

**Progress Report on the Government's Follow-up Action
on the Equal Opportunities Commission's Formal Investigation
Report on Accessibility in Publicly Accessible Premises
Position as at 31 December 2013**

Purpose

This paper reports on the progress of the Government's follow-up action as at 31 December 2013 on the Equal Opportunities Commission's Formal Investigation Report on Accessibility in Publicly Accessible Premises (EOC Report).

The Retrofitting Programme

2. The major retrofitting programme covers about 3 500¹ Government premises and facilities, amongst which nearly 90% have been retrofitted by 30 June 2012 (Class A) and the remainder will be completed by 30 June 2014 (Class B). A breakdown of all the premises and facilities to be retrofitted by type and the respective managing departments is at **Annex A**.

3. As at 31 December 2013, among all Class A items (3 059 premises/facilities), we have completed the works for 99.9% of them (3 055 premises/facilities). The remaining items under Class A (4 premises/facilities) are expected to be completed in the coming few months. For Class B items (393 premises/facilities) including relatively complex items which require construction of accessible lifting platforms or lifts, accessible unisex toilets and works requiring Heritage Impact Assessment prior to commencement, we anticipate that these items will be completed by end-June 2014 or earlier. As at end-December 2013, we have completed both the site survey and feasibility studies for 390 premises/facilities (99.2%), while works at 185 premises/facilities (47.1%)

¹ Another 86 government premises and facilities have been grouped under other improvement programmes, such as the Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the refurbishment programme of the Architectural Services Department, and upgrading of the barrier-free facilities will be carried out as part of the renovation works.

have commenced, and works at about 19.3% of them have been completed. The remaining works have been scheduled for commencement in early 2014. We anticipate that in general Class B items will be completed by end-June 2014 as scheduled.

4. Having regard to the complexity and extent of upgrading works, and the site and operational constraints, ArchSD has broadly categorised their improvement works into three groups –

(a) High Level of Complexity

The “High Complexity Premises” include multi-user complexes and high security premises. The improvement works usually involve major structural alterations and additions;

(b) Medium Level of Complexity

The “Medium Complexity Premises” are highly utilised complexes where improvement works may cause disturbance to the public and operation of the premises. Necessary phasing of works and segregation of working areas will be required; and

(c) Low Level of Complexity

The “Low Complexity Premises” require only minor improvement works.

5. A full list of the venues covered by the retrofitting programme under Class A and Class B, their respective progress as at end-December 2013 (with details on the scope of works and completion dates for projects where works have commenced and relevant information are available) and level of complexity can be found at **Annex B** and **Annex C** respectively.

6. For the retrofitting programme devised by HA to improve the accessibility of premises/facilities under its management (which covers public housing estates, commercial centres, carparks and factory buildings), all improvement works scheduled to be implemented by 30 June 2012 were completed. To strike a balance between the progress of

improvement works and service interruption/nuisances to tenants, HA has scheduled some of the improvement works for completion by 30 June 2014. To tie in with HA's lift modernisation programme, a small proportion of the improvement works will be completed by 2016-17. The progress of HA's retrofitting works scheduled for completion by 30 June 2014 is at **Annex D**. As at 31 December 2013, among these 96² premises/facilities, improvement works for 84 premises/facilities have been fully completed while works for the remaining sites have been completed 50% or more.

7. It has been the established practice of the Government to provide barrier-free access facilities at public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by the Highways Department (HyD)) where technically feasible (i.e. the "Original Programme"). The retrofitting works under the "Original Programme" include provision of lifts or standard ramps to existing public walkways which are not equipped with standard barrier-free facilities or proper at-grade crossing facilities available within about 100 meters. Currently, there are 158 technically feasible items under the "Original Programme". Investigation work of these items has been completed, and retrofitting works of 50 of them are under way while the remaining 108 are under different stages of planning. The works of these items will be completed by phases from 2014 to 2018. The progress of the relevant retrofitting works is at **Annex E**³.

8. In August 2012, the Government launched the new policy on "Universal Accessibility" which aims at further enhancing the barrier-free facilities for existing public walkways. Apart from the retrofitting works mentioned in paragraph 7 above, the Administration consulted the District Councils in the first half of 2013 on the priority for implementing the public's suggestions for retrofitting of lifts under the policy on "Universal Accessibility". We are now conducting technical feasibility studies for the three priority projects identified by each District Council.

² In these 96 premises/facilities, HA will carry out a total of 154 works items, among which 78 are in domestic blocks and external areas; 23 in public transport interchanges; 12 in commercial centres; 29 in car parks; 2 in factory buildings and 10 in other venues.

³ Apart from the items under the "Original Programme" mentioned in paragraph 7, Annex E also includes another 42 barrier-free access facilities retrofitting works items. Among these, works of 32 items have been completed while the remaining 10 items are under planning or construction.

Access Co-ordinators and Access Officers

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

10. The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and CSTDI, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, organised sign language training workshops for frontline staff of government departments in August 2011, March and July 2012, February, August, November and December 2013 to enhance their knowledge in basic sign language and awareness of the deaf culture, thereby facilitating the hearing impaired in accessing government services. The next series of training workshops will be conducted in March and April 2014.

Way Forward

11. It is the Government's established policy objective to provide a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities with a view to enabling them to access to premises and make use of the facilities on an equal basis with others, thereby facilitating them to live independently and integrate into society. We will continue to work closely with EOC, the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, the rehabilitation sector and the

community in building towards a barrier-free and inclusive society.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
February 2014