

## Property owner fined over \$60,000 for not complying with removal order

A property owner was fined \$60,800 for failing to comply with a removal order issued under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap 123) (BO) at Eastern Magistrates' Courts last week.

The order involved an illegal structure at the roof of a domestic building at Quarry Bay Street, Hong Kong. The illegal structure was used for habitation and was around 21 square metres in size. As the unauthorised building works (UBWs) were erected without prior approval from the Buildings Department (BD), contravening the BO, a removal order was served on the owner of the premises under section 24(1) of the BO.

As the owner repeatedly gave excuses and failed to remove the UBWs upon the expiry of the removal order, she was prosecuted by the BD. The owner was convicted at Eastern Magistrates' Courts on August 30.

"UBWs may adversely affect the structural and fire safety of a building, leading to serious consequences. Owners should seek professional advice before carrying out any building works in their premises," a spokesman for the BD said today (September 5).

Pursuant to section 40(1BA) of the BO, any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with an order served on him under section 24(1) of the BO, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of \$200,000 and to imprisonment for one year, as well as a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence has continued.