

Five property owners fined over \$63,000 in total for failing to comply with fire safety directions

Five property owners were convicted and fined over \$63,000 in total at the Fanling Magistrates' Courts on September 10 for failing to comply with fire safety directions issued under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O) (Cap. 572).

The Buildings Department (BD) issued fire safety directions under section 5(2)(a)(ii) of the FS(B)O to five owners of the respective three domestic flats in a 44-year-old composite building on Yan Hing Street, Tai Po, requiring them to comply with the fire safety construction requirements by providing fire-rated doors and modifying metal gates at the unit entrances, which open directly to a staircase.

Failing to comply with the statutory directions, the five owners were prosecuted by the BD and were convicted by the court. Two co-owners were each fined about \$11,060, another two co-owners were each fined about \$12,560, and a single owner was fined about \$16,580.

"According to the FS(B)O, failing to comply with a statutory direction issued under the ordinance without reasonable excuse is a serious offence. The BD may instigate prosecution proceedings against the owner", a spokesman for the BD said today (September 25).

Pursuant to section 5(8) of the FS(B)O, any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a statutory direction, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000 at present) and to a further fine of \$2,500 for each day of non-compliance. Upon conviction, an application may also be made to the court for a Fire Safety Compliance Order against the owner under section 6(1) of the FS(B)O directing the owner to comply with the requirements of the direction.