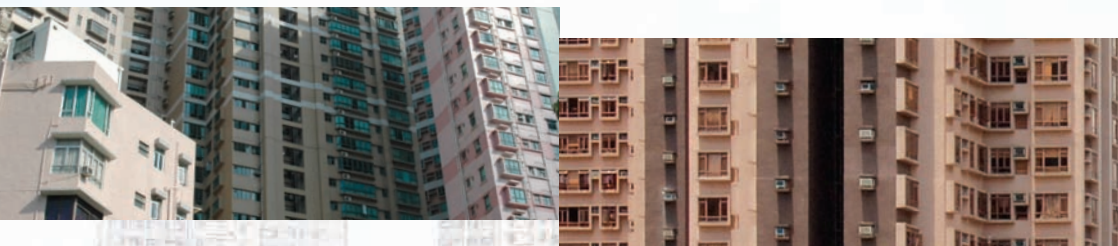


Home Affairs Department and Management of Private Buildings



Foreword

“Security is a prerequisite for a pleasant residence”. For most people in Hong Kong, purchasing a home is not only their wish but also the single most important decision on investment in their life. Effective building management helps provide a pleasant and comfortable living environment for owners, and ensure that their assets will not be unduly affected as a result of a lack of proper management and maintenance.



Government Policy

It has always been the Government’s policy to encourage and assist owners to form owners’ corporations (OCs) for effective building management. In this regard, the Government’s role is a “facilitator”, who will assist owners in discharging their management responsibilities through various measures, including the provision of a sound statutory framework and support services.

Key Messages

- It is the responsibility of property owners to manage and maintain their own properties;
- Active participation and involvement of owners and residents in building management are in their own interests; and
- OCs facilitate effective building management.

Role of the Home Affairs Department

The Home Affairs Department has all along been assisting owners of multi-storey buildings to incorporate themselves and form OCs.

An OC is a statutory body on building management registered under the Building Management Ordinance (BMO). It possesses an independent status and the requisite powers of a corporate body. Under BMO, the management committee (MC) of an OC is vested with powers and responsibilities by OC to handle matters relating to the management and administration of the common parts of the building, including repair works, maintenance of fire safety equipment, insurance, cleanliness, security, etc.



To encourage private property owners to form OCs and to assist them to better manage their buildings, staff of the District Building Management Liaison Team (DBMLT) in each district, with the support of the Community Organisers, will:

- visit owners of private buildings in the district to promote the good practices of building management;
- advise owners on the procedures of the formation of an OC;
- issue exemption certificates to the convenor of owners' meetings for obtaining a free copy of record of owners of the building from the Land Registry for the purpose of convening meetings to form an OC;
- attend owners' meetings and give advice to owners as and when necessary;
- process applications made to the Secretary for Home Affairs for an order to convene a meeting of owners under Section 3A of BMO;
- organise training courses, seminars, talks and workshops on building management for MC members;

- organise educational and publicity activities, e.g. arranging roving exhibitions on building management and producing a series of educational and publicity materials on building management, maintenance and insurance issues to promote proper and effective building management;
- handle enquiries and complaints relating to building management;
- assist law enforcement departments in enforcing building maintenance and fire safety improvement; and
- help resolve disputes between owners, OCs and management companies.

The main duties of Community Organisers are to conduct household visits and surveys and maintain close contact with owners and OCs. They will attend owners' meetings as and when necessary.

DBMLT staff are not legal professionals. They cannot and should not make interpretation or decision on the provisions of legislations or private contracts. The interpretation of legal provisions, such as the provisions of BMO, or private contracts, such as the Deed of Mutual Covenant of a building or maintenance contracts, should be handled by legal or authorised professionals. OCs should seek clarifications on legal issues from professional advisers.

Private buildings are private properties. It is therefore the responsibility of owners to manage their own buildings. District Offices (DOs) will provide liaison and advisory services to the parties concerned, however, they will not assume the management responsibilities for the owners. In the event of disputes over building management issues, DO staff will assist in mediation in a fair and impartial manner and do their best to help owners resolve building management issues.

For enquiries on building management matters, please contact DBMLTs of the respective DOs :

DBMLTs	Telephone No.
Central & Western	2119 5010
Eastern	2886 6569
Kowloon City	2621 3406
Kwun Tong	2171 7465
Sham Shui Po	2150 8175
Southern	2814 5762
Wan Chai	2835 1999
Wong Tai Sin	3143 1160
Yau Tsim Mong	2399 2155
Islands	2852 4318
Kwai Tsing	2494 4543
North	2675 1719
Sai Kung	2163 9431
Sha Tin	2158 5388
Tai Po	2654 1262
Tsuen Wan	3515 5654
Tuen Mun	2451 3047
Yuen Long	2478 6120

For more details on building management, please visit our website at <http://www.buildingmgt.gov.hk>

Concluding Remarks

The Government attaches great importance to building management work. With continual developments in society and rising living standards, there are increasing aspirations for quality accommodation. Owners are more concern with building management and are more aware of the importance of OC. To achieve effective building management, it is important that owners cooperate closely and participate actively in building management work. DOs will continue to enhance communication with the owners so as to provide services that best suit their needs.

Home Affairs Department
January 2007