

Government launches stakeholder consultation on proposed regulatory regime for Basic Housing Units

The Government launched today (December 2) a stakeholder consultation of about two months on the proposed regulatory regime for Basic Housing Units (BHU regulatory regime).

"The current-term Government has introduced a number of measures to substantially increase the public housing supply to meet the long-term demand by enhancing speed, quantity, quality and efficiency. Along with Light Public Housing and transitional housing, which help plug the short-term supply gap, eligible citizens can be housed in public housing more quickly. All these have enabled us to gradually handle the 'long-standing, big and difficult' issue of substandard subdivided units (SDUs).

"The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address to put in place, through legislation, a system on the renting of SDUs in residential buildings. SDUs meeting the required standards will be named BHUs. The BHU regulatory regime represents a significant milestone in eradicating substandard SDUs. Under appropriate regulation, the market demand will be satisfied by rental units providing more reasonable and safe environments," a spokesman for the Housing Bureau (HB) said.

The Government proposes that SDUs must comply with a set of minimum standards before they are allowed to be rented out in the future. There would be criminal liability on the part of landlords to rent out a substandard unit, while the tenants concerned will not be held liable. To put forward the BHU regulatory regime in an orderly manner, the Government plans to set up a registration system for pre-existing SDUs under rental, with a grace period to allow landlords of registered SDUs to carry out necessary alteration works within a reasonable period of time and apply for recognition as BHUs. New SDUs entering the market will only be allowed to be rented out after applying for and being recognised as BHUs that comply with the required standards.

The consultation document setting out the specific proposals and details has been uploaded to the website of the HB (www.hb.gov.hk/eng/bhu). Stakeholders may submit their views by email (bhu_consultation@hb.gov.hk), fax (2129 3829) or post (Dedicated Team on Subdivided Units, Housing Bureau, Housing Authority Headquarters, 33 Fat Kwong Street, Ho Man Tin, Kowloon) on or before February 10, 2025.