

Four property owners fined over \$5,000 to \$10,000 for not complying with relevant fire safety ordinances

Four property owners were fined over \$5,000 to \$10,000 respectively at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts on June 29 for failing to comply with statutory directions issued under relevant fire safety ordinances.

One of the property owners owns two premises in a 37-year-old commercial building located at Sai Yeung Choi Street South, Mong Kok. Two Fire Safety Improvement Directions were issued by the Buildings Department (BD) under Section 5(1A) of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (FS(CP)O) (Cap. 502), requiring the owner concerned to replace the entrance doors of the premises with fire-rated doors. Failing to comply with the statutory directions, the owner was prosecuted by the BD and was convicted and fined \$11,400 in total.

The other three owners own three domestic units in composite buildings aged between 35 and 57 years at Tung Choi Street, Fa Yuen Street and Canton Road, Kowloon respectively. Three Fire Safety Directions were issued under Section 5(2)(a)(ii) of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O) (Cap. 572), requiring the owners concerned to replace the entrance doors of the units with fire-rated doors, and one of the owners was also required to remove a metal gate that was obstructing the exit route.

Since the three owners failed to comply with the statutory directions, they were prosecuted by the BD and were convicted and fined \$10,065, \$8,800 and \$5,600 respectively.

"According to the FS(CP)O and FS(B)O, failing to comply with a statutory direction issued under the two ordinances without reasonable excuse is a serious offence. The BD may instigate prosecution proceedings against the owner", a spokesman for the BD said today (July 18).

Pursuant to Section 5(7)(b) of the FS(CP)O and Section 5(8) of the FS(B)O, any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a statutory direction served on him or her, 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 a court for a Fire Safety Improvement Compliance Order or a Fire Safety Compliance Order against the owner under Section 6(1) of the FS(CP)O or FS(B)O respectively directing the owner to comply with the requirements of the direction.