

**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 March 2012**

**Purpose**

This paper reports on the progress of the Government's follow-up action as at 31 March 2012 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 3,500<sup>1</sup> Government premises and facilities, amongst which nearly 90% will be retrofitted by 30 June 2012 (Class A) and the remaining 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. With the provision of additional funding starting from 2011 – 12 and the appointment of additional works contractors in October 2011, the works departments including the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), Highways Department (HyD) and Civil Engineering and Development Department, in collaboration with the managing departments of these premises and facilities, have stepped up their efforts in taking forward the retrofitting programme. In brief, as at 31 March 2012, we have completed site survey and feasibility studies at all Class A items (3,094 premises/facilities), while works at 2,340 premises/facilities (76%) have commenced, and works at about 29% of them have been completed. We have also made an initial assessment of the progress of

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<sup>1</sup> Another 83 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.

works as at end-April 2012. We find that works at 97% of them have already commenced and 73% of them have been completed. We anticipate that in general Class A items will be completed by end-June 2012 as scheduled. For Class B items 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 31 March 2012, we have completed site survey at 225 premises/facilities (54%) and completed both site survey and feasibility studies at 162 premises/facilities (39%).

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-March 2012 (with details on the scope of works and completion dates for projects where works have commenced and relevant information are available<sup>2</sup>) and level of complexity can be found at **Annex B** and **Annex C** respectively.

6. For the retrofitting programme devised by HA to improve accessibility of 237<sup>3</sup> premises/facilities under its management (which covers public housing estates, commercial centres, carparks and factory buildings), most of the improvement works will be implemented by 30 June 2012. To strike a balance between the progress of improvement works and service interruption and nuisances to tenants, HA will schedule 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. Progress of HA's retrofitting programme is at Annex D. In brief, site works for all premises/facilities have commenced, and works at 203 of them had been completed for 50% or more, while works at 53 of them had been fully completed. HA has also made an initial assessment of the progress of works as at end-April 2012. Approximately 85% of the works items have been completed. HA anticipates that, in general, the majority of the improvement works in all the 237 premises/facilities will be completed by end-June 2012 as scheduled.

7. Meanwhile, HyD has also implemented in full swing its retrofitting programme for the provision of barrier-free access (lift or ramp) at public footbridges, subways or elevated walkway structures without such access or alternative at-grade crossings, where technically feasible. Up to now, out of a total of about 300 such facilities, HyD has completed investigation of 175 facilities, of which 111 were found feasible for lift/ramp retrofitting works. Retrofitting works for all these 111 facilities are in progress or under active planning, and works for 25 of them have been completed. As regards the remaining facilities, HyD

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<sup>2</sup> Details of scope of works and completion dates for individual venues will be incorporated into subsequent progress reports once the relevant information is available.

<sup>3</sup> In these 237 premises/facilities, HA will carry out a total of 365 works items, among which 167 are in domestic blocks and external areas; 44 in public transport interchanges; 31 in commercial centres; 93 in carparks; 6 in factory buildings and 24 in other venues.

has already commenced planning and investigation for retrofitting works. Retrofitting works for all remaining feasible items would be taken forward as soon as possible with the majority of works scheduled for completion by around 2016-17 and the rest (e.g. those involving public objections or are technically complex) by around 2017-18. Progress of the relevant retrofitting works is at **Annex E**.

### **Access Co-ordinators and Access Officers**

8. To dovetail with the appointment of Access Co-ordinators (ACs) and Access Officers (AOs) in Government bureaux and departments in April 2011, the Government has launched a series of training, including seminars and pilot workshops, in collaboration with EOC for ACs and AOs since early 2011. Two new episodes of training videos have been produced in collaboration with 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. Besides, 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.

9. Furthermore, the Labour and Welfare Bureau and CSTDI, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, organised the first and second series of sign language training workshops for frontline staff of government departments in August 2011 and in March 2012 respectively to enhance their knowledge in basic sign language and awareness of the deaf culture, thereby facilitating the hearing impaired in their access to government services. The third round of workshops will be organised in June 2012.

## **Way Forward**

10. 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**

**May 2012**