

**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 30 June 2011**

Purpose

This paper reports on the progress of the Government's follow-up action as at 30 June 2011 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 3,700 Government premises and facilities, amongst which around 90% will be retrofitted by 30 June 2012 (Class A) and the remaining premises and facilities by 30 June 2014 (Class B). A breakdown of all the premises and facilities to be retrofitted by type and their managing departments is at **Annex A**.

3. As at 30 June 2011, the works departments including the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), the Highways Department (HyD) and the Civil Engineering and Development Department, in collaboration with the managing departments of these premises and facilities, have proceeded with the preparation work for over 57% of the premises and facilities while retrofitting works on a few premises and facilities have already commenced. In brief, among all Class A items, we have completed site survey at 2,033 premises/facilities (62%) and completed both site survey and feasibility study at 1,571 premises/facilities (48%), while works at 250 premises/facilities (8%) have commenced. For Class B items, we have completed site survey at 127 premises/facilities (33%) and completed both site survey and feasibility study at 48 premises/facilities (12%). 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 operation of the premises and public. 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.

4. A full list of the venues covered by the retrofitting programme under Class A and Class B, their respective progress and level of complexity can be found at **Annex B** and **Annex C** respectively.

5. For the retrofitting programme devised by HA to improve accessibility of 233 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 improvement works will be completed by 2016-17. Progress of HA’s retrofitting programme is at **Annex D**. In brief, site survey and feasibility study for all premises/facilities have been completed, while works have commenced at 83 sites.

6. Meanwhile, HyD will continue to accelerate 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 295 such facilities, HyD has completed investigation of

123 facilities, of which 67 were found feasible for lift/ramp retrofitting works. Amongst these 67 facilities, the retrofitting works for 22 have been completed so far and the retrofitting works for 12 are in progress or under active planning. As regards the remaining footbridges, subways or elevated walkway structures, HyD has already commenced planning and investigation for retrofitting works. In order to further shorten the time of project delivery, retrofitting works for all remaining feasible items would be taken forward in phases 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**. The Administration has already received funding approval of about \$280 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council for the design of barrier-free facilities at about 180 public pedestrian footbridges and subways, as well as the first phase of retrofitting works (involving 10 facilities). For the remaining retrofitting works, the Administration intends to seek funding from the Legislative Council in several batches as soon as the design works have been completed.

Access Co-ordinators and Access Officers

7. With effect from 1 April 2011, the Government has appointed Access Co-ordinators (ACs) in individual bureaux and departments to co-ordinate accessibility issues within the bureau and department to facilitate Government-wide collaborative efforts in enhancing the accessibility of Government and HA premises and facilities. Individual bureaux and departments have also appointed an Access Officer (AO) for each venue under their management to improve day-to-day management, raise venue staff's awareness of accessibility issues and follow up the needs of persons with disabilities on barrier-free facilities effectively.

8. In collaboration with the EOC, the Government has provided a series of training to the ACs and AOs. Two seminars for ACs organised by the EOC, Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI) were held on 18 and 25 January 2011. A total of over 290 ACs in government bureaux/departments attended the seminars. In tandem, a total of six pilot workshops for AOs were held in March 2011 to raise staff awareness and improve the day-to-day management on barrier-free access in

government venues. A total of over 1,120 AOs in government bureaux/departments attended the workshops. Besides, a number of departments having frequent interface with the public in their service delivery (such as the Housing Department and the Hongkong Post) have also organised, in collaboration with the EOC and CSTDI, tailored-made accessibility workshops for their frontline staff. Other similar workshops for staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Department of Health are in the pipeline.

9. Furthermore, LWB and CSTDI have, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, organised a new series of sign language training workshops for frontline staff of government departments to enhance support to the hearing impaired in their access to government services. The workshops will be held from July to August 2011.

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
August 2011