compilation of the manual and had been referred to AWG for discussion and subsequent implementation.

68. The Committee noted from paragraph 4.10 of the Audit Report that there were five unannounced PRH estates/block with ACMs on the HA website and enquired for the reasons of not announcing the five estates/block and whether inspections and monitoring had been conducted on them.

69. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that ACMs of the four estates (Choi Hung Estate,

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Fuk Loi Estate, Tai Yuen Estate and Long Bin Interim Housing) were located on the rooftop which was not easily accessible to the general public and residents. The Maintenance Planning and Review Committee, an internal HD senior-level committee decided to upload information on ACMs building elements to the HA/HD website at its meeting held on 29 June 2009. Although ACMs in the four estates had not been labeled, frontline staff had been conducting regular inspections and no abnormalities had been found. Inspection of these ACMs had been conducted in 2009, 2010, 2015 and 2016 and a sample report was given in Appendix 9. HD staff were also aware of the locations of ACMs, and would monitor the works of workers after the issuance of works orders to maintenance contractors.

70. The Committee also noted that Long Bin Interim Housing, one of the unannounced estates, was built in 1985, a year after HD had decided to ban the use of ACMs in constructing PRH estates. In addressing the Committee's concern about the use of ACMs after they were banned, **Director of Housing** explained at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that the office of the Long Bin Interim Housing was originally part of the former Long Bin Temporary Housing Area, which was designed and built in 1984 and was completed in 1985. Although the use of ACMs was banned by HD in 1984, some of the projects with design completed or under construction might still contain building elements with ACMs. As the former Long Bin Temporary Housing Area was demolished long time ago, relevant documents for the decision to continue the use of these materials were not available.

71. According to paragraphs 4.16, 4.27, 4.28 and 4.30 of the Audit Report, Audit's inspection of PRH estates with ACMs and review of HD's balcony repair works records revealed cases of damaged lobby grille panels/un-encapsulated balcony grille panels and unauthorized minor works undertaken by tenants in their flats which might disturb ACMs. The Committee enquired about the follow-up actions that had been taken by HD, LD and EPD in this respect and whether HD had conducted health checks for affected tenants to ascertain that their health had not been affected.

72. **Director of Housing** explained at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that HD had arranged a comprehensive review of all asbestos containing staircase/lobby and balcony grilles by a registered asbestos

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consultant. The consultant considered that these cases were of a minor nature and confirmed that no follow-up works were required. Subsequently, on the advice of EPD and LD, HD had completed the remedial works. New warning labels would be installed to indicate the presence of ACMs to alert on the use with care and to avoid disturbing ACMs. In addition, HD had written to all tenants concerned and contacted them to ensure that they were aware of the impact of asbestos abatement works. HD had also liaised with DH for their professional advice. Residents were advised to consult their doctors if in doubt, and they could visit the websites of EPD, LD and DH for more information on asbestos.

73. **Director of Environmental Protection** replied in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 10) that HD had engaged registered asbestos contractors to complete the maintenance of damaged panels in accordance with the statutory requirements and had duly followed the technical advice of EPD. EPD had also conducted spot checks during the works to ensure that the contractor completed the works in accordance with the method statements. EPD was following up with HD to strengthen the monitoring and liaison mechanism and to provide further training to HD's staff with a view to enhancing its management of the remaining ACMs in PRH estates.

74. **Commissioner for Labour** replied in his letter dated 12 January 2017 (*Appendix 11*) that LD was responsible for enforcing the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulation for the protection of the health of contractors' workers in conducting asbestos works. LD had examined all relevant cases mentioned in the Audit Report, and embarked on follow-up actions to ascertain if the requirements of the said Regulation were observed and the workers concerned properly protected. It was noted that most cases involved works projects done in earlier years, and the bar date of six months for taking prosecutions should already have expired even if the concerned contractors were found to have violated the said Regulation. LD had taken appropriate follow-up actions, which were detailed in Appendix 11.

75. In addition, **Commissioner for Labour** further advised in the same letter that LD was actively coordinating with HD in its follow-up actions on the Audit Report, and would keep working closely with different stakeholders, including the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board and Occupational Safety and Health Council, in organizing various programmes to raise the awareness of contractors and their workers, relevant employers' associations, etc. on ACMs and relevant health hazards.

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76. The Committee sought explanation of Case 3 in paragraph 4.34 of the Audit Report that a chimney with ACMs in poor condition was not properly recorded and followed up.

77. **Director of Housing** explained at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that the chimney was a property of a restaurant licensee. As the chimney was installed at the exterior of the building, it had been inspected by HD to ensure that it was in good condition, and letters were sent to the licensee on 14 and 17 January and 3 May 2011 advising him to employ a qualified contractor for the damaged chimney. As the chimney was owned by the restaurant and the licensee was responsible for employing contractors to carry out the removal works, HD had no obligation to supervise the works of the contractors to ensure that they met all statutory requirements. Nevertheless, HD agreed with Audit's recommendation that HD had a monitoring role to ensure that works carried out by third parties in its managed estates would be carried out safely. HD would strengthen the monitoring and control of works involving ACMs in PRH estates undertaken by third parties in future to ensure that such works would not undermine tenants' and workers' safety.

78. In response to the Committee's enquiry regarding the follow-up actions taken on the above chimney case, **Director of Environmental Protection** replied in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 10) that in July 2011, the tenant removed the chimney whilst EPD did not receive any notification from registered asbestos contractors on the removal of the chimney. The tenant therefore might have contravened APCO. Given that the responsible person of the tenancy already passed away in 2012 whilst the case came to EPD's notice last year, no prosecution action could be taken on the case. EPD was liaising with HD on strengthening the monitoring and control of the remaining asbestos-containing chimneys in PRH estates, clarifying the responsibilities of the owners of these chimneys and reminding them of the statutory requirements on asbestos abatement works. Moreover, EPD was taking follow-up action with HD by requiring chimney owners to give notification to EPD before carrying out works involving ACMs in PRH estates to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.

79. According to paragraph 4.15 of the Audit Report, Audit's examination revealed that some ACM records which had been used by HD staff for conducting condition surveys were inaccurate. The Committee enquired about measures HD had taken to ensure that records on ACMs were up-to-date and properly maintained.

80. **Director of Housing** explained at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that in the past, HD used to convey ACM records in writing. As a result, some frontline staff might not fully understand the location of ACMs. HD had re-examined all asbestos records in estate management offices and adopted a pictorial format for public inspection at ground floor lobbies in PRH estates. In addition, HD reviewed and updated information of ACMs from time to time. Registered asbestos consultants would be appointed to provide technical assistance on asbestos issues. In 2016, HD instructed a registered asbestos consultant to conduct a comprehensive inspection of ACMs in PRH estates.

E. Replacement of laundry pole-holders

81. According to paragraph 5.4 of the Audit Report, HD could not provide the number of laundry racks installed in the second phase of the 2004-2005 subsidy scheme for replacing laundry pole-holders. The Committee asked how HD could enhance its record-keeping system, such as deploying information technology in collating and compiling statistics.

82. **Director of Housing** explained at the public hearing on 13 January 2017 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 26 January 2017 (Appendix 7) that:

- the laundry racks under the 2004-2005 subsidy scheme were installed more than 10 years ago. All applications and records of laundry rack installation under the scheme were kept in respective estate management office;
- in order to project the number of racks in phase two of the scheme, HD compiled statistics on the number of applications received from tenants for each estate in 2004. After that, HD had not conducted similar statistical exercise. Therefore, statistics on the aggregate number of laundry racks installed under phase two of the scheme were not readily available. Nevertheless, the records of laundry racks installation of each estate had been kept in respective estate management offices; and
- during replacement of laundry pole-holders in 2014, HD had taken various measures to enhance the record keeping and work progress monitoring in respect of laundry rack installation and sealing-up of the

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pole-holders. Project teams in respective estate management offices were required to update and report the progress of work regularly. The information was then consolidated to establish a database with records of laundry rack installation to facilitate future monitoring. Upon completion of batch one of laundry rack replacement programme, HD would review the effectiveness of current monitoring mechanism.

83. According to paragraph 5.9 of the Audit Report, HD conducted a review of the laundry pole-holder in 2013, nine years after the 2004-2005 subsidy scheme. The Committee enquired about the reason for triggering the review.

84. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** replied in his letter dated 26 January 2017 (Appendix 7) that HA took a proactive and pragmatic approach to enhance the existing laundry facilities of PRH estates whenever resources allowed. In some Estate Improvement Programmes, the proposal of comprehensive replacement of pole-holders with laundry racks by HD free of charge as landlord's provision was welcomed by tenants and other stakeholders. Therefore, HD conducted a review of laundry facilities and launched a programme in 2014 for replacement of laundry pole-holders.

85. Regarding delays of some replacement works of the laundry pole-holders beyond their original completion dates, the Committee enquired about the reasons for the delays and follow-up actions taken by HD.

86. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** replied in his letter dated 26 January 2017 (Appendix 7) that as at 31 December 2016, there were completion delays in three works contracts which were mainly due to the contractors' deficiencies in works management. HD had taken actions against the contractors concerned under the provisions of the contracts, including issuing warning letters and adverse reports and claiming liquidated damages.

F. Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates

87. The Committee noted from paragraphs 6.14 and 6.15 of the Audit Report that the progress of implementing FS(B)O was slow, and the Fire Services Department ("FSD") and the Buildings Department ("BD") failed to reach an

agreement on the vetting/formal acceptance of HD's fire safety improvement proposals after rounds of discussion. The Committee enquired about the reasons of the delay and the timetable for implementing the fire safety construction works for all PRH estates.

88. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that:

- in 2008, the three departments, namely, HD, BD and FSD started to explore ways for HA to proceed with implementing FS(B)O. With more than 60 estates of different building design and a substantial number of blocks for each building design, it took a relatively longer time for the three departments to come to an agreement in adopting a prototype approach to facilitate the implementation of FS(B)O;
- after reaching the agreement, HD proceeded to arrange the fire safety improvement proposals through the prototype approach. The longer time involved in processing the prototypes was due to the need to take into account by the HD's consultant the likely effect on tenants and site constraints of existing buildings in preparing the proposals, the large number of housing blocks involved, a high degree of technical complexity and the time required by enforcement authorities in vetting the proposals. In fact, after the prototypes had been accepted, HD still needed to submit fire safety improvement proposals of each individual estate to the enforcement authorities for vetting and formal acceptance;
- HD, BD and FSD had recently reached an agreement on the arrangement for the acceptance of fire safety improvement works; and
- as at December 2016, three prototypes (Slab, Tower and H) had been accepted while the remaining four prototypes (Ziggurate/Trident, Linear, Cruciform 1 and 2) were being processed. The works for Fuk Loi Estate and Ping Shek Estate would commence for completion by 2020, while submission of the fire safety improvement proposal for each individual estate of the remaining estate to the enforcement authorities would be required after acceptance of prototypes. Hence it was not suitable for developing a concrete timetable for execution of works at this moment.

89. The Committee noted from paragraph 6.10(d) of the Audit Report that the review on budget and programme for Phase II fire safety construction works for the remaining 214 blocks would be conducted upon confirmation of the scope by 2016. The Committee enquired when such review would commence and the plan for implementing works for the remaining non-typical PRH blocks.

90. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that HD had sought approval from the Building Committee of HA to carry out fire safety improvement works in two phases with Phase I covering Slab Blocks and Phase II covering buildings of the remaining block types. However, as most PRH estates consisted of more than one block type, HD would carry out improvement works on an estate basis instead of in two phases based on block types. Since the scope of works could only be ascertained upon the acceptance of the fire safety improvement proposals by the enforcement authorities, HD would regularly review the budget and programme for the works and seek approval from the Building Committee of HA in due course. In addition, HD had already included the estates with blocks not falling under the seven prototypes into the consultancy studies. After acceptance of the prototypes, fire safety improvement proposals for these estates would be submitted to the enforcement authorities for vetting and formal acceptance.

91. The Committee was concerned that the delay of implementing FS(B)O would undermine fire safety of the concerned PRH estates, and enquired whether alternative fire safety enhancement measures would be implemented in the interim before the full implementation of FS(B)O.

92. **Director of Housing** replied at the public hearing on 23 December 2016 and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 9 January 2017 (Appendix 9) that the purpose of FS(B)O was to enhance the fire safety level of some existing old buildings. HD had been carrying out various kinds of fire safety improvement works to strengthen the fire safety measures in PRH estates aiming at compliance with FS(B)O voluntarily. These works included replacement of flat entrance doors, protection to uPVC pipes with fire collars in common areas, installation of fire rated doors at services rooms, installation of battery-type emergency lighting and automatic sprinkler system. In addition, HA would continue to implement quality fire safety management system, details of which were given in Appendix 9.

93. **Mr HUI Siu-wai, Director of Buildings** and **Mr Daryl LI Kin-yat, Director of Fire Services** supplemented in their letters dated 9 January 2017 (*Appendices 12* and *13* respectively) that the fire safety provisions in existing PRH blocks met the prevailing safety standard at the time of their construction. Therefore, the existing PRH blocks were basically safe from the fire safety point of view. Both BD and FSD had collaboratively provided assistance and advice to HD with a view to ensuring that the enhancement of fire safety standard in the concerned PRH blocks was being carried out efficiently.

94. According to paragraphs 6.20 and 6.21 of the Audit Report, both Director of Buildings and Director of Fire Services agreed with Audit's recommendations that they should work in collaboration with HD to ensure that fire safety improvement works for meeting the FS(B)O requirements in PRH estates were efficiently vetted and formally accepted. The Committee asked about the measures carried out by BD and FSD.

95. **Director of Buildings** and **Director of Fire Services** replied in their letters dated 9 January 2017 (*Appendices 12* and *13* respectively) that to assist HD in implementing FS(B)O in PRH blocks smoothly, inter-departmental meetings amongst HD, BD and FSD had been held regularly. FSD would continue to provide assistance and advice to HD regularly on fire safety improvement proposals, and conduct acceptance inspection upon completion of such works by HD. In addition, FSD and BD had agreed on the streamlined vetting procedure during the inter-departmental meetings, and therefore the vetting process would be shortened and conducted more efficiently.

G. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall comments

96. The Committee:

- notes that the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") and the Housing Department ("HD"), as an executive arm of HA, should effectively manage and maintain the stock of public rental housing ("PRH") estates to sustain their lifespan and economic value, and owe a duty of care to their tenants and stakeholders;

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

- stresses that as the subjects covered in this Chapter involve the safety and well-being of tenants of PRH estates, the Committee has spent considerable time to consider the evidence given by witnesses to ascertain the facts of the irregularities and deficiencies revealed in the Director of Audit's Report ("Audit Report"), and recommends improvement actions in a forward-looking manner;

Follow-up actions on public rental housing's water sampling tests for lead

- is strongly of the view that HD should:
 - (a) exercise good governance in handling crisis such as "excess lead in drinking water" effectively;
 - (b) adhere to the principle of keeping information open and transparent, and complying with HD's records management policies in making and preserving authentic, reliable, usable and complete records for public inspection, protecting vital records for future references and maintaining an accurate records inventory for efficient information management;¹¹ and
 - (c) adopt a people-oriented approach in addressing the "excess lead in drinking water" incident which adversely affects the health of tenants;
- reiterates that HA together with HD, as the landlord and PRH estates developer and manager, should exercise a duty of care towards all tenants of PRH and Tenants Purchase Scheme ("TPS") estates in relation to the supply of safe drinking water;
- expresses alarm and strong resentment, and finds it unacceptable about HD's negligence and lax attitude in coordinating, managing and handling of information relating to the water sampling tests in PRH developments, reflecting the department's poor governance and was contradictory to the principles of maintaining proper records and keeping information open and transparent as evidenced by the following:

¹¹ Paragraphs 3 and 11 of the Appendix to the "Housing Department Records Management Policy" (Departmental General Circular No. 2/2013), and paragraph 6 of the "Mandatory Records Management Requirements" (General Circular No. 2/2009). Both circulars are provided in Appendix 7.

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

- (a) HD had not prepared minutes/meeting notes for the first seven inter-departmental meetings held from 20 July to 7 August 2015 to review the water sampling test results ("inter-departmental meetings"). By the following reasons, it was unsatisfactory that minutes/meeting notes were not prepared:
- during the seven meetings, decisions were made on the handling of water sampling test results, including 37 non-compliant samples and five discarded samples. Such decisions had implications on the classification of a PRH estate as an affected development or not;
 - formal minutes/meeting notes recording the attendees of the meetings and process of deliberations and discussions were not kept, therefore undermining transparency and accountability of the decisions made at the meetings;
 - it was a deviation from the Administration's long-standing practice of good governance of keeping formal minutes/meeting notes for important meetings in which important decisions and follow-up actions were required; and
 - no attempts were made by HD to compile post-meeting notes or action lists to facilitate references by the departments attending the inter-departmental meetings in future on the decisions made and actions to be taken; and
- (b) HD's inadvertence in the compilation and validation of sampling test results data, resulting in the omission of two non-compliant samples when reporting the water test results to the public. The total number of non-compliant samples for the 11 affected PRH developments should have been 93 instead of 91. Notwithstanding that the omission did not affect the total number of estates classified as affected PRH developments, information on the water sampling test results was important for the public's understanding of the extent of the problem;
- expresses grave dismay and finds it inexcusable that Director of Housing,¹² being Chairman of the inter-departmental meetings and the

¹² Director of Housing, in his capacity of the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing), chaired the inter-departmental meetings to discuss and coordinate matters relating to the sampling of drinking water in PRH developments.

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subject officer in handling excess lead in drinking water in PRH estates, had not fulfilled his role in ensuring that the relevant deliberations and decisions were recorded for the seven inter-departmental meetings;

- is unconvinced and finds it unacceptable by the Director of Housing's explanation that he did not realize the need to prepare minutes/meeting notes until the eighth inter-departmental meeting, but not for the first seven ones, given that he was an experienced government official having chaired a number of other inter-departmental meetings before and, as he explained at the public hearings, it had been a practice that minutes/meeting notes would be prepared for the vast majority, if not all, of these other inter-departmental meetings;
- expresses great dissatisfaction and disappointment that other directorate government officials of HD who had been present at the first seven inter-departmental meetings neither took the initiative to assist Director of Housing in preparing minutes/meeting notes for those meetings nor reminded Director of Housing of the need to do so;
- finds it unacceptable and inexcusable that HA, together with HD, had not adopted a people-oriented approach when it decided not to conduct water sampling tests for 54 493 PRH flats in 39 TPS estates under the ownership and management of HA. HA, together with HD failed to fulfill a duty of care towards tenants of TPS estates impartially as with tenants of other PRH developments in ensuring the safety of drinking water;
- expresses concern about the slow progress of rectification works to replace non-compliant pipes in the common areas of 11 affected PRH developments, which ranged from 18.5% to 45.6% only as at July 2016, and that there was no definite timetable for completion of rectification works for common areas and inside domestic units;
- strongly urges and cautions HD to:
 - (a) take measures to ensure that minutes/meeting notes on all discussions in respect of water sampling matters as well as other important matters are maintained to support evidence-based decision making;

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

- (b) strengthen data validation so that information provided to the public is accurate and complete; and
- (c) expedite the rectification works to replace non-compliant pipes in the common areas and within domestic flats;

Management of asbestos-containing materials ("ACMs") in public rental housing estates

- stresses that HD has an essential duty in protecting and safeguarding the health and well-being of its tenants, workers and other stakeholders;
- given the carcinogenic nature of asbestos, finds it appalling and inexcusable that HD had not taken adequate and effective safeguards to protect tenants, workers and users of the premises from the potential hazards of ACMs in PRH estates, as evidenced by the following:
 - (a) although the Environmental Protection Department's guidelines had advised that all ACMs should be properly labelled, warning labels were not used by HD to alert tenants to the existence of ACMs in staircase/lobby grilles or chimneys in PRH estates. The Audit Commission ("Audit")'s examination revealed that there were cases of lobby grille panels/balcony grille panels being damaged, and that tenants had undertaken unauthorized minor works in their flats, which implied that uninformed tenants or workers could have accidentally damaged or disturbed ACMs and thus exposed themselves to health risks;
 - (b) in-flat inspections of balcony grille panels were inadequate as they were not covered in the half-yearly condition surveys and would only be inspected at external elevation, during vacant flat refurbishment or upon request for in-flat repair (i.e. Responsive In-flat Maintenance Services ("RIMS")) and during Total Maintenance Scheme ("TMS") in-flat inspections. For example, from 2010 to 2013, for Hing Wah (II) Estate, in-flat inspections only covered 13% of the 2 009 flats with ACMs in balcony grilles, and no in-flat inspection result had been reported in 2014 and 2015; and
 - (c) uninformed tenants carrying out unauthorized minor works or uninformed workers or contractors carrying out repair and maintenance works involving ACMs might expose them to the

risk of committing the relevant offence(s) under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311) ("APCO") and the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulation (Cap. 59AD);

- is surprised and finds it unacceptable about HD's management and maintenance of information and records relating to ACMs that they were not accurate and up-to-date for use by estate management staff in their daily inspections and monitoring, and that HD had not ensured that information on the locations of ACMs was made easily available to the public:
 - (a) there was no comprehensive survey on ACMs in PRH estates conducted by asbestos consultants in the period between 1989 and 2016. Records on the locations and conditions of ACMs were maintained and updated by estate management staff only during this period;
 - (b) Audit's examination revealed that there were cases where records maintained and managed by estate management offices were not accurate and complete, thus rendering HD ineffective in its monitoring of ACMs in PRH estates;
 - (c) five PRH estates/block with ACMs were not uploaded onto HA's website or covered by HD's half-yearly condition surveys. As these estates were not publicly announced and not monitored by regular half-yearly surveys, their conditions might have deteriorated and workers might not be fully aware of the existence of ACMs to exercise due care when carrying out maintenance works; and
 - (d) information on HA's website regarding ACMs in PRH estates did not contain sufficient details about the exact locations of ACMs and tenants still needed to approach the estate offices concerned to ascertain whether their flats had ACMs or not; and
- strongly urges and cautions HD to:
 - (a) take measures to ensure that all tenants, workers and stakeholders are fully informed of the locations of ACMs through effective dissemination channels and have all ACMs properly labelled;

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

- (b) closely monitor the extent of in-flat inspections to ensure an adequate coverage of all ACM balcony grilles; and
- (c) review the mechanism of maintaining and updating of ACMs records to ensure that they are accurate and complete.

Specific comments

97. The Committee:

In-flat maintenance of public rental housing flats

- expresses grave concern that HD fails to discharge its property management duties effectively to ensure that the stock of PRH estates are sustainably maintained in an efficient and cost-effective manner:
 - (a) HD was complacent about the access rate of TMS in-flat inspections¹³ and had not taken adequate and effective measures to improve the access rate:
 - 80 965 (21.6%) of 375 703 flats were inaccessible for inspection in the first five years of the second TMS cycle. Among them, 24 455 (30% of the 80 965) were also inaccessible in the first cycle;
 - only 872 warning letters were issued to uncooperative tenants between 2011 and 2016, and no consideration had been given to imposing more stringent penalty towards repeatedly uncooperative tenants;
 - inspections on Sundays and public holidays could only be arranged by appointment subject to resource availability without taking into account the working needs of tenants during weekdays and Saturdays;
 - no efforts had been made to enhance the linkage between RIMS and TMS so that information could be shared between

¹³ The access rate for TMS were 77.6% for the first TMS cycle and 78.4% for the first five years of the second TMS cycle.

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

the two programmes to better make use of the opportunity arising from tenants making requests for repair works under RIMS to conduct TMS inspection. For example, for 300 flats which had not been inspected under TMS from 2011 to 2014, no comprehensive in-flat inspection was conducted even when the tenants concerned subsequently made requests for repair works in their flats under RIMS; and

- in spite of the effectiveness of education booth in promoting TMS, education booths were not set up in 25 (19%) estates, of which 22 were TPS estates and three were on outlying islands; and
- (b) HD failed to ensure that public money on TMS and RIMS was well spent in maintaining and improving the quality of PRH flats:
- the aim of TMS was to proactively improve the conditions of PRH flats so that once the TMS repair works for a PRH flat were completed, the same flat would not need to undergo major repairs under RIMS in the following years. The high cost of TMS was considered justifiable by HD as it reflected the cost of providing proactive and prompt services.¹⁴ Despite the implementation of TMS, both the number of works orders and maintenance costs under RIMS had been on a rise:
 - (i) the number of works orders issued under RIMS had increased by 55% from 270 815 to 420 155 between 2011-2012 and 2015-2016; and
 - (ii) average maintenance cost per PRH flat under RIMS had been increasing from \$297 in 2011-2012 to \$664 in 2015-2016;
 - HD's periodic checks revealed unsatisfactory contractors' repair works. Of 133 flats selected for checking from 2014 to 2016, 118 (89%) flats had 385 items of unsatisfactory TMS repair works requiring replacement/rectification works;

¹⁴ Average maintenance cost per inspected flat was \$1,946 in the first TMS cycle and \$2,484 in the first five years of the second TMS cycle.

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

- in HD's audits of TMS teams' performance during 2012-2013 to 2015-2016, low scores were generally given to the in-flat inspection and maintenance service process. For example, in 20 (67%) of 30 estates covered by HD's performance audits, the average number of flats inspected by TMS teams could not meet the inspection standards;
 - as revealed by HD's performance verifications, only 25 (8%) estate offices of 304 selected estates from 2011 to 2015 could meet all nine RIMS service standards; and
 - the quality of RIMS repair works was generally unsatisfactory and on a deteriorating trend. For example, in respect of workmanship, 349 (65%) of 535 estate works orders checked by HD from 2011 to 2015 required partial or complete replacement/rectification works. The percentage of estate works orders requiring partial or complete replacement/rectification works increased from 50% in 2011 to 88% in 2015;
- urges HD to:
- (a) step up measures to improve the access rate of TMS inspections, including issuing more warning letters, consider allocating more resources for conducting TMS inspections on Sundays and public holidays and imposing penalty on repeatedly uncooperative tenants and employing information technology to analyze cases of unsuccessful visits to formulate suitable follow-up actions;
 - (b) ascertain the reasons for the increase in works orders under RIMS; and
 - (c) strengthen inspections and monitoring of contractors' repair works to ensure that their quality is up to standard, and consider taking actions against contractors with a history of sub-standard performance;
- notes that Director of Housing has generally agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 2.24, 2.32, 2.42 and 2.47 of the Audit Report;

Follow-up actions on public rental housing's water sampling tests for lead

- expresses grave concern and disappointment that:
 - (a) there was inadequacy in the sampling protocol adopted by the Water Supplies Department ("WSD") in 2015 as pointed out by the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water ("the Commission of Inquiry"). A retesting of drinking water of all PRH estates using an appropriate protocol could point to the need for further measures to be taken to safeguard tenants' drinking water safety;
 - (b) as at July 2016, 2 138 (7.4%) of 29 077 domestic premises in the 11 affected PRH developments had not been installed with water filters provided by the contractors concerned because some households had refused to install filters or returned filters after use or could not be contacted for arranging the installation works; and
 - (c) while the current plan of HD was to replace the non-compliant water pipes inside domestic units of the 11 affected PRH developments after the completion of rectification works for those in the common areas, as at July 2016, the progress of works in the common areas ranged from 18.5% to 45.6%. There was no target date for completing the replacement of non-compliant water pipes in the common areas;
- notes that:
 - (a) Director of Housing has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraph 3.31 of the Audit Report;
 - (b) as at October 2016, the rectification works in the common area of Kwai Yuet House at Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase I had been substantially completed and a trial for works inside flats to test contractors' method would be conducted in this estate;
 - (c) Director of Water Supplies has agreed with Audit's recommendation in paragraph 3.32 of the Audit Report; and
 - (d) WSD has commenced follow-up work on the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, including engaging expert consultants

Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats

to conduct a study on developing an appropriate sampling protocol which is targeted to be completed by March 2017;

- demands that Director of Housing should reconsider conducting water sampling tests/screening tests for PRH flats in TPS estates and other estates under HA's ownership and management if the Owners' Corporations concerned have not done so;

Management of asbestos-containing materials in public rental housing estates

- is surprised and finds it unacceptable that:
 - (a) among the five unannounced PRH estates/block with ACMs, a single-storey structure in the Long Bin Interim Housing with ACMs was built in 1985, after HD's ban on the use of ACMs in 1984;
 - (b) six cases of damaged balcony grille panels with ACMs in Hing Wah (II) Estate and Shek Lei (II) Interim Housing and two cases of damaged lobby grille panels with ACMs on two floors of Hing Wah (II) Estate were found by Audit in 2016. While the nature of these damaged parts suggested that there could be damage beneath the surface, these cases had not been reported in HD's condition surveys from 2010 to 2015 under its existing assessment criteria (which were based on the length and surface area of the damage). There was a risk of exposure to asbestos for workers/tenants nearby when the damage was inflicted;
 - (c) the repair and encapsulation works of an asbestos-containing balcony grille panel of a flat in Hing Wah (II) Estate carried out by HD's contractor might not have complied with the requirements of APCO or HD's Asbestos Technical Guides. The case indicated that HD front-line staff concerned did not have adequate training/alertness in handling repair works in PRH estates with ACMs despite HD's undertaking to enhance staff training in monitoring and handling asbestos in 2009;
 - (d) a damaged chimney with ACMs in an estate was suspected to have been removed by the chimney owner without complying with the APCO requirements. There was a risk that workers and

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nearby tenants had been exposed to asbestos during the removal process; and

- (e) the information provided to the Legislative Council Panel on Housing in February 2007 that ACMs inside PRH flats had either been removed or properly encapsulated was not consistent with Audit's findings that two cases of un-encapsulated ACM in balcony grille panels had existed up to 2013 and 2015. According to HD's 1990 records, ACM balcony grille panels of 15 flats in Hing Wah (II) Estate had not been fully encapsulated due to access problems. While in-flat inspections by HD's asbestos consultant in 2016 revealed that they had been fully encapsulated, there was no record to show whether the encapsulation works had been carried out in compliance with APCO requirements/HD's laid-down procedures;

- notes that:

- (a) Director of Housing has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 4.24, 4.35 and 4.40 of the Audit Report;
- (b) HD has been working with relevant government departments to identify issues and act on them as soon as possible; and
- (c) Director of Environmental Protection and Commissioner for Labour have agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 4.41 and 4.42 respectively of the Audit Report;

Replacement of laundry pole-holders

- expresses grave concern and dissatisfaction that:

- (a) HD had not carried out a post-implementation review of the 2004-2005 subsidy scheme for replacing laundry pole-holders. HA's Subsidised Housing Committee was not informed of the achievement of the scheme until 2014 when its endorsement was sought for the 2014 programme for replacing laundry pole-holders by laundry racks;
- (b) only about 10% of some 550 000 PRH flats with laundry pole-holders had been installed with laundry racks under the 2004-2005 subsidy scheme or by the tenants themselves, which

was far less than the estimated 30% stated in the 2004 Subsidised Housing Committee's paper. According to HD, from 2004 to 2014, there were some seven accidents involving seven fatalities and one injury likely due to the incautious use of laundry poles;

- (c) while the 2014 programme was launched to replace laundry pole-holders over three years, the progress as at 31 July 2016 was behind schedule. Of the 42 estates reported having completed works or with planned works schedules which had expired, the laundry rack installation works for 2 702 opted-in flats in six estates and the pole-holder sealing-up works for 4 801 opted-out flats in 10 estates were still outstanding. Of the 15 estates with works due for completion from August to September 2016, six estates had 75% of their opted-in flats pending laundry rack installation works and 10 estates had 76% of their opted-out flats pending pole-holder sealing-up works;
 - (d) while the Subsidised Housing Committee was informed that for tenants who did not opt for a new rack, the laundry pole-holders of their flats would be sealed up to avoid further use, Audit's sample check of some flats on two estates reported by HD to have completed or almost completed the sealing-up works for their opted-out flats revealed 167 cases of partially sealing up of/unsealed laundry pole-holders as at 31 July 2016; and
 - (e) in September 2016 (two years after the launch of the 2014 programme for replacing laundry pole-holders), HD obtained the endorsement of the Subsidised Housing Committee to provide laundry rods at the living room facade for specified blocks. According to HD, some tenants of the specified blocks considered the location of the laundry facilities at the re-entrants undesirable due to inadequate sunlight and natural ventilation, and cooking fumes emitted from kitchens. Some also considered that the laundry provision was inadequate due to the limited space of the re-entrants;
- notes that Director of Housing has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraph 5.21 of the Audit Report;

Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates

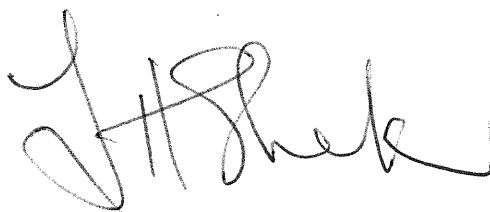
- expresses grave concern and dissatisfaction that:
 - (a) while fire is a risk for the densely populated PRH estates, up to August 2016, nine years after the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572) ("FS(B)O") came into effect, fire safety improvement works for the 64 PRH estates had not been fully completed for compliance with the relevant requirements of FS(B)O. In particular, the progress in respect of fire safety construction was slow. Phase I fire safety construction works in 51 estates of the slab block design were only targeted for completion by 2020-2021. As at 9 January 2017, fire safety improvement proposals under the three prototypes (Slab, Tower and H) had been accepted, while the remaining four prototypes (Ziggurate/Trident, Linear, Cruciform 1 and Cruciform 2) were being processed. However, HD still needed to submit the fire safety improvement proposals of individual estates to the enforcement authorities for vetting and formal acceptance after a prototype had been accepted;
 - (b) the progress of implementing FS(B)O was only reported to HD's senior management on two occasions in March 2008 and February 2014 respectively notwithstanding that the inter-departmental meetings with the Buildings Department ("BD") and the Fire Services Department ("FSD") had failed to reach an agreement on the vetting/formal acceptance of HD's fire safety improvement proposals after rounds of discussion; and
 - (c) while BD and FSD agreed in April and May 2014 to comment on HD's fire safety improvement proposals for specific PRH block types, they also remarked that the comments were to facilitate HD's self-compliance with FS(B)O. HD, BD and FSD had only come to an agreement recently on the vetting and formal acceptance of HD's fire safety improvement proposals after rounds of discussions and inter-departmental meetings; and
- notes that:
 - (a) Director of Housing has agreed with Audit's recommendation in paragraph 6.17 of the Audit Report; and

- (b) Director of Buildings and Director of Fire Services have agreed with Audit's recommendation in paragraph 6.18 of the Audit Report.

Follow-up action

98. The Committee wishes to be kept informed of the progress made in implementing the various recommendations made by the Committee and Audit.

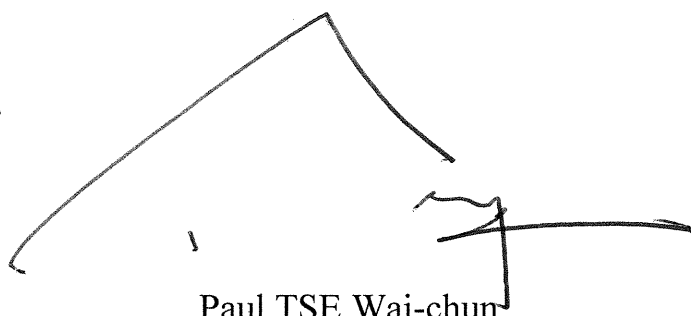
**SIGNATURES OF THE CHAIRMAN,
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**



Abraham SHEK Lai-him
(Chairman)



Kenneth LEUNG
(Deputy Chairman)



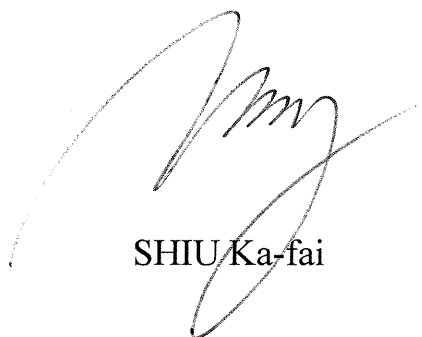
Paul TSE Wai-chun



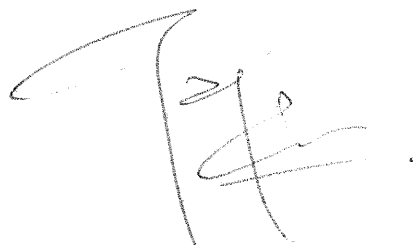
Steven HO Chun-yin



LAM Cheuk-ting



SHIU Ka-fai



Tanya CHAN

15 March 2017

**CHAPTER IN THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT'S REPORT NO. 67
DEALT WITH IN THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE'S REPORT**

**Director of
Audit's Report
No. 67**

**P.A.C.
Report No. 67A**

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>
1	Maintenance and safety-related improvements of public rental housing flats	4

**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF
THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF
THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION**

72. Public Accounts Committee

(1) There shall be a standing committee, to be called the Public Accounts Committee, to consider reports of the Director of Audit –

- (a) on the accounts of the Government;
- (b) on such other accounts required to be laid before the Council as the committee may think fit; and
- (c) on any matter incidental to the performance of his duties or the exercise of his powers as the committee may think fit.

(2) The committee shall also consider any report of the Director of Audit laid on the Table of the Council which deals with examinations (value for money audit) carried out by the Director relating to the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of any Government department or public body or any organization to which his functions as Director of Audit extend by virtue of any Ordinance or which receives public moneys by way of subvention.

(3) The committee shall consist of a chairman, deputy chairman and 5 members who shall be Members appointed by the President in accordance with an election procedure determined by the House Committee. *(L.N. 214 of 2005)*

(3A) The chairman and 2 other members shall constitute a quorum of the committee. *(L.N. 214 of 2005)*

(3B) In the event of the temporary absence of the chairman and deputy chairman, the committee may elect a chairman to act during such absence. *(L.N. 214 of 2005)*

(3C) All matters before the committee shall be decided by a majority of the members voting. Neither the chairman nor any other member presiding shall vote, unless the votes of the other members are equally divided, in which case he shall give a casting vote. *(L.N. 214 of 2005)*

(4) A report mentioned in subrules (1) and (2) shall be deemed to have been referred by the Council to the committee when it is laid on the Table of the Council.

(5) Unless the chairman otherwise orders, members of the press and of the public shall be admitted as spectators at meetings of the committee attended by any person invited by the committee under subrule (8).

(6) The committee shall meet at the time and the place determined by the chairman. Written notice of every meeting shall be given to the members and to any person invited to attend a meeting at least 5 clear days before the day of the meeting but shorter notice may be given in any case where the chairman so directs.

(7) *(Repealed L.N. 214 of 2005)*

(8) The chairman or the committee may invite any public officer, or, in the case of a report on the accounts of or relating to a non-government body or organization, any member or employee of that body or organization, to give information or any explanation or to produce any records or documents which the committee may require in the performance of its duties; and the committee may also invite any other person to assist the committee in relation to any such information, explanation, records or documents.

(9) The committee shall make their report upon the report of the Director of Audit on the accounts of the Government within 3 months (or such longer period as may be determined under section 12 of the Audit Ordinance (Cap. 122)) of the date on which the Director's report is laid on the Table of the Council.

(10) The committee shall make their report upon the report of the Director of Audit mentioned in subrule (2) within 3 months (or such longer period as may be determined by the Council) of the date on which the Director's report is laid on the Table of the Council.

(11) Subject to these Rules of Procedure, the practice and procedure of the committee shall be determined by the committee.

**Paper presented to the Provisional Legislative Council
by the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee
at the meeting on 11 February 1998 on
Scope of Government Audit in the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region -
'Value for Money Audits'**

SCOPE OF WORK

1. The Director of Audit may carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which any bureau, department, agency, other public body, public office, or audited organisation has discharged its functions.
2. The term "audited organisation" shall include -
 - (i) any person, body corporate or other body whose accounts the Director of Audit is empowered under any Ordinance to audit;
 - (ii) any organisation which receives more than half its income from public moneys (this should not preclude the Director from carrying out similar examinations in any organisation which receives less than half its income from public moneys by virtue of an agreement made as a condition of subvention); and
 - (iii) any organisation the accounts and records of which the Director is authorised in writing by the Chief Executive to audit in the public interest under section 15 of the Audit Ordinance (Cap. 122).
3. This definition of scope of work shall not be construed as entitling the Director of Audit to question the merits of the policy objectives of any bureau, department, agency, other public body, public office, or audited organisation in respect of which an examination is being carried out or, subject to the following Guidelines, the methods by which such policy objectives have been sought, but he may question the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the means used to achieve them.

GUIDELINES

4. The Director of Audit should have great freedom in presenting his reports to the Legislative Council. He may draw attention to any circumstance which comes to his knowledge in the course of audit, and point out its financial implications. Subject to these Guidelines, he will not comment on policy decisions of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council, save from the point of view of their effect on the public purse.

5. In the event that the Director of Audit, during the course of carrying out an examination into the implementation of policy objectives, reasonably believes that at the time policy objectives were set and decisions made there may have been a lack of sufficient, relevant and reliable financial and other data available upon which to set such policy objectives or to make such decisions, and that critical underlying assumptions may not have been made explicit, he may carry out an investigation as to whether that belief is well founded. If it appears to be so, he should bring the matter to the attention of the Legislative Council with a view to further inquiry by the Public Accounts Committee. As such an investigation may involve consideration of the methods by which policy objectives have been sought, the Director should, in his report to the Legislative Council on the matter in question, not make any judgement on the issue, but rather present facts upon which the Public Accounts Committee may make inquiry.

6. The Director of Audit may also -

- (i) consider as to whether policy objectives have been determined, and policy decisions taken, with appropriate authority;
- (ii) consider whether there are satisfactory arrangements for considering alternative options in the implementation of policy, including the identification, selection and evaluation of such options;
- (iii) consider as to whether established policy aims and objectives have been clearly set out; whether subsequent decisions on the implementation of policy are consistent with the approved aims and objectives, and have been taken with proper authority at the appropriate level; and whether the resultant instructions to staff accord with the approved policy aims and decisions and are clearly understood by those concerned;

- (iv) consider as to whether there is conflict or potential conflict between different policy aims or objectives, or between the means chosen to implement them;
- (v) consider how far, and how effectively, policy aims and objectives have been translated into operational targets and measures of performance and whether the costs of alternative levels of service and other relevant factors have been considered, and are reviewed as costs change; and
- (vi) be entitled to exercise the powers given to him under section 9 of the Audit Ordinance (Cap. 122).

PROCEDURES

7. The Director of Audit shall report his findings on value for money audits in the Legislative Council twice each year. The first report shall be submitted to the President of the Legislative Council within seven months of the end of the financial year, or such longer period as the Chief Executive may determine. Within one month, or such longer period as the President may determine, copies shall be laid before the Legislative Council. The second report shall be submitted to the President of the Legislative Council by the 7th of April each year, or such date as the Chief Executive may determine. By the 30th April, or such date as the President may determine, copies shall be laid before the Legislative Council.

8. The Director's report shall be referred to the Public Accounts Committee for consideration when it is laid on the table of the Legislative Council. The Public Accounts Committee shall follow the rules governing the procedures of the Legislative Council in considering the Director's reports.

9. A Government minute commenting on the action Government proposes to take in respect of the Public Accounts Committee's report shall be laid on the table of the Legislative Council within three months of the laying of the report of the Committee to which it relates.

10. In this paper, reference to the Legislative Council shall, during the existence of the Provisional Legislative Council, be construed as the Provisional Legislative Council.

**Witnesses who appeared before the Committee
(in order of appearance)**

Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung	Secretary for Transport and Housing
Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Director of Housing
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management) Housing Department
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management) ³ Housing Department
Miss Sandra LAM Ching-nga	Assistant Director (Special Support) Housing Department
Mr CHEUNG Tin-cheung	Director of Buildings (Acting)
Mr Daryl LI Kin-yat	Director of Fire Services
Mr Terrance TSANG Wing-hung	Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Fire Safety) Fire Services Department
Mr Enoch LAM Tin-sing	Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHAU Sai-wai	Assistant Director/Development Water Supplies Department
Mr KWOK Yau-ting	Chief Waterworks Chemist Water Supplies Department
Mr LEE Kwun-chung	Senior Engineer/Development (Special Duties) Water Supplies Department
Mr HUI Siu-wai	Director of Buildings
Mr YAU Shing-mu	Under Secretary for Transport and Housing
Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Dr Constance CHAN Hon-yee	Director of Health

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen

Consultant, Community Medicine
(Non-Communicable Disease)
Department of Health

Dr LEE Wai-on

Acting Government Chemist

Dr CHOI Sik-man

Acting Chief Chemist (Food Safety and
Quality Group)

Public Accounts Committee
Public Hearing on
Director of Audit's Report No. 67, Chapter 1
Hong Kong Housing Authority:
Maintenance and Safety-related Improvements of
Public Rental Housing Flats

Opening Remarks by the Secretary for Transport and Housing
(10 December 2016)

Chairman,

The Housing Department (HD) is the executive arm of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and is tasked to implement the policies determined by the HA. The HD is managing around 756,000 public rental housing (PRH) flats in 215 estates to meet the housing needs of low-income families that cannot afford private accommodation. To ensure a safe and pleasant living environment for the tenants, as well as to improve the sustainability of the PRH estates, the HD has introduced various maintenance and improvement programmes over the years.

2. From the perspective of the housing stock of the HA, proper maintenance and improvement works can keep our housing stock sustainable and also maintain its property value. Hence, regular review of the effectiveness of the maintenance and improvement works is very

important.

3. I welcome the audit review of the maintenance and safety-related improvement of PRH flats of the HA conducted by the Audit Commission. I want to express my appreciation for their professional manner in which this exercise was carried out and the opportunity the HD has been given to respond to the findings and to clarify many points ahead of the finalization of the Report. We generally agree with the observations and comments made by the Audit Commission. Most of the recommendations have either been implemented or will be taken on board as appropriate. We will continue to review the maintenance and safety-related improvement works for PRH estates for further enhancement.

4. Chairman: I together with the Director of Housing and his colleagues will be pleased to answer Members' queries. Before answering Members' queries, I would like to invite Mr. Stanley YING, Director of Housing, to have some initial response to the recent public concerns on the issues raised in the Audit Report.

Thank you.

(296 words, 2 minutes)

- END -

Public Accounts Committee
Public Hearing on
Director of Audit's Report No. 67, Chapter 1
Hong Kong Housing Authority:
Maintenance and Safety-related Improvements of
Public Rental Housing Flats

Speech by the Director of Housing
(10 December 2016)

Chairman,

Upon the issue of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67 (the Report), the media reported on parts of the Report. However, there is other information in the Report which is useful for comprehensive analysis of the subjects concerned. I would like to elaborate on the following two subjects.

2. First, the Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS). Most media reports focused on paragraph 2.37 of the Report regarding the unsatisfactory repair works found by our Surprise Check Teams in 89% of the flats selected for inspection. This is a fact, but some media have used this as an assessment of the effectiveness of the TMS. In fact, there are other data in the Report which are more directly relevant.

3. As mentioned in paragraph 2.2 of the Report, the objectives of the TMS are to upkeep the building conditions together with other maintenance programmes, and to provide pro-active maintenance service for tenants. Corresponding to these two objectives, we have been collecting directly relevant data to evaluate the effectiveness of the TMS. These data are summarized in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 of the Report. First, we found that the TMS has greatly improved the physical quality of the buildings. Secondly, on the tenants' front, the overall satisfaction rate of respondents in our regular customer satisfaction surveys has been around 80%. Another independent survey has also been showing customer satisfaction rate of over 80% for years. We consider that the above findings are more direct in assessing the effectiveness of the TMS.

4. With respect to the performance verification of surprise check, the purpose is not to assess the effectiveness, but to monitor and alert staff and contractors with a view to achieving continued improvement of their quality of works through a more stringent assessment standard. In the long term, we hope to continuously improve the works quality, and as a result, we may continue to find unsatisfactory performance of our staff and contractors so as to ensure their continued improvements.

5. Another subject is the records of water samples with excess lead. The Report points out that we have not kept meeting records for the first seven inter-departmental meetings that I chaired. This is a fact, I also think that we should have kept meeting records, which is why from the eighth meeting we started to keep meeting records. However, some

media reports seemed to suggest that because of the lack of meeting records, there were no records at all. In fact, while there are no records of the meetings, the raw data of the water samples discussed at the meetings are maintained by the Water Supplies Department and the Government Laboratory, and in emails among departments. The departments have provided these records to the Audit Commission in response to its enquiries.

6. During the seven meetings held from 20 July to 7 August last year, we processed water samples from six affected PRH developments, including 37 samples with excess lead, and five discarded samples. Departments have kept records of these five discarded samples. Such records include the reasons for discarding these samples, although for one of these five records there is no written record of the reasons for discarding it. The reasons for discarding these samples and the relevant internal records are set out in paragraph 3.13 of the Report.

7. While it is a fact we did not keep minutes for these seven meetings and this is where we need to make improvement, departments do keep the records of the samples discussed at these seven meetings and they are available for examination.

8. Lastly, I would like to point out some problems of the Housing Authority (HA)'s record systems. The HA has a wide range of businesses and a large portfolio. Every year, we sell thousands of flats, build tens of thousands of flats and at the same time, manage hundreds of

thousands of rental flats. These businesses involve large number of workflows and large number of records. With the long history of the HA, many of these records are old, and have hence created a huge “legacy” issue. We from time to time have to study in our department what records we should require our staff to keep, what technology to use and how to migrate the historical records to the new information technology systems, etc. We welcome the Report’s discussion on various record issues, and also look forward to listening to Members’ views.

9. Thank you.

(739 words, 5 minutes)

- END -



Our Ref. : HD 3-8/SD/BW- 5/9/4/3 (C)

Tel. No. : 2761 5002

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Your Ref. : CB4/PAC/R67

22 December 2016

Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attention: Mr. Anthony CHU)

Dear Sir,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67
Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats

With reference to your letter of 14 December 2016 addressed to the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the subject issue, I set out the Administration's response at the **Annex** for your consideration, please.

In our response to Item II(v), we have provided records of the Administration's internal correspondence and raw data of the water sampling results which are classified as **confidential** information. Circulation of and access to such information should be **restricted to the Public Accounts Committee** only. For raw data of the water sampling results, we have redacted information which will make the relevant unit/premises identifiable in order to preserve privacy of the tenants concerned.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Stanley YING".

PP. (Stanley YING)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

香港九龍何文田佛光街33號房屋委員會總部

Housing Authority Headquarters, 33 Fat Kwong Street, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

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c.c. Secretary for Transport and Housing	(w/ encl.)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury	}
Director of Audit	
Director of Water Supplies	
	(w/o encl.)

At the public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held on 10 December 2016, we provided members with further information in relation to Part 2 of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report (the Audit Report) on the "In-flat maintenance of public rental housing (PRH) flats". In response to enquiries raised by the PAC in its letter dated 14 December 2016, we provide our reply as follows:

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

- (a) Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS) is an initiative of the Housing Authority (HA) to provide proactive in-flat inspection, comprehensive repair and maintenance education to the tenants of the public rental housing (PRH) flats. When there is no special maintenance request from tenant nor there is any maintenance needs, HA takes the initiative to systematically inspect all PRH flats, ensuring a timely repair and maintaining healthier buildings for preventive purpose. From past experience, achieving a high access rate is not easy. The access rates achieved in the first and second TMS cycle at 77.6% and 78.4% respectively are considered relatively high. Nevertheless, HA agrees with paragraph 2.16 of the Audit Report that with flats inaccessible in both two cycles is not ideal. HA has been trying various means to increase the access rate. We will continue these efforts and consider proposal like better appointment arrangement, etc.
- (b) Housing Department (HD) did consider introducing the incentive scheme. In view of the positive feedback from tenants and the overall access rate being close to 80% subsequently and the complexity in implementing the scheme, we did not implement the incentive scheme under the principle of best use of public resources.
- (c) There are many reasons for inaccessibility of flats during TMS inspection including the living styles of tenants, for example, their busy jobs or shift work would not match with the TMS services. We believe that promoting participation of the scheme has to be in step with the priority of the matter. As said in (I)(a) above, TMS is an initiative of HA to provide proactive in-flat inspection, comprehensive repair and maintenance education to the tenants of the PRH flats. When we initiate this service, tenants may not find their flats with maintenance or safety problems requiring inspection and repair. We will continue to study on how to increase the

accessibility rate including the introduction of regulating measures appropriately at various degrees.

- (d) According to record, 872 warning letters were issued from 2011 to 2016. As explained in paragraph (I) (a) and (c), based on the nature of the scheme, we have been adopting an persuasive approach to increase the accessibility rate. Warning letter would not be issued when the first attempt to visit fails. Three attempts to visit each PRH flat would be made by the In-flat Inspection Ambassadors (IIAs). It would then be further followed up by the Estate Office. Within six months after the completion of TMS for individual block, HD will still try to contact those inaccessible flats. HD has actually conducted more than three attempts to each inaccessible flat.

Besides, reminder notice would be sent to the tenants in case of inaccessibility in each attempt of visit, inviting them to make appointment with the Public Relation Officer at the ground floor lobby. Issue of warning letter to the inaccessible flats would be considered as the last resort. Currently, our estate frontline staff will consider issue warning letters according to their individual estate situation. Through the various efforts and issue of warning letters, the overall access rate has generally been increased.

- (e) Refer Annex - Item (I) (e).
- (f) As aforesaid, based on the nature of TMS, the access rate at about 80% is already relatively high. We will continue to explore ways to increase the access rate. However, we do not have objective basis for setting a target of mandatory access rate in a duly responsible manner.
- (g) We are open on whether conducting in-flat inspection on Sundays and public holidays. According to HD's practice note, HD would arrange in-flat inspections on Sundays or public holidays upon request by tenants and subject to available resources. However, defect items were often found during the in-flat inspection and TMS aims at carrying out immediate repairs in one go so as to minimize re-appointment to repair and further inconvenience to tenants. To comply with statutory requirement, no mechanical tools can be used on Sundays and public holidays for general building works unless Noise Permit has been obtained. As mentioned in (I)(a), we will

review the appointment, in-flat inspection and related arrangements to cater for tenants' actual situation.

- (h) According to the paragraph 2.5 of the Audit Report, works orders issued for the major repair items (including water seepage and concrete spalling) had been decreased from 146,680 in the first cycle by 43% to 83,750 in the second cycle. Besides, according to the record for the 80,965 inaccessible flats in the second cycle, during the subsequent year after the TMS cycle, works orders were issued to 2,066 flats (2.6%) regarding concrete spalling repair and to 224 flats (0.3%) regarding water seepage repair respectively. It can be seen that defects which may pose higher risk to building safety constitutes only a small proportion.
- (i) As depicted in paragraph 2.25(b) of the Audit Report, TMS and RIMS are designed for different purposes. TMS is a preventive maintenance service while RIMS aims to provide quick responses to tenants' prompt requests. In the request for RIMS, tenants generally concern on whether their requested repair items can be completed expeditiously. It may cause inconvenience to them if comprehensive inspection and other repair works are conducted at the same time.

We will continue to consider increasing the TMS access rate, including carrying out comprehensive in-flat inspection during RIMS repairs.

- (j) A more stringent standard has been adopted to audit IIAs' service performance. The performance score of individual IIA does not meet the service standard mark of 65. The relatively high turnover rate of IIAs in TMS teams may be the main cause. As depicted in paragraph 2.19 of the Audit Report, TMS teams achieved total scores of 60 to 90 marks for each estates (against a passing mark of 60), which are above the passing mark. Nevertheless, HD will continue to strengthen the training and improve the IIAs' service standard.

- (k) To establish a mobile education booth (MEB) in the estate common areas of a TPS estate, approval must be obtained from the owners' corporation (OC). From past experiences, various reasons have been given by the OCs of TPS estates to refuse setting up service counters or MEBs, etc. in the common areas of their estates. For the relatively smaller PRH estates in the outlying islands, the mini-version of MEB set up next to the TMS's service counter is already effective for education and publicity purpose.

HD will continue to persuade OCs to let us set up MEBs in TPS estates.

- (l) HD's frontline staff would communicate with individual OCs of TPS estates with various practical means to suit their operational situations. Typical communication records are given in Annex to Item (I) (l).
- (m) The turnover rate of the practitioners in construction industry is relatively high. Some IIAs would seek for other development opportunities when they have gained adequate experience. In the recruitment of IIAs, HD has no restriction on age or gender. Applicants will be considered once meeting the admission requirements.

Although the turnover rate of IIAs is relatively high, their average tenure is over 18 months. About a quarter of them have worked for more than three years. Besides, more than 30% of the resigned IIAs were recruited by HD in other permanent posts.

Besides, as the in-flat repair work is highly repetitive, new recruits of IIAs can conduct in-flat inspection and site monitoring after a short training period. Effect of staff turnover on the overall operation is confined. HD will strengthen the training to further mitigate the effect.

Regarding the conversion of IIA posts to permanent civil service posts, HD needs to consider allocation of the limited human resources.

- (n) The increase in volume of repair work generally undergoes a process. As shown in Annex G of the Audit Report, during the first two years when the scheme commenced, the volume of work in 2012/13 increased by 19% of that in 2011/12 and 16% in 2013/14. In 2014/15 and 2015/16, the increases were only 5.4% and 7% respectively. It can therefore be noted that tenants' sense of maintenance had been successfully raised during the early stage of the commencement of the scheme but the volume of work became stable at relatively lower levels in later stage.

As mentioned in paragraph 2.28 of the Audit Report, reasons for the increase of RIMS works orders are as follows –

- (i) **Ageing of the PRH stock.** The proportion of PRH stock of over 30 years old has increased from 24% in March 2011 to over 40% in March 2016; and
- (ii) **Increase of the PRH stock.** The number of PRH flats has increased by 4.6% from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

The works items shown on the works orders are general categorization descriptions which are applicable to various repair items under the same category of works. Therefore, same works items recorded for the same flat may involve different repair items, e.g. “repair to sewer” includes repair to the main sewer, branch sewer or other associated parts. For the case as mentioned in Note 25 of paragraph 2.28 of the Audit Report, although the three repairs belong to the same category of works i.e. “repair to sewer”, repair items are different in the respective three works orders. They include replacement of drain pipe of wash hand basin, replacement of vent pipe of WC pan and replacement of sewage pipe at external wall.

To enhance the quality of works, we will strictly execute the contractual requirements. Should defects be found in the material, workmanship, etc., we will immediately instruct the contractor to rectify swiftly until the required standard is met. We have also adopted Building Works Maintenance Assessment Scoring System to assess contractors' performance regularly.

During the review on RIMS, we will make use of the data in the information system to assist in the trade and trend analysis, and identify suspected repetitive repair items.

- (o) As depicted in paragraph 2.33(c) of the Audit Report, in identifying estates or repair works items for performance verification, HD will focus on those estates suspected with performance issue or with higher potential risk, which will warrant more frequent verification visits. Hence some estates may not be selected. We opine that this risk-based sampling method is more cost effective. However, we will continue to adopt random sampling in parallel with risk-based sampling as they should be complementary to each other.
- (p) Common repair works items include replacement of water cistern, replacement of wash hand basin, concrete spalling repair, replacement of toilet door, retiling, replacement of windows, etc. Different repair works items involve different numbers of detailed repair items with different work procedures. During the random surprise checks, any defect on the detailed repair item or work procedure would be recorded. In fact, most of the detailed repair items had already met the required standards and the entire repair work had already met the functional requirement. Of course, defects of the detailed repair items can be properly made good to further enhance the output in respect of aesthetics, etc.; for examples, re-applying silicone sealant to the edge of replaced wash hand basin with previously uneven sealant or re-painting the repaired concrete spalling surface with previously sub-standard painting work.

According to the paragraph 2.37 of the Audit Report, for the 133 flats mentioned, there are about 2,800 detailed repair items. There are 385 undesirable detailed repair items which is about 14% (i.e. $385/2,800$). This matches with the result of the random sampling customer satisfactory survey conducted by the independent consultant, i.e. 80% overall satisfaction rate of respondents.

- (q) The Director of Housing gave an analysis on the issue during the opening of the public hearing of the Committee on 10 December 2016.

The main purpose of the surprise check is not for measuring effectiveness, but to monitor and alert site staff and contractors with a view to continuously enhancing their quality of works. Therefore, a stringent standard is adopted. In the long term, we hope to continuously improve the standard. The surprise check in future will hence keep on identifying unsatisfactory repair works, so as to urge our staff and contractors not to be complacent but to continuously improve.

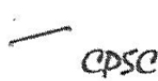
- (r) A mechanism on routine inspection and work certification by various frontline works staff is in place in HD. For some crucial work procedures, such as concrete spalling repair and tanking works, 100% inspection would be conducted. Besides, sampling audits on the works and monitoring procedures would be conducted by Surprise Check Team and Performance Verification Team regularly.

Both TMS and RIMS are implemented by District Maintenance Contracts.

HA manages the contractors through a list management system. The system has Preferential Tendering Opportunities arrangement in the procurement of District Maintenance Contracts. Tendering opportunities for works contracts is based on contractors' past performance. Contractors with less satisfactory performance would have a reduced opportunity in tendering or even be not eligible to submit tender. Meanwhile, for contractors with awarded contracts, if their performance score in the Building Works Maintenance Assessment Scoring System is lower than 60 in any one of the first five quarters since contract commencement or is lower than 65 in average, the contract period of their District Maintenance Contract would be shortened from three years to two years. In past five years, there are four District Maintenance Contracts with contract period shortened from three years to two years.

- (s) RIMS has been implemented in all PRH estates with over 400,000 works orders issued each year. With the participation of large number of ITTs and various local frontline staff responsible for monitoring and final inspection of the routine maintenance works, discrepancy may probably occur in output assessment.

To ensure the quality and consistency of maintenance works service, HD will conduct regular performance verification. We will continue to provide training for ITTs to enhance their inspection skills.



創毅物業服務顧問有限公司
Creative Property Services Consultants Limited

清河邨物業服務辦事處

Ching Ho Estate Management Office

致：清河邨清照樓 [REDACTED] 室住戶：

有關清河邨房屋署全方位維修計劃事宜

為進一步提升公共屋邨的保養和維修服務水平，房屋署已於 2016 年 1 月於清河邨展開「全方位維修計劃」，並安排「家居維修大使」到訪本邨勘察所有單位的室內狀況及提供全面維修服務，如發現房屋署負責的裝置於正常使用下有所損壞，家居維修大使會安排維修或更換。

家居維修大使曾到訪閣下單位，但未能成功進行勘察，請盡快與「全方位維修計劃」的客戶服務主任聯絡另安排日子進行勘察。如有任何租戶不讓房屋署授權人員進入單位內進行勘察，房屋署或會執行屋邨管理扣分制，向該租戶扣分。希望住戶盡量協助勘察，以便全方位維修計劃得以順利進行及完成。

如你對上述有任何疑問或預約勘察日期，可致電 5401 7926 與「全方位維修計劃」的客戶服務主任聯絡。



清河邨物業服務辦事處

2016 年 4 月 15 日

(For English version, please contact TMS's staff at 5401 7926)

新界 上水 清河邨 清照樓地下
3/F, Ching Yu House, Ching Ho Estate, Shing Mun, N.T.



商業登記證 26797939 傳真(Fax): 2671 7484
電郵(e-mail): admin.chh@cpsc.hk

***Note by Clerk, PAC: Chinese version only.**



嘉怡
物業管理有限公司

Nice Property Management Limited

朗屏邨租約服務辦事處

元朗朗屏邨悅屏樓地下 37-41 號

Long Ping Estate Management Office

No 37-41, G/F, Yuet Ping House, Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long, N.T.

電話 (Tel) : 2470 5600

傳真 (Fax) : 2470 5066

電子郵件 (E-mail) : longping@nicepml.com.hk

LIA

本函檔號：E/LP/15/L503

朗屏邨鏡屏樓 ■■■ 室
租戶

戶主先生/女士

**朗屏邨強制驗窗計劃
有關未能到訪勘察事宜**

就全港強制性驗窗計劃的推行，凡樓齡達 10 年或以上的樓宇都須要進行檢驗窗戶，有關計劃亦涵蓋朗屏邨。可惜經本處及全維修大使多次聯絡，惟至今仍未成功到訪檢查。現煩請 貴戶於本年 11 月 18 日前與本處聯絡，盡快安排時間予全方位維修大使進行檢查及驗窗。

如 貴戶於限期前仍未與本處聯絡及安排時間，本處會將此個案轉交房屋署元朗區租約事務管理處(一)接「屋邨管理扣分制」中第 C5 項「不讓房屋署或房屋署指派的工作人員進入居住單位進行房屋署負責之維修。」一經確認， 貴戶有可能因此而被扣 7 分。

根據現行房屋署政策，若承租人被扣滿 16 分，房屋署有可能會因此而發出終止租約通知書，終止你和你的家人於鏡屏樓 ■■■ 室的租住權及安排收回該房舍。屆時有關租約 即自行終止，你與你的家人需遷出現時的居住單位。

如有查詢，請致電 2470 5600 與本租戶服務辦事處關先生聯絡。

朗屏邨租戶服務辦事處



2015 年 11 月 11 日

特別副本送：房屋署元朗區租約事務管理處(一)/(租約)

房屋署區域物業管理辦事處/屯門及元朗(一)

***Note by Clerk, PAC: Chinese version only.**



⑦ HD(MB)TMS(T) 5/9/6/4 (TNS-EHK)

顯徑邨「全方位維修計劃」會議

會議議程

顯徑邨屋邨辦事處 會議室

二零一五年七月二十日下午三時

出席成員:

房屋署全方位維修計劃小組	屋宇保養測量師	吳宗豪 先生 (主席)
	工程監督(建築)	黃來 先生
	助理工程監督(建築)	杜志偉 先生
	一級工程監工(建築)	周文俊 先生 (紀錄人員)
	屋宇裝備大使	利成銘 先生
房屋署物業管理服務小組	屋宇裝備大使	陳曉娟 小姐
	副房屋事務經理	冼光耀 先生
	高級工程監督(建築)	鍾永棠 先生
物業管理公司 - 新恆基國際物業管理有限公 司	高級屋邨經理	趙鎮光 先生
	助理物業經理	余國偉 先生
	高級物業保養主任	吳鐵川 先生
	高級物業保養主任	譽思迪 先生
	物業保養主任	陳炳坤 先生
	助理物業保養主任	劉美欣 小姐
顯徑邨保養工程承辦商 - 瑞安建築有限公司	地盤總管	區銘賢 先生
	助理地盤總管	袁志偉 先生
	地盤管工	周富怡 先生

Distribution:

All present

by E-mail

→ File : HD(MB)TMS(T) 5/9/6/4
(TNS/EHK)

by hard copy

項目：

1.0 屋宇保養測量師吳宗豪先生向各成員簡介全方位維修計劃：

1.01 全方位維修計劃目的及服務範圍；

- 主動為住客維修因正常使用導致損耗而又屬於房屋署負責的室內固定裝置。
- 採取「先維修，後更換」的原則。
- 此計劃並不包括維修居民的自行裝置及大規模更換工程。

1.02 全方位維修計劃勘察安排次序及預算勘察時間表 (附件一)；

- 由 2015 年 8 月下旬至 2015 年 12 月上旬，將視乎勘察進程作出適當調整。

1.03 全方位維修計劃服務之運作流程。

- 室內勘察及紀錄有關狀況
- 會即時進行簡單維修
- 會安排維修工程，例如：維修石屎剝落、防水工程等
- 維修大使會簡介家居維修保養知識
- 預算勘察時間約 30 分鐘
- 勘察範圍：大廳、房間、廚房、浴室、露台
- 項目：天花、牆身、地台、窗戶、污水渠、來水管、電力裝置、電視接收訊號、保安系統、燃料氣體裝置。

2.0 討論事項：

2.01 全方位維修計劃辦公室位置及相關安排；

- 吳宗豪先生表示全方位計劃之人員將於八月上旬陸續入場

2.02 全方位維修計劃意見箱及服務櫃位之擺放位置；

吳宗豪先生提出於地下升降機大堂擺放意見箱。助理物業經理 余國偉先生表示顯徑邨管業處未能在各座地下升降機大堂放置意見箱及服務櫃位。吳宗豪先生表示將不設服務櫃位，查詢服務將以電話聯絡。另外，意見箱將放置顯徑邨顯耀樓地下的屋邨辦事處內。

☐ Urgent ☐ Return receipt ☐ Sign ☐ Encrypt ☐ Mark Restricted ☐ Expand groups

From: "Lau Chak Man" <[REDACTED]> - 29/04/2015 16:33

To: "Barry CY LAM" <cycy.lam@housingauthority.gov.hk> ,

Cc: "William WL WONG" <williamwl.wong@housingauthority.gov.hk> , "KK FUNG" <kk.fung@housingauthority.gov.hk> , "KW TSANG" <kaiwing.tsang@housingauthority.gov.hk> , "Kin-Man WONG" <kinmankm.wong@housingauthority.gov.hk>

Subject: RE: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate for the operation of PRO counter

Archive: This message is being viewed in an archive.

Dear Mr. LAM,

I have no objection to your setting up a PRO counter next to our CSA enquiry counter .

Regards,
LAU Chak-man
PM/TTII

From: Barry CY LAM [mailto:cycy.lam@housingauthority.gov.hk]

Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2015 1:57 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: William WL WONG; KK FUNG; KW TSANG; Kin-Man WONG

Subject: Fw: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate for the operation of PRO counter

Dear Mr. LAU,

As per our telephone conversation in this morning, would you please consider our PRO counter will operate in your office (next to the CSA counter) at the time stated in the attachment.

Thanks.

Regards,

C. Y. LAM, Barry
ACW/TMS28
2686 5216 / [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded by Barry CY LAM/HD/HKSARG on 29/04/2015 13:52 -----

William WL WONG MS-TMS2

29/04/2015 12:08

To: Barry CY LAM/HD/HKSARG@HD
cc: Kin-Man WONG/HD/HKSARG@HD
KK FUNG/HD/HKSARG@HD
KW TSANG/HD/HKSARG@HD

Subject: Re: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate for the operation of PRO counter
[Link](#)

Dear Barry,

Agreed the proposed PRO counter operation time due to the site condition .
However, please make a note that although the counter not operate but there is still
PRO service (station at our temp site office) during Sat.

Thank you.

Regards,
WONG wai-lam, William
MS/TMS2
Tel: 3162-0355

Barry CY LAM ACW-TMS28

To: William WL WONG /HD/HKSARG@HD

cc: KK FUNG/HD/HKSARG@HD
KW TSANG/HD/HKSARG@HD

Kin-Man WONG/HD/HKSARG@HD

29/04/2015 11:46

Subject: Re: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate for the operation of PRO counter
[Link](#)

Dear Mr. WONG,

Please be informed that the Property Manager (Mr. LAU) of PSA at Tung Tau (2)
Estate had not any objection for us to operate the PRO counter in their office (next
to the CSA counter). He mentioned that the working hour of their office which **open**
to public is only from **Monday to Friday at 09:00 - 18:00**. So our PRO counter may
not operated in the **Saturday morning**.

2) Would you please advise that if the PRO counter operation closed in every
Saturday for Tung Tau (2) Estate.

3) Attached please find the details of PRO counter with operation hour for your
kindly reference.

Thanks.

Regards,

C. Y. LAM, Barry
ACW/TMS28
2686 5216 / [REDACTED]

[attachment "Detail of PRO Counter with operation hour@Tung Tau (2) Estate.pdf"
deleted by William WL WONG /HD/HKSARG]

William WL WONG MS-TMS2

28/04/2015 15:09

To: Barry CY LAM/HD/HKSARG@HD
cc: "KW TSANG" <kaiwing.tsang@housingauthority.gov.hk>
Kin-Man WONG/HD/HKSARG@HD
KK FUNG/HD/HKSARG@HD
Subject: Re: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate [Link](#)

Dear Barry,

Please advise the solution of :

- Counter Desk is not allowed to be placed in the lift lobby;

Thanks.

Regards,
WONG wai-lam, William
MS/TMS2
Tel: 3162-0355

Barry CY LAM ACW-TMS28

28/04/2015 11:21

To: "Lau Chak Man" <[REDACTED]>
cc: "Jeff HS Chan" <[REDACTED]>
"KW TSANG" <kaiwing.tsang@housingauthority.gov.hk>
Kin-Man WONG/HD/HKSARG@HD
"SY SIU HO" <sy.siu@housingauthority.gov.hk>
"William WL WONG" <williamwl.wong@housingauthority.gov.hk>
"YL CHAN YEUNG" <yukling.chan@housingauthority.gov.hk>
KK FUNG/HD/HKSARG@HD
Subject: Re: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate [Link](#)

Dear Mr. LAU,

Thank you for your arrangement.

Regards,

C. Y. LAM, Barry
ACW/TMS28
2686 5216 / [REDACTED]

"Lau Chak Man" <
[REDACTED]>

28/04/2015 11:17

To: <cycy.lam@housingauthority.gov.hk>
cc: "Jeff HS Chan" <[REDACTED]>
"William WL WONG" <
williamwl.wong@housingauthority.gov.hk>
"KW TSANG" <kaiwing.tsang@housingauthority.gov.hk
>
<kinmankm.wong@housingauthority.gov.hk>
<hw.cheng@housingauthority.gov.hk>
"SY SIU HO" <sy.siu@housingauthority.gov.hk>
"YL CHAN YEUNG" <
yukling.chan@housingauthority.gov.hk>
Subject: TMS at Tung Tau II Estate
:

Dear Mr. Lam,

I have convened a meeting with IO's PMA and TMS contractor at the Conference Room of IO's PMA office on 22.4.2015. Salient points of the discussion are as follows:

- Counter Desk is not allowed to be placed in the lift lobby;
- Collection Box for questionnaire is allowed to be placed at the tower guard counter;
- Updated O. Chart with name and photo of workers be provided;
- Specimen of workers uniform be provides for reference;
- Updated programme of work be submitted to IO's PMA;
- Notices will be sent to tenant two weeks in advance;
- No Deposit for work is required;
- No storage area or dumping point will be provided by IO;
- Storage carts for workers are not allowed to be placed at the common areas overnight;

For your information, please.

Regards,
LAU Chak-man
PM/TTII

Abstract from a pre-meeting notes of Long Ping Estate

5	Service Counter/ Letter box to collect questionnaires	
5.1	No service counter would be set up at G/F lobby of individual block at Long Ping Estate (TPS Estate). TMSU Public Relations Officer (PRO) would station at the PSA estate office to answer enquires/ complaints from tenants relating to TMS as well as inspection/ works scheduling.	TMSU
5.2	It was agreed that subject to OC agreement, TMSU would place a letter box at G/F lobby of individual block for collecting tenants' feedback. However, if OC disagreed with the proposed arrangements, it was agreed the letter box would be placed at PSA estate office accordingly.	TMSU

Abstract from a pre-meeting notes of Tin King and Leung King Estate

5	Service Counter/Letter box to collect questionnaires	
5.1.	No service counter would be set up at G/F lobby of individual block at Tin King & Leung King Estates. Tentatively, TMSU's Public Relations Officer (PRO) would be stationed at DTMO to answer enquires/complaints from tenants relating to TMS as well as inspection/works scheduling.	TMSU
5.2.	It was agreed that TMSU would place a letter box at the DTMO to collect tenants' feedback.	TMSU

Since the start of the “excess lead in drinking water in public rental housing (PRH) estates” incident, we have been providing updates on the major developments of various issues through a number of channels, including press conferences, press releases, meetings of and papers for the Legislative Council (LegCo) as well as meetings of and papers for the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA). At the public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held on 10 December 2016, we also provided members with further information in relation to Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit’s Report (the Audit Report) on the “Follow-up actions on public rental housing’s water sampling tests for lead”. In response to enquiries raised by PAC in its letter dated 14 December 2016, we provide our reply as follows:

(II) Follow-up actions on public rental housing’s water sampling tests for lead

- (t) The two water samples found to have excess lead were taken from non-domestic units in Kai Ching Estate.

As we explained to the public from time to time in the past, when we conducted water sampling tests, our primary concern was the quality of drinking water supplied to domestic tenants because they were more likely to be affected by excess lead in water given their frequent use of water for consumption. Therefore, upon completion of a batch of water sampling tests, the test results were made public through press conferences or press releases. The water sampling test results for Kai Ching Estate were announced on 11 July 2015. Among a total of 115 water samples taken, seven samples exceeded the World Health Organisation’s provisional guideline value.

Apart from domestic premises, we have not neglected the quality of water supplied to non-domestic tenants. As mentioned previously, the water sampling tests for non-domestic facilities situated within PRH estates were conducted in a more systematic manner starting from August 2015. As stated in Table 4 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, six samples were taken from the non-domestic facilities in Kai Ching Estate on 15 August 2015, including the two non-compliant samples as stated in the Audit Report. Subsequently, we informed relevant non-domestic tenants of the water sampling test results.

As the water sampling exercise for PRH estates involved a large number of water samples, and as the water sampling tests for the non-domestic units concerned were conducted after Kai Ching Estate was already announced as an “affected estate”, in the process of collating and

compiling the tallies, the two samples taken from the non-domestic units of Kai Ching Estate were omitted from the total number of water samples found with excess lead. However, in spite of the said discrepancy, the information we previously announced, including the total number of samples taken for PRH estates and the total number of affected PRH estates remains unchanged.

We will, in accordance with the Audit Commission's recommendation, endeavour to minimize cases of incorrect categorization of data, etc. in collaboration with the Water Supplies Department when compiling tallies in the future.

- (u) Following the announcement of excess lead in drinking water in Kai Ching Estate in the evening of 10 July 2015 (Friday), the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) convened a high-level, inter-departmental meeting in the morning of 11 July 2015 (Saturday) to coordinate the follow-up actions. Between July and August 2015, 15 meetings were held, comprising the relevant Principal Officials and senior officials of Transport and Housing Bureau (THB), Housing Department (HD), Development Bureau, Water Supplies Department (WSD), Food and Health Bureau, Department of Health (DH), Government Laboratory (GLab), Information Services Department, Home Affairs Department and Hospital Authority, etc. Representatives of other bureaux/departments such as Education Bureau, Labour and Welfare Bureau, Social Welfare Department, Government Property Agency, Architectural Services Department, Government Logistics Department, etc. also attended the meetings where necessary. The dates and agendas of these 15 meetings are set out at **Annex (II)(u)**.
- (v) Relevant documents and records of the seven inter-departmental meetings held from 20 July to 7 August 2015 are set out in **Annex (II)(v)** (email correspondence is only available in English). As the correspondence (including e-mails) within or between departments is substantial, the information set out in **Annex (II)(v)** is the main documents and records which departments have managed to find in their records within the time prescribed by PAC secretariat.

HA Chairman announced on 15 July last year that water sampling tests for PRH estates would be conducted in a more systematic way. As the work involved several Government departments, the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) (PSH) convened the first inter-

departmental meeting on 20 July, comprising representatives from HD, WSD, GLab and DH, to coordinate the work among different departments. The inter-departmental meeting reviewed water sampling test results and coordinated follow-up actions.

As shown in **Annex (II)(v)**, in general, the seven meetings took place as follows -

- (a) Before each meeting, members of the inter-departmental meeting were notified to attend the meetings by HD;
- (b) The water sampling data of relevant estates were provided by WSD to members of the inter-departmental meeting before each meeting. At the inter-departmental meetings, WSD reported on the water sampling test results and provided professional advice or other supplementary information on the water sampling data. Attendees reviewed the relevant data and discussed the follow-up actions;
- (c) In order to keep the public and affected tenants abreast of the extent of the excess lead in drinking water in PRH estates, announcements were made after the inter-departmental meetings through press conferences or press releases, providing information such as the number of samples taken for the relevant estates, and the number of non-compliant samples, as well as the follow-up actions to be taken. Such follow-up actions included the provision of bottled water, water tanks and standpipes, holding of residents' forums, distributing health information, requesting the contractor to follow up, etc.

As seen from **Annex (II)(v)**, the seven meetings mainly dealt with water sampling data of individual estates and the follow-up actions that needed to be taken in respect of the estates found to have excess lead in water. In addition,

- (a) both the water sampling test results and the follow-up actions dealt with by the meetings were reported to the public through the media;
- (b) the follow-up actions that needed to be taken in respect of the estates found with excess lead in water were carried out immediately, such as arranging for the supply of bottled water immediately, holding a residents' forum on the same evening, etc.;
- (c) the meeting basically adopted most of the water sampling test results, discussed only a small number of cases among them, and

eventually discarded five samples only on professional grounds. Discarding samples on professional grounds was explained in detail by WSD at the press conferences on 14 and 15 July 2015 which took place prior to the seven meetings; and

- (d) for these five discarded samples, the relevant meetings were held on 23 July and 3 August 2015, and the primary records reviewed by the meetings are at **Appendix 2B and 5B to Annex (II)(v)** respectively

-

- (i) as seen from Appendix 2B, WSD's primary record has provided analysis of a sample taken from Yee Ming Estate, which was considered “doubtful” for a number of reasons;
- (ii) as seen from Appendix 5B, WSD's primary record has provided a number of reasons as to why two samples from Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 and one sample from Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 should be “superseded”. Another sample from Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 was not mentioned in the documents at Appendix 5B, but WSD has provided recollection of the reasons for discarding this sample in paragraph 3.13(d) of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report.

At the same meeting at which the decision to discard these four samples was made, 21 non-compliant samples from these two estates concerned were also confirmed. We therefore announced at the press conference on 3 August 2015 that Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 and Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 were found to have excess lead in water.

- (w) HA Chairman announced on 15 July last year that water sampling tests for PRH estates would be conducted in a more systematic way. As the work involved several Government departments, PSH convened the first inter-departmental meeting on 20 July, comprising representatives from HD, WSD, GLab and DH, to coordinate the work among different departments. The fact that there were no meetings records for the first seven meetings was not a decision made after consideration or discussion. The chairman raised this matter at the eighth meeting, and records of the decisions of the inter-department meetings were maintained thereafter.

We agree with the Audit Commission's recommendation that meetings records should be maintained for similar situations. Nevertheless, as

explained in item (v) above, the water sampling data and the follow-up work for estates found to have excess lead in water dealt with by the seven inter-departmental meetings were basically announced and implemented immediately afterwards. It was not possible or necessary to announce the information and implement follow-up actions based on meeting records. Although there are no meeting records, departments have kept the primary records of the samples dealt with by these seven meetings, including the reasons for discarding individual samples, and they are available for examination. We have provided relevant information to the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water (COI) and the Audit Commission earlier in response to their enquiries. In response to PAC's enquiries, the relevant information is set out at **Annex (II)(v)** for members' reference.

- (x) As mentioned in item (v) above, after the seven inter-departmental and meetings, we announced the water sampling test results and the follow-
- (y) up actions through press conferences or press releases.

During the time between the inter-departmental meetings and the press conferences or publication of the press releases, the relevant departments would examine their drafts and verify the information to be announced, including the water sampling test results and the follow-up actions to be taken. At the same time, PSH would report progress to the Secretary for Transport and Housing (STH), and the information to be announced to the media eventually would also be submitted to STH beforehand. Four press conferences were held after the first seven inter-departmental meetings and both STH and PSH attended these four press conferences.

PSH did not consult any senior management on the decisions made in respect of water samples made at the inter-departmental meetings chaired by him. The high-level, inter-departmental meetings chaired by CS mainly coordinated the follow-up actions in relation to the "excess-lead-in-water" incident, such as blood test arrangements for those in need, coordinating the work among different departments, etc., and did not intervene in operational matters such as water sampling. Representatives from THB or WSD would briefly report on the progress of the water sampling exercise for PRH estates, including the number of affected/non-affected estates to be announced, or some of the situations encountered in the water sampling process, etc.

- (z) A total of 29 inter-departmental meetings were held. The date of the meetings largely depended on the progress of water sampling, and there were no hard and fast rules. The dates and relevant discussions of the first seven inter-departmental meetings (i.e. from 20 July to 7 August 2015) are already set out in **Annex (II)(v)**. The dates of the remaining 22 inter-departmental meetings (i.e. from 12 August to 18 November 2015) are as follows: 12 August, 13 August, 18 August, 19 August, 26 August, 27 August, 1 September, 2 September, 9 September, 10 September, 15 September, 16 September, 23 September, 24 September, 30 September, 6 October, 14 October, 22 October, 28 October, 4 November, 11 November, and 18 November 2015. As mentioned in item (v) above, after the inter-departmental meetings, announcements were made through press conferences or press releases. The relevant press conferences and press releases are at **Annex (II)(z)**.
- (aa) We have provided some basic information on water sampling for PRH estates in response to the Audit Commission's enquiries. In view of PAC's concern over the first seven inter-departmental meetings, we consider that the number of samples covered by these seven meetings should be more finely articulated.

As the first inter-departmental meeting was held on 20 July 2015, the water samples announced before that were not dealt with by the inter-departmental meeting. These included the seven non-compliant samples taken from Kai Ching Estate as announced on 10 and 11 July 2015, five non-compliant samples taken from Kwai Luen Estate Phase 2 as announced on 14 July 2015, and one discarded sample taken from Shui Chuen O Estate as announced on 14 and 15 July 2015. Therefore, strictly speaking, as stated by PSH at the PAC public hearing on 10 December this year, during the first seven inter-departmental meetings, we discussed water samples from six PRH developments found to have excess lead in water, including 37 non-compliant samples, and five other samples with excess lead that we decided to discard.

Notwithstanding the above, the relevant departments did have exchanges for the samples announced before the first inter-departmental meeting. It is also true as stated in paragraph 3.12 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, that no meetings records were prepared for 49 non-compliant samples and six discarded samples. We agree that the decision notes for the inter-departmental meetings should be fully maintained. In this regard, we will make improvements in accordance with the recommendation of the Audit Commission.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Annex (II)(z) not attached.*

- (bb) As stated by PSH at the PAC public hearing on 10 December this year, during the first seven inter-departmental meetings, we discussed water samples from six PRH developments found with excess lead, including 37 non-compliant samples, and five other samples with excess lead that were discarded for various reasons. It is not satisfactory that no meeting records were maintained, but for the purpose of reporting to the public, the relevant departments have kept primary records of all of the water samples, which are available for examination. For details please refer to item (v) above.

Water samples were discarded based on objective reasons and analyses, with a view to achieving a more scientific sampling method. There was no cover-up whatsoever. As mentioned in item (v) above, among the five discarded samples, four were taken from Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 and Hung Hom Estate Phase 2. At the same meeting at which the decision to discard these four samples was made, other non-compliant samples were confirmed, and these two estates were also confirmed to have excess lead in water. Therefore, discarding these samples had no effect on the decision to announce the relevant estates as affected estates. As for the fifth discarded sample, a sample “with excess lead” was taken from a vacant unit in Yee Ming Estate and was suspected of environmental contamination. After further investigation, including taking additional samples from the same unit as well as other units on the same floor and on floors above and below the unit, it was found that all samples were within limit. Therefore, the inter-departmental meeting considered that the sample concerned was affected by environmental factors and should be discarded. We announced on 23 July 2015 that Yee Ming Estate was not affected by excess lead in water. In the same period, the water sampling test results for Wing Cheong Estate were discussed at the inter-departmental meeting on 20 July 2015 (i.e. three days earlier). Although there was only one non-compliant sample, we decided at the meeting to classify Wing Cheong Estate as an affected estate, and announced this at a press conference on the same day. This showed that we were not trying to reduce the number of affected estates when deciding to discard individual samples. In fact, as stated in the COI’s report, the COI did not accept that we deliberately adopted measures in order to limit the scope of the problem. The fact that once a single flat was affected, the whole estate would be classified as an “affected estate” was a cautious one, given for example in the U.S.A. where the authorities will be required to take steps only if the lead concentration of more than 10% of the samples collected exceeds the action level of 15 ug/L.

As for sample 5 of Table 6 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, it was taken before the first inter-departmental meeting. The Director of Water Supplies already explained the reasons for discarding this sample at the press conferences on 14 and 15 July 2015. This sample “with excess lead” was taken from a vacant unit at Shui Chuen O Estate and was suspected of environmental contamination. Therefore, WSD conducted further investigation by taking additional samples from the same unit, as well as other units on the same floor and on floors above and below the unit sharing the same downfeed pipe as that unit in a systematic manner. The test results showed that all sample were within limit. Therefore, after analysis, it was concluded that the water sample “with excess lead” had been affected by environmental factors and should be discarded.

- (cc) As mentioned in paragraph 3.17 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, at the press conference on 7 August 2015, in response to media enquiries, STH said that the nature of Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) and Home Ownership Scheme estates was more akin to private residential buildings and the decision to conduct water sampling tests rested with the Owners' Corporations (OCs) concerned. This decision was made by STH shortly before the press conference.

Mixed ownership is found in TPS estates, which meaning that some units are owned by HA, while some are privately owned. In terms of estate management, the common areas in TPS estates are managed by the OCs or the management committees, while the landlords are responsible for the maintenance matters inside individual units. As mentioned in paragraph 3.20 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, given the aforementioned circumstances, there are practical and technical difficulties in conducting water sampling tests for units occupied by HA tenants. As different units within the building block share the same water supply system, the water quality inside HA rental units will be affected by the water supply system outside of these units, and HA does not have the right to decide on matters relating to properties which are not under its ownership. Nevertheless, we believe that given the wide and sustained publicity in the press and the information published by the Government and the HA, the OCs of TPS estates along with owners of private housing had been alerted to the risk of excess lead in water and had presumably been making decisions as they deemed fit.

In fact, the 39 TPS estates were all completed before 2005. As mentioned from time to time in the past, the “Task Force on Investigation of Excessive Lead Content in Drinking Water” found that leaded solder used on water pipe joints was the cause of excess lead in drinking water, and as the water pipes in PRH estates completed before 2005 were connected mechanically and no soldering had been used in general, there would be one fewer risk factor leading to excessive lead in drinking water. In the water sampling tests conducted last year, all samples taken from PRH estates completed before 2005 were within limit.

As mentioned at the PAC public hearing on 10 December 2016, in response to the Audit Commission’s enquiries, we have gathered that the majority of TPS estates (32 out of 39 estates) had conducted water sampling tests on their own. Among the remaining seven estates, two of the OCs had discussed whether to conduct water sampling tests, and decided not to do so.

- (dd) Since the “excess-lead-in-water” incident, HA has been holding the contractors accountable according to the contracts, and has requested them to implement a series of measures, including installing filters for households free of charge, and to replace or clean the filter cartridges for households regularly in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions for the brand¹. For filters installed in Wing Cheong Estate and Tung Wui Estate, the contractor cleans the filter cartridges about once every three months, and replaces the filter cartridges once every 12 months. Since the installation of filters, the contractor has cleaned the filter cartridges for these households three times already, and has substantially completed the replacement of filter cartridges for these households recently. As for the remaining nine affected PRH developments, the contractors replace the filter cartridges for the households about once every six months. Since filters were installed in the affected PRH developments at different times, the timing for replacement of the filter cartridges varies from one estate to another. The latest round of filter cartridge replacement has also been substantially completed recently.

¹ For the brand of filters installed in Wing Cheong Estate and Tung Wui Estate by Paul Y. General Contractors Limited, the filter cartridges need to be cleaned about once every three months, and replaced once every 12 months. For the brands of filters installed by the remaining three contractors (i.e. Yau Lee Construction Company Limited, China State Construction Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited and Shui On Building Contractors Limited) in the affected PRH developments under their purview, the filter cartridges need to be replaced about once every six months.

After rectification works (including works in the common area and inside flats) are completed, the contractors will conduct water sampling tests (including lead) in accordance with the Water Authority's requirements to ensure the safety of drinking water. Subject to satisfactory water test results, the contractors will inform tenants that the water inside flats is safe for drinking, before removing the water filters for them. The contractors will continue to regularly clean or replace the filter cartridges for tenants before removal of water filters. We have informed tenants that for enquiries on the use and maintenance of filters, they can call the contractor or the manufacturer's hotline. The contractor or manufacturer will then arrange a household visit to find out more about the use of filters. Where necessary, the contractor will advance the replacement of filter cartridges for tenants. We have been providing tenants with tips on the use of filters to ensure the effectiveness of filters and the quality of the filtered water through our regular communication with tenants, such as distributing estate newsletters, posting notices, Estate Management Advisory Committee meetings, etc.

- (ee) The contractors have started replacing the non-compliant water pipes in the common areas of the 11 affected PRH estates since March 2016, and progress so far is generally satisfactory. On the whole, the contractors have completed more than half of the works in the common areas. As we reported to the Legislative Council previously, the time required for replacing the non-compliant water pipes in the common areas in each estate varied, depending on the number and design of the blocks involved. The actual time required for the works would be subject to weather conditions, allocation of manpower and other resources, etc. The contractors would also need to make arrangements for work from the works perspective of each estate. HA has posted notices in the lobbies of the affected estates to inform tenants of the estimated time required for replacement of water pipes in the common areas of each block, and has updated tenants on the progress of works through the Estate Management Advisory Committees.

Regarding works inside flats, as the furnishings and pipe routings inside tenants' flats vary from one to another, we consider that there are merits in conducting a trial for works inside flats to test contractors' method and the arrangements on a small scale first. As works in the common areas of Kwai Yuet House at Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase 1 had been substantially completed, we announced that a trial for works inside flats started there on 17 October 2016. In light of the experience from the trial,

the contractors will work out a more detailed work plan and timetable for works inside flats for the remaining affected PRH developments. HA will, in consultation with the contractors, inform the tenants of the details.

- (ff) According to our understanding, tenants have not installed water filters for various reasons. For example, some tenants have purchased and installed their own filters; some have chosen not to install filters or returned them after use due to the slower water outflow rate; some have mainly got access to safe drinking water from the temporary water points on each floor or the standpipes; while some tenants could not be contacted, etc.

After the installation of filters, the water outflow rate will inevitably slow down. Through regular communication with tenants and Estate Management Advisory Committee meetings, we have been providing tenants with tips on the use of filters to ensure the effectiveness of filters and the quality of the filtered water. For example, the filter should not be used to filter hot water; filtered water should not be used for other purposes such as washing food or utensils; when filtered water is not required, tenants should turn the pin on the diverter valve to disable the filtering function so that the water will not pass through the filter and the water outflow rate will increase.

For those households with whom we have had difficulty in getting in touch, the contractors have been trying to contact them outside working hours including on Sundays and will continue to do so. HA and the contractors will also continue to communicate with tenants, including posting notices at the lobbies and distributing newsletters to tenants' mailboxes, to encourage households whose premises have not been installed with water filters (including those who have refused installation or returned filters) to consider installing water filters.

Inter-departmental meetings
(July to August 2015)

	Date	Agenda (Issues to discuss)
1	11 July 2015	Appendix 1
2	13 July 2015	Appendix 2
3	14 July 2015	Appendix 3
4	15 July 2015	continuation of discussion of previous meeting
5	17 July 2015	Appendix 4
6	21 July 2015	Appendix 5
7	24 July 2015 ²	Appendix 6
8	28 July 2015	Appendix 7
9	29 July 2015	continuation of discussion of previous meeting
10	31 July 2015	continuation of discussion of previous meeting
11	3 August 2015	continuation of discussion of previous meeting
12	7 August 2015	Appendix 8
13	14 August 2015	Appendix 9
14	27 August 2015	Appendix 10
15	31 August 2015	continuation of discussion of previous meeting

² Chaired by the Secretary for Transport and Housing.

附錄 1

Kai Ching Estate (KCE)

Issues to discuss

Scale and cause of the problem: 4 out of 79 water samples have lead content exceeding WHO standard and 水喉接駁位焊接物料含鉛 found in two (vacant) units. Do we intend to do more tests and inspections? Should these tests/inspections be extended to other public housing estates with water pipe works undertaken by the same contractor/sub-contractor? What about private buildings with works undertaken by the same contractor/subcontractor? Should these be confined to recently completed buildings?

Provision of health advice and medical assessments: DH hotline, experts in universities, etc.

Remedial actions: can we just rely on contractor to come up with a plan to replace 含鉛的水管部件？

Legal actions: investigation by HD (non-compliance with contract) and WSD (breach of law)

Interim relief measures: supply of bottled water to families with vulnerable ones

Communication with Kai Ching Estate residents

Communication with members of public: HD hotline, WSD hotline?

Media arrangements

CSO

11 July 2015

Kai Ching Estate (KCE)

Issues to discuss at meeting on 13 July

Review arrangements put in place and reactions/actions of residents, political parties and media over the weekend (e.g. allegation that other water appliances like 水龍頭 are problematic?)

Water testing and solder inspection at the other 4 HA estates and contingency plans in case such samples also reveal lead levels exceeding WHO standard

Expanding water sample tests (115 samples so far) and solder inspections (two vacant units so far) at KCE

Collaboration with laboratories in universities to speed up water sample testing (mobilise Government Laboratory in addition to WSD's own lab?)

Forensic investigation into the cause of lead contamination at KCE (do we need to set up a special team with in-house experts as well as academia, e.g. those sitting on government's Advisory Committee on Water Sources and Quality of Water Supplies?)

Likely rectification plan from KCE main contractor

Immediate improvements to regulatory and monitoring work by HD and WSD to prevent similar recurrences

Media arrangements

CSO

12 July 2015

Kai Ching Estate (KCE)

Issues to discuss at meeting on 14 July

Regarding the 4 other public housing estates –

Release findings of water sample tests and solder inspections at the 4 other public housing estates as well as the CUHK Hostel and HAD joint user building

Explain with illustrations how inspections of lead in solder is conducted and how water samples are taken for lead testing and provide professional view on such unauthorized use of lead in soldering water pipe joints as the likely cause of lead in water by Government Chemist

Extend KCE contingency arrangements to Kwai Luen Estate and Shui Chuen O (?) : residents' forum, bottled water, water tanks/wagons, health advice, blood tests, etc.

Discuss with main contractor on temporary supply of water to affected residents and remedial measures

Regarding KCE –

Provide temporary water supply to each floor in each block of KCE to reduce inconvenience to residents

Devise a plan to replace lead-soldered pipes in public areas as well as within household units in an orderly manner pending outcome of detailed investigation by the task force

Arrange residents of the 7 households with lead not complying with WHO standards to do blood tests today, with a view to releasing results by end of this week

Give a full account of use of pre-fabricated parts : dispel misperception

Offer “compensation” to KCE residents (waiving of rent or water charges)

Other matters

Extend water sample tests and solder inspections to other HA estates :
Justifications; political pressure; capacity constraints; linked to detailed investigation

Step up monitoring and regulatory action by HD and WSD to prevent recurrence in newly completed buildings

Continue to assess effectiveness of lead-removing filters

Disseminate health advice

Provide advice to private building management and residents

Media arrangement : press conference at 4 p.m. (?)

CSO

14 July 2015

Kai Ching Estate (KCE)

Issues to discuss at the meeting on 17 July

Latest situation at KCE and Kwai Luen Estate (provision of temporary water supply, follow-up actions with the main contractors, reaction of the tenants, blood test appointments, shuttle service during the weekend, assistance to elderly/disabled residents in getting water to them, etc.)

Blood tests (latest situation, timing of findings available, release of findings, contingency arrangements, health advice)

Water sample tests at the additional 9 housing estates and Kwai Luen Estate Phase 1 (duration to complete all testing, timing of findings available, etc.)

Enlisting the help of HKUST in increasing laboratory testing capacity

Enlisting the help of 3rd party endorsers

WSD Task force to investigate the cause of excessive lead content in drinking water (publicity for first meeting, work plan, timing to complete the investigation, etc.)

HA's review committee: work plan and timing to complete the review

Line to take regarding various demands from political parties and residents –

- Territory-wide water testing, including public and private housing
- Blood tests for residents beyond the three vulnerable groups, e.g. elders, children marginally over 6, etc.
- Waiving of water charges and reduction in rental
- Replacement of water pipes at estates with lead in water not complying with WHO standard

- Re-testing of water in estates/blocks when water tests conducted by political parties show lead levels not complying with WHO standard
- Suspend main contractors of KCE and Kwai Luen Estate Phase 2 by HD and cancellation of licence to concerned plumber

Media arrangement

Next meeting

CSO

17 July 2015

Kai Ching Estate (KCE)
(Lead content in water supply in PRH estates)

Issues to discuss at the meeting on 21 July

THB/HD

Latest situation at KCE and Kwai Luen Estate (provision of temporary water supply to each floor by down pipes, follow-up actions with the main contractors on rectification works, reaction of the tenants, blood test appointments, shuttle service during the weekend, assistance to elderly/disabled residents in getting water to them, etc.)

Situation at Wing Cheong Estate (residents' meeting, temporary water supply, solder inspections, follow-up with contractor, appointments for blood tests)

Release of water test results of the outstanding estates (3 out of 10)

Extension to estates completed between 2011 and 2012 (time needed to complete 15 estates with some 26,000 units)

Other estates (public and private) with lead content not complying with WHO guidelines – pressure on government to undertake water tests?

Test of lead removal filters

Setting up of Review Committee

FHB/DH/HA

Blood tests : first batch results on 18 July and preparation for second batch release on 22 or 23 July (clinical care plan)

Extension of blood tests to vulnerable groups in Wing Cheong Estate

Further extension of blood tests (e.g. children under 6 at the time of admission into KCE, KLE and WCE)

Follow up of the mother and son at KLE with lead in blood exceeding the “no action” level

DEVB/WSD/Government Laboratory

Water sample tests for estates completed in 2011 and 2012 (duration to complete all testing, timing of findings available, etc.)

Enlisting the help of HKUST and private laboratories in increasing laboratory testing capacity

WSD Task Force to investigate the cause of excessive lead content in drinking water : can this be expedited to identify the source of lead in water?

Disputes in the taking of water samples : further explanation and 3rd party support?

Testing of lead in solders and pipes and other water supply materials

Others

Commission of Inquiry

Media arrangement

Next meeting

CSO

20 July 2015

**Inter-Bureau/Departmental Meeting
on Lead Content in Water Supply in PRH Estates**

Friday, 24 July 2015 at THB

Updates from relevant Bureaus/Departments:

THB/HD

FHB/DH/HA/Government Laboratory

DEVB/WSD

HAD

Media conference on 24 July 2015 - Key Messages:

1. HD's plan to extend systematic water sample testing ultimately to all Public Housing Estates; logistics and implications.
2. Installation of lead-removing filters in affected PRH estates by main contractors
3. HA Review Committee Membership and Terms of Reference
4. Progress of WSD Task Force
5. Any matters from blood testing and aftercare side?

Other Issues (if not already covered above):

1. Commissioner of Inquiry
2. Blood tests and follow up care; psychological counselling
3. Testing for other heavy metals in drinking water
4. Demands from parties and legislators for water charges/rent relief
5. Demands for compensation from affected PRH tenants, especially those with blood test results slightly above limit.
6. Political assessment

**Inter-Bureau/Departmental Meeting
on Lead Content in Water Supply in PRH Estates**

Proposed issues to discuss at the meeting on 28 July:

THB/HD

1. Latest situation at the three affected estates, namely Kai Ching Estate, Kwai Luen Estate and Wing Cheong Estate
2. Installation of lead-removing filters in three affected PRH estates by main contractors
3. Update on HD's systematic water sample testing on estates completed between 2011 and 2012. The next phase will cover public housing estates completed between 2005 and 2010
4. Housing Authority Review Committee

FHB/DH/HA

5. Update on some 300 blood test results to be released in mid-week
6. Update on follow-up children assessment services conducted in past weekend

DEVB/WSD/Government Laboratory

7. Progress of WSD Task Force
8. Testing for other heavy metals and contaminations in drinking water
9. Demands for water testing and consequential follow-up from private residential estates/buildings

Others

10. Commission of Inquiry
11. Political assessment
12. Media arrangement

**Inter-Bureau/ Departmental Meeting
on Lead Content in Water Supply in PRH Estates**

Proposed issues to discuss at the meeting on 7 August at 10:30 am

1. Results of Water Sample Tests and Solder Joint Inspections for remaining estates commissioned in 2011 and 2012
 - Contingency arrangement
 - Systematic water sample testing for estates commissioned between 2005 and 2010 – phasing and timing for next phase
 - Capacity-enhancing (HD, WSD and Govt Lab)
2. Results of Blood Tests
 - Follow-up actions (hotline, weekday developmental assessment sessions, shuttle service, other follow-up services)
 - When to release the developmental assessment results
 - Next batch of blood tests – timing
 - Capacity-enhancing (DH, HA, outsourcing to overseas laboratories)
3. Latest situation at the seven affected estates (reaction of residents, installation of downpipes, supply of bottled water, installation of lead-removing filters + terms and conditions to be signed by residents, disinfection of the water supply at Mun Ching House)
4. Liaison with main contractors (filters vs downpipes, proposed replacement of water pipes)
5. Progress of Housing Authority Review Committee (interim measures in respect of housing estates being built (bulk purchase of soldering materials /fittings by the main contractor?))
6. Progress of WSD Task Force (preliminary findings, overseas experts to speak in Hong Kong)

7. Presence of heavy metals (nickel, cadmium, etc.) in drinking water supply and current standards of water pipes and fittings
8. Commission of Inquiry
9. Water sample tests for other Government buildings/units
 - Government quarters/ FSI-owned units – progress
 - Hospitals (criteria, implications)
 - Welfare homes (criteria, implications)
10. Various demands from political parties (water tests for entire estate in the 7 identified ones; waiving of water charges; priority installation of lead-removing filters for the vulnerable groups and/or households with high lead reading; compensation)
11. PR and Media Arrangement
 - Comprehensive booklet, leaflet on the proper use of filters, video about the proper use of filters, video about bureau/departmental efforts on tackling the problem
 - Third party support?
 - Press Conference and line-up
12. Next Meeting

CSO
7 August 2015

**Inter-Bureau/ Departmental Meeting
on Lead Content in Water Supply in PRH Estates**

Proposed issues to discuss at the meeting on 14 August at 10:30 am

1. Latest situation at the ten affected estates (reaction of residents, installation of downpipes, supply of bottled water, installation of lead-reducing filters + terms and conditions to be signed by residents, liaison with the main contractors. Any special arrangement for residents of Un Chau Estate given its high lead reading?)
2. Progress of water sample tests
 - (a) Next batch – coverage and timing
 - (b) Capacity-enhancing and extra equipment (HD, WSD and Govt Lab)
3. Progress of blood tests
 - (a) Next batch – timing
 - (b) Follow-up actions (hotline, weekday developmental assessment sessions, shuttle service, other follow-up services)
 - (c) When to release the developmental assessment results
 - (d) Capacity-enhancing (DH, HA, outsourcing to overseas laboratories, enlisting the help of private hospitals for blood taking)
4. Progress of Housing Authority Review Committee
(dismantling of water pipes by contractors at estates being built? how to enhance monitoring of the use of soldering materials and water supply fittings in the interim?)
5. Progress of WSD Task Force (preliminary findings, overseas experts to speak in Hong Kong)
6. Water sample tests for other buildings/units – criteria (year 2005, landlord/ builder, long stay, vulnerable groups, in public housing estates?) and implications
 - (a) Government quarters/ FSI-owned units – progress
 - (b) Hospitals

- (c) Welfare homes/ centres (elderly, children, persons with disability, etc.)
- (d) Kindergartens, schools and tertiary institutions

7. Various demands from political parties

- (a) water tests for every household in the affected estates
- (b) HD staff/ DH staff to help residents register for blood tests
- (c) health experts to answer questions at affected estates
- (d) blood tests for all affected residents
- (e) engaging private hospitals to conduct blood tests
- (f) free follow-up services for children tested to have excess lead in blood
- (g) provide the timetable and progress on the installation of downpipes, installation of filters and replacement of water pipes
- (h) priority installation of filters for the vulnerable groups and/or households with high lead reading;
- (i) waiving of water charges and rent
- (j) compensation
- (k) upon investigation by the WSD Task Force, enhance the Waterworks Ordinance, update the current standards for pipes and fittings, strengthen monitoring of works for water supply system, expand the scope of water test by WSD
- (l) testing for other heavy metals in drinking water (e.g. in elderly homes, etc.)

8. Investigation and suspension of main contractors, and cancellation of licences to plumbers

9. Political engagement – meetings with LegCo Members, LegCo special House Committee meeting

10. PR Arrangement

- (a) Comprehensive booklet, leaflet on the proper use of filters, video about the proper use of filters, video about bureau/departmental efforts on tackling the problem
- (b) Third party support?

11. Next Meeting (arrangement during absence of CS and STH)

CSO
13 August 2015

**Inter-Bureau/ Departmental Meeting
on Lead Content in Water Supply in PRH Estates**

Proposed issues to discuss at the meeting on 27 August at 10:30 am

1. Latest situation at the ten affected estates (installation of downpipes, supply of bottled water, installation of lead-removing filters, liaison with the main contractors)
2. Water sample tests
 - (a) Results
 - (b) Next batch - timing
 - (c) Capacity-enhancing (HD, WSD and Govt Lab)
3. Blood tests
 - (a) Results
 - (b) Next batch - timing
 - (c) Follow-up actions (hotline, weekday developmental assessment sessions, other follow-up services, shuttle service by HD)
 - (d) When to release the developmental assessment results
 - (e) Capacity-enhancing (DH, HA, private hospitals, outsourcing to overseas laboratories)
4. Progress of Housing Authority Review Committee
5. Progress of WSD Task Force (preliminary findings, overseas experts to speak in Hong Kong)
6. Water sample tests for non-domestic units (criteria: year 2005, Government as builder and maintenance agent, frequent drinking of water/ long stay) - updates and implications
 - (a) Government quarters/ FSI-owned units
 - (b) Hospitals

- (c) Welfare homes/ centres (elderly, children, persons with disability, etc.)
- (d) Kindergartens, primary/ secondary schools and tertiary institutions
- (e) Correctional facilities, etc.

7. Investigation and suspension of main contractors, and cancellation of licences to plumbers

8. LegCo special House Committee meeting on 1 September

9. PR Arrangement

(a) Comprehensive booklet, video about the proper use of filters, video about bureau/departmental efforts on tackling the problem

(b) Third party support?

10. Next Meeting

CSO

26 August 2015

**Documents and records relating to the
seven inter-departmental meetings held
between 20 July 2015 and 7 August 2015**

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
20.7.2015	HD's email dated 19.7.2015 to WSD and GLab [see Appendix 1A]	WSD's internal email dated 20.7.2015 (copied to HD and DH) ⁴ [see Appendix 1B]	<u>Discussed and decided that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kwai Luen Estate Phase 1 (41 samples) - Mei Tin Estate (Mei Chuen House) (33 samples) - Shek Lei (II) Estate (Shek Foon House) (26 samples) - Fung Wo Estate (50 samples) - Mei Tung Estate (Mei Tak House) (24 samples) - Hung Fuk Estate Phase 1 and 2, and Phase 3 (150 samples were taken, among which the results of 85 samples were available before the meeting, while the remaining 65 samples were confirmed to be within limit after the meeting and before the announcement at the press conference) 	20.7.2015 [For extracts of the transcript of the press conference and the press release, see Appendix 1C(i) - (iii)]	<u>Announced that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kwai Luen Estate Phase 1 (41 samples were taken) - Mei Tin Estate (Mei Chuen House) (33 samples were taken) - Shek Lei (II) Estate (Shek Foon House) (26 samples were taken) - Fung Wo Estate (50 samples were taken) - Mei Tung Estate (Mei Tak House) (24 samples were taken) - Hung Fuk Estate Phase 1 and 2, and Phase 3 (150 samples were taken)

³ Some of the water test results which had been discussed and announced were repeatedly attached in some of WSD's emails. For members' easy reference, we have not attached the duplicated information in the relevant appendices.

⁴ Some of the water sampling test results was not yet available when the email was circulated to members of the inter-departmental meeting. WSD provided the relevant results via email to meeting attendees for reference after the meeting and before the announcement at the press conference. Details are at Appendix 1B.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Appendices 1A and 1B not attached.*

Annex (Part 2 of 2)

Annex (II)(v)

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
			<p><u>Discussed and decided that the following PRH estate was affected by excess lead in water:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wing Cheong Estate (46 samples were taken, among which the results of 37 samples were available before the meeting, while the remaining 9 samples were confirmed to be within limit after the meeting and before the announcement at the press conference)		<p><u>Announced the following PRH estate as an affected estate:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wing Cheong Estate (46 samples were taken; 1 exceeded the limit) <p><u>Announced a series of follow-up actions to be taken for Wing Cheong Estate:</u></p> <p>Provision of bottled water, water tanks and standpipes; holding a residents' forum, contacting the tenants of units with non-compliant samples; distributing health information to tenants' mailboxes; requesting the contractor to take follow-up actions</p>

Annex (Part 2 of 2)**Annex (II)(v)**

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
23.7.2015	HD's email dated 22.7.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 2A]	WSD's internal email dated 23.7.2015 (copied to HD) [see Appendix 2B]	<p><u>Discussed and decided that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yee Ming Estate (102 samples) - Cheung Lung Wai Estate (42 samples) - Tak Long Estate (198 samples) - Ching Long Shopping Mall (20 samples) <p><u>Discussed and decided to discard 1 sample:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yee Ming Estate⁵ 	23.7.2015 [For extract of the press release, see Appendix 2C]	<p><u>Announced that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yee Ming Estate (102 samples were taken) - Cheung Lung Wai Estate (42 samples were taken) - Tak Long Estate (198 samples were taken) - Ching Long Shopping Mall (20 samples were taken)

⁵ See sample 6 in Table 6, sample 10 in Table 7 and paragraph 3.13 (c) of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Appendices 2A and 2B not attached.*

Annex (Part 2 of 2)**Annex (II)(v)**

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
29.7.2015	HD's email dated 28.7.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 3A]	WSD's email dated 28.7.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting ⁶ [see Appendix 3B]	<p><u>Discussed and decided that all samples taken from the following PRH estate did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mei Tung Estate (Mei Yan Estate) (27 samples) <p><u>Discussed and decided that the following PRH estate was affected by excess lead in water:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase 1 (130 samples; 6 exceeded the limit) 	29.7.2015 [For extract of the transcript of the press conference, see Appendix 3C(i) – (ii)]	<p><u>Announced that the samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mei Tung Estate (Mei Yan Estate) (27 samples were taken) - Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 5 (73 samples were taken) <p><u>Announced the following PRH estate as an affected estate:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase 1 (130 samples were taken; 6 exceeded the limit) <p><u>Announced a series of follow-up actions to be taken for Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase 1:</u> Provision of bottled water, water tanks and standpipes; holding a residents' forum, contacting the tenants of units with non-compliant samples; distributing health information to tenants' mailboxes; requesting the contractor to take follow-up actions</p>

⁶ The water sampling test results for Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 5 were not yet available when the email was circulated to members of the inter-departmental meeting. WSD provided the results after the meeting and before the announcement at the press conference

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Appendices 3A and 3B not attached.*

Annex (Part 2 of 2)

Annex (II)(v)

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
31.7.2015	HD's email dated 30.7.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 4A]	WSD's email dated 31.7.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 4B]	<p><u>Discussed and decided that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Un Chau Estate Phase 5 (55 samples)- Domain and Yau Tong Community Hall (8 samples)- Choi Fook Estate (Choi Foon House) (27 samples)- Choi Tak Estate (Choi Yan House, Choi Yee House) (40 samples) <p><u>Discussed partial water samples from the following PRH developments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2- Tung Wui Estate- Hung Hom Estate Phase 2	31.7.2015 [For extract of the press release, see Appendix 4C]	<p><u>Announced that the samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Un Chau Estate Phase 5 (55 samples were taken)- Domain and Yau Tong Community Hall (8 samples were taken)- Choi Fook Estate (Choi Foon House) (27 samples were taken)- Choi Tak Estate (Choi Yan House, Choi Yee House) (40 samples were taken)

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Appendices 4A and 4B not attached.

Annex (Part 2 of 2)

Annex (II)(v)

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
3.8.2015	HD's email dated 31.7.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 5A]	WSD's email dated 2.8.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 5B]	<p><u>Discussed and decided that the following PRH estate was affected by excess lead in water:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 (59 samples; 5 exceeded the limit) - Tung Wui Estate (52 samples; 4 exceeded the limit) - Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 (74 samples; 16 exceeded the limit) <p><u>Discussed and decided to discard 4 samples⁷:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 samples from Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 - 2 samples from Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 	3.8.2015 [For extract of the transcript of the press conference, see Appendix 5C(i) – (ii)]	<p><u>Announced the following PRH estates as affected estates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 (59 samples were taken; 5 exceeded the limit) - Tung Wui Estate (52 samples were taken; 4 exceeded the limit) - Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 (74 samples were taken; 16 exceeded the limit) <p><u>Announced a series of follow-up actions to be taken for the 3 affected estates:</u></p> <p>Provision of bottled water, water tanks and standpipes; holding a residents' forum, contacting the tenants of units with non-compliant samples; distributing health information to tenants' mailboxes; requesting the contractor to take follow-up actions</p>

⁷ See samples 1 to 4 in Table 6 and Table 7, and paragraph 3.13(a) and (d) in Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Appendices 5A and 5B not attached.*

Annex (II)(v)

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
6.8.2015 and 7.8.2015	HD's email dated 5.8.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting ⁸ [see Appendix 6A]	WSD's emails dated 5.8.2015 and 7.8.2015 to members of the inter-departmental meeting [see Appendix 6B]	<p><u>Discussed and decided that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choi Tak Estate (Choi Chun House, Choi King House, Choi Leung House, Choi Yin House) and Choi Tak Shopping Centre (82 samples) - Shin Ming Estate (Shin Chi Estate, Shin Lai Estate) (49 samples) - Shatin Pass Estate (Wo Tin House, Shun Tin House) (53 samples) - Yau Lai Estate Phase 5 (Cheuk Lai House, Yung Lai House) (35 samples) - Yau Lai Estate Phase 6 (Yau Lai Shopping Centre) (4 samples) <p><u>Discussed and decided that the following PRH estate was affected by excess lead in water:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yan On Estate (69 samples; 5 exceeded the limit) 	7.8.2015 [For extract of the transcript of the press conference, see Appendix 6C(i) – (ii)]	<p><u>Announced that all samples taken from the following PRH estates did not exceed the limit:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choi Tak Estate (Choi Chun House, Choi King House, Choi Leung House, Choi Yin House) and Choi Tak Shopping Centre (82 samples were taken) - Shin Ming Estate (Shin Chi Estate, Shin Lai Estate)(49 samples were taken) - Shatin Pass Estate (Wo Tin House, Shun Tin House) (53 samples were taken) - Yau Lai Estate Phase 5 (Cheuk Lai House, Yung Lai House) (35 samples were taken) - Yau Lai Estate Phase 6 (Yau Lai Shopping Centre) (4 samples were taken) <p><u>Announced the following PRH estate as an affected estate:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yan On Estate (69 samples were taken; 5 exceeded the limit) <p><u>Announced a series of follow-up actions to be taken for Yan On Estate:</u> Provision of bottled water, water tanks and standpipes; holding a</p>

⁸ The email stated that the meeting would be held on two separate days. The Technical Review Meeting would be held on 6.8.2015 (the first day), and the Final Conclusion Meeting would be held on 7.8.2015 (the second day).

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Appendices 6A and 6B not attached.*

Annex (Part 2 of 2)**Annex (II)(v)**

Date of meeting	Notice of meeting	Documents circulated before the meeting ³	Discussions and decisions of the meeting	Press conferences held / press releases issued after the meeting	
				Date	Content of announcement / Follow-up actions
			<p><u>Discussed partial water samples from the following PRH developments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tin Ching Estate Tin Ching Amenity and Community Building - Choi Tak Estate (Choi Shing House, Choi Shun House) - Choi Fook Estate (Choi Lok House, Choi Sin House, Choi Hay House) - Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 1 (Mei Yue House, Mei Ying House) 		<p>residents' forum, contacting the tenants of units with non-compliant samples; distributing health information to tenants' mailboxes; requesting the contractor to take follow-up actions</p>

(節錄)

運輸及房屋局局長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會的開場發言全文(只有中文)

七個今日有化驗結果的屋邨，我想讀一讀它們的名稱給大家知道，包括葵聯邨一期、豐和邨、洪福邨、美田邨美全樓、美東邨美德樓、石籬（二）邨石歡樓和榮昌邨。這七個屋邨我們總共取了370個水樣本，當中我們發現只有榮昌邨一個樣本超出世衛的含鉛量標準。稍後應耀康署長會詳細交代驗水的詳情和一些跟進的工作。這是第一點。

2015年7月20日（星期一）

香港時間19時40分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.

(節錄)

房屋署署長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會開場發言全文(只有中文)

各位，正如剛才局長提到，我們這一輪驗水樣本的工作，其中七條邨的驗水樣本的結果已經有了，我現在慢慢逐個說給大家聽基本的資料。我們上一次與大家見面的時候，提供了一個表，我跟着表上的次序來說。

第一個是榮昌邨，我們總共抽取的水樣本是 46 個，有 1 個是超過世衛標準的，數值是 14。第二個是美田邨美全樓，我們抽取了 33 個水樣本，沒有樣本超過世衛標準。以下都是沒有找到水樣本超過世衛標準的，我便不重複了。第三個是石籬（二）邨的石歡樓，有 26 個水樣本，豐和邨我們取了 50 個水樣本，美東邨美德樓（取了）24 個水樣本，洪福邨的第一、二及三期有 150 個水樣本，另外，加上葵聯邨第一期取了 41 個水樣本。

這些合計共 370 個水樣本之中，只是榮昌邨的 46 個水樣本中，有 1 個是超過世衛標準的。因為（樣本）超過世衛標準，我們同時到有關單位用上次提及過的 X 射線熒光光譜分析儀器，進行一個快速的測試，看看這個單位中的焊料有沒有鉛的含量。初步測試發現有鉛的含量，基於這兩點，第一，在榮昌邨中有一個單位有一個水樣本含鉛超過世衛標準；第二，我們的初步測試發現焊料中有鉛，我們會按照以往在啟晴邨和葵聯邨第二期的做法，即時做以下的功夫：我重複一次，第一，我們會為這條邨的居民提供一些樽裝水。大家都記得，我們都說在這些情況下，有三類我們特別關心的居民：六歲以下的小朋友、孕婦、哺乳中的媽媽，我們有這些樽裝水，可以讓他們有一個安全的替代的飲用水的來源，如果其他居民有需要的話，我們的樽裝水，都會給他們的；第二就是我們和水務署方面，會一起首先在每一幢（大廈）樓下放一個水箱，同時都亦開始拉喉，希望去到每一座的樓下；第三，我們今晚幾個相關部門會開一個晚會，給居民提供即時最新的資料；第四，我們會把一些衛生資料，放在居民的信箱中。

另外，這次我們找到一個水樣本是超標的，其實是我們房屋署的辦事處，那邊有三位同事在那裏經常工作的，我們會聯絡同事，看看他們需不需要一些衛生資料和有沒有一些跟進的需要。

最後，其他的居民，特別是我們關心的三類居民，若他們想要多一點衛生方面的資料等，衛生署這陣子都有一條熱線，可以重複一下電話：2125 1122。

另一方面的跟進是，因為我們在這個邨中，有一些焊料，初步測試是覺得有含鉛，我們需要和總承建商跟進。以往給大家的資料都提過，總承建商是保華建築有限公司。我們會就這件事情和它跟進。

2015年7月20日（星期一）

香港時間20時27分

***Note by Clerk, PAC: Chinese version only.**

(Extract)

Water samples taken from public rental housing estates completed since 2013

The spokesman today (July 20) announced the details of the tests results as follows:

- * Kwai Luen Estate Phase 1: 41 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO,
- * Mei Chuen House of Mei Tin Estate: 33 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO,
- * Shek Foon House of Shek Lei (II) Estate: 26 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO,
- * Fung Wo Estate: 50 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO,
- * Mei Tak House of Mei Tung Estate: 24 samples were taken and all data met standard of the WHO and
- * Hung Fuk Estate Phase 1,2 and 3: 150 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO.

For Wing Cheong Estate, 46 samples were taken. One of the samples taken from the estate management office on the ground floor of Wing Chun House was found with a lead level of 14 micrograms per litre, above the acceptable level set out in the WHO guidelines. Preliminary finding by a X-ray fluorescence detector also showed the existence of lead at the soldering material of a pipe joint.

Monday, July 20, 2015

Issued at HKT 23:00

(Extract)

Test results of water samples taken from three public rental housing within standard limit

Secretary for Transport and Housing and the Chairman of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA), Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung, announced last week that drinking water samples from a total of 10 housing estates, including nine public rental housing estates completed since 2013 and Kwai Luen Estate Phase 1, would be systematically sampled and tested for lead content. The Housing Department (HD) has already announced the test results of 370 water samples taken from seven of these estates on July 20.

As for the remaining three estates completed since 2013, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) took a total of 362 drinking water samples for lead testing. The testing has now been completed. A spokesman for the HD said today (July 23) that the results were as follows:

- * Cheung Lung Wai Estate: 42 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the World Health Organization (WHO);
- * Yee Ming Estate: 102 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO;
- * Tak Long Estate: 198 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO;
- and
- * Ching Long Shopping Centre: 20 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO.

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Issued at HKT 19:50

(節錄)

運輸及房屋局局長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會的開場發言全文(只有中文)

房屋署聯同水務署正分批為二〇一一年及二〇一二年落成的公屋屋邨進行有系統抽樣驗水，並把早前有團體提出曾經自行驗出有超出世衛(世界衛生組織)含鉛量準則(所謂「超標」)水樣本的屋邨首先進行抽驗。

至今日為止，我們完成了對牛頭角下邨第一期、美東邨美仁樓和石硤尾邨第五期的水樣本化驗，這三個屋邨我們總共已檢驗了合共 10 座，涉及 7 500 戶。

結果如下：

* 牛頭角下邨第一期五幢的住宅樓宇，我們抽驗了 130 個水樣本，發現有六個樣本是超出世衛的(含鉛量)準則。

* 美東邨美仁樓一幢(住宅樓宇)，有 27 個(水)樣本，是沒有超標的發現。

* 石硤尾邨第五期共四幢(住宅樓宇)，我們抽了 73 個水樣本，亦是沒有超標的樣本。

2015 年 7 月 29 日(星期三)

香港時間 18 時 02 分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.

(節錄)

房屋署署長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會開場發言全文(只有中文)

各位，正如局長剛才提到，基於我們在牛頭角下邨所抽驗的結果（住宅用水由天台水缸供應，商戶用水則由總水管直接供應，後者水辦抽驗結果符合世界衛生組織標準），我們便會啟動以下的一些措施，這些措施都是我們在啟晴邨、葵聯邨第二期和榮昌邨據於同樣的數據底下所做的措施。第一，我們今晚開始便供應樽裝水給居民。第二，在牛頭角下邨的五幢大樓（貴亮樓、貴月樓、貴顯樓、貴新樓及貴輝樓）每一幢下面由水務署提供一個水箱，同時開始拉喉，希望盡快在每幢下面設立街喉。第三，相關的部門今晚會在邨內舉行居民簡報會，報告最新的一些數據和我們一些跟進措施，回答居民的問題。第四，我們會通告所有給我們抽樣的住戶，以及剛才說的六個水樣超標的（住戶），留下（聯絡）電話，讓他們得到一些衛生的資訊和醫護方面的一些跟進。第五，每個牛頭角下邨的住戶，我們都會在信箱裏放資訊小冊子。最後我們會通告（該邨的）總承建商，要求調查和跟進。牛頭角下邨的總承建商以往都已經提供了給各位，就是有利建築有限公司，得到他們的同意，提供多一個資料，就是他們所用的供水系統分判商，是明合有限公司，「明天」的「明」，「合作」的「合」。

2015年7月29日（星期三）

香港時間19時45分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.

(Extract)

Test results of water samples taken from three public rental housing estates within WHO standard limit

A spokesman for the HD said today (July 31) that water sampling for three additional estates completed in 2011 and 2012 has now been completed. The results are as follows:

* Un Chau Estate Phase 5 (Un Mun House, Un Wai House and Un Yat House): 55 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the World Health Organization (WHO);

* Choi Fook Estate (Choi Foon House): 27 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO; and

* Choi Tak Estate (Choi Yan House, Choi Yee House): 40 samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO.

In addition, although Domain (a shopping centre and Yau Tong Community Hall), completed in 2012, was not originally on the list of public housing estates completed in 2011 and 2012 as announced by the HD earlier, water samples were also taken there for testing as it was also completed in the same period. A total of eight samples were taken and all data met the standard of the WHO.

Friday, July 31, 2015

Issued at HKT 20:26

(節錄)

運輸及房屋局局長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會的開場發言全文(只有中文)

就二〇一一年、二〇一二年落成的公屋屋邨有系統抽樣驗水，我們至今已完成了八個屋邨(項目)的水樣本化驗。當中，除了牛頭角下邨一期發現有超出世衛(世界衛生組織)標準的水樣本，即上星期我們公布的130個樣本中有六個，和有水管焊料含鉛外，今日我們再發現東匯邨、紅磡邨二期及石硤尾邨二期均有超標水樣本，亦有發現水管焊料含鉛。結果如下：

- * 東匯邨牽涉到共兩幢的住宅樓宇，約1 300戶，52個樣本中有四個超標；
- * 紅磡邨二期共有三幢的住宅樓宇，總共約有1 900戶，74個樣本中有16個超標；
- * 石硤尾邨二期有兩幢的住宅樓宇，約1 500戶，59個樣本中有五個超標。

2015年8月3日(星期一)

香港時間18時48分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.

(節錄)

房屋署署長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會開場發言全文(只有中文)

各位，接着局長剛才所說的話，我就各方面補充一些資料。剛才他提到我們最新的抽水樣(本)的化驗結果，有三條邨有部分水樣(本)超過世衛(世界衛生組織)標準。跟以往一樣，我談談那些超過世衛標準的水樣(本)的數值，石硤尾邨二期有五個水樣(本)超過世衛標準，數值由(每公升)11至19(微克)；東匯(邨)有四個水樣(本)超過世衛標準，數值由(每公升)12.3至27(微克)；紅磡邨二期有十六個水樣(本)超過世衛標準，數值由(每公升)10.1至44.4(微克)。

基於化驗結果，我們都會在這三條邨沿用在其他邨的一套即時措施，各位都可能聽過，不過為了當邨居民，我都稍為談談這些措施。第一，我們即時會供應一些樽裝水，同時水務署會在每一幢樓下面擺放水箱，以及開始拉喉，希望盡快在每一幢樓樓下做街喉。第二，今晚幾個部門會在這三條邨為當地居民做簡報會，向大家報告最新情況及回答各位的問題。第三，所有我們曾抽樣的住戶，我們會把抽驗結果告訴他們，而水樣(本)超過世衛標準的(住戶)，我們會留下(熱線)電話，透過這個電話，居民可以得到一些衛生資料，或者要求一些衛生方面的跟進服務。第四，在每戶的信箱，有一些衛生的資訊。最後，我們會和剛才所說的三個總承建商跟進，要求他們調查，以及就一些即時和長期的跟進措施向我們提交建議，這就是這三條邨的情況。

2015年8月3日(星期一)

香港時間19時26分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.

(節錄)

運輸及房屋局局長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會開場發言全文(只有中文)

現跟大家交代最新的驗水結果：

- * 彩德邨，涉及剩餘四幢住宅樓宇，全部沒有超標的樣本發現。
- * 沙田坳邨，涉及兩幢住宅樓宇，亦是全部沒有超標（樣本）。
- * 欣安邨，涉及三幢住宅樓宇，同事抽取了 69 個樣本，發現有 5 個樣本超標。
- * 油麗邨第五期，涉及兩幢住宅樓宇，及第六期即油麗商場，均沒有（發現）超標樣本。
- * 善明邨，涉及兩幢住宅樓宇，亦是全部沒有超標（樣本）。

有關的情況稍後應耀康署長會跟大家詳細介紹。

2015年8月7日（星期五）

香港時間19時44分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.

(節錄)

房屋署署長在跟進食水含鉛量超標事件記者會的開場發言全文(只有中文)

接着我談談這次新公布的一些公屋項目，先談水樣本符合世衛標準的(屋邨)。彩德邨二〇一一年落成的四幢大樓，分別是彩俊樓、彩敬樓、彩亮樓及彩賢樓，共八十二個水樣本全部符合世衛標準；善明邨四十九個樣本；沙田坳邨五十三個樣本；油麗邨第五期二幢大樓——卓麗樓及雍麗樓——共三十五個樣本，以及油麗邨第六期，即(油麗)商場四個樣本，剛才所談的所有項目的水樣本都符合世衛標準。(樣本)大部分是(在)單位廚房(抽取)，除了油麗商場的樣本在廁所抽取，因為就非住宅物業而言，房委會與承建商一般只負責公用地方的供水系統。

接着談今次發現食水(含鉛)超標的欣安邨。我們從三幢樓共抽取了六十九個樣本，其中有五個樣本超標，數值由(每公升)10.01至31(微克)，另外我們在一些位置初步測試出焊位含鉛，基於這些數據，我們會實施一些各位記者朋友都熟悉的一貫措施，不過我都談談，讓當區的居民能知道。第一，我們會即時供應樽裝水；第二，水務署今日即時會幫忙擺放水箱於每一幢樓下面，同時開始拉喉，希望每一幢樓下面盡快有街喉；第三，我們會提供資料給已抽水樣本的住戶，特別是水樣本超標的(住戶)，我們會提供一個(熱線)電話，居民透過這個電話可以得到一些衛生資訊，以及衛生服務的跟進；第四，相關部門今晚會在邨內舉辦座談會，向各位報告最新的情況，接受大家的查詢；第五，我們會在每戶的信箱擺放一張衛生資料單張；第六，我們會與總承建商跟進，要求調查及作出跟進措施。欣安邨的總承建商是利建築有限公司，得到它的同意及提供資料，它用的水喉分判商是明合有限公司，這兩個名字以前都給過大家。

2015年8月7日(星期五)

香港時間20時48分

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Chinese version only.



Our Ref. : HD 3-8/SD/BW- 5/9/4/3 (C)
Tel. No. : 2761 5002
Fax. No. : 2761 1110

Your Ref.: CB4/PAC/R67

26 January 2017

Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attention: Mr. Anthony CHU)

Dear Sir,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67
Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats

----- With reference to your letters of 13 and 18 January 2017 addressed to the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the subject issue, I attach the required information at **Annex** for your consideration, please.

2. Please note that in our response to Item (I), we have provided records of the Administration's internal correspondence some of which are classified. I should be grateful if circulation of and access to such information is restricted to the Public Accounts Committee only. We have also redacted personal information and information which will make the relevant unit/premises identifiable in order to preserve privacy of the tenants concerned.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Sf." or similar, representing Stanley YING.

(Stanley YING)
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

Encl.

c.c. Secretary for Transport and Housing	}	(w/ encl.)
Director of Buildings		
Director of Fire Services	}	
Director of Water Supplies		
Director of Health		(w/o encl.)
Government Chemist		
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury		
Director of Audit	}	

In response to enquiries raised by the Legislative Council Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in its letters dated 13 and 18 January 2017, we provide our reply as follows:

(I) Follow-up actions on public rental housing's water sampling tests for lead

- (a) The Chairman of the Housing Authority (HA) announced on 15 July 2015 that water sampling tests for public rental housing (PRH) estates would be conducted in a more systematic way. As the work involved several Government departments, the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) convened the first inter-departmental meeting on 20 July 2015, comprising representatives from the Housing Department (HD), Water Supplies Department (WSD), Government Laboratory and Department of Health, to coordinate the work among different departments.

The main purpose of convening these inter-departmental meetings was to review and announce water sampling test results immediately, and to coordinate and announce and implement the follow-up actions immediately. As mentioned previously to PAC –

- (i) We agree with the Audit Commission that it is not satisfactory that no meeting records were maintained for the first seven meetings;
- (ii) However, the fact that there were no meeting records did not affect the main function of these seven meetings, namely to review and announce the water sampling results immediately, and to coordinate and announce the follow-up actions immediately in respect of the estates with excess lead.

As shown in the document submitted to PAC on 22 December 2016 (see Annex (II)(v) of that document), the seven meetings held during 20 July to 7 August 2015 took place as follows generally -

- Before each meeting, members of the inter-departmental meeting were notified to attend the meetings by HD;
- The water sampling data of relevant estates were provided by WSD to members of the inter-departmental meeting before each meeting. At the inter-departmental meetings, WSD reported on the water sampling test results and

provided professional advice or other supplementary information on the water sampling data. Attendees reviewed the relevant data and discussed the follow-up actions;

- In order to keep the public and affected tenants abreast of the extent of the excess lead in drinking water in PRH estates, announcements were made shortly after the inter-departmental meetings through press conferences or press releases, providing information such as the number of samples taken for the relevant estates, and the number of non-compliant samples, as well as the follow-up actions to be taken. Such follow-up actions included the provision of bottled water, water tanks and standpipes, holding of residents' forums, distributing health information, requesting the contractor to follow up, etc.

(iii) Although there are no meeting records, departments have kept the primary records dealt with by these seven meetings, and they are available for examination. In respect of the five samples discarded by these seven meetings, the primary records are summarized in paragraph 3.13 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report. As it can be seen, at the meeting at which the decision to discard two samples from Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 and two samples from Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 was made, five non-compliant samples from Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 and 16 non-compliant samples from Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 were adopted at the same time, and it was confirmed that Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 2 and Hung Hom Estate Phase 2 were affected by excess lead in water.

PAC's letter dated 18 January 2017 has requested us to submit relevant documents pertaining to the seven meetings. The relevant documents pertaining to the seven meetings, apart from those already submitted to PAC on 22 December 2016 (see Annex (II)(v) of that document), are provided at **Annex (I)(a)**. The information is provided by meeting date for members' easy reference.

- (b) The list of representatives from the Housing Department, Water Supplies Department, Government Laboratory and Department of Health who attended the seven inter-departmental meetings held from 20 July to 7 August 2015 is at **Annex (I)(b)**.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Annex (I)(a) not attached.*

- (c) As mentioned in part (a) above, the first inter-departmental meeting was held on 20 July 2015 to review water sampling test results and coordinate follow-up actions. The date of the meetings largely hinged on the progress of water sampling, and there were no hard and fast rules. After consolidating experiences, we considered that the water sampling tests could be reviewed in a more systematic and efficient manner. Starting from 6 and 7 August 2015, we held a Technical Review Meeting and a Final Conclusion Meeting on two consecutive days.

As stated in paragraph 3.10 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, the Technical Review Meeting and the Final Conclusion Meeting were held consecutively to discuss the same batch of water samples. The Technical Review Meeting held on 6 August 2015 discussed some water samples from PRH developments including Choi Tak Estate (Choi Chun House, Choi King House, Choi Leung House, Choi Yin House) and Choi Tak Shopping Centre, Shin Ming Estate (Shin Chi Estate, Shin Lai Estate), Shatin Pass Estate (Wo Tin House, Shun Tin House), Yau Lai Estate Phase 5 (Cheuk Lai House, Yung Lai House), Yau Lai Estate Phase 6 (Yau Lai Shopping Centre), Yan On Estate etc. At the meeting, some samples were considered doubtful and it was considered that further investigation should be conducted (such as taking additional samples from the same unit, as well as other units on the same floor and on floors above and below the unit etc.) in order to determine the water quality of that estate. In addition, water sampling from some locations within the estates had not been completed, and further sampling was required. After further investigation, we discussed and decided on the water sampling results of the developments concerned at the Final Conclusion Meeting on the following day (i.e. 7 August 2015), and announced at the press conference on the same day that Yan On Estate was affected by excess lead in water while samples taken from the other developments (i.e. Choi Tak Estate (Choi Chun House, Choi King House, Choi Leung House, Choi Yin House) and Choi Tak Shopping Centre, Shin Ming Estate (Shin Chi Estate, Shin Lai Estate), Shatin Pass Estate (Wo Tin House, Shun Tin House), Yau Lai Estate Phase 5 (Cheuk Lai House, Yung Lai House) and Yau Lai Estate Phase 6 (Yau Lai Shopping Centre)) did not exceed the World Health Organisation's limit.

From end-September 2015 onwards, we started conducting water sampling for PRH estates completed before 2005. As the "Task Force on Investigation of Excessive Lead Content in Drinking Water" found that leaded solder used on water pipe joints was the cause of

excess lead in drinking water, and as the water pipes in PRH estates completed before 2005 were connected mechanically and no soldering had been used in general, there would be one fewer risk factor leading to excessive lead in drinking water. Therefore, as mentioned previously, we conducted a water screening test for PRH estates completed before 2005. Since fewer samples were involved, as stated in paragraph 3.10 of Part 3 of Chapter 1 of the Audit Report, starting from the meeting on 30 September 2015, only Final Conclusion Meetings were held.

- (d) HA has distributed around 9.96 million bottles of bottled water to the 11 affected PRH developments, involving a total cost of around \$60 million. Details are as follows -

Bottle size	No. of bottles distributed	Total cost
4.5L	2,196,088	\$34,932,148
0.8L	7,766,232	\$25,627,703
	<hr/> 9,962,320	<hr/> \$60,559,851

- (e) The Government announced on 13 July 2015 to set up the Task Force on Excessive Lead Content in Drinking Water (the Task Force). The Task Force announced its preliminary findings on 25 September 2015 and submitted its final investigation report to the Secretary for Development on 31 October 2015. HA announced the establishment of the Review Committee on Quality Assurance Issues Relating to Fresh Water Supply of Public Housing Estates (the Review Committee) on 24 July 2015. The Review Committee submitted its interim report and final report to the HA Chairman on 6 October 2015 and 8 January 2016 respectively. In addition, the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water (the Commission) was set up by the Government on 13 August 2015. The Commission submitted its report to the Chief Executive on 11 May 2016, and the Government published the report on 31 May 2016.
- (f) The Housing Department has developed and promulgated a Records Management Policy (see **Annex (I)(f)**) in accordance with the Records Management Manual and other relevant regulations and circulars promulgated by the Government Records Service.

Specifically, records should be prepared and maintained on matters relating to the work of the department, including officers' communication with external persons and bodies, minutes, and other records of deliberations pertinent to the decision-making process etc. In respect of the first seven inter-departmental meetings, we have kept the primary records of the data dealt with at these meetings, and have provided the relevant information to the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water, the Audit Commission and PAC in response to their enquiries earlier. Nevertheless, we agree that it would be more satisfactory if we had maintained meeting records for the seven meetings in addition to the primary records. We will make improvements in accordance with the recommendation of the Audit Commission.

**Attendance for the inter-departmental meetings
from 20 July to 7 August 2015**

20 July 2015

Housing Department (HD)

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management) ³
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Assistant Director (Estate Management) ² (Atg)
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing) ²

Water Supplies Department (WSD)

Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHAN Kin-man	Chief Waterworks Chemist
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

Government Laboratory (GL)

Dr LAU Chau-ming	Government Chemist
Dr LEE Wai-on	Chief Chemist/Food Safety and Quality Group
Dr CHEUNG Tsz-chun	Senior Chemist/Chemical Safety Section
Dr FUNG Wai-hong	Senior Chemist/Trace Elements Section

Department of Health (DH)

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen	Head of Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch
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23 July 2015

HD

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Mr LAM Sze-chuen	Assistant Director (Project)1
Ms Theresa YIM Siu-ling	Assistant Director (Project)2
Mrs Irene CHENG WAN	Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)
Mr LEUNG Sai-chi	Assistant Director (Estate Management)1
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management)3
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Assistant Director (Estate Management)2 (Atg)
Mrs Vicki KWOK WONG Wing-ki	Assistant Director (Private Housing)
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing)2

WSD

Mr CHIN Chu-sum	Assistant Director/Customer Services
Mr Kelvin KWOK Yau-ting	Chief Waterworks Chemist/Task Force (Atg)
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

GL

Dr LAU Chau-ming	Government Chemist
Dr SIN Wai-mei	Assistant Government Chemist/Analytical and Advisory Services Division
Dr CHOI Sik-man	Senior Chemist/Additives, Contaminants and Composition Section

DH

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen	Head of Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch
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29 July 2015

HD

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Mr LAM Sze-chuen	Assistant Director (Project)1
Ms Theresa YIM Siu-ling	Assistant Director (Project)2
Mrs Irene CHENG WAN	Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management)3
Mrs Vicki KWOK WONG Wing-ki	Assistant Director (Private Housing)
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Chief Estate Surveyor/Commercial Properties
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing)2

WSD

Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHAN Kin-man	Chief Waterworks Chemist
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

GL

Dr LEE Wai-on	Chief Chemist/Food Safety and Quality Group
Dr CHOI Sik-man	Senior Chemist/Additives, Contaminants and Composition Section

DH

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen	Head of Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch
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31 July 2015

HD

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Ms Theresa YIM Siu-ling	Assistant Director (Project) ²
Mrs Irene CHENG WAN	Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management) ³
Mrs Vicki KWOK WONG Wing-ki	Assistant Director (Private Housing)
Mr LEUNG Chi-kwong	Assistant Director (Project) ³ (Atg)
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Chief Estate Surveyor/Commercial Properties
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing) ²

WSD

Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Mr Kelvin KWOK Yau-ting	Chief Waterworks Chemist/Task Force (Atg)
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

GL

Dr LEE Wai-on	Chief Chemist/Food Safety and Quality Group
Dr CHOI Sik-man	Senior Chemist/Additives, Contaminants and Composition Section

DH

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen	Head of Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch
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3 August 2015

HD

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Mr LAM Sze-chuen	Assistant Director (Project)1
Ms Theresa YIM Siu-ling	Assistant Director (Project)2
Mrs Irene CHENG WAN	Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)
Mr LEUNG Sai-chi	Assistant Director (Estate Management)1
Mr CHAN Siu-tack	Assistant Director (Estate Management)2
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management)3
Mr LEUNG Chi-kwong	Assistant Director (Project)3 (Atg)
Mr CHIU Pbut-kay	Chief Architect 6
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Chief Estate Surveyor/Commercial Properties
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing)2

WSD

Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHAN Kin-man	Chief Waterworks Chemist
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

GL

Dr LEE Wai-on	Chief Chemist/Food Safety and Quality Group
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DH

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen	Head of Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch
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6 August 2015

HD

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Mr LEUNG Sai-chi	Assistant Director (Estate Management)1
Mr CHAN Siu-tack	Assistant Director (Estate Management)2
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management)3
Mr Patrick LUK Kwong-wai	Chief Architect 1
Mr Alan HUI Bing-chiu	Chief Architect 3
Mrs Sonia WONG YUNG Tak-ling	Chief Architect 4
Mr CHIU Pbut-kay	Chief Architect 6
Mr WONG Mung-wan	Chief Architect 7
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Chief Estate Surveyor/Commercial Properties
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing)2

WSD

Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHAN Kin-man	Chief Waterworks Chemist
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

GL

Dr LEE Wai-on	Assistant Government Chemist/Analytical and Advisory Services Division (Atg)
Dr CHOI Sik-man	Chief Chemist/Food Safety and Quality Group (Atg)

7 August 2015

HD

Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong	Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen	Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Mr Albert LEE Kwok-wing	Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Mr LAM Sze-chuen	Assistant Director (Project)1
Mrs Irene CHENG WAN	Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)
Mr LEUNG Sai-chi	Assistant Director (Estate Management)1
Mr CHAN Siu-tack	Assistant Director (Estate Management)2
Ms Connie YEUNG Kwong-yim	Assistant Director (Estate Management)3
Mr Patrick LUK Kwong-wai	Chief Architect 1
Mr Alan HUI Bing-chiu	Chief Architect 3
Mr CHIU Pbut-kay	Chief Architect 6
Miss Rosaline WONG Lai-ping	Chief Estate Surveyor/Commercial Properties
Miss Leanne MA Nian-en	Senior Administrative Officer (Private Housing)2

WSD

Mr WONG Chung-leung	Deputy Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHAN Kin-man	Chief Waterworks Chemist
Mr William TAM Man-yiu	Chief Engineer/Customer Services (Atg)

GL

Dr CHOI Sik-man	Chief Chemist/Food Safety and Quality Group (Atg)
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DH

Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen	Head of Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch
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Ref.: HDGR 1-1/6-60/1

Housing Department
Hong Kong

25 April 2013

DEPARTMENTAL GENERAL CIRCULAR NO. 2/2013

Housing Department Records Management Policy

This Circular promulgates the Housing Department Records Management Policy (the Policy) to demonstrate the Department's commitment to practising good records management and facilitate orderly implementation of the mandatory records management requirements. It should be read in conjunction with General Circular (GC) Nos. 5/2006 entitled "Management of Government Records" and 2/2009 entitled "Mandatory Records Management Requirements" and Departmental General Circular (DGC) No. 4/2010 entitled "Mandatory Records Management Requirements".

Background

2. The Government has reiterated its records management policy and promulgated a list of mandatory and essential records management requirements through GC Nos. 5/2006 and 2/2009. Recognizing that records management is an important function of Bureaux/Departments (B/Ds), the Government Records Service has also issued a series of records management procedures and guidelines, including the Records Management Manual and a series of records management publications (accessible at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/index.htm#records>) to promote good practices for the management of government records in B/Ds. The Department has also issued the DGC No. 4/2010 to remind staff of the importance of proper records management and set out the level of responsible officers in meeting the mandatory requirements on management of government records.

Importance of a Departmental Records Management Policy

3. A departmental records management policy (the Policy) is a statement which offers an overview of how the B/Ds should create and manage its records to meet operational, policy, legal and financial purposes. It is a key component of good

corporate governance. Apart from serving as guidelines on records management for its staff, the Policy is also an effective way of cultivating and communicating records management culture within the Department.

Departmental Records Management Policy

4. The Policy has been drawn up at the **Appendix** to demonstrate our commitment to adopting and practising good records management. In the interests of promoting good records management, a set of additional guidelines in respect of the records management processes has also been developed and included as **Annexes A-D** to the Policy. The key components of the Policy comprise -

- (a) Purpose;
- (b) Policy statement;
- (c) Scope;
- (d) Regulatory environment;
- (e) Roles and responsibilities for records management;
- (f) Recordkeeping system;
- (g) Protecting vital records;
- (h) Monitoring and auditing; and
- (i) Training.

5. To ensure proper records management and smooth implementation of the Policy in the Department, Records Managers are appointed to oversee records management matters in their respective registries. A list of the Records Managers and their duties list are included as Annex to the Policy.

Monitoring and Review

6. Section/Unit Heads are required to monitor their staff's compliance with the Policy. To cope with changing circumstances, the Policy would be reviewed once every two years.

Re-circulation

7. The Policy should be re-circulated together with GC Nos. 5/2006 and 2/2009 and DGC No. 4/2010 at least once every six months to all staff.

Enquiries

8. Enquiries arising from this Circular should be addressed to Chief Executive Officer/Administration on 2761 6168 or Senior Executive Officer/General on 2761 6688.

Miss Stella WONG
for Permanent Secretary for
Transport and Housing (Housing)

Distribution

All Heads of Divisions/Sub-divisions/Sections/Units

Housing Department Records Management Policies

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish an overarching framework for the creation and management of records¹ through a comprehensive records management programme within the department to meet its business needs, accountability requirements and stakeholder expectations. The departmental records management policy and Circulars relating to records management (including General Circular Nos. 5/2006 and 2/2009 and Departmental General Circular No. 4/2010²) will be re-circulated to all staff at least once every six months.

Policy statement

2. Records are valuable resources of the Government to support evidence-based decision making, meet operational and regulatory requirements and are essential for an open and accountable government. Housing Department is committed to implementing the Government's records management policy through the establishment and implementation of a comprehensive records management programme for effective and efficient management of government records as well as identification and preservation of archival records.
3. The records management programme of this department aims to –
 - (a) make and keep authentic, reliable, complete and usable records;
 - (b) enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency;
 - (c) minimize the costs of managing records;

¹ A **record** is any recorded information or data in any physical format or media created or received by an organization during its course of official business and kept as evidence of policies, decisions, procedures, functions, activities and transactions.

² These General Circulars are accessible at HA > Adm Info > Circulars and Circular Memoranda > Other Circulars/Circular Memoranda and HA> Adm Info > Circulars and Circular Memoranda > Departmental General Circular respectively.

- (d) provide quality services to users;
- (e) provide necessary security for government information;
- (f) facilitate public access to records and information that encourage better understanding of government policies and operations; and
- (g) facilitate identification of records that have permanent value so that they may be preserved and made available to the public for research, educational, cultural and other related purposes.

Scope

4. This policy applies to all staff of the department for managing records created/collected in the course of business activities irrespective of the formats of the records. It also applies to all recordkeeping systems, including paper-based systems or electronic information systems (such as an electronic recordkeeping system (ERKS) and a business system with adequate records management functionality) which are used to keep and manage records of the department.

Regulatory environment

5. Housing Department acknowledges that the following laws and government policy/regulations have implications on the department's records management programme –

- (a) Evidence Ordinance (Cap.8) - e.g. proper keeping of records to ensure its legal admissibility;
- (b) Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap.486) - e.g. timely destruction of personal data in accordance with Privacy Commissioner Office's Code of Practice on Human Resource Management;
- (c) Limitation Ordinance (Cap.347) - e.g. retention of relevant records for the specified limitation periods to serve as evidence in possible legal proceedings;
- (d) Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap.553) - e.g. admissibility of electronic records in a court of law; and

- (e) Code on Access to Information - e.g. proper organization of records to facilitate their efficient retrieval for timely response to public access requests.
6. Records management programme has been established in accordance with its obligations under the above regulatory environment.

Roles and responsibilities

7. Records management is the responsibility of every staff of the Department. The following staff are assigned with specific roles and responsibilities –

- (a) Assistant Director (Administration) will oversee the records management in the Department.
 - (b) Chief Executive Officer/Administration is appointed as the Departmental Records Manager (DRM) and is responsible for assisting in establishing and implementing a comprehensive departmental records management programme.
 - (c) Assistant Departmental Records Managers (ADRM)s are appointed to assist the DRM to monitor records management activities in the department. A list of ADRMs is attached in **Annex A**.
 - (d) Records Managers (RMs) are appointed to oversee records management matters in the registries of each section/office. A list of RMs is attached in **Annex B** and their duties list is in **Annex C**.
 - (e) Registry Staff are responsible for the day-to-day records management activities in their registries.
 - (f) Records Users (i.e. subject officers) are responsible for creation/collection of and defining the access control for records in their daily business.
8. Individual staff may play more than one of the above roles. The records management duties of staff assigned with specific records management roles and responsibilities, particularly those relating to paragraph 7 (a) to (e)

above, should be clearly reflected in their job descriptions to facilitate evaluation.

Recordkeeping system

9. A recordkeeping system is a manual or an automated information system in which records of the department are collected, organized and categorized to facilitate their retrieval, distribution, use, disposal or preservation. All records of the Department will be captured into official recordkeeping systems, e.g. authorized paper-based systems managed by confidential registries, general registries and personal secretaries, ERKS and business systems with adequate records management functionality, but not personal spaces/systems (e.g. personal folder, e-mail in-box).

10. The recordkeeping system will manage the following records management processes –

- (a) Creation/collection and capture of records;
- (b) Registration of records;
- (c) Records classification;
- (d) Records storage and preservation;
- (e) Access to records;
- (f) Tracking movement of records; and
- (g) Retention and disposal of records.

Operational and procedural guidelines for these processes are outlined in **Annex D**.

Protecting vital records

11. Vital records are records containing information essential to the continued and effective operation of an organization during and after an emergency or disaster. Housing Department is committed to protecting its

vital records through a vital records protection programme³. Completed vital records schedules⁴ prepared by sections and offices should be centrally retained by DRM.

Monitoring and auditing

12. Housing Department will keep the Policy under regular review. Sections and offices are responsible for monitoring, on a day-to-day basis, compliance with the departmental records management policy, procedures and guidelines as well as mandatory records management requirements set out in GCs and DGC(s). Sections and offices are required to fully cooperate with the DRM and the Government Records Service (GRS) to conduct records management studies/reviews in the Department.

Training

13. Housing Department will equip staff with adequate records management knowledge and skills, in particular staff who are responsible for records management or have to create and collect records during their work. In this regard, sections and offices will nominate their relevant staff to attend records management training courses and seminars organized by GRS⁵ or the Training and Development Centre.

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³ Detailed guidelines and procedures for establishing, maintaining and reviewing a vital records protection programme are given in GRS Records Management Publication No.6 "Manual on Vital Records Protection" (accessible at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/pub6.htm>).

⁴ See Appendix D to GRS Records Management Publication No.6 "Manual on Vital Records Protection".

⁵ Information on GRS' training courses is available at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/index.htm#records>.

Annex A

Assistant Departmental Records Managers in Housing Department

Division	Post
Development & Construction Division	Senior Executive Officer/Construction
Estate Management Division	Senior Executive Officer/Estate Management
Corporate Services Division/ Strategy Division/Permanent Secretary (Housing)'s Office	Senior Executive Officer/General

Annex B

Records Managers in Housing Department

Corporate Services Division, Strategy Division and Permanent Secretary (Housing)'s Office

SCO/FSGR	EO/SM(1)	STSO	PTO(A)/ICU
HM/Pros	EO/Per(2)	HM/HS(Adm)	PTO(A)/ICU
SCO/ICR	EO/Per(4)	EO/PH	PTO(S)/ICU
API-27	EO/E(1)	EO(PS)	EO/ICU
MSOI-2	MHRD-G5	CEO/LTHS	BSE/LIFT
ACS/3	EO/CSP	Stat/2	AFMI/IA2
ACS/5	OLOI-31	SM/C	STO(A)/TAU
EO/GM(H)1	SCO/GR	A(CSU)2	
SCO/Appts	EO/SR(1)	EO/SD	
SEO/GM(W)2	PM/CE2	PTO(A)/ICU	

Development and Construction Division

PTO(A)/1	CTO(C)/G&QA	PTO(S)/3	PSO/Eng
PTO(A)/2	PTO(G)	PTO(S)/DC	SPSM
SA/20	SPO/5	STO(S)/41	PSM/GS
PTO(A)/3	PO/7	SE/MTM3	EO/C(G)
PTO(A)/4	SPO/DC	PTO/Lab	SCO/GR/P1
PTO(A)/D&S	PO/15	CTO/Audit(1)	SCO/GR/P2
CTO/P	SQS/CO	CTO(S)/QM	CO/GR/P3
CTO(BS)/C2	PSO(Q)/2	PTO/BT(C)	SCO/GR/DP
PTO(BS)/C2	PTO(S)/1	STO(A)/24	
SBSE/C9	PTO(S)/2	LS/C1	

Estate Management Division

AHM/M	AHM/T(TTI2)	AHM/CH-1	CW/TME1
AHM/M1	AHM/T(WTS3)3	AHM/T(KE10)	CW/TMW2
AHM/MOU(2)	AHM/TTI3	AHM/M(2)	CW/YLG1-1
AHM/KWH	AHM/TTI4	MS/SD1	SCW/YLG2
AHM/HWII(1)	AHM/T(TTI3)2	MS/CAT1	BSI/TME1
AHM/WT1	AHM/LMS(II)1	GE/M	BSI/TME1
AHM/YW	AHM/T(TTI1)1	AHM/M(SS1)	BSI/YLG12
AHM/T(HK2)2	AHM/FL(2)	MS/PD1	SBSI/YLG2
AHM/YTG2	AHM/WTI	PSO(Q)/MG	SBSI/TMW
AHM/HM	CW/TTI 1	CE21/M	BSE/YLG2
AHM/SPW4	CW/TWS2	AHM/SA(3)	MS/TME

AHM/SPW2	AHM/T(WTS4)1	STO(BS)/BSM2	STO(S)/T&Y
AHM2/ALC	AHM/LF1	STO(BS)/SS2	AHM/S(T&Y3)
AHM/T(HK5)	AHM/T(WTS1)	AHM/CNS(1)	AHM/T&Y
AHM/T(HK6)	SCW/TW	AHM/LEO(1)	AHM/KC
AHM/WF1(2)	AHM/TC 4	AHM/LY(1)	AHM/KC(1)2
AHM/T(HK7)1	AHM/TC 3	AHM/LH(1)	AHM/KC(II)3
AHM/T(KW1)	AHM/KE	AHM/SK(2)	AHM/TWH5
AHM/FCH3	STO(A)/KE4	AHM/SC(3)	AHM/T(KC3)
AHM/HIL(1)	HO/S(KE3)2	AHM/STW(1)	AHM/KSW1
AHM/T(KW2)	STOBS/KE	AHM/WC(2)	AHM/T(KC4)
AHM/WAL	STO(S)/KE1	AHM/T(S&M1)1	AHM/LK1
AHM/T(KW3)1	HO/SHM/KE1	AHM/LY(1)	AHM/T(KC5)2
AHM/LKK1	HO/SHM/KE2	AHM/T(S&M5)2	AHM/OY(2)
AHM/LKK2+LAO	HO/SPSM/KE	AHM/T(S&M3)2	AHM/T(KC6)1
AHM/T(KW3)2	SCW/KLE	AHM/T(TPO)2	AHM/T(KC6)2
AHM/SKM(1)	SBSI/KLE	AHM/T(NTH)2	AHM/SYE
AHM/OM4	CW/KWG2	AHM/T(TKO1)2	AHM/T(KC7)3
AHM/PT(4)	BSI/KWG2	AHM/T(NTT)5	CW/SKC1
AHM/CO	CW/NCW1	AHM/T(NTT)1	CW/HKC2
AHM/NS1	BSI/NCW1	AHM/TNS	SCW/RD
AHM/T(KW7)1	CW/KLC1	MS-DM1	MS/TMS7
AHM/T(KW7)1	BSI/KLC1	SCW/MSN	MS/TMS7
AHM/T(KW7)2	AHM/KY1	SCW/TSC	MS/TMS7
CW/KLS1	AHM/T(KE1)1	SCW/NSS	ACW/SC1
BSI/KLS1	AHM/LYM-1	SCW/TKO	AHM/M(3)
CW/SSP2	AHM/KYE	AHM-BE2	AHM/M(SS2)
BSI/SSP2	AHM/T(KE2)2	AHM-TTM4	AHM/Rent
CW/CHK2	AHM/SO2	AHM-TTM4	AHM/QA
BSI/CHK1	AHM/T(KE3)1	AHM/T(YLG3)2	AHM/AS(1)
CW/HW2	AHM/T(KE3)2	AHM/TS(2)1	HO/BPS
BSI/HW1	AHM/LWS	AHM/TH4	AHM/CSS3
CW/HE2	AHM/SE(1)	AHM/TTM2	AHM/TMP(2)
BSI/HE1	AHM/T(KE5)	AHM/SS(1)	AHM/PHRM2
ALMI/GN	AHM/WL	AHM/TIA(2)	AHM/ND(HQ)6
LM/TM1	AHM/LWN2	AHM/T(YLG2)1	SES/P2
AHM/ES(5)	AHM/LWN3	AHM/SS2	HM/CP(5)
DS(1)	AHM/T(KE7)	AHM/OT2	ES/CP(3)
AHM/T(WTS5)1	AHM/T(KE7)	AHM/T(TM3)2	ES/ND(4)
AHM/MT	AHM/PS3	AHM/YO3	PTO(S)/EM
AHM/TT1	AHM/T(KE8)+F(WC)	AHM/TTM1	STO(S)/SIS1
AHM/CG(2)	AHM/F(YO)	AHM/TNH2	STO(S)/SES2
AHM/CWN1-2	AHM/T(KE8)+F(WC)	AHM/T(YLG4)	STO(S)/SCM(1)1
AHM/SWK(2)	AHM/LAT(1)	AHM/TYT2	STO(S)/SCM(2)2
AHM/WTI	AHM/T(KE9)1	AHM/TYLG1(4)	EO/EM(3)

Major Duties of Records Managers

- (a) To oversee records management matters in their registries;
- (b) To ensure proper filing practices and all administrative and programme records covered by classification schemes in their registries;
- (c) To ensure proper records storage and preservation and to review records storage regularly in their registries;
- (d) To assist in reviewing and implementing records management practices and ensuring compliance with record management requirements;
- (e) To assist in establishing business rules for creation/collection of records and conducting a self assessment pending completion of the business rules;
- (f) To assist in drawing up and implementing the vital records protection programme;
- (g) To assist in reviewing records classification schemes for both administrative and programme records every two to three years;
- (h) To review/arrange time-expired records for disposal at least once every two years in accordance with General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules for administrative records and approved disposal schedules for programme records; and
- (i) To review approved disposal schedules at least once every five years with reference to the checklist issued by Government Records Service.

**Operational and Procedural Guidelines for
Records Management Processes**

All sections and offices in the department should ensure that the following records management processes are properly established and managed to support a comprehensive departmental records management programme.

Creation/collection and capture of records

2. Complete and reliable records should be created/collected to meet operational, policy, legal and financial purposes and document accurately and adequately government functions, policies, procedures, decisions and transactions to serve as reliable evidence. Some general examples of what records should be created or collected are provided below –

- (a) inward and outward communication with external persons and bodies directly relating to the functions and activities of an organization;
- (b) minutes and other records of meetings, consultations and deliberations pertinent to the decision-making process, formulation of policies and procedures or transaction of business;
- (c) major oral decisions and commitments;
- (d) individual exercise of a discretionary judgement which has a major effect on the functions and activities of the organization;
- (e) departmental/government forms, registers and information (in electronic/non-electronic forms) which document business transactions/procedures; and
- (f) draft documents (e.g. amendments to minutes of meetings) for a complete documentation of the relevant issue, as appropriate.

3. The creation/collection of records should be adequate but not

excessive.

4. Records should be created/collected to document the actions and decisions as soon as possible in order to ensure that the reliability and completeness of records will not be adversely affected due to passage of time.

5. E-mail records should be printed and filed in a paper-based recordkeeping system in accordance with the “Guideline on the Management of Electronic Mail” (accessible at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/doc/emailguideline.pdf>) issued by the Government Records Service (GRS) pending implementation of an electronic recordkeeping system (ERKS) in the department.

6. Records created/collected should be captured into official recordkeeping systems.

7. Decisions as to what records are to be kept should be documented in a way that can be used by staff in their daily work. Such decisions can serve as evidence of the department’s intentions.

Registration of records

8. A record is registered when it is captured into the recordkeeping system, providing evidence that it has been created/collected. In a paper-based system, a record captured into a file should be registered through entering such contextual information as the type of record (e.g. memo), date of record, and name of originator/addressee(s) of the record on the file in accordance with Chapter 12 of GRS Records Management Publication No.2 “Managing Active Records: File Management” (accessible at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/pub2.htm>).

Records classification

Establishment of records classification schemes

9. To facilitate a wide range of records management activities, including identification, capturing and retrieval of records, security and access control, records should be systematically organized according to a records classification scheme (also called a file plan), which is a plan for logical arrangement of both

administrative records⁶ and programme records⁷ according to one or more of the following: business functions, activities and contents of the records.

10. The standard subject classification scheme for administrative records as set out in GRS Records Management Publication No.3 “Subject Filing” (accessible at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/pub3.htm>) will continue to be adopted for the classification of administrative records in the department.

11. All programme records should also be covered by classification schemes. For those programme records not yet covered, relevant sections and offices should develop classification schemes for them not later than April 2013 in accordance with the procedures set out in the “Subject Filing” and Chapters 3-5 of “Managing Active Records: File Management”.

12. All sections and offices should ensure that proper filing practices are implemented in their registries with reference to the procedures set out in Chapters 8-16 of the “Managing Active Records: File Management”.

13. A Records Manager or Registry in-charge should be designated to control the creation, naming and coding of new files to facilitate accurate capturing and ready retrieval of records.

14. As a requirement to ensure quality, new records classification schemes of the department such as those necessitated by re-organisation should be approved by the Departmental Records Manager (DRM). The DRM’s approval is also required for records classification schemes to be adopted for a new office, irrespective of whether this is by way of creating new schemes or extending existing schemes. Before giving approval, the DRM should have regard to the principles set out in Appendix II to General Circular (GC) No. 2/2009.

Review of records classification schemes

15. To ensure that each records classification scheme remains effective to cope with changes over time and to identify scope for improvement, sections

⁶ Administrative records are records created or received during the course of day-to-day administrative activities that deal with finance, accommodation, procurement and supply, establishment, personnel and other general administrative activities. Records of this nature are common to B/Ds.

⁷ Programme records are records created or received by a B/D whilst carrying out the primary functions, activities or mission for which the B/D was established. Records of this nature are unique to each B/D.

and offices are required to review the records classification schemes for both administrative and programme records every two to three years and seek the DRM's endorsement, having regard to the principles set out in Appendix II to GC No. 2/2009. Staff not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent (i.e. an officer whose rank's maximum pay point is not lower than Master Pay Scale (MPS) Point 44 or equivalent) may be designated to assist the DRM in the review, but the DRM will remain responsible for the overall co-ordination and effectiveness of the review.

16. Each review should be completed within a reasonable period (say three to six months) and a clear target completion date should be set for each review. The results of the review and any follow-up action taken should be documented. The first round of review should be completed not later than April 2013.

Records storage and preservation

Proper storage of records

17. Records should be stored in such a manner so as to facilitate user access and ensure that they are protected from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, removal, deterioration, loss or destruction. The Security Regulations (accessible at <http://sb.host.cgo.hksarg/sr/sr.pdf>) should be complied with for handling and storing classified records and information. To ensure security of electronic records and information stored in computer systems (e.g. an ERKS or a business system), the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer's information technology security policy and guidelines should be followed.

18. For proper preservation, paper records should not be stored in an environment with high temperature and humidity, or exposed to significant risk of water damage (e.g. near unblocked window, under/near water/sewage pipe, water drain, manhole, water permeable wall or ceiling, water tank). Records should also be stored in proper facilities (e.g. filing cabinets and filing racks) instead of stacking them on the floor.

19. Paper records having long-term (i.e. 30 years or over) value should be stored in a clean environment with round-the-clock control of temperature and relative humidity at 20°C +/- 2°C and RH 50 % +/- 5% respectively to ensure their preservation to meet operational needs and reduce the risk of mould

growth which is a health hazard as far as practicable. Alternatively, sections and offices should critically review and shorten the retention periods of such records or preserve them through microfilming by utilising the service of GRS' Government Microfilm Centre.

20. For preservation of records stored in other media (e.g. optical discs), professional advice should be obtained as appropriate.

Review of records storage

21. Reviews on records storage should be conducted regularly (say once every two to three years) and after events such as typhoon or rainstorm. Each review should be completed within a reasonable period (say two to three months) and a clear target completion date should be set for each review. The results of the review and any follow-up action taken should be documented. The first review should be completed not later than April 2013.

Access to records

22. Timely access to records should be provided to authorized users for conducting business and other authorized purposes.

23. To provide sensitive information with adequate protection, records should be classified according to their level of sensitivity at a particular time. Classified records should be managed in accordance with the Security Regulations.

24. Access to records containing personal data should be arranged according to the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

25. Requests for access to records of the department by the public should be arranged according to the Code on Access to Information.

Tracking movement of records

Accurate and updated inventory of records

26. An accurate and updated inventory of records including at least (i) file title; (ii) file reference number; (iii) date opened and date closed; and (iv) storage location (e.g. room/floor) should be maintained.

27. Movements of records should be registered by the Bar-Coding File Management System (BCFMS), file movement card (GF448) or other effective means. Files should be passed through general registries or responsible staff so that their movement can be properly kept track.

28. Records management staff should take stocks of records and check the completeness of files regularly to minimize missing of records.

Transit and bulk relocation of records

29. To ensure safe custody of records during transit, effective measures (e.g. registering the records, putting records in locked/properly sealed containers, checking records before and after transit etc.) should be adopted. For bulk relocation of records, the following arrangements should be put in place: (i) designating an officer not below the rank of Executive Officer II or equivalent (i.e. an officer whose rank's maximum pay point is not lower than MPS Point 27 or equivalent) to oversee the task; (ii) taking stock before the relocation exercise; (iii) conducting a file inventory check after relocation; (iv) documenting the inventory check; and (v) updating the new storage location immediately afterwards.

Loss or unauthorized destruction of records

30. Any loss or unauthorized destruction of records should be immediately reported to the DRM and a copy of such report sent to GRS simultaneously. Upon receipt of such report, the DRM, with the assistance of the section or office concerned should (i) ascertain the facts and identify the circumstances leading to the loss or unauthorized destruction; (ii) reconstruct the records where necessary; (iii) take steps to prevent recurrence; (iv) consider whether any disciplinary action or other administrative action is necessary; and (v) report his findings and actions on (i) to (iv) above to GRS within three months.

31. The reporting requirements in other codes and regulations (e.g. Security Regulations) should be followed for loss of records containing classified information or personal data.

Retention and disposal of records

Establishment of records disposal schedules

32. All records irrespective of formats should be covered by approved

disposal schedules, which specify the arrangements to be made for custody (e.g. the department, GRS' records centres), retention period (e.g. three years) and disposal action (e.g. destruction or transfer to the Public Records Office (PRO) of GRS for permanent retention as archival records) of the records concerned to facilitate systematic disposal of records.

33. To dispose of administrative records, the set of disposal schedules developed by GRS and detailed in GRS Records Management Publication No. 4 "General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules (GARDS)" (accessible at <http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/pub4.htm>) should be adopted.

34. Programme records should be disposed of according to the disposal schedules established by the department and approved by GRS. To ensure that records are not retained for unduly long period without genuine business needs, sections and offices should critically assess their business requirements when setting a records retention period of seven years or more in disposal schedules. A copy of approved disposal schedules should be forwarded to the DRM.

35. For new series of programme records created after April 2012 and not yet covered by draft or approved disposal schedules, draft disposal schedules should be established in accordance with the procedures set out in GRS Records Management Publication No.1 "A Practical Guide to Records Scheduling and Disposal" (accessible at http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/sch_disp.htm) and forward to GRS within a period of two years upon creation of the series. Draft and finalized disposal schedules should be endorsed and signed respectively by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent.

Regular disposal of time-expired records

36. Regular disposal of records facilitates easy retrieval of records in active use, and minimize costs for maintaining and storing records. Accordingly, time-expired records should be reviewed for disposal at least once every two years in accordance with General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules for administrative records and approved disposal schedules for programme records. The results of the review on retention and disposal of time-expired records should be considered and endorsed in writing by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent and properly documented. Each review should be completed within a reasonable

period (say one to two months) and a clear target completion date should be set for each review. The first review should be completed not later than April 2013.

37. Records having archival value should be transferred to PRO of GRS according to the respective disposal schedules. If there are valid reasons to defer the transfer of time-expired records having archival value or potential archival value to PRO for retention or appraisal by more than two years, a directorate officer's written approval should be obtained. Such cases have to be brought up to the directorate officer for direction during the next disposal exercise.

38. In disposal exercises, particular attention should be paid to those files which have been opened over 30 years but remain unclosed to see whether they should be closed and then disposed of.

39. GRS Director's prior agreement must be obtained for any disposal or destruction of records using the memo templates provided by GRS (accessible at http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/sch_disp.htm).

40. To minimize unauthorized destruction of records, records ready for disposal should be handled in accordance with the records disposal procedures set out in Appendix IV to GC No. 2/2009.

41. All records relevant to records disposal, including internal endorsement, GRS Director's agreement and a list of records approved for disposal should be kept permanently in the department for future reference.

Transfer of records to non-government bodies

42. In case records have to be transferred to non-government bodies, the sections and offices concerned should send a list of records pending transfer to the DRM for seeking GRS Director's prior agreement so that appropriate arrangements can be made for records having archival value. No government records should be transferred outside the Government unless with the prior agreement of the GRS Director.

43. The list of records should group the records by disposal schedule and include the following information: (i) file title; (ii) file reference number; and (iii) date opened and date closed.

Review of disposal schedules

44. To cope with changing circumstances, approved disposal schedules should be reviewed at least once every five years with reference to the checklist issued by GRS (accessible at http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/doc/Checklist_v1R.pdf). The review and any amendments should be endorsed by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent. Proposed amendments to disposal schedules should be forwarded to GRS for approval.

45. Each review should be completed within a reasonable period (say two to three months) and a clear target completion date should be set for each review. The results of the review and any follow-up action taken should be documented. The first review should be completed not later than April 2013.

Documenting records management processes

46. Documentation describing records management policy and processes as well as recordkeeping systems should address legal, regulatory, operational and technical requirements. The following records management activities should be documented among others –

- (a) establishment and review of records management policy, procedures and guidelines;
- (b) designation of records management roles and responsibilities;
- (c) decisions on records creation/collection;
- (d) records inventory;
- (e) establishment, adoption and review of classification schemes;
- (f) review of records storage;
- (g) arrangements of records access;
- (h) movement of records;
- (i) establishment and review of disposal schedules;
- (j) internal endorsement on and GRS' approval for disposal of records;
- (k) deferment of transfer of records having archival value or potential

archival value to PRO of GRS;

- (l) records disposal procedures;
- (m) bulk relocation of records procedures;
- (n) transfer of records to other sections and offices of the department, other departments or outside the Government;
- (o) investigation and follow-up action on loss or unauthorized destruction of records;
- (p) vital records protection programme; and
- (q) monitoring and auditing of records management.

47. Sections and offices are required to document other records management activities not listed above as appropriate.

Managing records for administrative changes

48. From time to time, there are such administrative changes as reorganization of business functions and activities which necessitate transfer of records between sections and offices of the department, or to/from other departments. Such transfers should be properly managed in accordance with the procedures set out in Chapter 8 of Records Management Manual (accessible at http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/doc/RM_Manual.pdf), including preparing an accurate list of records to be transferred, updating of records inventory/classification scheme(s)/disposal schedules, adopting the procedures on bulk relocation of records etc. To ensure effective coordination, the DRM should be informed of transfer of records between departments.

* * * * *

5 October 2010

DEPARTMENTAL GENERAL CIRCULAR NO. 4/2010
Mandatory Records Management Requirements

This Circular reminds staff of the importance of proper records management and sets out the level of responsible officers in meeting the mandatory requirements on management of government records in accordance with General Circular (GC) No. 2/2009.

Background

2. Proper records¹ management not only enhances operational efficiency and effectiveness while minimizing costs, but also ensures proper preservation of records and materials with archival value. To promote best practices for the management of government records in bureaux/departments (B/Ds), the Government Records Service (GRS) published the Records Management Manual, Guideline on the Management of Electronic Mail and a series of records management publications, which can be browsed via the following website: <http://grs.host.cgo.hksarg/index.htm>. To demonstrate Government's commitment to practise good records management and preserve archival records, the GRS has introduced a number of mandatory and essential records management requirements for B/Ds to follow. A pre-requisite for good records management is to maintain an accurate inventory of records.

Categorization of Records

3. Government records can broadly be categorized into administrative records and programme records. Administrative records are those created or received during the course of day-to-day administrative activities that deal with finance, accommodation, procurement and supply, establishment, personnel and other general administrative activities. Records of this nature are common to B/Ds. Programme records are those created or received by a B/D whilst carrying out the primary functions, activities or mission for which the B/D was established. Records of this

¹ A record is any recorded information or data in any physical format or media created or received by an organization during its course of official business and kept as evidence of policies, decisions, procedures, functions, activities and transactions. This includes e-mail correspondence which should be "printed-and-filed" for record purposes.

nature are unique to each B/D.

4. For administrative records, the Department has obtained approval from the GRS for adopting a standard classification scheme, the skeleton of which is provided at **Annex A**. Given the common nature of general administrative records, the GRS has developed a common set of disposal schedules for these records in Records Management Publication No. 4 “General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules” (GARDS). For programme records, reference is made to the procedures set out in GRS’ Records Management Publication No. 3 “Subject Filing” for developing individual classification scheme. Procedures on drafting disposal schedules for programme records are set out in Chapter 4 of GRS’ Records Management Publication No. 1 “A Practical Guide to Records Schedules and Disposal”. These publications are available on GRS’ website: <http://grs.host.ccg.hksarg/index.htm>.

Duties of Responsible Officers

5. Records management is a joint effort. Staff should understand their respective roles and responsibilities in ensuring the Department’s compliance with the mandatory records management requirements as set out by the GRS. Three levels of responsible officers and their respective duties are detailed as follows:

- (i) Assistant Departmental Records Managers [at the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent or above]

In order to ensure the mandatory records management requirements are properly attended to in all offices of this Department, Assistant Departmental Records Managers (ADRM) have been appointed in respective Divisions to coordinate and monitor the records management routines within their purview. Senior Executive Officer/General is the ADRM for records registries under Corporate Services Division, Strategy Division and Permanent Secretary (Housing)’s Office. Senior Executive Officer/Construction and Senior Executive Officer/Estate Management are the ADRMs for records registries under Development and Construction Division and Estate Management Division respectively. They may seek further assistance of relevant officers in their Divisions for records management matters as appropriate. The ADRMs will be responsible for the following in accordance with GC No. 2/2009:

- (a) To ensure the standard classification scheme for administrative records (**Annex A**) is adopted by all offices under the respective Division(s) **not later than April 2012**.
- (b) To vet and submit new classification schemes for approval by the Departmental Records Manager (DRM), i.e. Chief Executive Officer/Administration.
- (c) To review the records classification schemes for the respective Divisions(s)

every two to three years with a view to ensuring that the classification schemes remain effective to cope with changes over time and to identify scope for improvement. The review should be conducted having regard to the principles set out in **Annex B**, and the results of the review and any follow-up action taken should be documented.

- (d) To ensure draft disposal schedules covering all programme records for the respective Division(s) would be forwarded to the GRS for approval **not later than April 2012 for existing records** and within a period of two years for new records created after April 2012.
- (e) To ensure safe custody of records and to compile a report to DRM in case of loss or unauthorized destruction of records in the respective Division(s).
- (f) To assist in identifying vital records within the purview of respective Division(s) and recommending an action plan for protecting such records **not later than April 2012**. Vital records are those records containing information essential to the continued and effective operation of an organization during and after an emergency or disaster. ADRMs should arrange to identify and protect vital records by way of duplication or off-site storage to ensure uninterrupted operation of major business functions.
- (g) To assist in co-ordinating regular reviews of records management practices in respective Division(s) to ensure that the records management programme is functioning effectively. The review should include (i) assessment of compliance with the mandatory records management requirements set out in this Circular (e.g. progress in implementing the standard classification scheme for administrative records, establishing draft disposal schedules for programme records etc.); and (ii) identification of areas requiring improvement with regard to desirable best practices and formulation of plans to implement improvement measures. To assist B/Ds in this task, GRS will issue guidelines setting out the scope and issues for review. The Department's completed review will be endorsed by a directorate officer and returned to GRS.

(ii) Section/Unit Heads

While ADRMs are tasked to coordinate and monitor the records management routines at Divisional level, Section/Unit Heads of respective Sub-divisions will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day management of registries within their purview including the following in accordance with GC No. 2/2009:

- (a) To implement the standard classification scheme for administrative records (**Annex A**) **not later than April 2012** and to make reference to the procedures set out in GRS' Records Management Publication No. 3 to develop classification scheme for their programme records.

- (b) To seek approval from DRM via ADRM for new classification schemes. To facilitate a wide range of records management activities, including identification, capturing and retrieval of records, security and access control, records should be systematically organized according to a records classification scheme, which is a plan for logical arrangement of records according to one or more of the business functions, activities and contents of the records. New classification schemes include those necessitated by re-organisation and those adopted for a new office, irrespective of whether this is by way of creating new schemes or extending existing schemes. In developing a new classification scheme, reference should be made to the principles set out in **Annex B**.
- (c) To adopt the set of disposal schedules developed by the GRS and detailed in GARDS for disposing of administrative records².
- (d) To establish draft disposal schedules covering all their programme records and forward them to the GRS for consideration via respective ADRMs **not later than April 2012 for existing records** and within a period of two years for new records created after April 2012. The disposal schedules stipulate the length of time that records should be retained and the ways of disposal (e.g. destruction; intermediate storage at records centre and then destruction; microfilming and then destruction; permanent retention) having regard to the administrative, operational, fiscal and legal requirements and archival values of the records. The draft disposal schedules should be endorsed by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent. The GRS will discuss with the officers concerned regarding the proposed retention period and disposal action with a view to finalizing the disposal schedules, and the finalized disposal schedules should be signed by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent in the respective registries.
- (e) To transfer records having archival value to the Public Records Office (PRO) of the GRS according to the respective disposal schedules. Some records may contain information having archival value (as appraised by the PRO and indicated in approved disposal schedules) which forms part of the memory of the community.
- (f) To arrange disposal of time-expired records at least once every two years. It is necessary to arrange prompt disposal of time-expired records, i.e. inactive records which have been retained for the period specified in the GARDS for administrative records or in the approved disposal schedules for programme records and are ready for disposal. In the interest of proper internal control, disposal of records, including destruction of records, should

² For retention and destruction of personnel-related files and records, departmental guidelines are set out in AD(Adm)'s memo ref. HD 1/711/83 II dated 16 January 2007.

be considered and endorsed in writing by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent in respective records registries. For ease of reference, the records disposal process in respect of administrative records and programme records is shown at **Annex C**. If there are valid reasons to defer the transfer of time-expired records having archival value or potential archival value to the PRO for retention or appraisal by more than two years, they should be set out in writing for agreement by a directorate officer in the concerned registries. Such cases have to be brought up to the directorate officer for direction during the next disposal exercise.

- (g) To obtain prior agreement from the GRS Director before destruction of any government records. This is to safeguard against premature disposal of records and destruction of records having archival value. To minimize the risk of inadvertent unauthorized destruction of records during the disposal process, Section/Unit Heads should designate an officer not below the rank of Executive Officer II or equivalent to ensure that the disposal process is properly supervised and the records disposal procedures set out in **Annex D** are complied with.
- (h) To submit to DRM via ADRM a list of records pending transfer to non-government bodies for prior agreement from the GRS Director, in cases such as corporatization, privatization or outsourcing.
- (i) To put in place appropriate arrangements to ensure safe custody of records. Records should be stored in proper facilities (e.g. filing cabinets, filing racks) in a clean and dry environment. Consideration may be given to making use of GRS' records centres as an intermediate storage for inactive records not requiring frequent retrieval. To minimize the risk of losing records during bulk relocation of files, appropriate arrangement should be made during the process. These include: designating an officer not below the rank of Executive Officer II or equivalent to oversee the task; taking stock before the relocation exercise; conducting a file inventory check after relocation; documenting the inventory check and updating the new storage location immediately afterwards. Any loss or unauthorized destruction of records should be immediately reported to the DRM via ADRM and a copy of such report sent to the GRS simultaneously.
- (j) To identify vital records within their purview and propose to ADRM an action plan to protect them by making reference to the guidelines and procedures set out in GRS' Records Management Publication No. 6 "Manual on Vital Records Protection" **not later than April 2012**.
- (k) To review their records management practices regularly with a view to assess their compliance with the mandatory records management requirements and identifying areas requiring improvement. GRS will issue guidelines in this regard.

(iii) Officer-in-charge (Oi/c) of Records Registries

Oi/c of respective records registries shall execute routine mandatory records management requirements listed below in accordance with GC No. 2/2009:

- (a) To prepare and maintain an accurate inventory of records which should at least include file title, file reference number, date opened and date closed, and storage location. Such records inventory should be regularly updated to cater for change.
- (b) To apply the standard classification scheme to all their administrative records (**Annex A**) **not later than April 2012**.
- (c) To bring up and promptly dispose of time-expired records at least once every two years for all their administrative records which are covered by GARDS and for all their programme records with approved disposal schedules.
- (d) To ensure that records are stored in such a manner so as to facilitate user access and protected from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, removal, deterioration, loss or destruction.

Assistance from the GRS

6. The GRS arranges regular seminars / briefings to assist the Department in meeting the mandatory records management requirements. Staff will be informed of the details of such courses via HA e-Learning Portal when they are open for enrolment. Staff could also refer to the detailed guidelines set out in the GRS publications which are available at <http://grs.host.cgo.hksarg/index.htm#records>. Staff may also contact Senior Executive Officer (Records Management) of the GRS on 2195 7789 for matters and assistance pertaining to the mandatory records management requirements.

Enquiries

7. Enquiries arising from this Circular may be addressed to Senior Executive Officer (General) on 2761 6688 or Executive Officer (General)1 on 2761 6028.

Miss Stella WONG
for Permanent Secretary for
Transport and Housing (Housing)

Distribution

All Heads of Divisions/Sub-divisions/Sections/Units

Annex A

Standard Classification for Administrative Records in Housing Department

Tier 1				Tier 2		Tier 3	
Prefix	Division Code	Sub-division/Office Code	Section/Sub-section/Unit Code (3-5 alpha and/or numeric characters)	Schedule No. *	Classification No. *	General Subject No. #	Specific Subject No. #
HD	1- Corporate Services Division	1/ Administration Sub-division 2/ Finance Sub-division 3/ Legal Services Sub-division 4/ Information and Community Relations Sub-division 5/ Information and Technology Sub-division 6/ Management Services Sub-division 7/ Committees' Section	e.g. GADM1, HRM1, HRM2, T&DC, APPT1, GMW, TRAN FMSS, IRMSS, IBSS, FOSS CACs, CLS, LCS, PROS CCR, NEWS SS1, SYS1, SYS2 MSD1, MSD2, MSD3 COMM1, COMM2	1- Administration 2- Accommodation and Facilities 3- Equipment and Supplies 4- Finance 5- Personnel 6- Information Systems and Services	5-200/ 5-60/ 5-75/ 5-85/ 5-95/ 5-60/	1-999/	1-999
	2- Development and Construction Division (DCD)	1/ Division Administration Secretariat/DCD 2/ Project Sub-division 1 3/ Project Sub-division 2 4/ Development and Procurement Sub-division 5/ Planning Section 6/ Audit Unit	e.g. DAS A1, CE, GE, SE2, LSU, LA1 A2, A3, BS, SE1, QMU, BITU, LA2 PTSS, SHU, EMU, DS, QS, SE3, CMT, MTL, MTMU PLAN AUD	1- Administration 2- Accommodation and Facilities 3- Equipment and Supplies 4- Finance 5- Personnel 6- Information Systems and Services	5-200/ 5-60/ 5-75/ 5-85/ 5-95/ 5-60/	1-999/	1-999
	3- Estate Management Division (EMD)	1/ Division Administration Secretariat/EMD 2/ Deputy Director (Estate Management)'s Office 3/ Estate Management Sub-division 1 4/ Estate Management Sub-division 2 8/ Estate Management Sub-division 3	e.g. DAS M EM1, KE, KWH, SS4, MOU EM2, KC, TNS, T&Y, SS1, GE, SD, RD EM3, WTI, SS2, SS5, CPSS, PHRM	1- Administration 2- Accommodation and Facilities 3- Equipment and Supplies 4- Finance 5- Personnel 6- Information Systems and Services	5-200/ 5-60/ 5-75/ 5-85/ 5-95/ 5-60/	1-999/	1-999
	4- Strategy Division	1/ Housing Subsidies Sub-division 2/ Policy Support Sub-division 3/ Private Housing Sub-division 4/ Strategic Planning Sub-division	e.g. EST2, LAS, BCU, ALLO PS1, PS2 PH1, PH2 SP1, SP2, STAT1, STAT2	1- Administration 2- Accommodation and Facilities 3- Equipment and Supplies 4- Finance 5- Personnel 6- Information Systems and Services	5-200/ 5-60/ 5-75/ 5-85/ 5-95/ 5-60/	1-999/	1-999
	5- PS(H)'s Office	1/ Central Support Unit 2/ Independent Checking Unit	e.g. CSU1, CSU2 NBT, BCT, EBT, SVT, LOEU, TAU, IAU	1- Administration 2- Accommodation and Facilities 3- Equipment and Supplies 4- Finance 5- Personnel 6- Information Systems and Services	5-200/ 5-60/ 5-75/ 5-85/ 5-95/ 5-60/	1-999/	1-999

e.g. HD	1-	1/	GADM1/	5-	80/	2/	2
File Name: Meeting with Departmental Consultative Committees							
HD	2-	3/	QMU1/	4-	10/	101/	101
File Name: Accounts and Payment Records for New Works Project							
HD	3-	2/	KWH/	2-	40/	11/	11
File Name: Communication System for PSA Office							
HD	4-	4/	STAT1/	6-	15/	1/	1
File Name: Procurement of Electronic Survey System							
HD	5-	2/	LOEU/	3-	45/	1/	1
File Name: Maintenance of Photocopier							

* The classification numbers are in accordance with GRS and controlled by GRS Publication No. 3
Tier 3 of the classification is assigned and maintained by individual registry in Housing Department

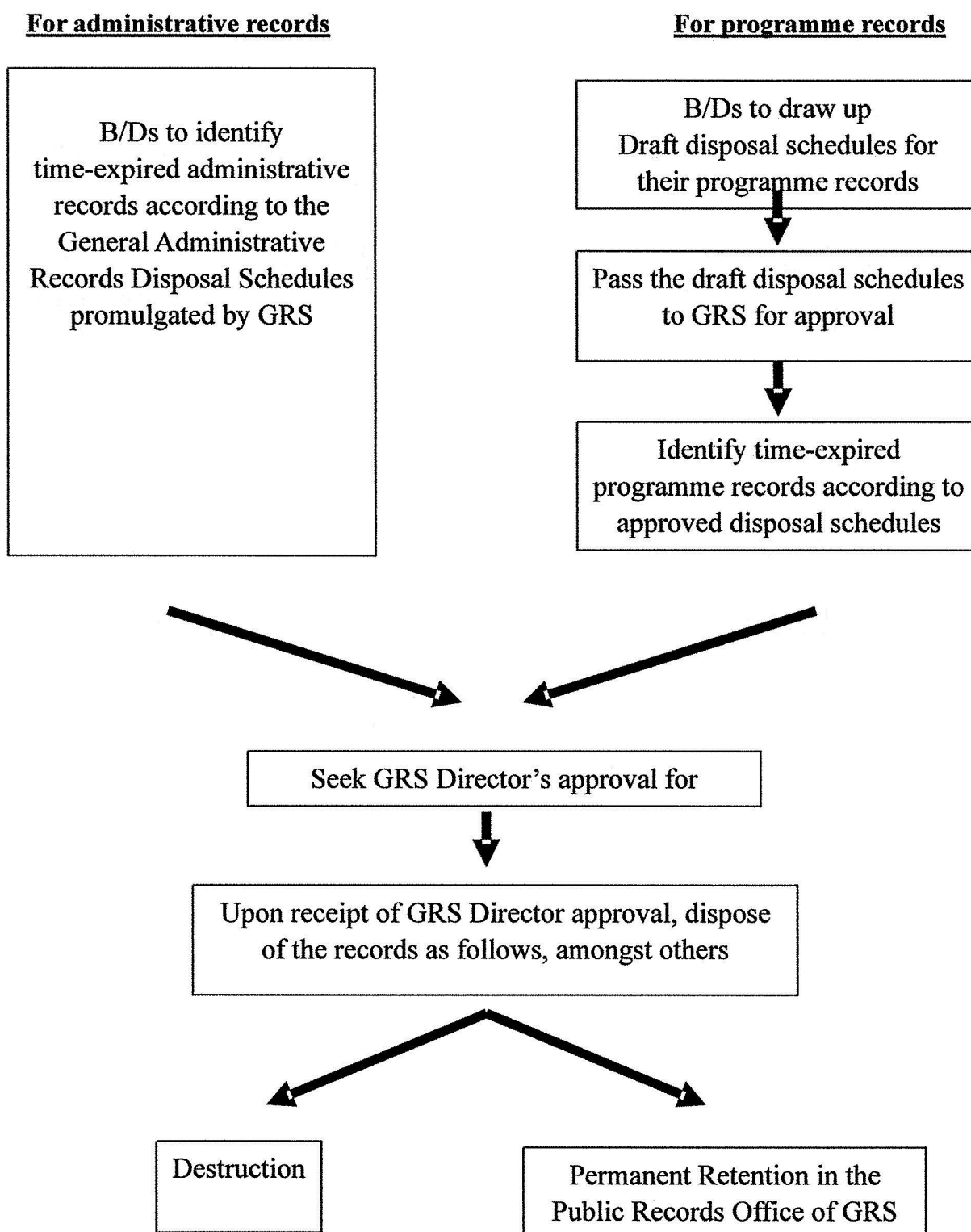
Principles in Establishing / Reviewing Records Classification Schemes

In developing a new records classification scheme or reviewing such schemes, the following principles should be taking into account -

- (a) whether programme records are separated from administrative records;
- (b) whether the scheme is systematic, logical, consistent and scalable to facilitate accurate and complete documentation of policies, procedures and decisions for the efficient carrying out of the Department's functions, activities and transactions;
- (c) whether the scheme can be used easily and the file titles are clear and unique (e.g. avoid the use of "general"/"miscellaneous") to facilitate accurate capturing and ready retrieval of records; and
- (d) whether the scheme facilitates segregation of vital records for protection and establishment of disposal schedules to satisfy retention requirement stipulated by legislation (e.g. Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance) and to separate records which need to be kept for a long period (e.g. those on policy) from those which need to be kept briefly (e.g. routine correspondence).

(Notes: The principles in this Annex are derived from paragraphs 414-420 of the Records Management Manual and paragraphs 3.9-3.12 and 3.16 of GRS' Records Management Publication No. 2 "Managing Active Records: File Management".)

Flow Chart Showing Major Steps to Dispose of Records



Procedures on Records Disposal

(a) Preparing an accurate list of files to be disposed of

For records under the custody of the Department, files to be disposed of should be physically checked against the list to ensure its accuracy. For records stored in GRS' records centres, the Department may make use of the records transfer list for the purpose of seeking GRS' agreement for disposal. The list should be updated to exclude files already retrieved from the records centres;

(b) Ensuring the completeness of files having archival value

For records kept by the Department where the relevant disposal schedule stipulates that the files should be transferred to the Public Records Office of GRS for appraisal of archival value or for permanent retention, the contents of the files should be checked to ensure that no enclosures or minute sheets are missing;

(c) Segregation of records approved for destruction

For records kept by the Department, upon receipt of GRS' approval for destruction, the subject officer should be tasked to identify the relevant records and check to ensure that records approved for destruction do not mix up with those pending approval;

(d) Documentation for accountability

The checks in (a), (b) and (c) above should be documented for accountability.

(Notes: Bureaux/departments were advised of these procedures among other measures to minimize loss and inadvertent destruction of government records in GRS' memo (1) in LM (2) in GRS RC 30/0 dated 13 May 2008.)

Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region

28 December 2006

General Circular No. 5/2006

Management of Government Records

(Note: Distribution of this Circular is Scale C. It should be brought to the attention of officers who, because of the functions of their posts, are required to take action on, or to be informed of, the Circular.)

This Circular reminds heads of bureaux and departments the importance of proper management of government records and draws their attention to good records management practices.

Proper Records Management

2. Records are valuable resources of the Government to support evidence-based decision-making, meet operational and regulatory requirements and are essential for an open and accountable government.. Good records management enhances operational efficiency and effectiveness while minimizing costs.

3. A service-wide Records Management Strategy was devised in the late 90s to help bureaux and departments improve the quality and efficiency of records service, control growth of paper records, reduce records stock and improve cost effectiveness in records management. Building on that strategy, we issued the Records Management Manual in 2001 to set out the code of best practices for the proper management of government records. After a lapse of five years, we see a need to remind colleagues of the key principles and features in our records management strategy and manual, as highlighted below –

- (a) each bureau and department should designate a **Departmental Records Manager** to oversee its records management programme. Staff members should understand their respective records management responsibilities;

- (b) records should be systematically organized by way of a logical **filing scheme** to facilitate access and retrieval. While bureaux and departments can compile their own filing schemes for their unique programme records, they should organize common administrative records in line with the standard classification scheme designed by the Government Records Service (GRS);
- (c) **records retention and disposal schedules** should be drawn up and reviewed every five years to assist timely disposal of unwanted records;
- (d) bureaux and departments are reminded to seek the **prior consent** of the Government Records Service Director before they destroy and dispose of any government records;
- (e) records appraised to have **archival value** should be transferred to the Public Records Office of GRS;
- (f) **inactive records** (i.e. those with a low retrieval rate) should be stored off-site in low rental premises such as the records centres operated by GRS or microfilmed with the assistance of GRS; and
- (g) vital records should be **protected** by way of duplication or off-site storage to ensure uninterrupted operation of major business functions.

— A gist of the good records management practices is at **Appendix I**. The Records Management Manual and relevant records management publications (as listed in **Appendix II**) can be accessed at CCGO website: <http://grs.host.ccgohksarg/>.

Management of Electronic Mail

4. We promulgated on 10 October 2001 the Guideline on the Management of Electronic Mail to help bureaux and departments identify, create, file and manage e-mail records so that sufficient and accurate evidence of official business and activities will be retained for legal, operational, accountability and archival purposes. Colleagues are reminded to adhere to the Guideline, also available at the afore-mentioned CCGO website.

Support Services on Records Management

5. GRS provides a range of services to assist bureaux and departments to improve records management. These include –

- (a) guidelines and procedures on records management;
- (b) records management training and advice;
- (c) records appraisal to determine retention requirements;
- (d) services and facilities for the intermediate storage of inactive records and permanent storage of records of archival value;
- (e) microfilming services including advice on microfilming, microfilming of source documents, microfilm storage facilities and disposal of filmed source documents and microfilm; and
- (f) study on electronic records management through a pilot project on electronic record-keeping system.

— The responsible officers for these services are listed at **Appendix III**.

Enquiries

6. Enquiries on this Circular may be addressed to the Government Records Service Director at 2195 7781 or to relevant officers covered in Appendix 'III.

(Miss Elizabeth Tse)
Director of Administration

c.c. Judiciary Administrator

Good Records Management Practices
(summarized from the Records Management Manual (RMM)
and records management publications)

Benefits of good records management [para. 101 of RMM]

1. Good records management under a comprehensive records management programme can bring the following benefits -
 - (a) accurate and complete documentation of the policies, procedures, decisions, functions, activities and transactions of the Government;
 - (b) effective control of the quality and quantity of government records;
 - (c) streamlining activities, systems and processes of the creation, distribution, use, maintenance and disposal of records for efficient and cost-effective operation of the Government; and
 - (d) adequate and proper identification, protection and preservation of records valuable to the Government and the community.

Definition of records, records management and record-keeping system [paras. 105, 115 and 402 of RMM]

2. A record is any recorded information or data in any physical format or media created or received by an organization during its course of official business and kept as **evidence** of policies, decisions, procedures, functions, activities and transactions.
3. Records management refers to the planning, directing, organizing, controlling, reviewing, training and other managerial activities involved with respect to the creation, classification and indexing, distribution, handling, use, tracking, storage, retrieval, protection and disposal of records to achieve adequate and proper documentation of an organization's policies, decisions and transactions as well as its efficient and cost-effective operation.

4. A record-keeping system is a manual or automated information system in which records are captured and organized to facilitate their access and use, disposal and preservation.

Departmental Records Manager [paras. 210-219 of RMM]

5. To assist the head of a bureau or department to establish and implement a proper departmental records management programme, a Departmental Records Manager, who is normally expected to be the Departmental Secretary or an officer holding equivalent position, should be appointed.

6. He/She should oversee the departmental records management programme according to established government policies and procedures, encourage the cooperation of personnel in daily handling and use of records across the organization, and coordinate with GRS and other bureaux and departments on records management matters.

Records creation [paras. 300-318 of RMM]

7. Records are created and captured to meet policy, operational, legal and financial purposes. Bureaux and departments should identify their business functions and assess their information needs so as to create and capture adequate but not excessive records.

8. The captured records should be complete: a record contains not only the content but also the structure (e.g. the structure of an e-mail record covers its header, body, attachments and corresponding reply) and contextual information (e.g. the name of the organization and the person who prepared and transmitted the record, the date and/or time it was received) necessary to document an official activity or transaction. It should be possible to understand a record in the context of the organizational processes that produced it and of other linked records.

Records classification [paras. 400-449 of RMM]

9. To facilitate the identification and retrieval of records, records should be systematically organized according to a records classification or

filing scheme, which is a plan for logical arrangement of records according to the subject (e.g. procurement of cleansing service) or functions/activities (e.g. human resource management, financial management) for which they were created. GRS has developed a subject filing scheme for common administrative records¹ for adoption by bureaux and departments (see **Records Management Publication No. 3** for details). For programme records² which are unique to each bureau or department, the latter should make reference to the procedures set out in **Publication No. 3** to develop its own filing scheme.

10. According to Security Regulations, records have to be classified according to their level of sensitivity. Different protection measures have to be adopted to handle records of different security classifications.

Records retrieval and access [paras. 450-482 of RMM]

11. Records should be accessed and used by authorized users taking into account their information need and security classification of the records.

Records storage [paras. 500-523 of RMM]

12. Records should be stored in such a manner so as to facilitate user access and protected from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, removal, deterioration, loss or destruction. They should be stored in a secure environment protected from dirt, water, insects and rodents, smoke, chemical exhausts, and away from direct sunlight.

Records disposal [paras. 600-635 of RMM]

13. Records accumulate and grow in the course of business. If records are not properly and systematically disposed of, useful and unwanted records will mix together making records retrieval difficult and time-consuming and

¹ Administrative records are those records created or received during the course of administrative activities that deal with finance, accommodation, procurement and supply, establishment, personnel and other general administrative activities. Records of this nature are common to all bureaux and departments.

² Programme records (operational or functional records) are records created or received by a bureau or department whilst carrying out the primary functions, activities or missions for which the agency was established. Records of this nature are unique to each bureau and department.

hence affect operational efficiency. Furthermore, as records continue to build up, more resources will have to be set aside to meet storage needs.

14. In this regard, bureaux and departments should plan to dispose of their unwanted records in a systematic manner. To dispose of administrative records, bureaux and departments should adopt the set of general administrative records disposal schedules developed by GRS (see **Records Management Publication No. 4** for details). For programme records, bureaux and departments should develop records retention and disposal schedules which stipulate the length of time that records should be retained and the ways of disposal (e.g. destruction, intermediate storage at records centre and then destruction, microfilming and then destruction, permanent retention) having regard to the administrative, operational, fiscal and legal requirements and archival values of the records. Please refer to **Records Management Publication No. 1** on development of records retention and disposal schedules.

Records having archival value [paras. 636-639 of RMM]

15. Some records may contain information having archival value which forms part of the memory of the community. GRS is committed to preserving such records and material of enduring value for the benefit of the people of Hong Kong. Bureaux and departments should transfer their records having archival value to GRS according to the respective disposal schedules. To avoid destruction of records having archival value, bureaux and departments should **not** dispose of their records without prior consent of GRS.

Managing inactive records [Records Management Publications Nos. 1 and 5]

16. Inactive records with low retrieval rate (e.g. those not retrieved in the last two years or only referred to at a frequency of not higher than three references per linear metre per month) are recommended to be stored off-site (e.g. in records centres operated by GRS) before final disposal to minimize storage cost. Bureaux and departments may also consider seeking the assistance of GRS to microfilm inactive records which have to be retained for not less than seven years to save storage space. Records centres providing low cost intermediate storage of inactive records are popular among bureaux and departments and are reaching their full capacity. Records for transfer to the records centres should be covered by updated disposal schedules. To maximize

the utilization of records centres, bureaux and departments should arrange timely disposal of the records stored therein in accordance with the relevant disposal schedules.

Vital records protection [paras. 700-730 of RMM]

17. Vital records are those records containing information essential to the continued and effective operation of an organization during and after an emergency or disaster. Bureaux and departments should identify and protect (e.g. through duplication and/or off-site storage) their vital records to improve their ability in managing crisis situations, ensure uninterrupted operation of major business functions during and after an emergency or a disaster, mitigate loss and damage, and protect the legal and financial rights and the interests of the clients they serve.

Managing records for administrative changes [paras. 800-838 of RMM]

18. Bureaux and departments may need to transfer the custody or ownership of their records due to administrative changes (e.g. establishment, transfer, deletion or outsourcing of functions). The bureaux and departments concerned should make preparation for such transfer (e.g. disposal of unwanted records, updating the filing scheme, and compilation of a list of records to be transferred). Prior concurrence of GRS should be obtained for any transfer of records outside the Government.

Monitoring records management [paras. 900-917 of RMM]

19. Bureaux and departments should monitor and review their records management function, including the operation of the record-keeping system and implementation of good records management practices regularly every five years or more often.

Source

20. The RMM is available at CCGO website:
<http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg./>

**Records Management Publications
to be used in conjunction with the Records Management Manual**

Publication No. 1 – A Practical Guide to Records Scheduling and Disposal

1. This publication provides a detailed procedural guide on the drawing up of retention and disposal schedules and explains the operation and services of the records centres operated by the Government Records Service (GRS).

Publication No. 2 – Managing Active Records: File Management

2. This publication details the principles, standards and procedures in the management of active records kept in a paper-based record-keeping system. Major topics include the roles of registries and records officers, records grouping, file coding, handling of incoming and outgoing correspondence, file movement control, making up and closing of files.

Publication No. 3 – Subject Filing

3. This publication establishes a comprehensive classification scheme for administrative records, which are grouped into six schedules viz. Administration, Accommodation and Facilities, Equipment and Supplies, Finance, Personnel as well as Information Systems and Services. It also provides guidelines on the development of a classification scheme for programme records.

Publication No. 4 – General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules

4. As a sequel to Publication No. 3 and using the same classification scheme of administrative records, this publication sets out retention and disposal schedules of administrative records for adoption by bureaux and departments.

Publication No. 5 – The Microfilming User Manual

5. This publication provides guidelines, standards and procedures for microfilming government records and the retrieval and maintenance of microfilm, as well as information on the service of the Government Microfilming Centre of GRS.

Publication No. 6 – Manual on Vital Records Protection

6. This publication identifies common hazards to records, explains the importance of vital records protection, provides guidelines on selection of appropriate protection methods, and enumerates the steps in establishing a vital records protection programme.

Publication No. 7 – Checklist for Proper Records Management Practices

7. Structured in a simple self-assessment format, this publication aims to provide a useful tool for planning, conducting and evaluating records management activities.

Publication No. 8 – 中文檔案管理指引

8. This publication provides a practical guide on the proper handling and filing of Chinese documents in a bilingual environment. Major topics include the convention of writing Chinese documents, their formats and recording of Chinese documents onto minute sheets.

Guideline on the Management of Electronic Mail

9. This publication provides guidance and instructions to help bureaux and departments identify and manage e-mail records so that sufficient and accurate evidence of official business will be retained. It also standardizes the “print-and-file” practice to ensure the appropriate capturing of e-mail records in the paper-based record-keeping environment.

Handbook on Records Management

10. The handbook aims to provide Departmental Records Managers and their assistants with a total records management concept, together with the principles and good practices for improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of records management systems.

Source

11. Full details on the publications are available at CCGO website:
<http://grs.host.ccgo.hksarg/>.

Appendix III

Records Management Services provided by GRS

Service	Responsible Officer	Tel No.
Records Management Advice & Training	CEO (Records Management and Administration)	2195 7818
	SEO (Records Management)	2195 7789
Records Disposal and Records Centres	SEO (Records Management)	2460 3760
Records Appraisal and Transfer	Archivist (Public Records)	2195 7782
Government Microfilming Centre	Curator (Preservation Service)	2195 7808
Electronic Records Management	CEO (Record Systems Development)	2195 7790

22 April 2009

General Circular No. 2/2009

Mandatory Records Management Requirements

(Note: Distribution of this Circular is Scale C. It should be brought to the attention of officers who, because of the functions of their posts, are required to take action on, or to be informed of, the Circular.)

This Circular sets out mandatory requirements on the management of government records. It should be read in conjunction with General Circular No. 5/2006 entitled "Management of Government Records" which contains comprehensive advice on good records management.

Introduction of Mandatory Records Management Requirements

2. Records¹ are valuable resources of the Government to support evidence-based decision-making, meet operational and regulatory requirements and are essential for an open and accountable government. Good records management enhances operational efficiency and effectiveness while minimizing costs. Records management is therefore an important function of bureaux and departments (B/Ds). In addition, the Government is committed to identifying and preserving government records having archival value so as to enhance public awareness of Hong Kong's documentary heritage. Heads of B/Ds should accord appropriate priority and resources to implement a proper records management programme throughout their organizations. B/Ds should also cooperate with the Government Records Service (GRS) to ensure proper preservation of records and materials with archival value.

3. To promote best practices for the management of government records in B/Ds, we published the **Records Management Manual (RMM)** and the

¹ A record is any recorded information or data in any physical format or media created or received by an organization during its course of official business and kept as evidence of policies, decisions, procedures, functions, activities and transactions.

Guideline on the Management of Electronic Mail in 2001 and a series of records management publications².

4. Since then most B/Ds have already established a records management programme. It is now an opportune time to introduce a number of mandatory and essential records management requirements in order to demonstrate Government's commitment to practise good records management and preserve archival records. Opportunity is also taken to specify the level of responsible officers in important record management activities to ensure that these activities are properly attended to in B/Ds.

Designation of Departmental Records Manager

5. The **Departmental Records Manager (DRM)** of each B/D has a key role to play in records management and a sufficiently senior officer should be designated to take up the responsibility. The normal practice is for the Departmental Secretary to serve as DRM. As a general guideline, an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent should be designated as the DRM to ensure that there is adequate attention from senior management on records management. B/Ds with their DRMs assumed by officers below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent should designate another officer at the appropriate rank as DRM and advise the GRS of the change within two months. The GRS should also be informed of any replacement of their DRM as soon as this takes place, and in any case not later than two weeks after the replacement. A list of major duties of the DRM is at **Appendix I**. As records management is a joint effort, all officers in a B/D should cooperate with their DRM, particularly in complying with the mandatory requirements set out in this Circular.

Maintaining an Accurate Records Inventory

6. An accurate inventory of records is a prerequisite for good records management because it facilitates efficient control and retrieval of records and provides basic information to support records management activities (e.g. establishing records disposal schedules). Accordingly, it is incumbent upon all B/Ds to **prepare and maintain an accurate inventory of records** if they have not already done so. Such records inventory should be regularly updated to cater for changes. A records inventory on files should at least include the following information –

² The Records Management Manual, the Guideline on the Management of Electronic Mail and other records management publications, such as Publication No. 1 "A Practical Guide to Records Scheduling and Disposal", Publication No. 2 "Managing Active Records: File Management", Publication No. 3 "Subject Filing" and Publication No. 4 "General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules" can be accessed at <http://grs.host.cgo.hksarg/>.

- (a) file title;
- (b) file reference number;
- (c) date opened and date closed; and
- (d) storage location (e.g. room/ floor).

Proper Management of Electronic Mail Records

7. Apart from paper records, e-mails created or received in the course of official business should be kept as records to serve as evidence of such business. E-mail records include, for example, internal and external communication relating to the functions and activities of the B/D, information pertinent to the decision making process, formulation of policies and procedures and transaction of business. In case of doubt as to whether a particular e-mail should be kept as record, an officer should seek guidance from his supervisor. The use of electronic recordkeeping system for keeping electronic records is being studied by GRS together with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Efficiency Unit. In the meantime and unless otherwise agreed by GRS, e-mail correspondence should be **“printed-and-filed”** for record purposes, i.e. subject officers should arrange to print an e-mail record directly from the e-mail software³ for filing in an appropriate paper-based file similar to other records.

Records Classification

Establishment of new records classification schemes

8. To facilitate a wide range of records management activities, including identification, capturing and retrieval of records, security and access control, records should be systematically organized according to a **records classification scheme** (also called a file plan), which is a plan for logical arrangement of records according to one or more of the following: business functions, activities and contents of the records. It includes a coding system expressed in symbols (e.g. alphabetical, numerical and alpha-numerical) to show the logical relationship amongst the records. An effective records classification scheme is conducive to effective records management. As a requirement to ensure quality, **new classification schemes for a B/D** such as those necessitated by re-organisation **should from now on be approved by its DRM**. The DRM's approval is also required for records classification schemes to be adopted for a new office, irrespective of whether this is by way of creating new schemes or extending existing schemes. Before giving approval, the DRM should have regard to the principles set out in **Appendix II** which are derived from existing guidelines on content classification contained in paragraphs 414-420 of the RMM and guidelines on records classification contained in paragraphs 3.9-3.12 and

³ If an e-mail record is exported or copied to other software for printing, its structure (e.g. e-mail header and body) which affects understanding of the information contained therein may not be accurately presented.

3.16 of GRS' Records Management Publication No. 2 "Managing Active Records: File Management".

Administrative records

9. Administrative records are records created or received during the course of day-to-day administrative activities that deal with finance, accommodation, procurement and supply, establishment, personnel and other general administrative activities. Records of this nature are common to B/Ds. The GRS has promulgated a standard classification scheme for administrative records, which provides standard primary subject terms on administrative activities to help B/Ds achieve a higher efficiency and accuracy in organizing common administrative records and in disposing of such records. The standard classification scheme and the standard disposal schedules for administrative records are detailed respectively in GRS' Records Management Publication No. 3 "Subject Filing" and Publication No. 4 "General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules". While B/Ds may add secondary, tertiary and other lower level terms under the primary terms to suit their circumstances, they are required to seek GRS' prior agreement for addition of a new primary term to the standard classification scheme, so that timely action can be taken to establish a corresponding disposal schedule.

10. Since the introduction of the standard classification scheme in 1994, B/Ds have been adopting the standard scheme gradually to manage their administrative records. To reap the full benefits set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 above, B/Ds which have yet to **adopt the standard classification scheme for all their administrative records** are required to do so without further delay and, in any event, **not later than April 2012**. For the few B/Ds which have yet to be covered by GRS' records management studies, they should comply with this requirement three years after completion of the studies.

Programme records

11. Programme records are records created or received by a B/D whilst carrying out the primary functions, activities or mission for which the B/D was established. Records of this nature are unique to each B/D. B/Ds should make reference to the procedures set out in GRS' Records Management Publication No. 3 to develop its own classification scheme for programme records.

Regular review of records classification schemes

12. A records classification scheme allows modifications such as addition of new records series to cater for changing circumstances. To ensure that each scheme remains effective to cope with changes over time and to identify scope for improvement, the DRM is required to **review the records classification**

— schemes every two to three years, having regard to the principles set out in **Appendix II**. The results of the review and any follow-up action taken should be documented. Some large departments may need to designate staff at regional/district level to conduct such reviews. In such cases, the designated staff should not be below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent, and the DRM will remain responsible for the overall co-ordination and effectiveness of the review.

Records Disposal

Establishing disposal schedules for all programme records

13. It is important to establish **disposal schedules** to ensure systematic planning and orderly implementation of records disposal after records have been kept the right length of time to meet the purposes they are created and in compliance with legal or statutory requirements. This will facilitate subsequent transfer of inactive records to GRS' records centres for intermediate storage, transfer of archival records to the Public Records Office of GRS for permanent retention or destruction of unwanted records.

14. To dispose of **administrative records**, B/Ds should adopt the set of disposal schedules developed by GRS and detailed in GRS' Records Management Publication No. 4 "General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules". For **programme records**, B/Ds should, in consultation with GRS, develop **disposal schedules** which stipulate the length of time that records should be retained and the ways of disposal (e.g. destruction; intermediate storage at records centre and then destruction; microfilming and then destruction; permanent retention) having regard to the administrative, operational, fiscal and legal requirements and archival values of the records⁴.

15. With experience gained in the disposal of their administrative and programme records and in establishing disposal schedules for many of their programme records, B/Ds should now be in a position to establish disposal schedules for all their programme records. Accordingly, **B/Ds are required to prepare and forward to GRS draft disposal schedules covering all their programme records not later than April 2012**. These draft disposal schedules should be endorsed by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent. GRS will consider the draft disposal schedules and discuss with the B/D concerned regarding the proposed retention period and disposal action with a view to finalizing the disposal schedules. Finalized disposal schedules should be signed by an officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent in the B/D concerned. For new series of programme records created

⁴ Chapter 4 of GRS' Records Management Publication No. 1 "A Practical Guide to Records Scheduling and Disposal" sets out procedures on drafting disposal schedules for programme records.

after April 2012, B/Ds should forward draft disposal schedules to GRS within a period of two years.

Transferring records having archival value to GRS

16. Some records may contain information having archival value (as appraised by the Public Records Office of GRS and indicated in approved disposal schedules) which forms part of the memory of the community. **B/Ds should transfer their records having archival value to the Public Records Office of GRS according to the respective disposal schedules.**

Disposal of time-expired records

17. Regular disposal of records facilitates easy retrieval of records in active use, and minimizes costs for maintaining and storing records. Accordingly, it is necessary to arrange prompt disposal of time-expired records, i.e. inactive records which have been retained for the period specified in the “General Administrative Records Disposal Schedules (GARDS)” for *administrative records* or the approved disposal schedules for *programme records* and are ready for disposal. As a requirement, B/Ds should from now on **dispose of time-expired records at least once every two years** for all their administrative records, which are covered by GARDS, and for all their programme records with approved disposal schedules. In the interest of proper internal control, disposal of records, including destruction of records, should be considered and endorsed in writing by a senior officer not below the rank of Senior Executive Officer or equivalent in the B/D. The records disposal process in respect of administrative records and programme records is shown in the flow chart at **Appendix III** for reference. If there are valid reasons to defer the transfer of time-expired records having archival value or potential archival value to the Public Records Office of GRS for retention or appraisal by more than two years, they should be set out in writing for agreement by a directorate officer in the concerned B/D. Such cases have to be brought up to the directorate officer for direction during the next disposal exercise.

Prior consent before destruction of records

18. **B/Ds must obtain the prior agreement of the GRS Director before they destroy any government records.** This is to safeguard against premature disposal of records and destruction of records having archival value. GRS will process B/Ds’ requests as soon as possible.

19. To minimize the risk of inadvertent unauthorized destruction of records during the disposal process, B/Ds should designate an officer not below the rank of Executive Officer II or equivalent to **ensure that the disposal process is**

— properly supervised and the records disposal procedures as set out in Appendix IV are complied with.

Transferring government records to non-government bodies

20. In case a B/D needs to transfer its records to non-government bodies due to such reasons as corporatization, privatization or outsourcing, the DRM should send a list of records pending transfer to the GRS Director for prior agreement so that appropriate arrangements can be made for records having archival value. The list should group the records by disposal schedule and include the information set out in paragraph 6(a) to (c) above, i.e. file title, file reference number, date opened and date closed. **No government records should be transferred outside the Government unless with the prior agreement of the GRS Director.**

Proper Custody and Storage of Records

21. B/Ds should **put in place appropriate arrangements to ensure the safe custody of records.** To minimize the risk of losing records during bulk relocation of files, appropriate arrangement should be made during the process. These include: designating an officer not below the rank of Executive Officer II or equivalent to oversee the task; taking stock before the relocation exercise; conducting a file inventory check after relocation; documenting the inventory check and updating the new storage location immediately afterwards.

22. Any loss or unauthorized destruction of records should be immediately reported to the DRM and a copy of such report sent to GRS simultaneously. Upon receipt of such report, the DRM should –

- (a) ascertain the facts and identify the circumstances leading to the loss/ unauthorized destruction;
- (b) reconstruct the records where necessary;
- (c) take steps to prevent recurrence;
- (d) consider whether any disciplinary action or other administrative action is necessary; and
- (e) report his findings and actions on (a) to (d) above to GRS within three months.

23. Records should be stored in such a manner so as to facilitate user access and protected from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, removal, deterioration,

loss or destruction. At present, most government records are in paper form. Paper deteriorates rapidly in an environment of high temperature and high humidity. Furthermore, mould growth on paper is a health hazard to staff. Records should therefore be stored in proper facilities (e.g. filing cabinets, filing racks) in a clean and dry environment. Consideration may be given to making use of GRS' records centres as an intermediate storage for inactive records not requiring frequent retrieval.

Protecting Vital Records

24. Vital records are those records containing information essential to the continued and effective operation of an organization during and after an emergency or disaster. B/Ds should **identify and protect their vital records** by way of duplication or off-site storage to ensure uninterrupted operation of major business functions. For B/Ds who have yet to take action in this regard, they are required to **draw up an action plan not later than April 2012** to establish and implement a vital records protection programme⁵.

Regular Review of Records Management Practices

25. To ensure that their records management programme is functioning effectively, B/Ds should review their records management practices regularly. The review should include -

- (a) assessment of compliance with the mandatory records management requirements set out in this Circular (e.g. progress in implementing the standard classification scheme for administrative records, establishing draft disposal schedules for programme records etc.); and
- (b) identification of areas requiring improvement with regard to desirable best practices and formulation of plans to implement improvement measures.

26. To assist B/Ds in this task, GRS will issue a further guideline setting out the scope and issues for review. The completed review should be endorsed by a directorate officer and returned to GRS.

Summary of Requirements

27. In sum, B/Ds are required to -

⁵ Detailed guidelines and procedures for establishing a vital records protection programme are given in GRS' Records Management Publication No. 6 "Manual on Vital Records Protection".

- (a) review whether there should be any change to staff designated as the DRM and inform GRS of any replacement of the DRM (para. 5);
- (b) prepare and maintain an accurate records inventory (para. 6);
- (c) print-and-file e-mail records (para. 7);
- (d) ensure that any new records classification scheme is approved by the DRM (para. 8);
- (e) adopt the standard classification scheme designed by GRS for all administrative records not later than April 2012 (para. 10);
- (f) review records classification schemes every two to three years (para. 12);
- (g) establish draft disposal schedules for all existing programme records not later than April 2012 (para. 15);
- (h) transfer records having archival value to GRS according to the respective disposal schedules (para. 16);
- (i) dispose of time-expired records at least once every two years, with disposal of records considered and endorsed in writing by a senior officer (para. 17);
- (j) obtain prior agreement from the GRS Director before destruction of records (para. 18);
- (k) ensure that the records disposal process is properly supervised (para. 19);
- (l) obtain prior agreement from the GRS Director before transferring government records to non-government bodies (para. 20);
- (m) put in place arrangements to ensure proper custody and storage of records, and investigate any loss or unauthorized destruction of records (paras. 21-23);
- (n) draw up an action plan not later than April 2012 to identify and protect vital records (para. 24); and
- (o) review records management practices regularly (paras. 25-26).

28. In addition to the DRM, B/Ds may consider designating appropriate staff to ensure the compliance of the mandatory records management requirements set out in this Circular.

Assistance from GRS

29. Enquiries arising from this Circular may be addressed to Chief Executive Officer (Records Management and Administration) on 2195 7818 or Senior Executive Officer (Records Management) on 2195 7789. GRS will arrange seminars / briefings to assist B/Ds in meeting the requirements set out in this Circular.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Mak', with a stylized, cursive script.

(Miss Jennifer Mak)
Director of Administration

c.c. Judiciary Administrator

Appendix I

Major Duties of Departmental Records Manager

- (a) Ensure that the design of the recordkeeping system, the choice of equipment and the use of resources and space are as efficient and cost-effective as possible;
- (b) Establish, implement and document departmental records management practices and procedures according to the guidelines and instructions of the GRS;
- (c) Provide records management staff with appropriate training and guidance to supplement those provided by GRS, having regard to the operational needs of the B/D;
- (d) Appoint Assistant Departmental Records Manager(s), where necessary, to monitor records management routines;
- (e) Introduce the use of technology in a cost-beneficial manner to any aspect of the records management function that improves operation of the organization and helps achieve the records management policy of the government;
- (f) Use GRS' records centres as far as practicable to store, service and dispose of inactive records;
- (g) Facilitate records appraisal and records access review conducted by the Public Records Office of GRS and ensure prompt and systematic transfer of archival records to the Public Records Office for preservation;
- (h) Identify and protect vital records so as to ensure their availability in the event of any emergency or disaster;
- (i) Foster cooperation between records management personnel and other staff to facilitate the most effective management of departmental records;
- (j) Cooperate with GRS in evaluating and improving the effectiveness of the records management programme on a regular basis;
- (k) Approve new records classification schemes and review records classification schemes every two to three years;

- (l) Conduct investigation into cases involving loss or unauthorized destruction of records, take appropriate follow-up action, and report findings to GRS; and
- (m) Consult GRS when records management advice is required.

(Notes: This list is adapted from Appendix C to the Records Management Manual, with items (k) and (l) added to reflect the new duties arising from this Circular.)

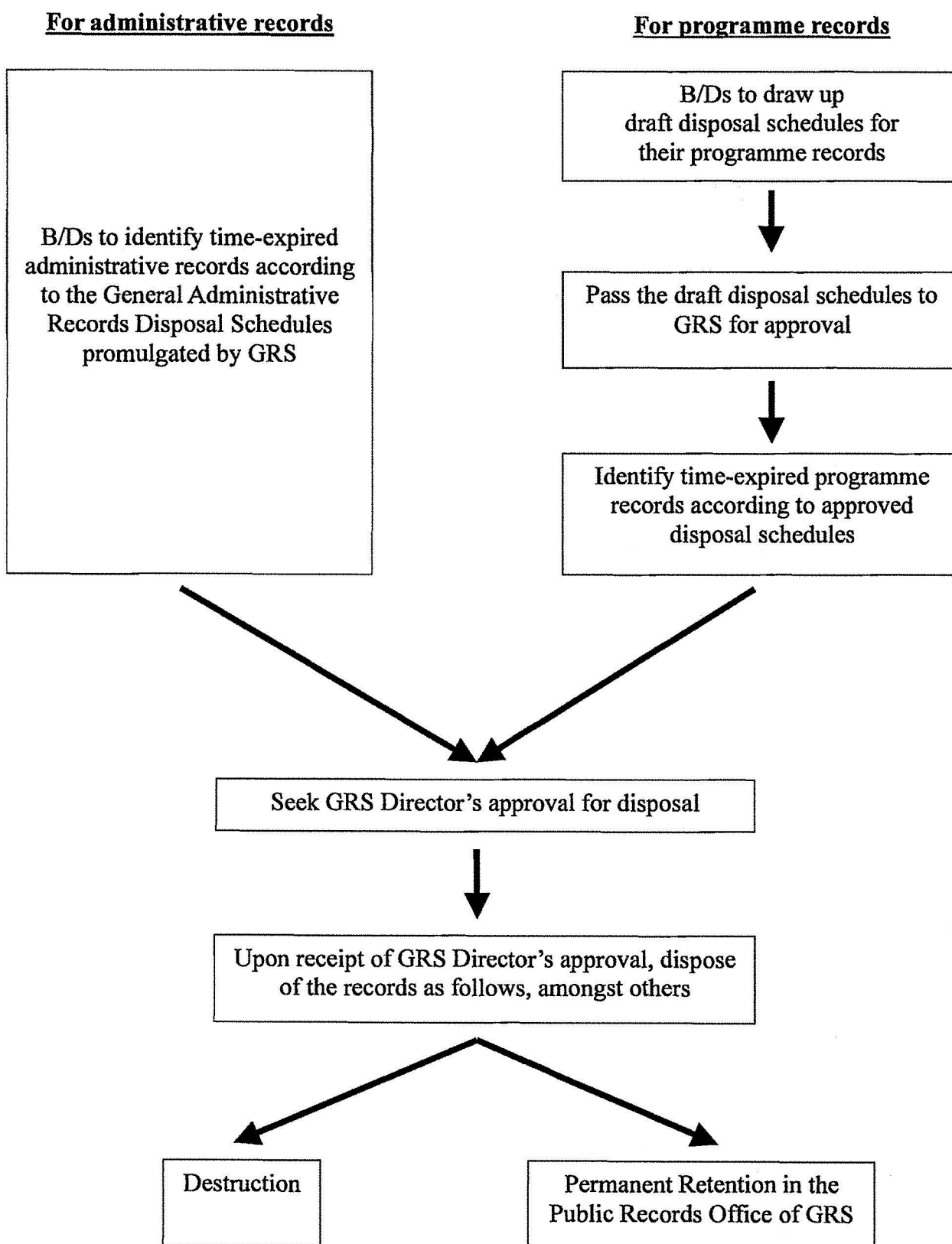
Principles in Establishing / Reviewing Records Classification Schemes

The Departmental Records Manager is required to have regard to the following in approving a new records classification scheme or reviewing records classification schemes -

- (a) whether programme records are separated from administrative records;
- (b) whether the scheme is systematic, logical, consistent and scalable to facilitate accurate and complete documentation of policies, procedures and decisions for the efficient carrying out of the B/D's functions, activities and transactions;
- (c) whether the scheme can be used easily and the file titles are clear and unique (e.g. avoid the use of "general"/"miscellaneous") to facilitate accurate capturing and ready retrieval of records; and
- (d) whether the scheme facilitates segregation of vital records for protection and establishment of disposal schedules to satisfy retention requirement stipulated by legislation (e.g. Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance) and to separate records which need to be kept for a long period (e.g. those on policy) from those which need to be kept briefly (e.g. routine correspondence).

(Notes: The principles in this Appendix are derived from paragraphs 414-420 of the Records Management Manual and paragraphs 3.9-3.12 and 3.16 of GRS' Records Management Publication No. 2 "Managing Active Records: File Management".)

Flow Chart Showing Major Steps to Dispose of Records



Procedures on Records Disposal

(a) Preparing an accurate list of files to be disposed of

For records under the custody of B/Ds, files to be disposed of should be physically checked against the list to ensure its accuracy. For records stored in GRS' records centres, B/Ds may make use of the records transfer list for the purpose of seeking GRS' agreement for disposal. The list should be updated to exclude files already retrieved from the records centres.

(b) Ensuring the completeness of files having archival value

For records kept by B/Ds where the relevant disposal schedule stipulates that the files should be transferred to the Public Records Office of GRS for appraisal of archival value or for permanent retention, the contents of the files should be checked to ensure that no enclosures or minute sheets are missing.

(c) Segregation of records approved for destruction

For records kept by B/Ds, upon receipt of GRS' approval for destruction, an officer should be tasked to identify the relevant records and check to ensure that records approved for destruction do not mix up with those pending approval.

(d) Documentation for accountability

The checks in (a), (b) and (c) above should be documented for accountability.

(Notes: Bureaux/departments were advised of these procedures among other measures to minimize loss and inadvertent destruction of government records in GRS' memo (1) in LM (2) in GRS RC 30/0 dated 13 May 2008.)

At the public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held on 13 January 2017, we provided members with further information in relation to Part 5 of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report (the Audit Report) on the "Replacement of Laundry Pole-holders". In response to enquiries raised by the PAC in its letter dated 13 January 2017, we provide our reply as follows:

(II) Replacement of laundry pole-holders

- (g) The laundry racks under the 2004-2005 Subsidy Scheme (the Scheme) were installed more than 10 years ago. All applications and records of laundry rack installation under the Scheme were kept in respective Estate Management Offices (EMOs).

In order to project the number of racks in Phase 2 under the Scheme, HD compiled statistics on the number of applications received from tenants for each estate in 2004. Such information was consolidated in Estate Management Division Instruction No. P11/2004 issued on 2 September 2004. After that, HD had not conducted similar statistical exercise. Therefore, statistics on aggregate number of laundry racks installed under Phase 2 of the Scheme were not readily available. Nevertheless, the records of laundry rack installation of each estate have been kept in respective EMOs.

During replacement of laundry pole-holders in 2014, HD has taken various measures to enhance the record keeping and work progress monitoring in respect of laundry rack installation and sealing-up of the pole-holders. Project teams in respective EMOs were required to update and report the progress of work regularly. The information was then consolidated to establish a database with records of laundry rack installation to facilitate future monitoring.

Upon completion of Batch I of the Laundry Rack Replacement Programme, HD will review the effectiveness of the current monitoring mechanism.

- (h) There were seven fatalities out of these eight casualties.
- (i) HA takes proactive and pragmatic approach to enhance the existing laundry facilities of PRH estates whenever resources allow. In some Estate Improvement Programmes, the proposal of comprehensive replacement of pole-holders with laundry racks by

HD free of charge as landlord's provision was welcomed by tenants and other stakeholders. Therefore, in 2014 HD conducted a review of laundry facilities and launched a programme for replacement of laundry pole-holders.

- (j) As at 31 December 2016, there were completion delays in three works contracts which were mainly due to the contractors' deficiencies in works management. The following actions were therefore taken against the contractors concerned under the provisions of the contracts respectively:

Contractor	Number of Contract Warning Letter issued	Adverse Report issued	Liquidated Damages claimed
Contract "A"	4	1	Yes
Contract "B"	2	Nil	Yes
Contract "C"	Nil	Nil	Yes



水務署
Water Supplies Department

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Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Hong Kong

電子郵遞
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電話
Telephone 2829 4400

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Facsimile 2827 8400

檔號
Reference (34) in WSD TC 43/2016
Your ref : CB4/PAC/R67

22 December 2016

Mr Anthony CHU
Clerk
Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr CHU,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67

**Maintenance and safety-related improvements
of public rental housing flats**

Thank you for your letter of 14 December 2016 requesting for supplementary information arising from the Public Accounts Committee's public hearing held on 10 December 2016.

I have the pleasure to provide the requested information using the same paragraph referencing of your letter as follows.

- (a) Inter-departmental meetings chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) were held amongst

representatives from the Housing Department (HD), the Water Supplies Department (WSD), the Government Laboratory (GL) and the Department of Health (DH). The main purpose of these meetings was to review water sampling test results and deliberate and decide the follow-up actions required. In general, before the inter-departmental meetings, WSD would submit water sampling test results to members of the meeting. After the water sampling results of respective public rental housing (PRH) developments were concluded at the meetings, either press conferences would be held or press releases issued (normally on the same day) to inform the public and tenants of the Affected PRH developments of the updated situation of lead in drinking water incident in the PRH developments including the number of water samples taken and number of non-compliant samples (if any) found in the drinking water of the respective PRH developments. From July to August 2015 when a number of Affected PRH developments were identified, it was a norm that oral reports were made to the relevant bureau heads before the press conferences were held or press releases issued. Thereafter, when no further Affected PRH developments were identified and when water sampling tests were carried out in PRH developments completed before 2005, relevant bureau heads were kept updated instantly via press releases which were issued on the same day after the relevant inter-departmental meetings were held.

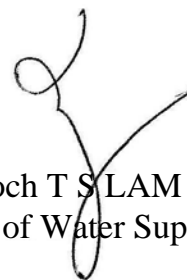
- (b) The Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water in its report issued on 31 May 2016 supported the WSD's proposal to set up an international expert panel on water safety (the Panel) to provide expert advice to Hong Kong on matters including water quality standard, water quality regulatory and monitoring regime, water sampling protocol etc. The Panel was set up by the DEVB on 1 June 2016 and comprises five members with three overseas members and two local members. The three overseas experts are from the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada with extensive experience in the water industry and involvement in the work of international associations. One of the two local experts is an experienced water consultant and the other is a medical professor. The details of the expertise of individual members are at **Annex**.

As of December 2016, the Panel have held three meetings for in-depth discussions on various issues related to drinking water safety. Members of the Panel have been briefed on the general water supply system and drinking water safety system in Hong Kong. They have met with the overseas expert consultants

engaged by WSD and exchanged views with the consultants, DEVB and WSD on water safety matters including the drinking water quality standard and the water sampling protocols of various international organisations and developed countries and water safety plans. They have also conducted site visits to better understand the typical plumbing systems of the PRH developments and private housing estates in Hong Kong. Panel members have provided expert advice in regard to drinking water safety and in particular a holistic plan including drinking water quality standards, the formulation of a territory-wide compliance monitoring programme and water safety plans to enhance drinking water safety in Hong Kong. Against this, the Panel works as a team with overseas members providing advice jointly with local members after detailed discussion and deliberation taking into consideration the international practice and experience as well as local environment and circumstances. DEVB and WSD are currently reviewing and studying the advice of the Panel in consultation with the overseas expert consultants. The work progress of the Panel is satisfactory with a target to complete the work by March 2017.

In regard to the expenditure for the work of the Panel, a sum of \$1.2 million has been set aside in 2016-17 financial year and the expenditure up to the end of October 2016 was about \$0.47 million.

Yours sincerely,



(Enoch T S LAM)
Director of Water Supplies

Encl.

c.c. Secretary for Development	(fax no. 2810 8502)
Secretary for Transport and Housing	(fax no. 2523 9187)
Director of Housing	(fax no. 2761 6700)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury	(fax no. 2147 5239)
Director of Audit	(fax no. 2583 9063)

Members of International Expert Panel on Drinking Water Safety

Professor Jennifer Colbourne was the former Chief Inspector of the Drinking Water Inspectorate of the United Kingdom. She is now a Visiting Professor of the Centre for Environmental and Health Engineering, University of Surrey, UK. The centre research projects encompass water resources surveillance, water treatment, supply and regulation etc. She is the former Chairman of the International Water Association, UK Committee.

Dr David Cunliffe is the lead editor of World Health Organization (WHO)'s publication 'Water Safety in Buildings' and is also former Chair of Australian National Water Quality Advisory Committee. He was the Chair of International Task Force Meeting for the Finalization of the 3rd Edition of the WHO Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality.

Professor Michèle Prévost holds an Industrial Chair on Drinking Water at Polytechnique Montréal. She leads the multi university Canadian Water Network initiative on lead in drinking water. She sits on International Lead and Copper Rule revision consultation team for the Office of Research and Development of the US EPA.

Dr CHAN Hon-fai is the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Water Supplies and expert member of Task Force on Excessive Lead in Drinking Water. Dr Chan is the past Chairman of the Environmental Division of the Hong Kong Institute of Engineers and he is also a leading water and environmental management expert.

Professor Thomas Chan Yan-keung is the Professor of Department of Medicine and Therapeutics, Faculty of Medicine of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Professor Chan is the Consultant Physician and Clinical Pharmacologist, Director of Prince of Wales Hospital Poison Treatment Centre and Member of Coordinating Committee of Hong Kong Poison Control Network. He is also a Member of the Advisory Committee on Water Supplies.



Our Ref. : HD 3-8/SD/BW- 5/9/4/3 (C)

Tel. No. : 2761 5002

Fax. No. : 2761 1110

Your Ref. : CB4/PAC/R67

9 January 2017

Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attention: Mr. Anthony CHU)

Dear Sir,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67
Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats

With reference to your letter of 30 December 2016 addressed to the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the subject issue, I attach the required information at **Annex** for your consideration, please.

Yours faithfully,

(Connie KY Yeung)
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c. Secretary for Transport and Housing
Director of Buildings
Director of Fire Services
Director of Environmental Protection
Commissioner for Labour
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Director of Audit

(w/ encl.)

(w/o encl.)

香港九龍何文田佛光街33號房屋委員會總部

Housing Authority Headquarters, 33 Fat Kwong Street, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

互聯網網址 :

Internet Homepage Address: <http://www.housingauthority.gov.hk>

At the public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held on 23 December 2016, we provided members with further information in relation to Part 4 of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report (the Audit Report) on the "Management of Asbestos-containing Materials in Public Rental Housing Estates". In response to enquiries raised by the PAC in its letter dated 30 December 2016, we provide our reply as follows:

(I) Management of Asbestos-containing Materials in Public Rental Housing Estates

- (a) In handling asbestos-containing materials (ACM), the Housing Department (HD) shall comply with the relevant ordinances such as the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311). However, in 1997, the Government exempted the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) from submitting asbestos investigation plans or asbestos abatement plans on maintenance, repair, handling or abatement of six types of ACM in HA's properties under section 69 (1) of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance.

As mentioned in paragraph 4.6 of the Audit Report, HD in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the Labour Department (LD), have established an inter-departmental Asbestos Working Group (AWG) to formulate asbestos management strategies for public rental housing (PRH) estates and compiled an Asbestos Management Manual to ensure compliance with the relevant ordinances and regulations. These include the investigation, maintenance, repair, handling or abatement of the balcony and staircase/lobby grilles. Please refer to Asbestos Management Manual at Attachment Item (I)(a) for details.

- (b) According to paragraph 2.3.4 of HD's Asbestos Management Manual, the majority of the ACM are cementitious with asbestos fibres bonded in cement and such bonded materials have very low possibility of releasing asbestos fibres into the air.

Encapsulated balcony grilles inside flats have been labeled with a triangular mark, which was agreed by the AWG (Attachment Item (I)(b) refers). There are no warning labels for the other ACM such as staircase/lobby grilles or chimneys in PRH estates.

Before the relevant legislation came into force on 19 June 1997, HD has been maintaining close communication with EPD through the

AWG. For example, during the AWG meetings held on 23 January 1997 and 22 May 1997, the Asbestos Management Manual was discussed and revisions had been made. Subsequently, a copy of the revised Asbestos Management Manual was sent to the EPD and the LD for record.

- (c) As mentioned in (b), the required labeling of a triangular mark on encapsulated balcony grilles inside flats was stipulated in the Asbestos Management Manual, which was compiled by the AWG comprising representatives of HD, EPD and LD. There are no warning labels required for the other ACM such as staircase/lobby grilles or chimneys in PRH estates.

According to the encapsulation record, HD has labeled the balcony grille encapsulation with a triangular mark in accordance with the Asbestos Management Manual.

- (d) As mentioned in paragraph 4.25 (e) (iv) of the Audit Report, HD will label all ACM in the estates and the label design will follow EPD's proposed design. At present, HD has installed these new warning labels for all asbestos containing staircase/lobby grilles. Labels will be installed for other ACM such as balcony grilles and chimneys in due course.
- (e) A total of 66 AWG meetings were held from 1988 to 2016. Minutes of all the meetings are available and the meeting dates are listed in chronological order at Attachment Item (I)(e)-1.

Regarding the respective roles of HD, EPD and LD in managing and monitoring ACM in PRH estates, reference can be made to the Terms of Reference of the AWG (Attachment (I)(e)-2 refers). HD is mainly responsible for the day-to-day management and monitoring of the ACM, while EPD and LD advise on the relevant ordinances and regulations.

- (f) The advice given under the Code of Practice on Asbestos Control issued by EPD is not a statutory requirement. As stipulated in paragraph 4.6 of the Audit Report, HD in conjunction with EPD and LD, have established an inter-departmental AWG to formulate asbestos management strategies for PRH estates and compile the Asbestos Management Manual to ensure compliance with relevant ordinances and regulations. HD has been maintaining close communication with EPD through the AWG to ensure an effective ACM management mechanism is implemented in PRH estates in accordance with the Asbestos Management Manual.

A comparison of the EPD's Code of Practice on Asbestos Control (Attachment-Item (I)(f) refers) and the HD's Asbestos Management Manual are as follows:

EPD's Code of Practice on Asbestos Control – Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan	HD's Asbestos Management Manual	
	Section Number	Remarks
- Detailed description of the premises	2.1	Followed in general.
- Organization of people for implementing the O&M plan	2.2 4.1 5.5	Followed in general.
- Details of any identified ACM and suspect material	3.2	Followed in general.
- Condition of the identified ACM and suspect material	3.3 5.4 5.6	Followed in general.
- Reasons why any ACM or suspect material should not be removed	3.3 3.5	Followed in general.
- Method of labeling the ACM	2.3	Refer to 2.3.4 The majority of ACM accessible to the tenants, public or HD staff are of the cement bonded type. Encapsulated balcony grilles inside flats containing asbestos have been

EPD's Code of Practice on Asbestos Control – Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan	HD's Asbestos Management Manual	
	Section Number	Remarks
		<p>labeled with a triangular mark. There are no warning labels for the other ACM such as the staircase/lobby grilles or chimneys in PRH estates.</p> <p>Please refer to paragraph 4.25 of the Audit Report for other enhancement measures.</p>
- Method of informing all people who may be affected	2.3	<p>Tenants: HD has distributed pamphlets to tenants, posted notices at G/F lobbies, kept asbestos records in estate management offices for inspection and labeled balcony grille encapsulation inside flats with the triangular mark.</p> <p>Workers: HD staff are aware of the location of ACM. They will issue works orders to maintenance contractors and monitor the works of the workers. In addition, balcony grille encapsulation inside flats have been labeled with the triangular mark.</p> <p>HD has uploaded asbestos information to the HA/HD website in 2009 for public inspection.</p> <p>Please refer to paragraph 4.25 in the Audit Report for other enhancement measures.</p>
- Surveillance scheme	2.3 3.5	<p>HD has a three-tier monitoring mechanism. Firstly, HD will inspect the condition of ACM in the estates through routine and half-yearly inspections. If irregularities are found, follow-up actions will be taken immediately. Secondly, random checks will be conducted to the asbestos inspection records by the Research and Development Unit. Thirdly, HD will</p>

EPD's Code of Practice on Asbestos Control – Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan	HD's Asbestos Management Manual	
	Section Number	Remarks
		appoint an independent registered asbestos consultant to carry out occasional review as an additional measure.
- Method to avoid disturbing the ACM	2.3	Followed in general.
- Record keeping scheme	3.2	Followed in general.
- Actions for handling deteriorating ACM	2.4 3.3	Followed in general.

- (g) HD staff are aware of the location of ACM. They will issue works orders to maintenance contractors and monitor the works of the workers. In addition, the balcony grille encapsulation has been labeled with the triangular mark. In the past, HD has distributed pamphlets to tenants, posted notices at G/F lobbies and kept asbestos records in estate management offices. HD further uploaded asbestos information to the HA/HD website in 2009 for public inspection.

To enhance communication and staff awareness of the asbestos issue, HD has taken various enhancement measures. Details are given in paragraph 4.25 of the Audit Report.

- (h) Some requirements stipulated in the Asbestos Management Manual compiled by HD, EPD and LD are higher than EPD's Code of Practice on Asbestos Control. As far as monitoring of ACM is concerned, EPD's Code of Practice on Asbestos Control recommends inspection at least once every two years, but the HA will inspect the ACM once every half year and has a three-tier monitoring mechanism. Firstly, the condition of ACM in PRH estates is inspected through routine and half-yearly inspections. If irregularities are found, follow-up actions will be taken immediately. Secondly, random checks will be conducted to the asbestos inspection records by the Research and Development Unit. Thirdly,

HD will appoint an independent registered asbestos consultant to carry out occasional review as an additional measure. The monitoring mechanism will also be discussed at AWG meetings from time to time.

- (i) In the past, HD used to convey ACM records in writing, not in a pictorial format. Some frontline staff may not fully understand the location of the ACM. Now, HD has re-examined all asbestos records in estate management offices and adopted a pictorial format for public inspection at G/F lobbies in PRH estates.

Information of ACM is reviewed and updated from time to time by HD. Registered asbestos consultants will be appointed to provide technical assistance on asbestos issues. In 2016, HD instructed a registered asbestos consultant to conduct a comprehensive inspection of ACM in the record.

- (j) The condition of ACM in PRH estates is mainly inspected by the regional Assistant Clerks of Works (ACW). At the time of appointment, ACWs are required to have a diploma or higher certificate in construction studies and three years of relevant working experience. During the inspections, they checked whether the damaged ACM has exceeded 5% or 10% of the ACM area according to the Asbestos Management Manual and decide to take further follow-up actions. If there is any problem, they will report to the supervisors and ask for instructions. As mentioned in (h), this is the first tier of the ACM monitoring mechanism of HD.

In collaboration with EPD and LD, HD has established an inter-departmental AWG to formulate asbestos management strategies for PRH estates and compile the Asbestos Management Manual. The 10% or 5% assessment criterion was developed by the asbestos consultant in the 1990s during compilation of the manual and had been referred to the AWG for discussion and subsequent implementation.

- (k) For ACM inspections by the Research and Development Unit, please refer to paragraphs 4.22 (a) - (c) of the Audit Report.

- (l) The five unannounced estates/blocks mentioned in the Audit Report are Choi Hung Estate, Fuk Loi Estate, Tai Yuen Estate and Long Bin Interim Housing Estate, and also the chimney in Fu Lai House of Fu Shan Estate.

The ACM of the four estates (Choi Hung Estate, Fuk Loi Estate, Tai Yuen Estate and Long Bin Interim Housing Estate) are located on the rooftop which is not easily accessible to the general public and residents. The Maintenance Planning and Review Committee (MPRC), an internal HD senior-level committee, at its meeting held on 29 June 2009, discussed and decided to upload information on ACM building elements to the HA/HD website. Subsequently, Senior Maintenance Surveyor/Research and Development, uploaded the relevant information to the HA/HD website according to the MPRC decision for public inspection.

Although the ACM in the four estates have not been labeled, frontline staff have been conducting regular inspections and no abnormalities have been found. In addition, the Research and Development Unit conducted inspections to these ACM in 2009, 2010, 2015 and 2016 and found that they were in good condition (Attachment I - Item (I)(l) refers). HD staff are also aware of the location of the ACM. They will monitor the works of the workers upon the issue of works orders to the maintenance contractors.

- (m) The four reports were submitted by HA to the Panel on Housing of the Legislative Council on the performance of environmental targets and initiatives in respective years. Amongst the report items, one of them was the control of hazardous materials in existing estates. The ACM in the four estates have been in good condition and there was no abnormality.
- (n) As mentioned in (l), frontline staff have been conducting routine inspections and no abnormalities have been observed. In addition, the Research and Development Unit conducted inspections of these ACM in 2009, 2010, 2015 and 2016 and found that they were in good condition. Attachment I - Item (I)(l) refers.

- (o) According to HD's record, the latest full asbestos record before 2009 is the one dated October 2007 (Attachment - Item (I)(o) refers). Except the chimney at Fu Lai House in Fu Shan Estate, the five estates are on the list.
- (p) The office of the Long Bin Interim Housing Estate was originally part of the former Long Bin Temporary Housing Area (THA). Long Bin THA was designed and built in 1984 and was completed in 1985. Although the use of ACM was banned by HD in 1984, some of the projects with design completed or under construction, such as Long Bin THA, might still contain building elements with ACM. As the former Long Bin THA was demolished long time ago, the relevant documents for the decision to continue the use of these materials are not available.
- (q) HD has arranged a comprehensive review of all asbestos containing staircase/lobby and balcony grilles by a registered asbestos consultant. The consultant considered that these cases were of a minor nature and confirmed that no follow-up works were required. Nevertheless, HD has asked the consultant to recommend follow-up plans. Subsequently on the advice of EPD and LD, HD has completed the remedial works. In addition, new warning labels will be installed to indicate the presence of ACM to alert on the use with care and to avoid disturbing the ACM.

Please refer to paragraphs 4.25 and 4.36 of the Audit Report for details of follow-up works and recommendations of enhancement.

In addition, HD has written to all tenants concerned and contacted them to ensure that they are aware of the impact of the asbestos abatement works.

HD has been in liaison with the Department of Health (DH) for their professional advice. Residents are advised to consult their doctors if in doubt. Residents could also visit the website of EPD, LD and DH for more information on asbestos.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** Attachment - Item (I)(o) not attached.

- (r) From our record, the concerned tenants have not made application to HD for installation of the air conditioners. Since the installation works would take only one or two hours to complete, frontline staff might not be able to notice such works and require the tenants to stop the installation of the air conditioners promptly.

HD appointed a registered asbestos consultant in mid-2016 to inspect the supporting frames of the air conditioners. It was found that these cases were of a minor nature and confirmed that no follow-up works were required.

- (s) HD considers it necessary to enhance the alertness of frontline staff in handling ACM and has adopted a series of enhancement measures. Please refer to paragraphs 4.25, 4.36 and 4.46 of the Audit Report for details.

- (t) The chimney in Case 3 was the property of the restaurant licensee. As the chimney was installed at the exterior of the building, it had been inspected by the HD to ensure that it was in good condition. Its condition had always been recorded and followed up by HD as letters were sent to the licensee on 14 January, 17 January and 3 May 2011 advising him to employ a qualified contractor for the damaged chimney.

As the chimney was owned by the restaurant and the licensee was responsible for employing the contractor or workers directly to carry out the removal works, HD had no obligation to supervise the works of the contractor or workers.

As regards the management of ACM in PRH estates, HD has taken a series of enhancement measures. Please refer to paragraphs 4.25, 4.36 and 4.46 of the Audit Report for details.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

SECOND EDITION – MAY 2009

Review Authority : CM/M(PM)

Contact Point : SMS/R&D

Issued by the Chief Manager/Management ([Project Management](#))
Housing Department, Hong Kong

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Reviewed for adequacy, approved and authorized for issue :



(William W.L. HO)

Chief Manager / Management (Project Management)

The Contact Point and the Review Authority for this Technical Guide are Senior Maintenance Surveyor / Research & Development and Chief Manager / Management (Project Management) respectively.

1.0 PURPOSE

1. The policy responsibilities and procedures for the management and abatement of asbestos containing materials (ACM) in properties under the management of the Housing Department or its management agents, including HA property and Estate Schools, are described in the following documents:

EMDTG07 Asbestos Management;

MWPM03 Selection & Appointment of Contractor

MWPM07 Programme Planning

EMDTG08 Asbestos Technical Guidelines;

SL Specification Library

2. The contents of this Technical Guide are for reference only, departure is permitted on justifiable grounds as determined by the Action Officer.

2.0 PLANNING

2.1 Policy

GENERAL

1. Various types of asbestos containing materials (ACM) were used in Housing projects before asbestos was known to be harmful to health. The significance of asbestos and its effect on health is detailed in Section 5.2, Significance of Asbestos. The Housing Department has formulated a policy on asbestos and developed an overall asbestos management strategy for the management of the existing ACM in Housing property.

POLICY ON ASBESTOS

2. The Department will endeavour to minimise as far as reasonably practicable the risk to its tenants, the public and its staff arising from asbestos-containing materials in its property stock.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

3. The Housing Department's overall asbestos management strategy is summarized below :
 - (a) to establish and update a central record of all relevant information related to asbestos.
 - (b) to communicate effectively and accurately the information both within the Department/its management agents and with external parties such as other Government Departments, media, tenants' groups, etc.
 - (c) to plan effectively for necessary abatement works and set priorities for action.
 - (d) to provide necessary resources for implementation of the management programme.
 - (e) to coordinate the effects of different divisions of the Department in an overall management programme.
 - (f) to define responsibility among different parties concerned in the asbestos issue e.g. the Housing Department, the tenants, the contractors etc.
 - (g) to monitor and control effectively the on-going asbestos abatement works and subsequent safe dumping of asbestos waste.

2.2 Responsibility

GENERAL

1. The Housing Department's asbestos management strategy is implemented through the Asbestos Management Programme / ad-hoc asbestos abatement works when considered necessary.
2. The HD Asbestos Working Group (AWG) which is chaired by CM/M(PM), advises AD(EM)2 on the implementation of the Department's asbestos management strategy and monitors the Asbestos Management programme.
3. The AWG comprises representatives from the Housing Department, the Environmental Protection Department, the Labour Department.
4. The Housing Department representatives include the following coordinators :
 - (a) CM/M(PM) for the Estate Management Division,
 - (b) SMS/R&D for the Estate Management Division, (BW Section),
 - (c) SSE/15 for the Development & Construction Division,
 - (d) SE/122 for the Development & Construction Division,
 - (e) SE/SIS3 for the Estate Management Division (SE Section),
 - (f) HM/BPS2 for the Estate Management Division,
 - (g) MS/ENV for the Estate Management Division, (BW Section),
 - (h) CTO(BS)/TD for the Estate Management Division (BS Section)

ASBESTOS WORKING GROUP

5. The AWG receives and considers information on materials containing asbestos in Housing Authority (HA) Managed Properties or the properties managed by the HA's agents, develops and monitors the Housing Department's asbestos abatement programmes and advises the Director of Housing on the continued development of the asbestos abatement strategy.
6. The List of Registered Asbestos Contractors / Consultants / Supervisors / Laboratories is managed by EPD.
7. Refer to Section 5.2 for the detailed terms of reference and membership of the AWG.

HD RESPONSIBILITIES

8. The Assistant Director/Estate Management(2), AD/EM(2), is responsible for the implementation of the Asbestos Management programme within the Estate Management Division, and the management of the central records of information related to asbestos.
9. The Assistant Directors of the Construction Division are responsible for administering demolition contracts.
10. The Chief Manager/Management (PM) is responsible for the coordination and recording of the asbestos abatement activities within the Estate Management Division and the coordination of central records on ACM and specialist contractors.
11. The detailed responsibilities and procedures for asbestos abatement activities are set out in this Technical Guide.

2.3 Management Strategy

GENERAL

1. The Asbestos Management Programme provides a comprehensive plan for the implementation of the Housing Department's asbestos management strategy. The programme includes the following asbestos management activities :

- Identification of ACM
- Training
- Personnel Protection
- Periodic ACM Surveillance
- Central Records
- Abatement
- Emergency Procedures
- Special Procedures

IDENTIFICATION OF ACM

2. Most of the existing Asbestos Containing Materials within property managed by the Housing Department & HKHA's management agents have been identified and the type of asbestos, location and condition recorded.
3. Where records do not exist of a material suspected of containing asbestos, staff arrange for the material to be sampled in accordance with Section 5.6, BULK SAMPLING, and report the results on Form [EMDTG07-F02](#) to SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate. The results of any bulk sampling arranged during the course of demolition works are copied to SMS/R&D.
4. The majority of ACM materials accessible to the tenants, public or HD staff are of the cement bonded type, and due to the quantities involved these have not been individually labelled. Where balcony grill panels containing asbestos have been encapsulated since 1989, these have been marked to aid later identification. Refer to Section 3.3, ASBESTOS ABATEMENT.
5. Staff are notified of the location and condition of ACM through regular reports based on the central records of ACM. Tenants and the public can view these reports at the relevant Estate Office.
6. New materials used in the construction and maintenance of property are screened for [free of](#) asbestos before being approved for use.

TRAINING

7. HD staff are provided with training on a need basis to ensure that they are aware of the possible occurrence of ACM in buildings and in materials, and to ensure that they are familiar with the policy, responsibilities and procedures for the management and abatement of asbestos.
8. Staff required to use personal protective equipment in the inspection and monitoring of asbestos abatement activities are provided with training in its care and use.

PERSONNEL PROTECTION

9. The risk of staff being exposed to asbestos dust is low, however, staff who are required during the course of their duties to enter a space where asbestos dust is present or liable to escape are provided with the appropriate respiratory protective equipment and protective clothing in accordance with the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulations.
10. All staff who are involved in asbestos abatement works are provided, free of charge, with the opportunity to have their health and physical condition checked for fitness to wear respirators. Staff with severe lung disabilities are strongly advised to undergo a medical examination prior to taking up the inspection of asbestos work.
11. For further details refer to Section 3.1, PERSONNEL PROTECTION.

HALF-YEARLY PERIODIC ACM SURVEILLANCE

12. Periodic surveillance of ACM is carried out through an [half-yearly](#) condition survey of asbestos containing building elements. The result of the surveys and any proposed changes to the asbestos abatement programme are recorded, and the central records updated at the end of [each survey](#).
13. The condition of existing ACM in building services equipment is monitored and checked during routine maintenance.
14. If at any time it is suspected that an additional material or element may contain asbestos, samples are collected and analysed to verify the presence of asbestos. If the result is affirmative, the additional material / element will be replaced with asbestos free materials and recorded accordingly.
15. For further details refer to Section 3.5, [HALF-YEARLY](#) ACM SURVEILLANCE.

CENTRAL RECORDS

16. Central records being maintained contain information related to asbestos, including :
 - all ACM, the location, condition and the type of asbestos contained.
 - abatement programmes and activities.
17. For further details refer to Section 3.2, CENTRAL RECORDS.

ABATEMENT

18. Asbestos abatement activities carried out under the Asbestos Management Programme include the encapsulation and removal of ACM. These activities are carried out in accordance with agreed programmes and procedures.
19. For further details refer to Section 3.4, ABATEMENT PROGRAMME and Section 3.3, ASBESTOS ABATEMENT.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

20. HD procedures for dealing with emergencies involving asbestos include procedures to deal with :
 - emergency repair to underground asbestos cement watermains.
 - emergencies during the course of Asbestos Abatement work.
21. In the case of asbestos contamination, immediate steps shall be taken to restrict access to the contaminated area, erect warning signs, verify the asbestos contamination and arrange for decontamination.
22. Any person who may have touched the contamination in any way should be advised to wash their hands, hair and face, or to take a thorough shower as soon as practicable.
23. Emergencies during the course of Asbestos Abatement work include :
 - spillage of contaminated debris outside the work area
 - exceeding the Environmental Control Limit of 0.01 fibres/mL
 - a fire in or adjoining the work area
 - the raising of a Number Three Typhoon Signal (or above)
 - a worker collapses or some other accident occurs
24. For further details refer to Section 5.7, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES and the respective Divisional documentation.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

25. Special procedures covering asbestos management are set out in the respective Divisional documents and include detail procedures for :
 - contracting
 - specification
 - work methods
 - monitoring
 - inspection
 - testing
 - remedial action
 - records

2.4 Abatement Programme

GENERAL

1. The asbestos abatement activities carried out under the Asbestos Management Programme are coordinated by way of the following programmes :

- the Asbestos Abatement Programme; and
- the Redevelopment Programme

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT PROGRAMME

2. All the asbestos abatement works planned and undertaken by the Estate Management Division are recorded in a asbestos abatement programme.
3. The asbestos abatement programme is maintained by SMS/R&D, based on abatement works reports and ACM condition information provided as a result of the periodic surveillance of ACM.
4. SMS/R&D updates the asbestos abatement programme when significant changes are required.
5. There is no specific programme to remove ACMs from building services equipment, however the condition of such ACM is inspected during the routine maintenance and testing of the equipment. When the inspection reveals that the ACM warrants removal, it is replaced with an asbestos-free substitute whenever practicable.

REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

6. The demolition of older Housing Blocks for redevelopment purposes is planned and undertaken in accordance with the Redevelopment Programme. As a result, all existing ACM in these blocks will be removed during the demolition of the blocks.

3.0 MANAGEMENT

3.1 Personnel Protection

GENERAL

1. The approach to asbestos removal adopted by the Department is intended to minimise as far as reasonably practicable the risk to its tenants, the public and its staff arising from the removal of the ACM. The approaches adopted depend on the type of ACM involved and include negative pressure full containment, partial segregation and open air removal with wetting and careful dismantling.
2. Where the asbestos removal requires the full containment approach, inspection by HD staff is normally from outside the containment by means of a viewing panel. Where full containment is not required, inspection by HD staff normally involves occasional visits to works areas where the air-borne dust level has been established to be well below the air monitoring control levels.
3. Although the risk of HD staff being exposed to asbestos is low, the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulations, require that respiratory protective equipment and protective clothing must be worn by every person employed in connection with an asbestos abatement process or in a place into which asbestos dust is liable to escape.
4. As the use of a filter type respirator may affect the health of people who suffer from severe lung disabilities, a medical examination, including chest X-ray and lung function test, is necessary for all staff who are likely to be involved with asbestos abatement inspection duties. People most likely to be affected are those who suffer from chronic bronchitis, asthma, chronic obstructive airway diseases, silicosis or advanced cases of pulmonary TB.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION

5. All HD staff who are likely to be involved in asbestos abatement works are provided, free of charge, with the opportunity to have their health and physical condition checked for fitness to wear respirators. Staff with severe lung disabilities are strongly advised to undergo a medical examination prior to taking up the inspection of asbestos work.
6. Staff who are concerned that their respiration has deteriorated or is adversely affected because of illness, or those who wish merely to have their respiration checked may, at any time, (prior to or during duties involving the inspection of asbestos abatement work) request a medical examination.
7. Requests for medical examinations are submitted in memo form to the appropriate Chief Professional Officer for professional staff or to the appropriate Chief Technical Officer for site staff. The officer concerned reviews the request and forwards it to CM/M(PM) for the necessary arrangements to be made. Refer to sample memo [EMDTG07-F03](#).

USE OF HALF-FACE RESPIRATOR

8. The respiratory protection provided by the half-face respirator is dependent on the effectiveness of its fit to the face of the wearer. Two tests that may be carried out to check that the half-face respirator fits satisfactorily are the Positive Pressure Fit Test and the Negative Pressure Fit Test. The tests are conducted as follows :

a) Positive Pressure Fit Test

Completely cover the exhaust with the palm of the hand and breathe out slightly. The respirator fit is effective if it lifts slightly away from the face and no air leaks out.

b) Negative Pressure Fit Test

Completely cover the cartridges with the palm of the hands and breathe in slightly. The respirator fit is effective if it sticks slightly to the face.

3.2 Central Records

GENERAL

1. The Chief Manager/Management(PM) is responsible for the recording of the asbestos abatement activities within the Estate Management Division and the coordination of central records on ACM
2. SMS/R&D and CTO(BS)/TD are responsible for the maintenance of the building works and building services records respectively.
3. As, BSEs and SEs of the Development & Construction Division are responsible for supplying the Estate Management Division coordinators with information on their asbestos abatement activities for updating the central records.

ACM RECORDS

4. SMS/R&D maintains central records of asbestos related information for building elements, including:
 - survey records and bulk sampling reports on the location and condition of the ACM;
 - the type and quantity of asbestos contained; and
 - the dates of any enclosure/encapsulation etc.
5. CTO(BS)/TD maintains central records of all asbestos containing building services installations.

ABATEMENT PROGRAMMES

6. SMS/R&D maintains an asbestos abatement programme recording all the asbestos abatement works planned and undertaken by the Building Works Sections of the Estate Management Division.
7. MSs are responsible for supplying SMS/R&D with ACM condition information after each condition survey to update the Asbestos Abatement Programme.

LISTS OF REGISTERED ASBESTOS CONSULTANTS, CONTRACTORS, SUPERVISORS AND LABORATORIES

8. The updated lists of Registered Asbestos Consultants/Contractors/Supervisors/Laboratories can be viewed at EPD's website: <http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd>.

REPORTS

9. SMS/R&D prepares reports on asbestos recording :
 - the progress of all abatement works for the current year;
 - a summary of major types of ACMs; and
 - the number of blocks in Housing Properties with ACMs.

3.3 ASBESTOS ABATEMENT

GENERAL

1. Asbestos abatement activities carried out under the Asbestos Management Programme are carried out in accordance with agreed programmes and procedures. These activities include the encapsulation and removal of ACM.

ENCAPSULATION

2. The encapsulation method of asbestos abatement is generally confined to staircase and balcony grille panels. Where the panels are in good condition the work method set out in EMDTG08 is followed and the work is treated as normal building maintenance work, and is carried out by the Housing Department's Contractors.
3. Most asbestos balcony grille panels of properties managed by Housing Department or HKHA's management agents have been encapsulated. It is intended that the remaining panels also be encapsulated if access and other constraints can be overcome.
4. Upon completion of the work, the Project MS records the encapsulation in Form [EMDTG07-F05](#) and submits the form to SMS/R&D for the updating of the central record.

ASBESTOS REMOVAL

5. Asbestos removal activities are carried out under the Asbestos Abatement Programme and the Redevelopment Programme.
6. [Development](#) & Construction Division staff arrange for asbestos removal works under the Redevelopment Programme.
7. Estate Management Division staff arrange for asbestos removal works under the Asbestos Abatement Programme or on need basis.
8. Not all works involving the removal of ACM from HA properties are included in the programme, which primarily covers the large scale works involving the removal of a particular type of ACM from a whole block.
9. Where any individual panel or section of ACM becomes defective and warrants abatement without delay, the MS shall arrange for its removal or abatement as appropriate regardless of whether such was included in the current programme or not.
10. On occasions the Estate Management Division may request the removal of ACM from squatter structures. Refer to Section 4.5. [\(Deleted\)](#)
11. Estate Management Division BS staff arrange for the removal of friable ACM found in building services installations that warrants abatement.

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT PROCEDURES

12. The detailed responsibilities and procedures for the abatement of asbestos containing materials are described in Sections 3 and 4, and the following Divisional documents :

- The Asbestos Technical Guidelines, EMDTG08.
- [Development &](#) Construction Division's SE Technical Guide to Asbestos Removal (DSEG-ASB).

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT SPECIFICATIONS

13. Detailed specifications for the asbestos abatement works are prepared at Divisional level setting out specific requirements where necessary concerning:

- Statutory obligations and codes of practice
- Use of Registered Asbestos Consultants, Contractors, Supervisors & Laboratories
- Preliminary site visits and surveys for asbestos
- Notifications to Government authorities
- The submission required with tenders/quotations
- The submission required before the works may commence
- Asbestos removal works programmes
- Site supervisors
- Air monitoring
- Approvals for commencement of work
- Personnel access to sites and signage
- Equipment and materials
- Maintenance and testing of plant and equipment
- Decontamination facilities
- Containments
- Methods of removal
- Control limits for airborne asbestos dust levels
- Suspension of works
- Acceptance of asbestos removal work
- Disposal of contaminated waste
- Project records
- Decontamination
- Emergency procedures during course of asbestos removal works
- Payment of works

ASBESTOS REMOVAL WORK METHODS

14. Detailed removal methods for the asbestos abatement works are prepared at Divisional level for each type of ACM. The work methods set out specific guidelines concerning:

- Associated non asbestos works
- Equipment required
- Preliminary cleaning
- Zoning of works
- Containments/segregation
- Decontamination facilities
- Protective equipment required
- The removal work
- Preparation for visual inspections
- Air monitoring on completion of works
- Waste disposal

- Air monitoring strategy

WORKS MONITORING

15. In the management of asbestos abatement works HD staff/[Estate Manager \(Maintenance\) of PSA \(applies to all "PSA" as mentioned in this manual\)](#) closely monitor the works to ensure that the Registered Asbestos Contractor complies with the regulations and the specified requirements. An important part of this monitoring involves the monitoring of air test samples. Registered asbestos consultant is to be engaged for asbestos abatement work for non-exempted works.
16. Before commencement of any preparation work on site, background air tests are carried out. Environmental, leakage and personal air monitoring tests are carried out during asbestos removal work and penultimate, clearance and reassurance air monitoring tests on completion of the works. An air monitoring strategy is included in the approved work methods for the works.
17. Air monitoring is carried out by Registered asbestos Laboratories through HD's materials testing services term contracts, and requests for air monitoring tests are made to SCE/MTM using Form DCMM-F03.
18. Refer to section 6.5, AIR MONITORING.

3.4 Approved Specialist Contractors

LISTS OF REGISTERED ASBESTOS CONSULTANTS, CONTRACTORS, SUPERVISORS AND LABORATORIES.

1. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) maintains and manages lists of Registered Asbestos Consultants, Contractors, supervisors and Laboratories.
2. The current lists can be viewed at EPD's website: <http://www.epd.gov.hk>.

PERFORMANCE OF REGISTERED ASBESTOS CONTRACTORS/CONSULTANTS/SUPERVISORS

3. On the completion of an asbestos abatement project, the MS/BSE of the Estate Management Division and the PSA in charge of the project completes a report on the performance of the Registered Asbestos Contractor, using Form [EMDTG07-F01](#). Should the project MS/BSE or the PSA find that the performance of registered asbestos consultants is poor they shall also report to SMS/R&D.
4. Reference should be made to all project records and all items of non-compliance recorded on the form. The report is countersigned by the senior professional officer and submitted, together with copies of all supporting project records and documents for items of non-compliance, to SMS/R&D within one week of the completion of the project. The BSE submits the report via CTO(BS)/TD.
5. SMS/R&D reviews the report and submits, where the poor performance of the above asbestos professionals is noted with recommendations as appropriate to EPD and LD (Attn.: S(RW)6, Asbestos Management & Control Section (1), EPD and SOH(D), Occupational Hygiene (Development) Division, LD).

3.5 Periodic ACM Surveillance

GENERAL

1. An [half-yearly](#) condition survey of asbestos containing building elements in each area is carried out by the MS, SCW and PSA concerned. The results of the surveys are recorded on Form [EMDTG07-F04](#) and submitted to SMS/R&D at the end of each condition survey.
2. SMS/R&D carries out a random check of the submissions and advises the MS/SCW/PSA of any discrepancies.

ASSESSMENT

3. Each "ACM unit" (i.e. a whole panel, a whole length of pipe in one storey, a roof tile, a piece of corrugated sheet) is initially inspected and considered independently. Those damaged parts that are clustered at the one point are defined as localized. Single cracks that can be found in various locations on the ACM unit are taken as scattered.
4. Using the definitions above, if localized damage exceeds 10% of the total area or length of that ACM unit, or if scattered damage exceeds 5% of the total area or length of that ACM unit, that ACM unit will be considered as "in poor condition".
5. After assessing all ACM units independently in the one building, the number of "poor" ACM units is calculated and divided by the total number of ACM units to obtain the percentage of poor ACM units. If the proportion so calculated exceeds 10%, all poor ACM units should be removed without delay and the rest of the same type of ACM in the building included in the asbestos abatement programme.
6. If any length of asbestos pipe is in poor condition, the whole stack should be removed. If the number of stacks to be removed is more than 10% of the total number of stacks in the building, the remaining stacks should also be included in the asbestos abatement programme.
7. The condition of each asbestos containing building element is inspected in accordance with the guidelines set out below.

GRILLES (STAIRCASE/BALCONY/LOBBY)

8. Initial inspection is conducted on the exterior using binoculars. The grille conditions are assessed according to the following :-

Satisfactory : No visible damage (major cracks or chipping) or up to 5% of area scattered OR up to 10% of area localized damage.

Poor : More than 5% of area scattered or more than 10% of area localized damage (major cracks or chipping).

9. Those panels classified as "poor" are inspected at close range. The potential for further deterioration is assessed. Those that can easily be reached by occupants (without employing any physical aid) are classified as accessible. Where this is the case, the grille is recorded and put on an immediate removal programme.
10. The above guidelines also apply to encapsulated grilles.

CORRUGATED SHEETS

11. As the corrugated sheets are predominantly used as canopies, and are therefore installed in a slanting manner, external inspection through the use of binoculars might not be practicable, but would provide an initial assessment. As the corrugated sheets are generally only accessible via the residential units, those able to be covered by the initial assessment can be eliminated thereby minimizing the disturbance to tenants.

12. Where it is not possible to assess the condition of the corrugated sheets through an initial assessment, the sheets are inspected at close range. The assessment criteria are as follows :-

Satisfactory : No visible damage i.e. no chipping, breakage, or hole on the Corrugated Sheet or up to 5% of area scattered OR up to 10% of area localized damage.

Poor : More than 5% of area damage or more than 10% of area localized damage.

ROOF TILES

13. Each tile is considered individually. However, since the removal of an individual roof tile is impractical, the aim of the assessment should be to determine whether to carry out an overall removal or not. In assessing the condition of the roof tiles, the overall percentage of damaged tiles should be worked out and an assessment made using the following criteria :-

Satisfactory : 15% of area damage or less (major cracks or chipping).

Poor : >15% of area damage (major cracks or chipping).

REFUSE CHUTE

14. Refuse chutes are assessed on a floor by floor basis. The assessment guidelines are as follows :-

Satisfactory : No visible damage (major cracks or chipping) or deterioration, OR damage (major cracks or chipping) up to 5% of area of the surface if scattered or up to 10% of area if localized.

Poor : Damage (e.g. chipping) >5% of area of the surface if scattered or >10% of area if localized or any major crack.

CEMENT PIPES

15. Cement pipes (or rainwater pipes) are assessed on a floor by floor basis both at public areas such as corridor or staircase landings and inside occupied flats. The assessment guidelines are as follows :-

Satisfactory : No visible damage (major cracks or holes or rusting) OR damage (major cracks or chipping) up to 5% of area of the surface of that run of the pipe if scattered or up to 10% of area if localized.

Poor : Damage (e.g. chipping) >5% of area of the surface of that run of the pipe if scattered or >10% of area if localized or any major crack.

CHIMNEY

16. Every section of the chimney body is surveyed if applicable. In general the bottom section of the chimney starts at the restaurant kitchen level. As the restaurant is taken as a high activity area, damage inflicted by human factors would be very probable. The ending section of the chimney is usually at the roof area of the building. This section of the chimney is of low human disturbance and damage by means of natural causes such as weathering is more likely.

17. The middle or traverse areas of the chimney are usually enclosed in the building structure or enclosed by features such as ducting. These sections of the chimney normally receive low or no disturbances of any kind and if deemed inaccessible, the bottom and top section should be representative enough of the whole chimney for the purpose of condition surveillance.

18. The chimney should be assessed using the following criteria :-

Satisfactory : No visible damage (major cracks or holes or rusting) OR damage up to 5% of area of the surface if scattered or up to 10% of area if localized.

Poor : Damage (major cracks or holes or rusting) >5% of area of the surface if scattered or >10% of area if localized.

OTHER ELEMENTS

19. All other ACMs should be assessed on an % of area basis. The assessment guidelines are as follows :-

Satisfactory : No visible damage or deterioration OR damage up to 5% of area of the surface if scattered or up to 10% of area if localized.

Poor : Damage >5% of area of the surface if scattered or >10% of area if localized.

4.0 MAINTENANCE WORKS

4.1 Responsibilities

BUILDING WORKS

1. SMS/R&D
 - to provide MS/PSA with ACM information where necessary.
 - to give advice on abatement method guidelines and air monitoring strategy.
 - to give advice on preparation of Particular Specification on asbestos abatement.
 - to attend pre-work meeting.
 - to carry out technical audit inspections.
 - to keep record of Registered Asbestos Contractor's performance reports.
 - to take over special asbestos abatement works from the MS as may be required.
2. MS
 - to arrange for asbestos abatement works.
 - to notify EPD of asbestos abatement works in standard form
 - to arrange for bulk sampling of suspected ACM.
 - to hold pre-work meetings for asbestos abatement works.
 - to monitor asbestos abatement works.
 - to compile Registered Asbestos Contractors' performance reports for submission to SMS/R&D.
3. SCW
 - to assist MS in the inspection of asbestos abatement works.
 - to attend emergency Work Request from Estate Management Office regarding asbestos contamination.

BUILDING SERVICES

4. CTO(BS)/TD
 - to give advice on abatement method guidelines and air monitoring strategy.
 - to give advice on preparation of particular Specification on asbestos abatement.
 - to attend pre-work meeting.
 - to carry out technical audit inspections.
 - to coordinate Registered Asbestos Contractors' performance reports and provide such reports to SMS/R&D.
 - to take over special asbestos works from BSE as may be required.
5. BSE
 - to arrange bulk sampling of suspected ACM.
 - to arrange for asbestos abatement works.
 - to notify EPD of asbestos works in standard form.
 - to hold pre-work meetings for asbestos works.
 - to monitor asbestos works.
 - to compile Registered Asbestos Contractors' performance reports for submission to SMS/R&D through CTO(BS)/TD.
6. SBSI
 - to assist BSE in the inspection of asbestos works.
 - to attend emergency Work Request from Estate Management Office regarding asbestos contamination in building services installation.

4.2 PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

1. The MS initiates and monitors asbestos abatement work in accordance with the asbestos abatement programme. In addition the abatement of individual ACM elements are initiated, regardless of whether they are included in the programme or not, if they become defective and require abatement without delay.
2. The BSE initiates and monitors asbestos abatement work whenever friable ACM is found in building services installations that requires abatement.
3. The Project Professional for asbestos works shall check whether the works belong to the list of exempted works in Section 6.8, which determine the need to engage a Registered Asbestos Consultant/Contractor.
4. The procedures for the engagement of a Registered Asbestos Consultant for Maintenance works are described in paragraph 25-27.
5. Exempted works shall be carried out in accordance with the Asbestos Management (EMDTG07) and supporting documents. Non-exempted classes of works shall be carried out according to the Asbestos Abatement Plan prepared by a Registered Asbestos Consultant and accepted by EPD.
6. The procurement of Registered Asbestos Contractor services may be arranged by means of separate lump sum contracts, quotations etc. depending on the nature, scale and urgency of the works.
7. The MS/BSE selects the appropriate procurement method and prepares for the works as set out below for each contract type. The MS/BSE seeks advice from SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate, for the detail preparation of the documentation.
8. If no work method guideline is suitable for the asbestos job, the MS/BSE should consult SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate, for advice. Where the works are of a special nature they may be taken over by SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate.
9. If details of the type(s) of asbestos are not available in the Central record, the MS/BSE arranges for bulk sampling tests in accordance with Section 5.6.

GUIDELINES/SAMPLE SPECIFICATIONS

10. Guidelines for works procurement are set out in the Appendices and sample specifications and work methods are set out in the Asbestos Technical Guidelines, EMDTG08.

11. Where guidance on the preparation of the particular specification is included in a sample document it is enclosed in brackets and identified. All guidance notes must be deleted from the final printout of the particular specification.
12. Copies of the sample documents and specifications contained in EMDTG08 may be obtained in electronic and hardcopy form from QMU/M.

LUMP SUM CONTRACTS

13. A lump sum contract may be arranged if the cost of the asbestos job together with any necessary builder's work is high and suitable work method guidelines are described in EMDTG08. In this situation the Registered Asbestos Contractor is a subcontractor to the general contractor.
14. The contract documents are prepared in accordance with the Estate Management Division (EMD)'s Contract Procedures manuals, and with the specific requirements for asbestos works included as part of the Particular Specification as described in the Appendices.

QUOTATIONS

15. The most common procurement arrangement is to use a quotation.
16. The quotation documents are prepared in accordance with the EMD's Contract Procedures manuals and with the specific requirements for asbestos works included as part of the Quotation Terms as described in the Appendices.

DOCUMENTATION/NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

17. There are a number of requirements both statutory and from Housing Department for contractors involved in asbestos abatement works to give prior notice to other Government Departments and to maintain specific records relating to the works. These are set out below for each of the Departments concerned.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD)

18. At least 28 days before commencement of asbestos removal works, the MS/BSE shall notify EPD using the standard form ([EMDTG07-F12](#)) at section 5 giving details of location, planned commencement and completion dates of asbestos removal, type of ACM, and project contact officer's telephone number. A copy of the prescribed form shall be forwarded to SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate.

19. The contractor is required to apply for a waste disposal trip ticket for the disposal of asbestos waste generated from the asbestos abatement work well ahead of time. The application for this trip ticket should be kept on-site for inspection.
20. Maintenance records for any HEPA equipment must be kept on-site.

LABOUR DEPARTMENT

21. It is a statutory requirement that the contractor should give notification to the Labour Department 28 days before the commencement of asbestos abatement work. The notification is done through a prescribed form and a copy should be kept on-site.
22. All asbestos workers must have valid and up-to-date medical certificates.
23. Where special construction or equipment such as scaffolding or hoists are used as part of the asbestos abatement work, the relevant certificates or inspection reports must be available on-site.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT

24. The contractors are required to keep a complete list of the workers and site supervisor, including their I.D. numbers and an organization chart on-site for inspection.

PROCEDURE FOR ENGAGEMENT OF A REGISTERED ASBESTOS CONSULTANT

25. This procedure describes the arrangements to be followed for the engagement of a Registered Asbestos Consultant for Maintenance works.
26. For planned jobs the Project Professional obtains the latest list of registered asbestos contractors/consultants through EPD's website. (Note: For the asbestos abatement work of non-exempted classes of work, it is recommended that the registered asbestos contractor shall engage at their own cost the said consultant for periodic supervision and certification of completion of works).
27. The Project Professional should give 28 days notice to EDP in the prescribed form at Section 5.8 before commencement of the asbestos work.
 - a) Emergency repairs to underground asbestos cement watermain shall follow the procedures stipulated in Estate Management Division Instruction No. W01/2014.

4.3 MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

1. In the management of asbestos abatement works the MS/BSE/PSA and their site staff closely monitor the works to ensure that the Registered Asbestos Contractor complies with the regulations and the specified requirements. This includes :
 - a) requiring the contractor to obtain approval prior to the commencement of the works, or any zone of the works.
 - b) air monitoring testing before during and after the works.
 - c) the maintenance of a daily log by EMD staff.
 - d) inspection to ensure that the contractor adheres to the approved work method/Asbestos Abatement Plan.
 - e) inspecting the works on completion of any zone.
 - f) requiring the contractor to obtain approval prior to removing any containment or segregation.
 - g) requiring the contractor to prepare emergency measures.
 - h) technical audit of the works by SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD.
 - i) reporting on the contractor's performance on completion of the works.

PRE-WORK MEETING

2. A pre-work meeting is arranged by the MS/BSE/PSA and consists of the MS/BSE/PSA and site staff, SMS/R&D's representative or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate, the Registered Asbestos Contractor and site supervisor, the main contractor, the Registered Asbestos Laboratory representative, the affected occupiers' representatives and a representative from EMD.
3. The MS/BSE/PSA prepares Form [EMDTG07-F06](#) and submits it together with the required information to SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD respectively at least one week before the pre-work meeting.
4. The purpose of the pre-work meeting is to :
 - (a) ensure that all parties understand the work method;
 - (b) confirm the programme and zoning arrangements;
 - (c) scrutinise the contractor's submission on the proposed site supervisor and the equipment and its maintenance records;
 - (d) confirm the air monitoring strategy and schedule including arrangement of background air monitoring;
 - (e) confirm the site set-up and location of the secure store or storage skip; and

- (f) issue the necessary forms to the Registered Asbestos Contractor for his use.

AIR MONITORING

- 5. Air monitoring is crucial to the management of asbestos abatement works. Before commencement of any preparation work on site, background air tests are carried out. Environmental/leakage and personal air monitoring tests are carried out during asbestos removal work and penultimate, clearance or reassurance air monitoring tests on completion of the works as appropriate. An air monitoring strategy is included in each of the BW work method guidelines, and CTO(BS)/TD provides the required air monitoring strategy for BS.
- 6. Requests for air monitoring tests are made to SCE/MTM (tel.2728 3992) using Form DCMM-F03.This Form can be downloaded from HKHA's Intranet.

COMMENCEMENT OF ASBESTOS REMOVAL WORK

- 7. Having completed the necessary preparation work, the Registered Asbestos Contractor is required to request approval to commence work on Form [EMDTG07-F07](#), Request for Approval to Commence Work. The contractor completes Part A of the form and submits the form to the MS/BSE/PSA.
- 8. The MS/BSE completes Part B of Form [EMDTG07-F07](#) to either give approval to commence work or to indicate any checklist item not in order and require the contractor to re-submit. The forms are filed on the project file.

INSPECTION REQUEST ON COMPLETION OF ZONE

- 9. On completion of the asbestos removal of one zone, the contractor is required to request an inspection of the zone on Form [EMDTG07-F08](#), Request for Inspection. The contractor completes Part A of the form and submits the form to the MS/BSE/PSA after receiving the penultimate air test results from the testing contractor. The final clearance air test or reassurance air test for the zone may only be carried out after approval is given by the MS/BSE/PSA.
- 10. After receiving satisfactory clearance/reassurance air test results of the zone, the contractor completes Part B of the form and submits the form to the MS/BSE/PSA for approval to commence the next zone, if there is more than one zone.
- 11. On completion of the asbestos removal works the contractor completes Part C of the form and submits the form to the MS/BSE/PSA for approval to remove the containment/segregation for the zone. The forms are filed on the project file.
- 12. If the contractor removes a containment/segregation before obtaining approval the MS/BSE/PSA instructs them to carry out appropriate remedial measures, including reinstatement and cleaning, before resubmitting the form.
- 13. The MS/BSE/PSA ensures that the asbestos waste is disposed of to the satisfaction of EPD.

DAILY LOG

14. The MS/BSE/PSA maintains a daily log of the asbestos abatement works on Form [EMDTG07-F09](#). The check list is a guideline only and only the non-compliances are to be recorded. This form is used as an aid to the assessment of the contractor's performance and the lower part of the form shall be kept on the project file.

AIR MONITORING TEST RESULTS

15. The laboratory is required to fax the air monitoring test results to the MS/BSE/PSA within 4 hours of a test or before 9 a.m. the next morning.
16. The MS/BSE/PSA checks the results against the air monitoring control limits at Section 6.5, Air Monitoring, and takes action as necessary in accordance with the work method and the emergency measures.
17. The laboratory is required to compile a weekly summary of air monitoring test results using Form [EMDTG07-F10](#) and submit the form to the Project Officer each week.
18. If the duration of the removal work is less than one week (e.g. removal of the lagging on a generator flue) one form is used on completion of the work.

MONITORING OF THE WORKS

19. The MS/BSE/PSA and site staff monitor the works to ensure that they are carried out in accordance with the statutory requirements and the approved work method.
20. A Registered Asbestos Supervisor is required to be on-site full time. Whenever asbestos work or asbestos work related activities are being carried out (such as site cleaning and constructing containment) supervision of the works must be provided by the Registered Asbestos Contractor's Registered asbestos Supervisor. This is a mandatory requirement and deviation from this is considered a serious offence.
21. The contractor is required to follow the approved method statement meticulously. Any request for deviation must be submitted to the project professional officer in writing for approval.
22. Upon leaving the site at the end of a work day, all power and water supply must be switched off. However, in the cases where a containment is used, the air mover is required to be switched on 24 hours a day and hence electricity supply must be kept going for this purpose.
23. Where the power supply to a containment must be switched off until the next working day, all the openings of the containment must be sealed up before the air mover is switched off. The air mover must be switched on before the sealed openings are re-opened on the next working day.
24. Detailed inspection guidelines set out in the Appendices.

EMERGENCY MEASURES

25. The MS/BSE/PSA and site staff ensure that the contractor carries out the appropriate emergency measures if any of the following situations arise during the course of asbestos removal works :
- (a) Spillage of asbestos contaminated debris outside the work area;
 - (b) The environmental control limit is exceeded;
 - (c) A fire breaks out in or near the work area;
 - (d) A worker collapses or occurrence of an accident; or
 - (e) Number 3 typhoon signal (or above) is raised or a rain storm warning is given.
26. Where either the leakage or Personal samples or both have exceeded the required limit during a short duration job (one day), the site staff instruct the contractor to carry out necessary clean-up at appropriate locations.
27. Where either the leakage or Personal samples or both have exceeded the required limit and the abatement work has not been completed at the time of receiving the results, the site staff ensure that the contractor carries out the appropriate emergency measures.
28. In all cases site staff check thoroughly that the contractor has followed the approved method statement meticulously and report to the MS/BSE/PSA as appropriate.
29. The emergency measures that the contractor is required to follow are included in the contract documents. Refer to EMDTG07-5.7, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.

TECHNICAL AUDIT INSPECTION

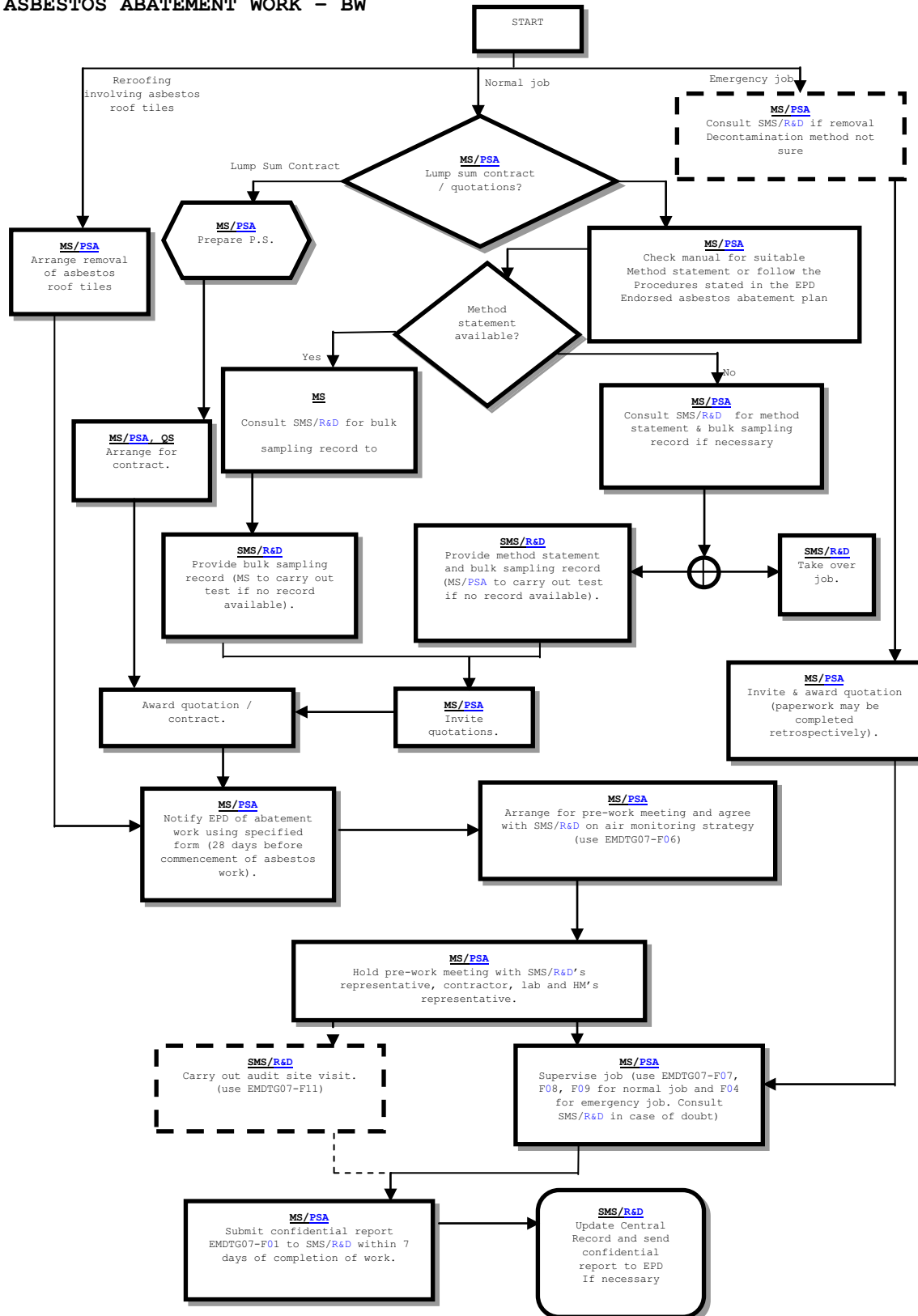
30. SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD or their representatives as appropriate carry out random technical audit inspections of asbestos abatement works. The inspection reports are recorded on Form [EMDTG07-F11](#) and a copy is sent to the MS/BSE/PSA in charge of the project.

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE OF SPECIALIST ASBESTOS REMOVAL CONTRACTOR

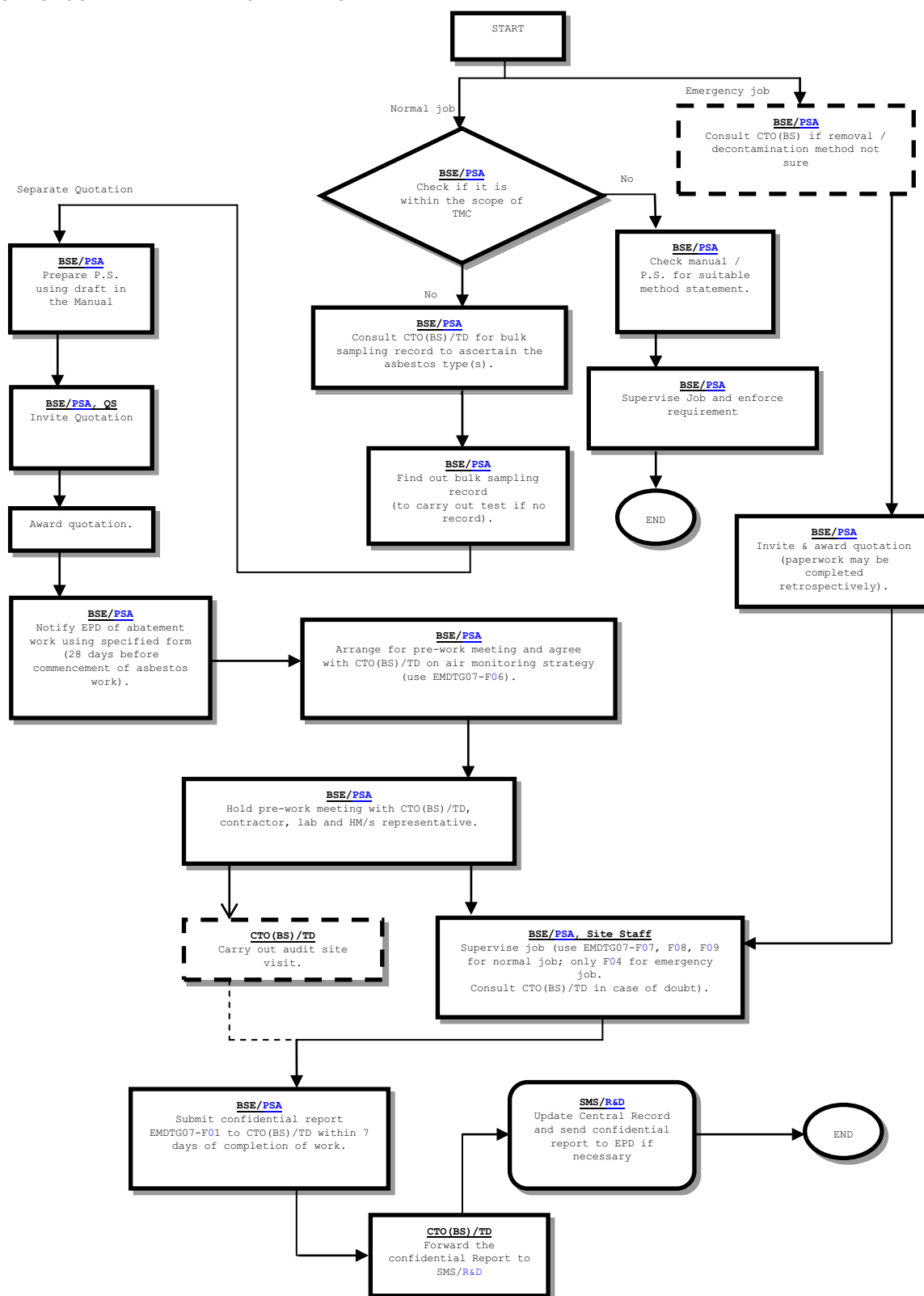
31. On the completion of an asbestos abatement project, the MS/BSE/PSA in charge of the project completes a report on the performance of the specialist contractor, using Form [EMDTG07-F01](#).
32. Refer to Section 3.4, Registered Asbestos Consultants, Contractors, supervisors & Laboratories.

4.4 Flow Charts

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT WORK - BW



ASBESTOS ABATEMENT WORK - BS



4.5 Squatter Structures (Deleted)

GENERAL

1. For demolition of squatter structures suspected of containing asbestos, the squatter control staff liaise with the relevant MS to arrange a joint site visit with a view to ascertaining whether ACM are present. As soon as ACM are confirmed by laboratory analysis, the HM is notified of the test results.
2. The HM will request the MS to remove the ACM by sending a memo with details such as location, dimensions etc. and funding arrangement. The MS shall then arrange the asbestos abatement work following proper procedures, and send a performance report on the registered asbestos contractor to SMS/R&D upon completion of work. After the removal of the ACM, the remaining structure is removed by the Squatter Control Section.

5.0 MISCELLANEOUS**5.1 Abbreviations****ABBREVIATION****A**

A	-	Architect	
ACM	-	Asbestos Containing Material	
Arch. S.D.	-	Architectural Services Department	
AWG	-	Asbestos Working Group	

B

BS	-	Building Services	
BSE	-	Building Services Engineer	
BW	-	Building Works	

C

CM	-	Contract Manager (see SO)	
CM/M	-	Chief Manager/Management	
CSE	-	Chief Structural Engineer	
CTO	-	Chief Technical Officer	

D

DMO	-	District Maintenance Office	
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E

EPD	-	Environmental Protection Department	
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H

HD	-	Housing Department	
HEPA	-	High Efficiency Particulate Air	
HM	-	Housing Manager	

L

LD	-	Labour Department	
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M

EMD	-	Estate Management Division	
MS	-	Maintenance Surveyor	

P

PO	-	Project Officer	
PSA	-	Property Services Agent	
PVA	-	Polyvinyl Acetate	

ABBREVIATION**Q**

QA	-	Quality Assurance
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S

SBSI	-	Senior Building Services Inspector
SCW	-	Senior Clerk of Works
SE	-	Structural Engineer
SMS	-	Senior Maintenance Surveyor
SO	-	Supervising Officer (in Specification means Contract Manager)
SSE	-	Senior Structural Engineer

5.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF ASBESTOS

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF ASBESTOS

1. Asbestos occurs naturally in many parts of the world; the main sites of commercial production are in Canada, the Russian Federation and South Africa. 'Asbestos' is a generic term for the fibrous forms of several mineral silicates. These occur naturally in seams or veins, in many igneous or metamorphic rocks and belong to one of two large groups of rock-forming minerals : the serpentines and the amphiboles.
2. The three main types of asbestos produced commercially are :
 Chrysotile - white asbestos
 Crocidolite - blue asbestos
 Amosite - brown asbestos
3. The serpentine group contains chrysotile, which is the only asbestos form member of this group of minerals and by far the commonest and commercially the most important type of asbestos.
4. The amphibole group contains crocidolite and amosite and also anthophyllite, actinolite and tremolite. Amosite is an acronym for Asbestos Mines of South Africa and is mineralogically known as cummingtonite - grunnerite asbestos. Tremolite may occur as a contaminant with chrysotile and with other minerals such as vermiculite.
5. Asbestos-containing rock is crushed and milled at the mining site to produce raw asbestos of various grades. Asbestos fibre is incombustible and mechanically strong and the different types are also, in different degrees, resistant to high temperatures, electric current and alkalis and efficient at absorbing sound. Only the amphibole fibres are resistant to acids. Because of its fibrous nature, it can be woven into fabrics and used as reinforcement for cement and plastics.

ASBESTOS RELATED DISEASES

6. The principal diseases known to be caused by exposure to asbestos are asbestosis, lung cancer and malignant mesothelioma.
 Asbestosis : Fibrosis or scarring of the lung in which the tissue becomes less elastic making breathing progressively more difficult. It is irreversible and may progress even after cessation of exposure to asbestos. Asbestosis is an industrial disease arising from high levels of exposure to airborne dust and there is little risk of contracting this disease from normal levels of environmental exposure to asbestos.

- Lung cancer : An increased incidence of lung cancer has been found amongst people who work with asbestos. The incidence is dependent on the degree of exposure and is very much greater for smokers than for non-smokers. All three types of commonly-used asbestos fibre can cause lung cancer, but crocidolite and amosite are thought to be more dangerous than chrysotile.
- Mesothelioma : A cancer of the inner lining of the chest or of the abdominal wall. The incidence in the general population is very low and most cases are attributable to working with asbestos. Crocidolite and probably amosite are much more likely to cause mesothelioma than chrysotile asbestos.

EXPOSURE, LATENCY, FIBRE SIZE

7. The risk of contracting an asbestos related disease depends on a number of factors, including the cumulative dose to which an individual has been exposed, the time since first exposure and the type and size of the asbestos fibres. It is generally assumed that the risk of cancer is proportional to total exposure. There is commonly a lag or latency period of 10-20 years between first exposure and onset of symptoms for asbestos related diseases and, in the case of cancer, the period of latency may be up to 40 years or more.
8. Fibre size and shape are thought to be important variables in determining the risk from asbestos. Longer fibres with a length of greater than 200 microns are generally cleared from the nasal passages, but shorter fibres with a diameter of less than about 2 microns may penetrate deep into the lungs.
9. Laboratory evidence suggests that the hazard is greatest with fibres between 5 and 10 microns in length and 1.5 or 2 microns in diameter. There are, however, no clear boundaries between hazardous and non-hazardous configurations.

PUBLIC HEALTH EFFECTS

10. Most of the information of the health effects of exposure to asbestos has been derived from studies of workers occupationally exposed to asbestos fibres at concentrations many times higher than those encountered by the general public. Estimates of the risk of low level exposure have to be based on extrapolation from occupational exposure levels, and the range of uncertainty in such estimates is large.

11. The risk of mesothelioma is thought to increase rapidly with time since first exposure and it is therefore likely that children will be more at risk than adults from a similar exposure. Smoking and asbestos appear to act synergistically in causing lung cancer, and smokers exposed to asbestos have a much greater additional risk of contracting lung cancer than non-smokers similarly exposed.
12. There is no known threshold level for exposure to asbestos below which there is no risk and it is advisable to reduce exposure to the minimum that is reasonably practicable. In cases where there is potential for long periods of exposure, as in homes, or where children are involved, as in schools, particular efforts should be made to ensure that the levels are as low as possible.

ASBESTOS IN DRINKING WATER

13. The UK Committee on Medical Aspects of the Contamination of Air, Soil and Water, advising on the implications for public health of the use of asbestos cement pipes in drinking water distribution systems, concluded that :
14. "The only potential risk from the presence of asbestos in drinking water which has been suggested as at all plausible, is that of certain forms of cancer. The Committee has considered the substantial body of research findings relevant to this question; it has found no convincing evidence which indicates that the concentrations and forms of asbestos in drinking water in the UK, including those derived from the use of asbestos-cement pipes according to current practice, represent a hazard to the health of the consumer. The information assessed by this Committee suggests that, if there is any carcinogenic risk to the consumer from exposure to asbestos in drinking water, it is of an extremely low order and is not detectable by the methods currently available."
15. The report of the Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment states that studies have generally yielded negative results and that there is no clear epidemiological evidence of increased carcinoma in the gastro-intestinal tract attributable to asbestos in non-occupationally exposed populations.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF ASBESTOS

1. Relevant information on the subject can be found in the following legislations and publications :
 - (a) Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulation (Cap. 59AD). The regulation was made under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (Cap. 59).
 - (b) Pneumoconiosis and Mesothelioma (Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 360).
 - (c) Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (Cap. 509)
 - (d) Occupational Safety and Health Regulation (Cap. 509A)
 - (e) The Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311).
 - (f) The Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation (Cap. 354C). The regulation is made under the Waste Disposal Ordinance (Cap. 354).
 - (g) Code of Practice: Safety and Health at Work with Asbestos published by LD.
 - (h) Health Hazards of Asbestos published by LD.
 - (i) 5 sets of Code of Practice on Asbestos Control published by EPD :-
 - Handling, Transportation and Disposal of Asbestos Waste;
 - Preparation of Asbestos Investigation Report, Asbestos Management Plan and Asbestos Abatement Plan;
 - Asbestos Work Using Full Containment or Mini Containment Method;
 - Safe Handling of Low Risk Asbestos Containing Material; and
 - Asbestos Work Using Glove Bag Method.
 - (j) 4 leaflets published by EPD :-
 - Environmental Asbestos Control;
 - Asbestos Removal of Unauthorized Building Works;
 - How to Handle Corrugated Asbestos Cement Sheets; and
 - Banning Asbestos.
 - (k) Practice Note 2/97 Handling of Asbestos Containing Materials in Buildings issued by the Professional Persons Environmental Consultative Committee.
 - (l) Code of Practice for Demolition of Buildings published by the Buildings Department.

- (m) Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers - ADV-1 "Asbestos" issued by the Buildings Department.
- (n) Practice Note for Registered Contractors - PNRC 15 "Asbestos" issued by the Buildings Department.

5.4 Air Monitoring Control Limits

GENERAL

1. Air monitoring is carried out to ensure that there is no contamination of the surrounding environment or increase in risk to any person as a result of asbestos abatement works.
2. The air monitoring standards that are applied to all asbestos abatement works in accordance with the local legislation and accepted international standards are set out below.

BACKGROUND LEVEL

3. Background sampling is conducted to determine the ambient fibre level prior to the commencement of abatement work and to detect any change in it resulting from the works.
4. There is no standard level for a background sample, however unless there are other sources of fibre generation in the vicinity of the work site that cannot be isolated or removed, the 0.01 fibre/mL level is imposed.

OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE LIMITS

5. Personal sampling is conducted for the protection of workers during the process of asbestos abatement works.
6. The occupational exposure limits should not exceed :
 - 0.2 fibre/mL for crocidolite and amosite
 - 0.5 fibre/mL for other forms of asbestos
7. In practice some form of respiratory protection is essential and the equipment used must be that which is appropriate for the dust levels involved.

LEAKAGE (DURING ABATEMENT) CONTROL STANDARD

8. Leakage sampling is conducted adjacent to the site where asbestos abatement works is being carried out to ensure that there is no contamination of the surrounding environment during the course of the works.
9. The dust level adjacent to the sites where asbestos abatement works is being carried out should not exceed 0.01 fibre/mL or be significantly different from the background level, whichever is higher.

PENULTIMATE/FINAL CLEARANCE STANDARD

10. Penultimate and final clearance sampling is conducted to ensure that the site is safe for re-occupation after asbestos abatement works have been carried out by the containment or mini-containment method.

11. The fibre count upon completion of abatement works should not exceed 0.01 fibre/mL or be higher than the original background level and no visible debris be apparent.

REASSURANCE STANDARD

12. Reassurance sampling is conducted to ensure that the site is safe for re-occupation after asbestos abatement works have been carried out by a method other than containment or mini-containment.
13. A reassurance sample is acceptable if it is below 0.01 fibre/mL, or is not greater than original background sampling results.

5.5 Asbestos Working Group Terms of Reference

MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of the Asbestos Working Group (AWG) is as follows :-

Chairman	CM/M(PM)
Members	SMS/R&D
	SSE/15
	SE/122
	SE/SIS3
	CTO(BS)/TD
	HM/BPS2
Secretary	MS/ENV

Representative from :

Environmental Protection Department.
Labour Department

TERMS OF REFERENCE

2. - to advise the Permanent Secretary of Housing on the continued development of an asbestos abatement strategy;
- to receive and consider information on materials containing asbestos in Housing Authority managed property;
- to receive and consider information on the Housing Department's asbestos abatement programmes;
- to keep under review the Housing Department procedures for removal or encapsulation of materials containing asbestos, and to provide advice to the Housing Department on these procedures to ensure standards of asbestos abatement are appropriate for the level of risk;
- to receive and consider information of the performance of asbestos abatement contractors and consultants undertaking work for the Housing Department, and the results of associated routine air monitoring.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

3. Meetings are held annually.

FILE REFERENCE

4. HD3-4/RD/-9/3

5.6 Bulk Sampling

GENERAL

1. The purpose of these guidelines for bulk sampling is to enable staff to produce representative sampling strategies for materials suspected of containing asbestos. The basic principles of bulk sampling are :
 - to obtain representative samples of the suspected asbestos-containing materials (ACM), and
 - to draw inference from the samples collected about the overall ACM, stating clearly the statistical validity of such inference.
2. Sampling guidelines are set out below for each type of ACM.

SURFACE MATERIAL

3. Surface material includes ACM used as surface finishing such as acoustic plaster and asbestos paint. If asbestos is suspected in surfacing material, a full depth approach should be adopted.
4. Sampling guideline for surface material.

Homogeneous Area	No. of samples
50 m ² or less	3 (only analyse the second and third sample if the result of the first is negative)
for each additional area up to 100 ²	1 further sample
for an area larger than 500m ²	at least 5 in total

5. Sample should be taken to full depth with dimension of 25mm x 25mm.

CEMENTITIOUS MATERIAL

6. Cementitious material includes asbestos segregation boards, corrugated sheets, asbestos roof tiles, grille panels, asbestos cement pipes and all other cementitious suspected ACM. Sample size should have a minimum dimension of 25mm x 25mm.
7. Sampling guideline for cementitious material.

Homogeneous Area	No. of samples
100m ² or less	2 (only analyse the second sample if the result of the first is negative)
for each additional area up to 100m ²	1 further sample
for an area larger than 700m ²	at least 5 in total

8. Sample should have a minimum size of 25mm x 25mm.

RESINATED MATERIAL

9. Resinated material includes materials such as gaskets, caulking material, pump packing, lift brake lining, brake shoe, fire damper of busbar riser, arc chute of switch gear and vinyl floor tiles.
10. Two samples shall be taken for each type of material located at a single location. (for cases where it is impractical to obtain sample from the installation which is in operation, relevant contractor shall provide sample of the same material for analysis, such as lift brake lining). The second sample should be analysed only if the first is negative.
11. Sample should be equivalent to a volume dimension of 25mm x 25mm x 10mm.

WOVEN MATERIAL

12. Woven material includes suspected woven ACM used as flexible joints, fire blankets, and fire curtain.
13. Two samples shall be taken for each type of material located at a single location. (For cases where it is impractical to obtain sample from the installation which is in operation, relevant contractor shall provide sample of the same material for analysis if available). The second sample should be analysed only if the first is negative.
14. Sample should have a minimum dimension of 25mm x 25mm.

INSULATION MATERIAL

15. Insulation material includes materials such as switch gear arc chutes, insulation boards, pipe/flue/rope/chimney lagging, refuse chutes, sandwiched chimney insulation material and air duct insulating material.
16. Sampling guideline for insulation material in the form of lagging.

Homogeneous run	No. of samples
10m in length/50m ² or less	3 (only analyse the second and third sample if the result of the first is negative)
for each additional length up to 5m or additional area up to 100m ²	1 further sample
for a total length longer than 50m or larger than 200m ²	at least 5 in total

17. For other insulation material, 2 samples shall be taken for each type of material located at a single location. (For cases where it is impractical to obtain sample from the installation which is in operation, relevant contractor shall provide sample of the same material for analysis if available). The second sample should be analysed only if the first is negative.

CONNECTING PARTS

18. Connecting parts includes installations such as elbows, flanges and valves.
19. 2 samples shall be taken for each type of installation items located at a single location. The second sample should be analysed only if the first is negative.
20. Sample should have a minimum dimension of 25mm x 25mm.

REQUEST FOR TESTING SERVICES

21. Bulk sampling is carried out through the Department's materials testing services, and requests for bulk sampling are made to SCE/MTM using Form DCMM-F03. This form can be downloaded from HKHA's Intranet

5.7 Emergency Procedures

ASBESTOS CONTAMINATION

1. If Management staff or PSA identify a case of asbestos contamination, they should immediately fence off the contaminated area, erect warning signs and arrange a guard to patrol if necessary. They should advise any person who has touched the contamination to wash their hands, hair and face, or to take a thorough shower as soon as practicable.
2. The appropriate DMO should be notified of the case by an Urgent Works Request from the HM/PSA.
3. As soon as possible after receiving the notice the MS/BSE or SCW/SBSI conducts an inspection to verify the asbestos contamination and arranges for decontamination of the contaminated area by an Registered Asbestos Contractor. The associated paperwork for award of quotation, issue of Works Order and notification to EPD may be dealt with retrospectively. For emergency repairs to underground asbestos cement water mains, the procedures stated in EMDI No.W01/2014 shall be followed.
4. If the MS/BSE/PSA is not sure of the decontamination method or the contamination is widespread, SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD should be consulted.
5. The site staff monitor the works and maintain a record using the DAILY LOG Form [EMDTG07-F09](#).
6. Within one week of the completion of the works the MS/BSE/PSA submits a report on the registered asbestos contractor's performance to SMS/R&D for processing in the normal manner. Refer to Section 3.4
7. Any subsequent asbestos work following the decontamination work is dealt with according to the procedures for Planned works.

PROCEDURES IN THE CASE OF A SPILLAGE OF DEBRIS

8. If during the course of Asbestos Abatement work Asbestos contaminated debris is spilled outside the Work Area, staff ensure that the registered asbestos contractor immediately carries out the following :-
 - a) Segregate the contaminated area and post warning signs.
 - b) Stop all processes which would result in producing more asbestos debris.
 - c) Spray all the suspected contaminated surfaces and debris within the Work Area with Amended Water in a fine mist spray, using airless spray equipment.
 - d) Bag all loose asbestos materials/debris which are present in the Work Area.
 - e) Wet-wipe clean the surfaces and thoroughly clean the contaminated area with a HEPA vacuum cleaner once the surfaces become dry. Prepare the site for visual inspection by the SO, who shall verify by visual inspection and/or air testing that

the above measures have been carried out satisfactorily, before works are allowed to proceed.

Approved full-face positive-pressure powered respirators should be worn by workers carrying out the above.

PROCEDURES IF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL LIMIT IS EXCEEDED

9. If during the course of Asbestos Abatement work air monitoring results show that the Environmental Control Limit of 0.01 fibres/mL has been exceeded, staff ensure that the Contractor immediately carries out the following :-

- a) Stop all processes which would result in producing more asbestos debris.
- b) Spray all surfaces and debris within the Work Area with Amended Water in a fine mist spray, using airless spray equipment.
- c) Bag all loose asbestos materials/debris present in the Work Area(s).
- d) Investigate together with the SO the source of dust, the integrity of the Containment and the work procedures to identify the causes; and take immediate measures to rectify the situation as agreed by the SO.

Approved full-face positive-pressure powered respirators should be worn by workers carrying out the above.

PROCEDURES TO ADOPT AFTER A FIRE

10. If during the course of Asbestos Abatement work a fire has occurred and has been put out, staff ensure that the Contractor immediately carries out the following :-

- a) Spray all surfaces and debris within the Work Area with Amended Water in a fine mist spray, using airless spray equipment, once the fire has been extinguished and the site is safe for re-entry.
- b) Bag all loose asbestos materials/debris which are present in the Work Area.
- c) Wipe clean the surfaces and thoroughly clean the contaminated area with a HEPA vacuum cleaner once the surfaces become dry. Prepare the site for visual inspection by the SO, who shall verify by visual inspection and/or air testing that the above measures have been carried out satisfactorily, before works are allowed to proceed.

Approved full-face positive-pressure powered respirators should be worn by workers carrying out the above.

PROCEDURES IF A NUMBER THREE TYPHOON SIGNAL (OR ABOVE) IS RAISED OR WHEN THE RAIN STORM WARNING IS GIVEN

11. If during the course of Asbestos Abatement work a Number Three Typhoon Signal (or above) is raised, or if the Red Rainstorm Warning Signal is given, staff ensure that the registered asbestos contractor immediately carries out the following :-
 - a) Stop all processes which would result in producing more asbestos debris.
 - b) Bag all loose asbestos materials/debris which are present in the Work Area and remove to the Secure Store.
 - c) Clean the contaminated area thoroughly with a HEPA vacuum cleaner. Cut off all power and water supplies and secure all loose equipment and materials against typhoon damage. Check the drainage system is not blocked within the site area to avoid flooding.
 - d) Move all bags of asbestos waste to the Secure Store.
 - e) Prepare the site for visual inspection by the SO, who shall verify that the above measures have been carried out satisfactorily, before workers leave the site.
12. The abatement works are allowed to recommence once the Number Three Typhoon Signal has been lowered or when the Red-Rainstorm Warning signal is of whichever is applicable and the SO has verified that any necessary cleaning up work and repairs to containments have been completed.

PROCEDURES IN THE CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

13. If during the course of Asbestos Abatement work a worker collapses or some other accident occurs, staff ensure that the registered asbestos contractor immediately carries out the following :-
 - a) Stop all work and if necessary remove worker or workers to safety.
 - b) If a worker has collapsed, remove his face mask. In other cases the face mask should be left in place. Carry out normal Emergency First Aid procedures.
 - c) Arrange for the worker to be taken to a Hospital. Personal decontamination should be carried out whenever possible.
 - d) If the worker has not been decontaminated, the rescue or medical personnel involved should be so informed so that they are aware that the workers' clothing are contaminated and take appropriate safety measures.
 - e) Clean any adjoining area contaminated during the emergency thoroughly with a HEPA vacuum cleaner. Prepare the site for visual inspection by the SO, who shall verify by visual inspection and/or air testing that the above measures have been carried out satisfactorily, before works are allowed to proceed.

5.8 Standard Forms

FORM NO.	TITLE/DESCRIPTION	LAST AMENDMENT DATE	
<u>EMDTG07-F01</u>	Report on Performance of Registered Asbestos Contractor	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F02</u>	Report on Bulk Sample Test Results	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F03</u>	Sample memo to request : Medical Examination for HD Staff Engaged in the Inspection of Asbestos Abatement Works	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F04</u>	Condition Survey of Asbestos Containing Materials	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F05</u>	Report on Encapsulation of Asbestos Cement Balcony Grille Panels	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F06</u>	Information for Pre-work Meeting	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F07</u>	Request for Approval to Commence Work	15/05/2009	
<u>EMDTG07-F08</u>	Request for Inspection	15/05/2009	
<u>EMDTG07-F09</u>	Daily Log	15/05/2009	
<u>EMDTG07-F10</u>	Air Monitoring Data Summary Sheet	15/05/2009	
<u>EMDTG07-F11</u>	Technical Audit Inspection Report	17/07/2015	
<u>EMDTG07-F12</u>	Notification of Commencement of Asbestos Abatement Work	15/05/2009	

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Pre-works Check

GENERAL

1. This part of the site work involves three aspects :
 - a) Works area preparation;
 - b) Secure storage area preparation;
 - c) Availability of facilities;

WORKS AREA PREPARATION

2. Before the commencement of any containment/segregation construction work, the site must be properly prepared. This involves :
 - removing all removable items and storing them in a secure place (inaccessible by anyone not part of the work team);
 - cleaning thoroughly by wet-wiping with wet cloth and HEPA vacuuming to the extent that all visible dust particles or fibres are cleared; and
 - covering securely the non-removable items with 0.15mm thick polythene sheets (to avoid contamination).
3. All these must be properly and thoroughly done before the contractor should be allowed to proceed with building the containment or segregation.
4. Where asbestos is known to be present, any fibre that is unclassified will be treated as asbestos fibre to be on the safe side. Therefore, pre-site cleaning is not to be taken lightly especially when the asbestos-containing material is friable in nature.

SECURE STORAGE AREA PREPARATION

5. A secure storage area shall mean a fully segregated area that is lockable with access limited to those handling the asbestos waste. Appropriate warning signs must be put up in conspicuous locations to warn any potential trespassers that might pass by.
6. The secure storage area must be locked at all times except when waste is being placed in it or removed from it.
7. The secure storage area should ideally be located not too far away from the waste producing point, however, waste transporting through public areas must be kept to a minimum.
8. Should it be considered unavoidable to transport waste through public areas, the waste should be transported in sturdy carriers of an inconspicuous appearance. Additional precautionary measures will be required as approved by the Housing Department.

AVAILABILITY OF FACILITIES

9. Power and water supply on site must be checked and confirmed well ahead. Very often, these items would have to be provided for the contractor and time must be allowed to arrange for them.

6.2 Equipment Check

GENERAL

1. The inspection of equipment involves the following aspects :
 - a) availability of equipment
 - b) clean and free of debris
 - c) HEPA items
 - d) items for wetting ACM
 - e) containment/segregation items
 - f) personal protective items
 - g) waste disposal items
 - h) ACM removal items

AVAILABILITY OF EQUIPMENT

2. In the registered asbestos contractor's technical submission, an equipment list of all equipment and consumables the contractor proposed to use would be included. This list should form the basis of cross checking the equipment available on site. Any missing item(s) must be identified and be in place before any work can be carried out.

CLEAN AND FREE OF DEBRIS

3. As all dust and unclassified fibre will invariably be taken as asbestos, the equipment themselves must be clean and free of visible dust/fibre before they can be used in asbestos work procedures. Cleaning of the equipment can be done by either wet-wiping and or HEPA vacuuming.

HEPA ITEMS

4. HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) items include the air movers, vacuum cleaners, and respirators. They are there to screen out asbestos dust/fibres effectively (capable of trapping and retaining 99.97% of the particles (asbestos fibres) greater than 0.3µm in mass median aerodynamic equivalent diameter).
5. With the air movers and the vacuum cleaners, the HEPA filters shall be installed in the maintenance workshop and the maintenance record kept on site for inspection when required. Hence, if the site staff are in any doubt as to the integrity of the HEPA filters in the equipment, the servicing record should be checked. The date of the record should also be checked to make sure it is the latest one.
6. The HEPA filter used in the respirators should be the replaceable cartridge type filters as approved under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos Approval of Respiratory Protective Equipment) Notice.
7. With effect from December 1998, HEPA-filtered appliances that are used in asbestos works should be tested by the HEPA Appliance

Testing Centre recognized by the Environmental Protection Department. Certificate would be issued to the appliances that have passed the tests stipulated on the Code of Practice on Asbestos Control. Certification for all such appliances in use should be kept on site to facilitate compliance inspections carried out by the Environmental Protection Department and the Housing Department.

ITEMS FOR WETTING ACM

8. Amended water must be available on site for wetting of the ACM before removal. Amended water means a water diluted wetting agent (chemically 50% polyoxyethylene ether + 50% polyoxyethylene ester).
9. A common commercial product that is widely acceptable is called 'Asbesto-wet' which is an American product. If there is any doubt, the product's specifications should be checked. If the composition matches with the chemical composition described above (sometimes a few volume percentages will be allocated to some sort of emulsion), then the product is considered acceptable.

CONTAINMENT/SEGREGATION ITEMS

10. A containment will consist of the following parts/items each of them must be checked to assess the overall integrity of the containment :-
 - a) 0.15mm thick polythene sheets; timber battens;
 - b) 50 to 70mm wide duct tape;
 - c) air mover for full containment/HEPA vacuum cleaner for mini containment;
 - d) viewing panels (made of clear acrylic sheets);
 - e) mirror (in the clean room for assisting the face fitting of respiratory equipment) :
 - f) shower equipment including shower head, basin, shampoo & soap, nail brush, etc., and water filtration system capable of filtering particles down to 5µm in suspension. The water supply should also be checked on the sufficiency and cleanliness of water source.
 - g) warning signs;
11. A segregation will consist of the following parts/items and each of them must be checked to assess the overall integrity of the segregation :-
 - a) plywood boards used for hoardings;
 - b) 0.15mm thick polythene sheets;
 - c) 50 to 70mm thick duct taps;
 - d) viewing panels (made of clear acrylic sheets);
 - e) mirror (in the clean room for assisting the face fitting go respiratory equipment) :

- f) shower equipment including shower head, basin, shampoo & soap, nail brush, etc., and water filtration system capable of filtering particles down to 6µm in suspension. The water supply should also be checked on the sufficiency and cleanliness of water source.
- g) warning signs;

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE ITEMS

12. Personal protective equipment includes :

- a) disposable, impervious coveralls with hood and shoe cover;
- b) approved half mask respirators and/or full-face powered respirators fitted with approved disposable cartridge with HEPA filters.
- c) Generally, all abatement procedures for friable ACMs would require the full-face type respirators. The compliance of these items should be checked against the Factory and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Special Regulation and their related Codes of practice;
- d) eye protector (for sharp/cementitious ACMs only) or where such are needed for safety reasons.

WASTE DISPOSAL ITEMS

13. Asbestos waste, depending on its physical nature, can either be stored in waste bags or steel waste drums. Generally, for asbestos waste that has sharp edges that may cause damage to waste bags and are bulky, or the waste is wet or heavy, they should be stored in waste drums. However, sometimes an additional woven bag as the innermost bag can be used if the sharp items are not large in size.

14. In any case, an appropriate warning sign with "DANGER - ASBESTOS WASTE, DO NOT INHALE DUST" in both Chinese and English printed on them must be put on the waste containing medium. In the case of waste drums, the type of asbestos (chrysotile, amosite, crocidolite etc.) should be specified as part of the label.
15. Asbestos waste bags
 - a) Inner layer waste bags should be made of 0.15mm thick polythene and appropriately colour coded following the guideline below :
 - transparent for bonded ACM excluding blue/brown asbestos.
 - white for chrysotile (white asbestos);
 - orange for any other type of asbestos apart from chrysotile;
 - b) Outer layer waste bags should be made of 0.15mm thick polythene and must be transparent so that the inner layer coloured bag can be seen.
 - c) Each layer of the bagged waste should be vacuum packed and goose-neck sealed with tape. This practice is important to help minimize damage to the plastic layers during temporary storage and handling of the waste. Any damaged plastic bag will be self-revealing in that the bagged waste would become puffy due to loss of the vacuum, meaning that at least an additional layer of plastic is required, i.e. vacuum packed and goose-neck sealed again, to avoid release of asbestos fibres.
16. Asbestos waste drums
 - a) The waste drums should be made of mild steel (light duty with removable heads). These drums are of full aperture type and the lids may be secured with latch, lever, or nut and bolt.

ACM REMOVAL ITEMS

17. Apart from exceptional cases where written approval is granted by the authorities, removal of ACMs should be conducted using hand tools only. These hand tools could be paint scrapers, wire brushes etc.

6.3 Visual Inspection

GENERAL

1. The main purpose of the visual inspection is to check whether the asbestos removal work is complete. Although asbestos fibres, in their most lethal size, are invisible to the human eye, the air samples and the thorough cleaning have helped to ensure the cleanliness of the containment.
2. Because the human eye cannot distinguish asbestos fibres from other fibres, any fibre or dust that is visibly detectable is treated as asbestos fibre.
3. If any fibres or dust are visible it is clear indication that the cleaning has not been thorough enough.
4. The visual inspection involves the following aspects:
 - a) personal protection
 - b) visual inspection
 - c) decontamination

PERSONAL PROTECTION

5. To ensure personal safety, the visual inspections should only be conducted after satisfactory penultimate air test results have been received from the laboratory.
6. Although satisfactory penultimate air test results are normally a good indication of cleanliness, the site staff should still take care in putting on the protective equipment such as coveralls and a half mask respirator. **Paper masks are not to be used.**

VISUAL INSPECTION

7. In conducting the visual inspection, the site staff should check every corner of the containment, not only the surfaces previously covered with ACM. A good method is to wipe a finger across the plastic sheet to check the dustiness.
8. Take care to look at the duct tapes where peeling could have occurred. As the duct tapes have very strong adhesives, fibres or debris can easily get stuck where there is not a perfect seal. The use of a torch will assist in the inspection.

DECONTAMINATION

9. If the site staff are satisfied that the work area is cleaned, they will not be expected to carry out extensive decontamination when leaving from the decontamination unit.
10. As a minimum however, wet-wiping with a clean towel and washing the hands and face should be carried out. Any tools brought into the containment such as torches shall be cleaned by wet-wiping before taking them out of the containment.

6.4 Smoke Test

GENERAL

1. The smoke test is used in the following activities :
 - a) containment integrity check
 - b) air mover efficiency check

CONTAINMENT INTEGRITY CHECK

2. After the site staff are fully satisfied with the integrity of the containment, a smoke test is carried out. The purpose of the smoke test is to ensure the air-tightness of the Containment.
3. When the site staff are ready for the smoke test, the contractor is instructed to prepare the containment by filling it with non-toxic smoke, usually by means of a smoke generator. As the test is to ensure that the containment is air-tight, any trace of smoke leakage from the containment is not acceptable and rectification should be carried out immediately (usually by applying duct tape or foam).
4. External lighting should be switched off as this would affect the ease of visually detecting the smoke. Site staff should inspect the containment by shining a torch along the sides of the containment, concentrating on the joints, where leakage is most likely.

AIR MOVER EFFICIENCY CHECK

5. The purpose of the test is to check the efficiency of the air mover and to ensure that the negative pressure required is attained. When there is no visual leakage of smoke from the containment, the air mover and the negative pressure monitor should both be switched on.
6. The site officer should then check visually to see if all smoke inside the containment is extracted, that the absolute filters screen out the smoke effectively and that the pressure gauges read normal.
7. The test is important because the path of smoke extraction can indicate whether all area of the containment fall within the extractable zone. Should there be any short-circuiting of the extraction path, there will be areas of the containment where smoke will congregate and stay.
8. In order for this visual assessment to be accurate, the site staff may be required to enter the containment in order to obtain a complete picture of the extraction profile of the smoke.

9. The short-circuiting of the extraction path might be due to the location of the decontamination unit (the entry/exit points) and the air mover. In theory they should be located in diagonally opposite corners of the containment. For a very large containment, 2 air movers placed at 2 strategically chosen locations may be required.
10. If the particular site conditions make it difficult to satisfy the above requirements, the smoke test will be especially useful in determining the integrity of the containment in terms of the air change effectiveness and the negative pressure.

6.5 Air Monitoring

GENERAL

1. Air monitoring tests are conducted at various stages of the asbestos abatement work. Asbestos abatement works are normally done under full/mini containment, or segregation.
2. Air monitoring tests required for asbestos abatement work performed under full/mini containment are :
 - a) Background
 - b) Leakage
 - c) Penultimate
 - d) Final Clearance, and
 - e) Personal.
3. Air monitoring tests required for asbestos abatement work performed under segregation are :
 - a) Background
 - b) Environmental
 - c) Reassurance
 - d) Personal.

BACKGROUND TEST

4. Background samples are collected after the pre-cleaning of the work site but before building of the containment or segregation commences. Background air tests should generally be collected one day before the commencement of building the containment or segregation. The building of the containment or segregation is not to commence until the background samples have been received and interpreted to be acceptable.
5. The background sample will not necessarily be under 0.01 fibres/mL because there may be other sources of fibre generation that cannot be isolated or removed. If the site officer is not convinced that there are other sources of fibre generation contributing to the excessive fibre level, the 0.01 fibres/mL criteria should be imposed.
6. Another common problem that may occur with background sampling is dust overloading of the filter. This may occur in cases such as where the work site is open and in close proximity to heavy traffic, or there is dusty construction work nearby.
7. Where there is a problem with dust overloading of the filter, the contractor should be instructed to clean the site as thoroughly as possible, then :
 - a) For works under containment, have the containment built. The inside of the containment should then be cleaned after it is completed. Background re-sampling are then carried out inside the containment. In this case, background sample results of 0.01 fibres/mL are required.

- b) For works under segregation, take multiple samples of shorter duration and pool the results. This method is used as a last resort.

LEAKAGE TEST

8. Leakage samples are taken to continuously monitor the integrity of the containment. Four leakage samples are required as a minimum. The suggested locations for these four samples are as follows :-
 - a) one inside the clean room of the decontamination unit or debris port;
 - b) one at 1.5m away from the unobstructed exhaust of an air mover;
 - c) two area samples outside the containment remote from the decontamination unit;
9. If the containment is large, the site officer may, at their own discretion, request for further leakage sampling be carried out.
10. Leakage samples are acceptable if they are below 0.01 fibres/mL, or are not greater than the original background sampling results. If leakage sample results are considered unacceptable, all asbestos abatement work should be stopped and remedial action(s) taken. This may involve one or more of the following :
 - a) a thorough checking of the containment for leaks, especially when the area samples are exceeding the required level, and/or
 - b) checking the effectiveness of the air mover, hence the negative pressure if the clean room sample exceeds the requirements, and/or
 - c) checking the integrity of the air mover, such as the maintenance record of the HEPA filter. If in doubt, site officer should request the changing of the air mover.

ENVIRONMENTAL TEST

11. Environmental samples are taken in the vicinity of an asbestos abatement work area to check the ambient fibre level. Any sudden rise in the ambient level is investigated to determine if it is due to a failure of the precautionary measures taken in the asbestos works.

PENULTIMATE TEST

12. Penultimate samples are taken after the innermost plastic layer of the containment has been HEPA vacuumed and wet-wiped, PVA sprayed and removed, and the 2nd innermost plastic layer HEPA vacuumed and wet-wiped.
13. Penultimate test samples are acceptable if under 0.01 fibre/mL. If the Penultimate sample exceeds the requirement, the containment should be re-cleaned by HEPA vacuuming and wet-wiping and further Penultimate tests carried out.

14. The Laboratory is responsible for carrying out a visual inspection and ensuring that there is no fibre/debris visually detectable before the Penultimate samples are carried out. If the Contractor fails the visual inspection carried out by the Consultant (after Penultimate tests), the site would be required to be re-cleaned and Penultimate tests re-carried out. The fees so incurred will be borne by the Specialist Testing Contractor, not the Contractor.

FINAL CLEARANCE TEST

15. Final Clearance tests are carried out after the visual inspection finds the area clean and free of fibres/dust, the surfaces previously covered with ACM sealed and PVA sprayed, the 2nd innermost layer of plastic sheet PVA sprayed and removed, and the work area HEPA vacuumed and wet-wiped once more.
16. Final Clearance test samples are acceptable if under 0.01 fibre/mL. If the Final Clearance samples exceed the standards, the containment should be re-cleaned by HEPA vacuuming and wet-wiping and further Final Clearance tests carried out.

PERSONAL TEST

17. Personal samples are requirements by the labour Department and are taken to monitor the fibre level asbestos workers are subjected to during asbestos abatement work. The sampler should be fixed to the worker's coverall and within his breathing zone.
18. Personal samples must comply to the following standards :-
 - 0.5 fibres/mL for Chrysotile;
 - 0.2 fibres/mL for asbestos fibre other than Chrysotile.

REASSURANCE TEST

19. As asbestos abatement work performed under segregation is done under open air conditions, only one set of clearance indicators is required and these samples are termed Reassurance.
20. Reassurance samples are taken after completion of asbestos removal, thorough cleaning of the site, and surfaces previously covered by ACM sprayed with PVA. Locations of the samples are at where the asbestos abatement took place and at the periphery of the segregation.
21. The fibre level indicated by the reassurance test should not exceed 0.01 fibre/mL or that of the background test, whichever is the higher.

6.6 Lump sum contracts

GENERAL

1. The MS/BSE/PSA prepares the tender documents for a lump sum contract for asbestos abatement works in accordance with the HD's Contract Procedures manuals, as appropriate. The documents generally consist of the following :
 - a) Conditions of Tender
 - General Conditions
 - Special Conditions
 - b) Form of Tender
 - c) Articles of Agreement
 - d) Conditions of Contract
 - General Conditions
 - Special Conditions
 - e) General Specification
 - f) Particular Specification
 - Part A, The Works
 - Part B, Amendments to the GS
 - Appendices
 - g) Schedule of Quantities (& Rates)
 - h) Summary of Tender
2. The MS/BSE/PSA seeks advice from SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate, for the detail preparation of the documentation.

FORM OF TENDER

3. The Form of Tender should include details of the :
 - a) Description of the Works;
 - b) Site of the Works; and
 - c) Working Period.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF TENDER

4. In addition to listing the documents issued and the documents available to the tenderers the Special Conditions of Tender should include the following paragraph:

Other submissions required with tender

In accordance with condition GCT 3(c), any further information described in Appendix B of the Particular Specification is required to be submitted with the tender.

PARTICULAR SPECIFICATION, PART A - THE WORKS

5. Part A, The Works, defines the Project, identifies the Contract Manager and gives a general description of the works.

6. Paragraphs are added to Part A concerning the asbestos abatement work to be carried out by registered asbestos contractor employed direct by the Authority/PSA (if appropriate). Air monitoring and testing for asbestos removal shall normally be carried out by HD's term testing services contractor (request to be made through SCE/MTM).

PARTICULAR SPECIFICATION, PART B - AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE GS

7. [Appropriate](#) Appendices A to F [should be inserted in the Particular Specification.](#)

PARTICULAR SPECIFICATION - APPENDICES

8. The detail requirements for asbestos abatement works are described in the appendices to the Particular Specification. The following appendices are added to the Particular Specification for Lump Sum contracts:

Appendix A	-	Definitions
Appendix B	-	Asbestos Works
Appendix C	-	Emergency Measures
Appendix D	-	Equipment Standards
Appendix E	-	Standard Forms
Appendix F	-	Asbestos Work Methods (see below)

9. Appendix A, Definitions, defines the terms associated with asbestos works as used in the contract. Refer EMDTG08-2.1.
10. Appendix B, Asbestos Works, is the general specification for asbestos works. Refer EMDTG08-2.2.
11. Appendix C, Emergency Measures, sets out the measures the contractor is required to take in the case of an emergency during the course of asbestos removal works. Refer EMDTG08-2.3.
12. Appendix D, Equipment Standards, sets out the standards for the specific equipment and materials used in asbestos removal works. Refer EMDTG08-2.4.
13. Appendix E, Standard Forms, includes the standard forms that the contractor is required to use for requesting approvals and inspections. Refer EMDTG08-2.5.
14. Appendix F, Asbestos Work Methods, sets out the work method guideline for the specific type of asbestos removal works. Only the work method relevant to the works is included as Appendix F. Refer to EMDTG08 section 3 and section 4 for Building Works and Building Services asbestos work methods respectively.

15. Where guidance on the preparation of the particular specification is included in a sample document it is enclosed in brackets and identified. All guidance notes must be deleted from the final printout of the particular specification.
16. Copies of the sample documents and specifications contained in EMDTG08 may be obtained in electronic and hardcopy form from QMU/M.
17. Refer to EMDTG08, Section 1.2, for a sample particular specification for contracts covering specialist asbestos abatement works.

6.7 Quotations

GENERAL

1. The MS/BSE/PSA prepares the quotation documents for a quotation for asbestos abatement works in accordance with the Maintenance Works Process Manual as appropriate. The documents generally consist of the following :
 - a) Conditions of Quotation
 - b) Form of Quotation
 - c) Conditions of Contract
 - d) General Specification
 - e) Particular Specification - Appendices
 - f) Schedule of Quantities (& Rates)
 - g) Summary of Quotation
2. The MS/BSE/PSA seeks advice from SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate, for the detail preparation of the documentation.
3. The specific requirements for the asbestos abatement works are included in the Quotation Terms and the Particular Specification as described below.

FORM OF QUOTATION

4. HD's Maintenance Works Process Manual contains standard Form of Quotation.

QUOTATION TERMS

5. The quotation terms generally consist of the following :
 - a) List of the documents making up the quotation documents.
 - b) Conditions of Quotation

CONDITIONS OF QUOTATION

6. The conditions of quotation includes the following :
 - a) List of the documents issued to tenderers.
 - b) Conditions of Contract
 - c) Inspection of other documents
 - d) Definitions
 - e) Description of the Works;
 - f) Site of the Works;
 - g) Working Period; and
 - h) Other submissions required with quotation.
7. Refer to the sample Quotation Terms at EMDTG08-1.1.

PARTICULAR SPECIFICATION

8. The particular specification consists of amendments to the general specification and appendices setting out the detail specification for asbestos works.

9. Appropriate Appendices A to F should be inserted into the Particular Specification.
10. Refer to the sample particular specification at EMDTG08, Section 2.
11. The detail requirements for asbestos abatement works are described in the appendices to the Particular Specification. The following appendices are added to the Particular Specification:

Appendix A	-	Definitions
Appendix B	-	Asbestos Works
Appendix C	-	Emergency Measures
Appendix D	-	Equipment Standards
Appendix E	-	Standard Forms
Appendix F	-	Asbestos Work Methods (see below)
12. Appendix A, Definitions, defines the terms associated with asbestos works as used in the contract. Refer EMDTG08-2.1.
13. Appendix B, Asbestos Works, is the general specification for asbestos works. Refer EMDTG08-2.2.
14. Appendix C, Emergency Measures, sets out the measures the contractor is required to take in the case of an emergency during the course of asbestos removal works. Refer EMDTG08-2.3.
15. Appendix D, Equipment Standards, sets out the standards for the specific equipment and materials used in asbestos removal works. Refer EMDTG08-2.4.
16. Appendix E, Standard Forms, includes the standard forms that the contractor is required to use for requesting approvals and inspections. Refer EMDTG08-2.5.
17. Appendix F, Asbestos Work Methods, sets out the work method guideline for the specific type of asbestos removal works. Only the work method relevant to the works is included as Appendix F. Refer to EMDTG08 section 3 and section 4 for Building Works and Building Services asbestos work methods respectively.
18. Where guidance on the preparation of the particular specification is included in a sample document it is enclosed in brackets and identified. All guidance notes must be deleted from the final printout of the particular specification.
19. Copies of the sample documents and specifications contained in EMDTG08 may be obtained in electronic and hardcopy form from QMU/M.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED TO TENDERERS

20. The following documents are issued to the tenderers :
 - a) Conditions of Quotation
 - b) Form of Quotation and one additional form of quotation
 - c) Special Conditions of Contract
 - d) Particular Specification
 - e) Schedule of Quantities
 - f) Summary of Quotation

INSPECTION OF OTHER DOCUMENTS

21. Where the General Specification and other additional documents are provided for inspection only, the following paragraph is included together with the appropriate list of documents :

The following additional document(s) may be inspected at the office of the Contract Manager's Representative :-

- a) The General Specification for Building Works 2013 Edition, issued by the Estate Management Division of the Housing Department.

For the purpose of this clause the appropriate officer is :
Mr. at telephone No.

DEFINITIONS

22. Refer to the sample Quotation Terms at EMDTG08-1.1.

6.8 List of Exempted Classes of Works

List of exempted classes of works to be specified under s.69(2) of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance

An owner of premises is not required to submit an asbestos investigation report or an asbestos abatement plan for the following works :

Class 1

Maintenance, repair, use, handling or abatement of :-

- (1) non-woven non-friable asbestos gasket.
- (2) asbestos gland packing material in pump, valve, engine and other mechanical plant items.
- (3) non-friable asbestos friction products.
- (4) corrugated asbestos cement sheet not within a fire site.
- (5) asbestos cement watermains maintained by Water Supplies Department.
- (6) asbestos blackboard
- (7) fuse box/switch box containing asbestos materials
- (8) resilient floor covering not within a fire site, such as : -
 - (a) vinyl asbestos floor covering; and
 - (b) sheet vinyl asbestos floor covering; and
 - (c) bitumen asbestos roofing felt.

Class 2

Maintenance, repair, handling or abatement of the following materials installed in properties managed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority : -

- (1) balcony asbestos cement grille panel.
- (2) staircase asbestos cement grille panel.
- (3) roof asbestos cement insulation tile.
- (4) asbestos cement soil stack.
- (5) asbestos cement refuse chute.
- (6) laboratory asbestos bench-top.

Class 3

Storage or sale of asbestos containing material.

Class 4

Manufacturing process involving asbestos.

Class 5

Transport of asbestos containing material.

List of exempted classes of works to be specified under s.75(4) of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance

An owner of premises is not required to engage a registered asbestos contractor to carry out the following works :

Class 1

Maintenance, repair, use, handling or abatement of : -

- (1) non-woven non-friable asbestos gasket.
- (2) asbestos gland packing material in pump, valve, engine and other mechanical plant items.
- (3) non-friable asbestos friction products.

Class 2

Demolition work involving only resilient floor covering in a vacant building not within a fire site, such as : -

- (1) vinyl asbestos floor tile;
- (2) sheet vinyl asbestos floor covering; and
- (3) bitumen asbestos roofing felt.

Class 3

Storage or sale of asbestos containing material.

Class 4

Manufacturing process involving asbestos.

Class 5

Transport of asbestos containing material.

2.3

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

2.3 Management Strategy

GENERAL

1. The Asbestos Management Programme provides a comprehensive plan for the implementation of the Housing Department's asbestos management strategy. The programme includes the following asbestos management activities :

- Identification of ACM
- Training
- Personnel Protection
- Periodic ACM Surveillance
- Central Records
- Abatement
- Emergency Procedures
- Special Procedures

IDENTIFICATION OF ACM

2. Most of the existing Asbestos Containing Materials within property managed by the Housing Department & HKHA's management agents have been identified and the type of asbestos, location and condition recorded.
3. Where records do not exist of a material suspected of containing asbestos, staff arrange for the material to be sampled in accordance with Section 5.6, BULK SAMPLING, and report the results on Form EMDTG07-F02 to SMS/R&D or CTO(BS)/TD as appropriate. The results of any bulk sampling arranged during the course of demolition works are copied to SMS/R&D.
4. The majority of ACM materials accessible to the tenants, public or HD staff are of the cement bonded type, and due to the quantities involved these have not been individually labelled. Where balcony grill panels containing asbestos have been encapsulated since 1989, these have been marked to aid later identification. Refer to Section 3.3, ASBESTOS ABATEMENT.
5. Staff are notified of the location and condition of ACM through regular reports based on the central records of ACM. Tenants and the public can view these reports at the relevant Estate Office.
6. New materials used in the construction and maintenance of property are screened for free of asbestos before being approved for use.

TRAINING

7. HD staff are provided with training on a need basis to ensure that they are aware of the possible occurrence of ACM in buildings and in materials, and to ensure that they are familiar with the policy, responsibilities and procedures for the management and abatement of asbestos.
8. Staff required to use personal protective equipment in the inspection and monitoring of asbestos abatement activities are provided with training in its care and use.

3.4

ASBESTOS WORK METHODS - BW

BALCONY GRILLE ENCAPSULATION

GENERAL

1. This particular specification covers the encapsulation of asbestos cement staircase and balcony grille panels, where the panels are in good condition and the works are handled as normal building maintenance work.
2. The Contractor shall execute the asbestos encapsulation works in accordance with the following procedures :-

2.1 Equipment

For this operation, the following equipment is required as a minimum, and to the standard specified in appendix D;

- (a) Paper Mask
- (b) Vacuum Cleaner
- (c) Rust Inhibitor of an approved chemical type of neutralisation of existing rust.

2.2 Cleaning

Clean the grille panel with vacuum cleaner to remove all debris and dust particles. Cover balcony floor with plywood sheets to catch debris.

ENCAPSULATION WORKS3. Encapsulation of the panel

- (a) Apply rust inhibitor to exposed reinforcing steel. Also apply bond coat of cement slurry, 1:2 mix, to surfaces of grille panel.
- (b) Fix galvanised steel expanded metal lathing to each face of the panel using stainless steel wire tiles.
- (c) Apply 20mm thick external rendering consisting of cement, lime, and sand, to both faces of the grille panel as follows :-
 - First coat, 10mm thick - mix 1:3 (cement, sand)
 - Finishing coat, 10mm thick - mix 1:3:6 (cement, lime, sand)

4. Marking

Press the standard mark into both faces of the panel before the mortar sets. The mark should be approximately 3mm to 5mm deep, and positioned in the top right hand corner of the panel, as shown in Fig. 5-1.

3.4

ASBESTOS WORK METHODS - BW

BALCONY GRILLE ENCAPSULATION

5. Clearing Site

Vacuum clean the balcony floor, clean up and wipe off all surfaces, leave site clean and tidy on completion.

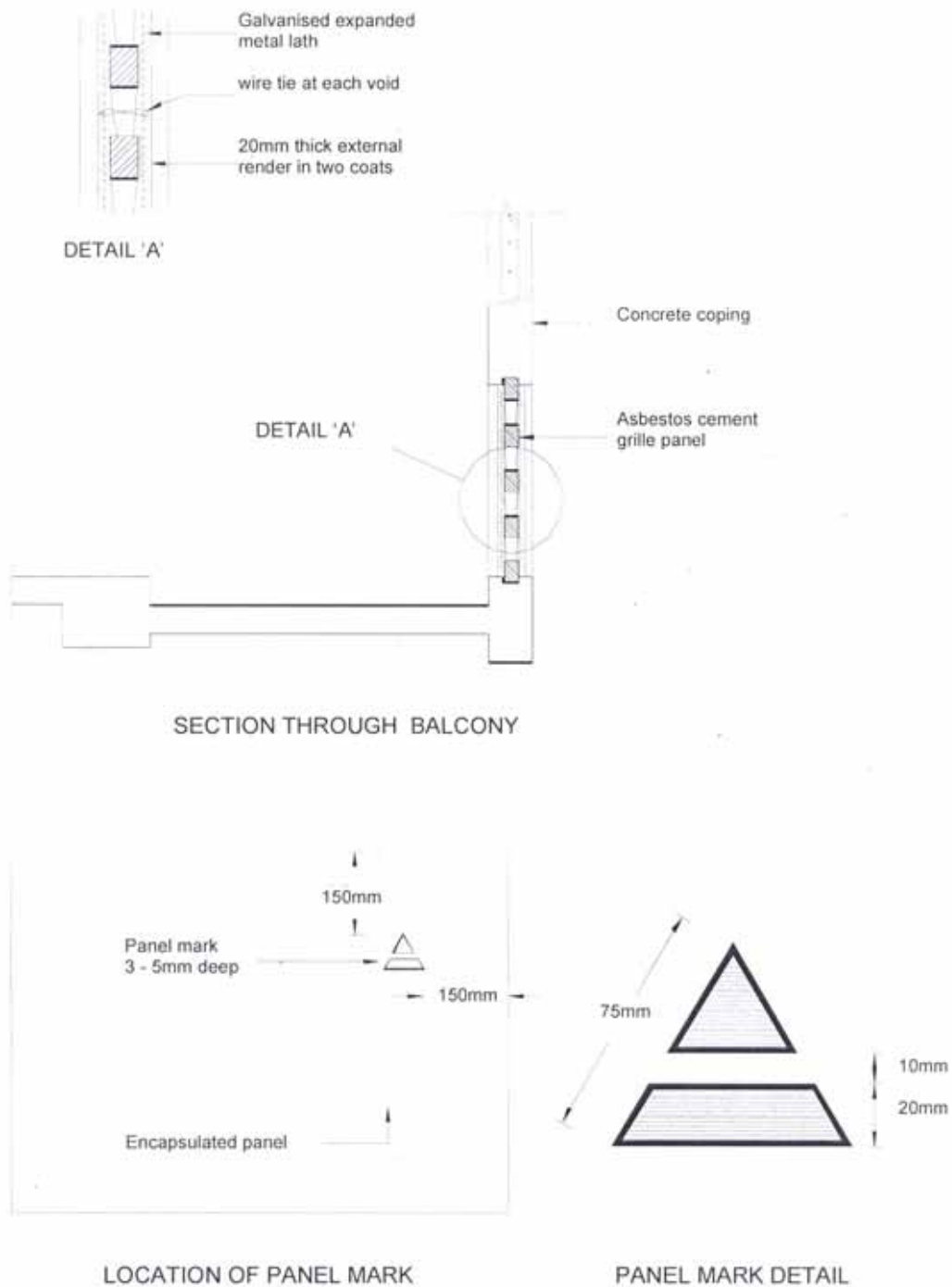


Figure 5-1 : Encapsulation of Balcony Grille

Meeting Dates of Asbestos Working Group

7/9/1988	1 st meeting	EPD, LD, HD
7/10/1988	2 nd meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
4/11/1988	3 rd meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
9/12/1988	4 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
17/2/1989	5 th A meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
7/3/1989	Special meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
14/4/1989	6 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
31/5/1989	7 th special meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
21/8/1989	8 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
29/11/1989	9 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
10/1/1990	10 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
11/4/1990	11 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
8/3/1991	12 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
7/6/1991	13 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
6/9/1991	14 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
6/12/1991	15 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
3/3/1992	16 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
12/6/1992	17 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
4/9/1992	18 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
4/12/1992	19 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
5/3/1993	20 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
4/6/1993	21 st meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
7/9/1993	22 nd meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
3/12/1993	23 rd meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
8/3/1994	24 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
27/5/1994	25 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
25/8/1994	26 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
28/11/1994	27 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
24/2/1995	28 th meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
29/5/1995	29 th meeting	EPD, HD and EHS Consultants
25/8/1995	30 th meeting	EPD, HD and EHS Consultants
24/11/1995	31 st meeting	EPD, LD, HD and EHS Consultants
28/2/1996	32 nd meeting	EPD, HD and EHS Consultants
29/5/1996	33 rd meeting	EPD, LD and HD
5/9/1996	34 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
23/1/1997	35 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD

22/5/1997	36 th meeting	EPD and HD
28/8/1997	37 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
5/12/1997	38 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
6/3/1998	39 th meeting	HD
19/6/1998	40 th meeting	LD and HD
18/9/1998	41 st meeting	EPD, LD and HD
11/12/1998	42 nd meeting	EPD, LD and HD
12/3/1999	43 rd meeting	LD and HD
4/6/1999	44 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
3/9/1999	45 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
3/12/1999	46 th meeting	LD and HD
22/3/2000	47 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
9/6/2000	48 th meeting	EPD and HD
8/9/2000	49 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
1/12/2000	50 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
2/3/2001	51 st meeting	EPD, LD and HD
1/6/2001	52 nd meeting	EPD and HD
3/9/2001	53 rd meeting	LD and HD
3/12/2001	54 th meeting	LD and HD
1/3/2002	55 th meeting	LD and HD
3/6/2002	56 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
2/9/2002	57 th meeting	EPD, LD and HD
2/12/2002	58 th meeting	LD and HD
3/3/2003	59 th meeting	LD and HD
10/9/2003	60 th meeting	LD and HD
28/9/2010	1 st Inter-departmental liaison meeting	EPD, LD and HD
19/7/2011	2 nd Inter-departmental liaison meeting	EPD, LD and HD
29/4/2014	3 rd Inter-departmental liaison meeting	EPD, LD and HD
13/9/2016	4 th Inter-departmental liaison meeting	EPD, LD and HD
30/9/2016	5 th Inter-departmental liaison meeting	EPD, LD DoH and HD

EPD – Environmental Protection Department

LD – Labour Department

HD – Housing Department

DoH – Department of Health

5.5

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

5.5 Asbestos Working Group Terms of Reference**MEMBERSHIP**

1. The membership of the Asbestos Working Group (AWG) is as follows :-

Chairman	CM/M(PM)
Members	SMS/R&D
	SSE/15
	SE/122
	SE/SIS3
	CTO(BS)/TD
	HM/BPS2
Secretary	MS/ENV

Representative from :

Environmental Protection Department.
Labour Department

TERMS OF REFERENCE

2. - to advise the Permanent Secretary of Housing on the continued development of an asbestos abatement strategy;
- to receive and consider information on materials containing asbestos in Housing Authority managed property;
- to receive and consider information on the Housing Department's asbestos abatement programmes;
- to keep under review the Housing Department procedures for removal or encapsulation of materials containing asbestos, and to provide advice to the Housing Department on these procedures to ensure standards of asbestos abatement are appropriate for the level of risk;
- to receive and consider information of the performance of asbestos abatement contractors and consultants undertaking work for the Housing Department, and the results of associated routine air monitoring.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

3. Meetings are held annually.

FILE REFERENCE

4. HD3-4/RD/-9/3

- 所在位置與天然及人工通風途徑的相對關係；及

- 緊接範圍的人口及活動。

因首次暴露於石棉至有疾病徵狀出現，中間潛伏期會長約十至四十年不等。既然有此情況，應特別注意較易因石棉而引致疾病的嬰兒及學童。

八．三 註冊石棉顧問宜盡可能將任何其他認為有用及相關的資料列入調查報告內。

九 石棉管理計劃

九．一 石棉管理計劃應可獨立成文，由註冊石棉顧問簽署，以確認計劃內載資料均屬真確。

九．二 含石棉物料即使存在，也不一定意味處所或船舶使用人的健康正受到危害。註冊石棉顧問應充分考慮石棉調查結果，然後決定是否需要進行石棉消滅工程。假如無需進行石棉消滅工程，則應該提供操作及保養計劃。假如必需進行石棉消滅工程，則應擬備石棉消滅計劃。因此，對於無需進行消滅工程的含石棉物料及其他懷疑含石棉物料，石棉管理計劃應提供操作及保養計劃；若要進行石棉消滅工程或涉及使用或處理含石棉物料的工程，則另外提供石棉消滅計劃。

十 操作及保養計劃

十．一 操作及保養計劃旨在訂定作業方法，以便：

- 使含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料維持在良好狀態；

- 確保妥善清除先前釋出的石棉纖維；
 - 防止進一步釋出石棉纖維；
 - 監察含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料的狀況；及
 - 安全處理意外釋出的石棉纖維。
- 十·二 操作及保養計劃應述明針對有關處所或船舶而制訂的操作及保養方針和程序，如有需要，要定期修訂更新，並使各有關人員可以取得及知悉這些資料。計劃內至少應包括下列資料：

- 處所或船舶的詳細描述：
 - 詳細描述有關處所或船舶的位置、樓齡或船齡、結構、用途、使用模式及主要活動及概述毗鄰處所或船舶的用途及活動。
- 實施操作及保養計劃的人事組織：
 - 這包括一組織圖表，當中要列明行政及權力架構（附姓名或名稱及職位）及界定主要參與者（如處所或船舶的擁有人、註冊石棉顧問、負責監管及保養的監管人及員工、註冊石棉承辦商等）的職責。
- 已辨別出的含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料的詳情：
 - 應表列所有已辨別出的含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料的特性、種類、數量及物理狀況，並應在樓宇圖則或草圖上標示所有已辨別出的含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料的確實位置。

■ 已辨別出的含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料的狀況：

描述所有已辨別出的含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料的狀況，及詳細描述任何受損毀物料的尺寸、再受損毀的可能性及空氣質素的量度（如適用）。若先前釋出的石棉污染物經予清除，則應詳加述明清除工作。如受損毀的含石棉物料位於天然或人工通風系統吹風經過處，以致纖維可被吹送，則清理工作可能要廣及整個處所，甚至通風系統。

■ 含石棉物料或懷疑含石棉物料不應拆除的理由：

原處含石棉物料或懷疑含石棉物料通常可留於原處並予以有效管理，但若選用其他石棉消滅方法，如延遲行動、漿封或圍封，則應說明理由。所提出的理由應以調查結果為依據。

■ 標識含石棉物料的方法：

所有已辨別出的含石棉物料若無需拆除，便應按照附錄 3 內載規定，加以標識。至於標識方法及標籤保養的詳情，亦應說明。

■ 告知所有可能受影響人士的方法：

對於工人、住戶及處所或船舶的其他使用人，適宜將可能受到他們干擾的含石棉物料的位置和物理狀況坦誠公開，並鼓勵他們向處所或船舶的擁有人報告任何含石棉物料受干擾的跡象或受損情況，以便採取矯正措施。應詳加說明能達至上述效果的溝通渠道及方法。

■
監察方案：

應至少每兩年一次委任一註冊石棉顧問全面覆查所有含石棉物料及懷疑含石棉物料。期間可利用一項經小心設計的計劃，以監察懸浮於空氣中的石棉纖維，使能及早察覺含石棉物料是否狀況惡化或已受到干擾。對於物料在不同時日的狀況，若能拍攝彩照以供比較，則甚為有用。應提供達至上述效果的監察方案的詳情。

■
避免擾動含石棉物料的方法：

應鼓勵工人、住戶及處所或船舶的其他使用人，在展開任何工程前（即使是預定的小型保養及翻新工程），知會處所或船舶的擁有人。除此，亦應建立核准制度，用以：

- 監察任何操作及保養工程的活動；
- 防止含石棉物料或懷疑含石棉物料受到意外擾動；及
- 阻止使用新的含石棉物料。

上述保養或翻新工程申請表及核准書樣本見附錄4及5。至於該知會及核准制度的行政細節，亦應說明。

■
備存紀錄方案：

應提供為所有石棉管理文件而制訂的備存紀錄方案的詳情。這些石棉管理文件，包括調查及評估報告、操作及保養計劃、方針及工程程序、員工培訓及醫療紀錄、纖維釋出報告、飄散於空氣中的纖維監察報告、保養及翻新的知會、簽發的核准書、評估影響含石棉物料的工程及覆驗及監察含石棉物料等。

- 對狀況逐漸惡化的含石棉物料所採取的行動：

應充分解釋處理逐漸惡化的含石棉物料的特別操作及保養方法，以及在何種情況下才需展開徹底的清理工序。

十一 石棉消滅計劃

十一.一 石棉消滅計劃的目的在於定出：

- 消滅含石棉物料的方法；
- 保障工人與環境的工作的成效及準則；及
- 所需要的緊急程序及應變措施。

十一.二 石棉消滅計劃應至少包括下列資料：

- 處所或船舶的詳細描述：
- 詳細描述有關處所或船舶的位置、樓齡或船齡、結構、用途、使用模式及主要活動，及概述毗鄰石棉消滅工程場地及處所或船舶的用途及活動。至於石棉消滅工程場地的確實位置和界限，應予說明及清楚展示在樓宇圖則或草圖上。

- 註冊石棉顧問、承辦商及化驗所的詳情：

提供受委任進行石棉消滅工程的註冊石棉顧問、註冊石棉承辦商及註冊石棉化驗所的姓名或名稱、註冊編號

Current Condition of Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) at Tai Yuen Estate

Date : 07.01.2009

Location A : R/F at Block A Tai Yan House



The current condition of asbestos corrugated cement sheet is fair.

Photos for current coditions of Asbesto Cement Vent Pipes in Choi Hung Estate



Pak Suet House



Luk Ching House



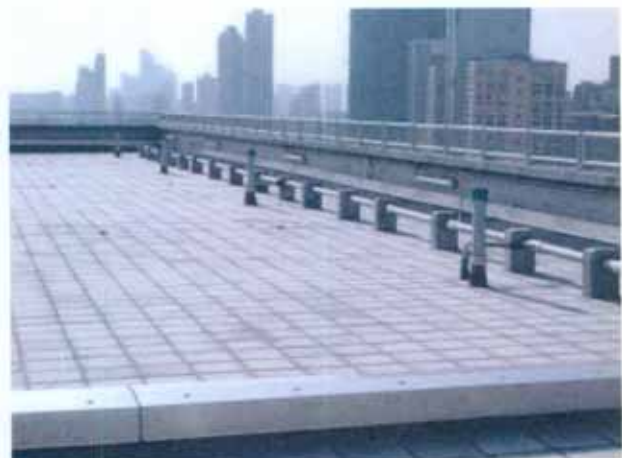
Chi Mei House



Hung Ngok House



Kam Wan House



Chui King House

Inspection Record

Prepared by : K.C. CHEUNG ACW/R&D3
 Project : Refuse Chute at Wing Tai House, Fuk Loi Estate
 Date : 23-11-2009



1. DESCRIPTION : Encapsulated ACM refuse chute at roof floor



2. DESCRIPTION : Encapsulated ACM refuse chute at roof floor



3. DESCRIPTION : ACM refuse chute at roof floor



4. DESCRIPTION : ACM refuse chute at roof floor



5. DESCRIPTION : ACM refuse chute at roof floor



6. DESCRIPTION : ACM refuse chute at roof floor

Inspection Record

Prepared by : Y.M. TSANG WSI/R&D21
 Project Long Bin Interim Housing
 Date : 11-1-2010



1. DESCRIPTION : Asbestos corrugated sheet at roof of blk. 9



2. DESCRIPTION : Asbestos corrugated sheet at roof of blk. 9



3. DESCRIPTION : Asbestos corrugated sheet at roof of blk. 9



4. DESCRIPTION : Asbestos corrugated sheet at roof of blk. 9



5. DESCRIPTION : Asbestos corrugated sheet at roof of blk. 9



6. DESCRIPTION :

ACM Details – Corrugated cement sheet installed by HD

Long Bin Interim Housing – Management office

Photos taken on 23/12/2015

Inspected by : W.W.CHAN(ACW/R&D1)

Finding : Condition in order



Management office(屋邨辦事處)



Corrugated sheet at roof of management office



Corrugated sheet at roof of management office



Closed up view of corrugate sheet

ACM Details – Asbestos cement vent pipe

Suspected to be asbestos containing

Choi Hung Estate – Chi Mei, Chiu King, Hung Ngok, Kam Wan, Luk Ching, Pak Suet House

Photos taken on 24/12/2015

Inspected by : W.W.CHAN(ACW/R&D1)

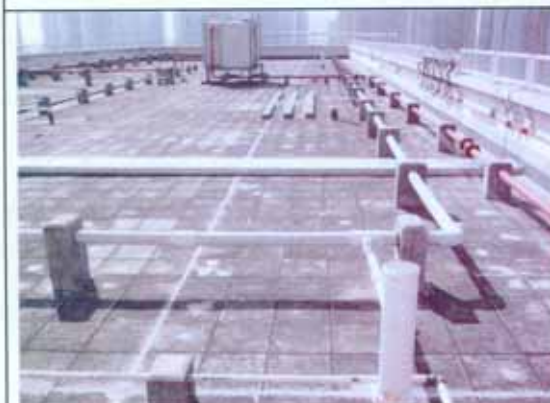
Finding : Condition in order



Chi Mei House(紫薇樓)



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe



Kam Wan House (錦雲樓)



Vent pipes At roof



Vent pipes at roof



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe



Hung Ngok House(紅萼樓)



Vent pipes at roof



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe



Closed up view of vent pipe



Closed up view of vent pipe



Pak Suet House(白雪樓)



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe



Condition of vent pipe

ACM Details – Asbestos cement vent pipe

Suspected to be asbestos containing

Choi Hung Estate – Kam Pik, Kam Hon, Kam Wah House

Photos taken on 28/12/2015

Inspected by : W.W.CHAN(ACW/R&D1)

Finding : Condition in order



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof



Vent pipes at roof

ACM Details – Corrugated cement sheet installed by tenant

Tai Yuen Estate – Tai Yan House B

Total 2 nos. corrugated sheets at roof

Photos taken on 31/12/2015

Inspected by : W.W.CHAN(ACW/R&D1)

Finding : Condition in order



Tai Yan House(泰欣樓 B)



Corrugated sheet below water tank of roof



Corrugated sheet below water tank at roof



Corrugated sheet below water tank at roof



ACM Details – Vent pipe of refuse chute

Encapsulated/ enclosed

Fok Loi Estate – Wing Lok House

Photo taken : 22/3/2016

Inspected by : C.H.Cheng(WS1/R&D21)

Finding : Condition in order



ACM Details – Roof vent pipe of refuse chute

Encapsulated/ enclosed

Fok Loi Estate – Wing Tai House

Photos taken on 22/3/2016

Inspected by : C.H.CHENG(WS1/R&D21)

Finding : Condition in order



At the public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held on 23 December 2016, we provided members with further information in relation to Part 6 of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report (the Audit Report) on the "Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates". In response to enquiries raised by the PAC in its letter dated 30 December 2016, we provide our reply as follows:

(II) Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates

- (u) In 2008, the Housing Department (HD), Buildings Department (BD) and Fire Services Department (FSD) started to explore ways for the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) to proceed with implementing the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O). With more than 60 estates of different building design involved and substantial number of buildings for each building design, it took a relatively longer time for the three departments to come to an agreement in adopting a prototype approach to facilitate the implementation of the FS(B)O.

After reaching agreement, the HD proceeded to arrange the fire safety improvement proposals through adopting the prototype approach in implementing the FS(B)O. The reason for longer time involved in processing the prototypes was due to sufficient time was needed by the HD's consultant in preparing the proposals by taking into account the likely effects on tenants and site constraints of existing buildings. At the same time, as each prototype covers a large number of public housing blocks and has a high degree of technical complexity, the enforcement authorities also require adequate time in vetting the proposals. In fact, after the prototypes have been accepted, the HD still needs to submit the fire safety improvement proposals of individual estates to the enforcement authorities for vetting and formal acceptance.

Up to now, three prototypes (Slab, Tower and H) have been accepted by the enforcement authorities, while the remaining four prototypes (Ziggurate/Trident, Linear, Cruciform 1 and Cruciform 2) are being processed. Meanwhile, not all FS(B)O improvement works may be implemented immediately, the HD has been carrying out various kinds of fire safety improvement works over the years under respective maintenance programmes to strengthen the fire safety

measures in public rental housing (PRH) estates. These works include replacement of flat entrance doors, protection to uPVC pipes with fire collars in common areas, installation of fire rated doors at services rooms, installation of battery-type emergency lighting and the automatic sprinkler systems.

Regarding the progress of vetting/formal acceptance, we generally agree with the recommendation as stated in paragraph 6.18 of the Audit Report. Recently, the three departments have reached an agreement on the arrangements for acceptance of fire improvement works. Nevertheless, we would like to stress that HD's works on fire safety have not been delayed.

- (v) The purpose of the FS(B)O is to enhance the fire safety level of some existing old buildings. Although fire safety improvement works could not be immediately implemented at individual PRH estates as per the relevant requirements of the FS(B)O, as stated in paragraph 6.10(a) of the Audit Report, the HD has been carrying out various kinds of fire safety improvement works under respective maintenance programmes to strengthen the fire safety measures in PRH estates aiming at compliance with the FS(B)O voluntarily. These works include replacement of flat entrance doors, protection to uPVC pipes with fire collars in common areas, installation of fire rated doors at services rooms, installation of battery-type emergency lighting and the automatic sprinkler system.

Besides, HA will continue the implementation of a quality fire safety management system, including:

- (i) Standard building layout with spacious common areas

Most of the old PRH blocks adopted standard designs featuring wide corridors for fire escape, spacious common areas and escape staircase to achieve the basic fire safety requirements.

- (ii) Effective estate management practices

Our effective estate management team maintains a quality and safe living environment for tenants. Estate management staff will carry daily patrol to ensure means of escape unobstructed.

We have proper exit and directional signs in place. Besides, a fire safety plan is well established and available in each estate.

(iii) Regular maintenance & improvement of the buildings

Technical staff will regularly inspect the buildings and carry out maintenance works to enhance the living environment of all PRH estates. Besides, the HD also continuous to upgrade the fire safety standard of our PRH estates.

(iv) Regular maintenance of fire services installations

The fire services installations (FSI) of all PRH estates have already been upgraded and are under regular maintenance by registered fire services installation contractors. Instead of having an annual inspection as required under the statutory requirement, the HD conducts half-yearly inspections for the FSI to further enhance the overall fire safety.

(w) When we sought approval from the Building Committee of the HA on implementation of the FS(B)O in PRH estates in March 2014, we proposed to carry out the improvement works in two phases with Phase 1 covering Slab Blocks and Phase 2 covering buildings of the remaining block types.

However, after study, we found that most PRH estates consisted of more than one block type. To achieve better co-operation among tenants and stakeholders and to facilitate smooth implementation of the fire safety improvement works, the proposed improvement works will be carried out on an estate basis instead of in two phases based on block types.

As mentioned in our response in Item (u) above, the HD has been adopting the prototype approach to facilitate the implementation of the FS(B)O. However, we still need to submit the fire safety improvement proposals of individual estates to the enforcement authorities for vetting and formal acceptance after a prototype has been accepted. Since the scope of works could only be ascertained upon the acceptance of the fire safety improvement proposals by the enforcement authorities, the HD will regularly review the budget and programme for the works and seek approval from the Building Committee of the HA in due course.

- (x) As stated in our response in Item (w) above, the proposed improvement works will be carried out on an estate basis instead of in two phases based on block types. The HD has already included the estates with blocks not falling under the seven prototypes into the consultancy studies. After acceptance of the prototypes, fire safety improvement proposals for these estates will be submitted to the enforcement authorities for vetting and formal acceptance.
- (y) The proposal for Wo Che Estate was approved by the BD in August 2016. For Butterfly Estate, our consultant is now revising the proposal according to the comments given by the BD and re-submission for acceptance will be made in early January 2017. For Tai Hing Estate, a revised proposal was submitted for acceptance in December 2016. We understand that the proposal for these prototypes will be accepted by the enforcement authorities in March 2017 provided that Advisory Committee's consideration will not be required.
- (z) Please refer to our reply in Item (u) above.
- (aa) As the fire safety improvement proposals under the pilot scheme for Fuk Loi Estate and Ping Shek Estate have been accepted, the works for these two estates will be commenced and aimed at completion progressively in 2020. For the remaining estates, submission of fire safety improvement proposal to the enforcement authorities for each individual estate will be required after acceptance of prototypes. Adequate consultation will also be necessary before execution of works. Under these circumstances, the HD considered that it is not a suitable time to develop a concrete time table for the execution of works at this moment. However, the HD will continue to review the situation and establish the time table for carrying out the improvement works in due course.

- (bb) Since the HA's building projects of PRH Estates are exempt from the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123), they are not subject to the statutory third party checking by the BD. In order to put these projects under objective scrutiny, the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) under the Director of Housing was established in November 2000 to strengthen the examination of building proposals and the execution of works.

The ICU monitors the statutory compliance of the PRH estates which are not subject to the direct building control under the BO by way of an administrative control system. Under the aforesaid system, all building works carried out in PRH estates which are not subject to the BO still have to comply with the same technical requirements of the BO. The ICU performs regulatory checking according to the BO on building works carried out in PRH estates, while the approval of plans, issue of consent to the commencement of works, site monitoring, final inspections and the issue of an occupation permits for building projects follow those set out under the administrative procedures.

本署檔號
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來函檔號
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Environmental Protection Department
Branch Office
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Wan Chai, Hong Kong.



環境保護署分處
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9 January 2017

Mr. Anthony CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong.

BY FAX (2543 9197) & POST

Dear Mr. CHU,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67
Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats

I refer to your letter dated 30 December 2016. I am pleased to provide the requested information on management of asbestos-containing materials in public rental housing estates in the Annex to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

(Raymond W.M. WONG)

for Director of Environmental Protection

c.c. Secretary for Transport and Housing (fax. no. 2523 9187)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2147 5239)
Director of Housing (fax. no. 2761 6700)
Director of Buildings (fax. no. 2868 3248)
Director of Fire Services (fax. no. 2368 9744)
Director of Water Supplies (fax. no. 2802 2537)
Commissioner for Labour (fax no. 3101 1066)
Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67

**Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats**

Management of asbestos-containing materials (“ACMs”) in public rental housing
 (“PRH”) estates

- (a) **Whether Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) would consider reviewing the label in Figure 1 of the Audit Report so that the messages on the existence of ACMs could be conveyed more effectively in order that tenants, workers and other users would be alerted to take necessary precaution not to disturb or damage the ACMs, and the public would be aware of the adverse impact on health caused by ACMs?**

EPD response:

The ACM warning label (including its color, messages, and size) currently adopted by the EPD was designed with reference to international standards, including the one used by the Health and Safety Executive of UK. We consider that the current asbestos warning label with the wording of “material contains ASBESTOS DO NOT DISTURB,” “Breathing asbestos dust is dangerous to health” and “Follows safety instructions” in black on a red background can clearly alert all parties of the potential harm arising from asbestos, and thus should not disturb or damage ACM. We note that there was no suggestion in the Audit Report for reviewing the existing asbestos warning label.

- (b) **Whether EPD has followed up on Case 3 to paragraph 4.34 to ascertain whether the chimney in question was removed in compliance with the requirements of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) (Cap. 311)?**

EPD response:

The EPD investigated Case 3 of the Audit Report on suspected non-compliance concerning the removal of an asbestos-containing chimney. The chimney was owned by a tenant of the public housing estate. In 2011, the estate management office of the Housing Department (“HD”) issued three letters to the concerned

tenant requesting him to appoint a qualified contractor to carry out the maintenance works as soon as possible and provided him with information on registered asbestos contractors (“RACs”). In July 2011, the tenant removed the chimney whilst the EPD did not receive any notification from RACs on the removal of the asbestos-containing chimney. The tenant therefore might have contravened the Air Pollution Control Ordinance. Given the responsible person of the tenancy already passed away in 2012 whilst the case came to EPD’s notice in last year, no prosecution action could be taken on this case.

The EPD agrees with the Director of Audit’s recommendations and is liaising with the HD on strengthening the monitoring and control of the remaining asbestos-containing chimneys in public housing estates, clarifying the responsibilities of the owners of these chimneys and reminding them of the statutory requirements on asbestos abatement works. Moreover, the EPD is taking follow-up action with the HD and the chimney owners, requiring them to give the EPD the notification before carrying out works involving ACM in public housing estates so as to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.

- (c) **According to paragraphs 4:13 to 4:16, there were cases of lobby grille panels/un-encapsulated balcony grille panels being damaged. Paragraphs 4:28 to 4:30 also indicate that PRH estate tenants had undertaken unauthorized minor works in their flats which might have disturbed ACMs and exposed the workers/tenants concerned to asbestos released. What follow up actions had been done and what improvements could be made?**

EPD response:

On the damaged lobby grille panels/un-encapsulated balcony grille panels and the balcony grille panels that were affected by minor works carried out by tenants, the HD advised that it had engaged RACs to complete the maintenance of damaged panels in accordance with the statutory requirements and had duly followed the technical advice of the EPD. The EPD also conducted spot checks during the works to ensure that the contractor completed the works in accordance with the method statements.

The EPD is following up with the HD to strengthen the monitoring and liaison mechanisms and to provide further training to HD’s staff with a view to enhancing its management of the remaining ACMs in public housing estates.



Labour Department (Headquarters)

勞工處(總處)

Your reference 來函編號: CB4/PAC/R67
Our reference 本處檔案編號: (2) in L/M(2) to LD CR/4-35/8
Tel. number 電話號碼: 2852 4047
Fax number 傳真機號碼: 2581 2049

12 January 2017

Ms. Angela CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong.

Dear Ms. CHU,

Public Accounts Committee

Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67

**Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats**

With reference to your letter dated 30 December 2016 addressed to the Commissioner for Labour on the subject issue, please find attached the information at the Annex for your consideration, please.

Yours sincerely,


(CHAN Keng-kwong)
for Commissioner for Labour

c.c. Secretary for Transport and Housing (fax. no. 2523 9187)
Director of Housing (fax. no. 2761 6700)
Director of Buildings (fax. no. 2868 3248)
Director of Fire Services (fax. no. 2368 9744)
Director of Water Supplies (fax. no. 2802 2537)
Director of Environmental Protection (fax no. 2891 2512)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2147 5239)
Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67

**Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats**

The Labour Department (LD) is responsible for enforcing the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Asbestos) Regulation (F&IU(Asbestos)R) for the protection of the health of contractors' workers in conducting asbestos work. We have examined all the cases mentioned in the audit report, including those mentioned in paragraphs 4.13 to 4.16 and 4.28 to 4.30, and embarked on follow-up actions to ascertain if the requirements of F&IU(Asbestos)R were observed and the workers concerned properly protected. It was noted that most cases involved work projects done in earlier years, and hence even if the concerned contractors were found to have violated F&IU(Asbestos)R, the bar date of six months for taking prosecutions should already have expired. Nevertheless, LD has taken appropriate follow-up actions as detailed in the table below. LD would issue warnings to the concerned contractors if necessary.

Case Reference	Concerned issues	Findings
Paragraph 4.13 (Photo 5, 6)	Cracks and damaged parts on asbestos-containing balcony grille panel	No asbestos work was involved.
Paragraph 4.13 (Photo 4, 7) Paragraph 4.28 (Photo 13) Paragraph 4.30 (Photo 14)	Drilled holes, protruding pipe, air-conditioner supporting frame and towel rack on asbestos-containing balcony grille panel	The Housing Department (HD) did not have relevant work records. LD was taking follow-up actions with the tenants through HD.
Paragraph 4.15 (Photo 8)	Railing on balcony grille panel	Not involving asbestos-containing materials.
Paragraph 4.16 (Photo 9, 10)	Asbestos-containing lobby grille with damaged parts	HD did not have relevant work records. Investigation completed.

Paragraph 4.27 (Case 2 photo 12)	Concrete spalling repair and encapsulation works of asbestos-containing balcony grille panel carried out by RIMS contractor	LD has contacted the responsible contractor and worker. The work project did not damage asbestos-containing materials and no worker was exposed to asbestos dust. There was therefore no violation of F&IU(Asbestos)R. Investigation completed.
Paragraph 4.34 (Case 3 Photo 15)	Suspected removal of a chimney with asbestos containing materials	Neither HD nor the tenant concerned kept information about the responsible contractor(s). Investigation completed.

LD is actively coordinating with HD in its follow-up actions on the audit report, including having offered advice on the revision of its asbestos management policy and the methods for the repair and removal of the asbestos containing materials. Surprise inspections will be conducted to ensure that the repair and removal works are properly done by contractors concerned in accordance with the approved working methods and that the workers are properly protected.

LD will keep working closely with different stakeholders, including the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board and Occupational Safety and Health Council, in organizing public talks, seminars and exhibitions; issuing guidebooks and posters; launching mobile applications and broadcasting short films to raise the awareness of contractors and their workers, relevant employers' associations, trade unions and owners' corporations of old buildings, etc. on asbestos containing materials and relevant health hazards.



YOUR REF 來函檔號： CB4/PAC/R67
 OUR REF 本署檔號： (37) in L/M(9) to BD CR/4-35/2 C
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9 January 2017

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Public Accounts Committee
 Legislative Council
 Legislative Council Complex
 1 Legislative Council Road
 Central, Hong Kong
 (Attn: Ms. Angela CHU)

Dear Ms. CHU,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No.67
Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing flats

Thank you for your letter dated 30 December 2016, please find our reply as follows:

(a) Fire safety of the Public Rental Housing (PRH) Estates before full implementation of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance

The purpose of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O) is to provide better protection from the risk of fire for occupants of, and visitors to, composite buildings and domestic buildings which were constructed, or with their plans of buildings works first submitted for approval on or before 1 March 1987. However, this does not imply that these buildings have imminent fire danger. It is noted that Housing Department (HD) is endeavoring to comply with the requirements under the FS(B)O and has already carried out improvement works to some fire service provisions of the existing PRH blocks with a view to enhancing their fire safety level. Therefore, the existing PRH blocks are basically safe from the fire safety point of view.

(b) Concrete measure to ensure fire safety improvement works in PRH estates are efficiently vetted and formally accepted

Since the accepted fire safety improvement proposal can generally be applied to all the PRH blocks covered by the prototype and that HD, Fire Services Department (FSD) and Buildings Department (BD) had agreed on the streamlined vetting procedure during the inter-departmental meetings, we anticipate that the vetting process will be shortened and conducted more efficiently. Also, apart from the regular meetings amongst the working level of the enforcement authorities and HD to resolve problems arise during the implementation of the FS(B)O to the PRH estates, the three departments have agreed to hold inter-departmental liaison meetings regularly to review the progress.

(c) Timetable for implementing the FS(B)O for all PRH estates

While BD will continue to collaborate with HD on the carrying out of fire safety improvement works for PRHs, HD is in a better position to confirm the timetable for implementing such works for all PRH estates.

Should you have any questions, please contact our Chief Building Surveyor/ Fire Safety, Mr. Michael PANG, at telephone no. 2135 2401. .

Yours sincerely,



(HUI Siu-wai)
Director of Buildings

c.c. Secretary for Development - Attn: Mr David Ng (fax no. 2899 2916)
Secretary for Transport and Housing (fax no. 2523 9187)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2147 5239)
Secretary for Security (fax no. 2868 9159)
Director of Housing (fax no. 2761 6700)
Director of Water Supplies (fax no. 2802 2537)
Director of Environmental Protection (fax no. 2891 2512)
Commissioner for Labour (fax no. 3101 1066)
Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)
Director of Fire Services (fax no. 2368 9744)

香港特別行政區政府
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消防總部大廈



FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

FIRE SERVICES HEADQUARTERS BUILDING,
NO. 1 HONG CHONG ROAD,
TSIM SHA TSUI EAST, KOWLOON,
HONG KONG.

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9 January 2017

Mr Anthony CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr CHU,

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No.67

**Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing ("PRH") flats**

Thank you for your letter dated 30 December 2016. This Department's responses to the questions raised are set out in the Appendix to facilitate the Committee's consideration of the captioned Chapter of the Audit Report. The Chinese translation of our responses is also attached.

Yours sincerely,

(Li Kin-yat)
Director of Fire Services

c.c. Secretary for Transport and Housing (Fax: 2523 9187)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Fax: 2147 5239)
Secretary for Security (Fax: 2877 0636)
Director of Housing (Fax: 2761 6700)
Director of Buildings (Fax: 2868 3248)
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FP(FS)/C 133/01

Encl.

Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No.67

**Maintenance and safety-related improvements of
public rental housing ("PRH") flats**

Response to Questions

<i>Enhancing fire safety of old public rental housing estates</i>	
(a)	<p><i>Whether the delay in implementing the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance ("FS(B)O") would undermine fire safety of the concerned PRH estates? Would the Housing Department ("HD")/the Fire Services Department ("FSD")/the Buildings Department ("BD") consider undertaking alternative fire safety enhancement measures in the interim before the full implementation of FS(B)O to enhance fire safety for the concerned estates?</i></p>
	<p>While the HD is endeavoring to comply with the requirements under the FS(B)O in PRH blocks, it does not affect the fire safety of the buildings having regard to the fact that the fire safety provisions in the existing PRH blocks meet the prevailing standard at the time of their construction. Both enforcement authorities, viz the BD and the FSD, have collaboratively provided assistance and advice to HD with a view to ensuring that the enhancement of fire safety standard in the concerned PRH blocks are carried out efficiently. It is also noticed that improvement works are being carried out in various PRH blocks and some fire service installations and equipment (such as emergency lighting system and automatic sprinkler system) have been or are being installed in the concerned PRH blocks. Such measures would definitely enhance the overall fire safety standard.</p>
(b)	<p><i>According to paragraphs 6.20 and 6.21, both the Director of Buildings and the Director of Fire Services agree with the audit recommendation in paragraph 6.18 that they should work in collaboration with the Director of Housing to ensure that the fire safety improvement works for meeting the FS(B)O requirements in PRH estates are efficiently vetted and formally accepted. Are there any concrete measures to ensure the works could be efficiently vetted and formally accepted?</i></p>
	<p>To assist HD in implementing the FS(B)O in the PRH blocks smoothly, inter-departmental meetings amongst HD, BD and FSD have been held regularly. Being one of the enforcement authorities, FSD will continue to</p>

	provide assistance and advice to HD regarding any proposals on fire safety improvement works. In addition, FSD is also committed to conducting acceptance inspection upon being notified of the completion of such works by HD. As a matter of fact, the detailed arrangement and procedures was already agreed by all departments during the inter-departmental meeting.
(c)	<i>Have HD, BD and FSD come up with a timetable for implementing the fire safety construction works for all PRH estates?</i>
	While FSD will continue to collaborate with HD to carry out the fire safety improvement works for PRHs, HD is in a better position to confirm the timetable for implementing such works for all PRH estates.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACMs	Asbestos-containing materials
APCO	Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311)
Audit	Audit Commission
Audit Report	Director of Audit's Report
AWG	Asbestos Working Group
BD	Buildings Department
DevB	Development Bureau
DH	Department of Health
EPD	Environmental Protection Department
FS(B)O	Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572)
FSD	Fire Services Department
HA	Hong Kong Housing Authority
HD	Housing Department
IAs	In-flat Inspection Ambassadors
LD	Labour Department
LegCo	Legislative Council
OCs	Owners' Corporations
PGV	Provisional guideline value
PRH	Public rental housing
RIMS	Responsive In-flat Maintenance Services
the Commission of Inquiry	Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water
the Review Committee	Review Committee on Quality Assurance Issues Relating to Fresh Water Supply of Public Housing Estates
the Task Force	Task Force on Investigation of Excessive Lead Content in Drinking Water
TMS	Total Maintenance Scheme

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

TPS	Tenants Purchase Scheme
WHO	World Health Organization
WSD	Water Supplies Department