

Ombudsman invites public views on Buildings Department's implementation of Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme

The following is issued on behalf of the Office of The Ombudsman:

The Ombudsman, Ms Connie Lau, today (August 2) invited members of the public to provide information and/or views on the implementation of the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme by the Buildings Department (BD).

The Scheme commenced in June 2012. Owners of private buildings aged 10 years or above (except domestic buildings not exceeding three storeys), having received the BD's statutory notices of the Scheme, are required to arrange inspection and (where found necessary) repairs for the windows of their buildings. As at May 2018, the Office of The Ombudsman had received 50 complaints against the BD for failing to duly implement the Scheme since its commencement.

Furthermore, the Office has noticed that accidents involving falling windows have occasionally happened in recent years. The windows of some old buildings are dilapidated, but the BD takes a long time to select the buildings as targets of the Scheme. There has also been a case in which a window fell from a building even though it had already been inspected under the Scheme. Such a situation invites concern. The Ombudsman has, therefore, initiated a direct investigation to examine whether there are any inadequacies and areas for improvement in the BD's implementation of the Scheme. This direct investigation covers:

- (1) The BD's selection of target buildings of the Scheme;
- (2) The BD's procedures for issuing statutory notices of the Scheme;
- (3) The BD's mechanism for monitoring compliance with the statutory notices; and
- (4) The BD's enforcement actions against breaches of requirements of the Scheme.

To make the investigation more comprehensive, The Ombudsman is now inviting the public to send in information and/or views in writing to the Office of The Ombudsman by September 2, 2018:

Address: 30/F, China Merchants Tower, Shun Tak Centre, 168-200 Connaught Road Central, Hong Kong

Fax: 2882 8149

Email: complaints@ombudsman.hk