

# Rating (Amendment) Bill 2019 gazetted

The Rating (Amendment) Bill 2019 (the Bill) was gazetted today (September 13).

The Bill aims to implement the proposed Special Rates announced by the Chief Executive on June 29, 2018 with a view to encouraging a more timely supply of first-hand private residential units.

"Target units under the Special Rates regime are first-hand private residential units with the occupation permit issued for 12 months or more. Developers of such units are required to submit annual returns to the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) on the status of the units during the past 12 months," the Government spokesman said.

"If a target unit remains unsold on the last day of a 12-month reporting period, its developer is liable for the payment of Special Rates to the RVD. One major exception is that the target unit has been rented out under a stamped tenancy agreement at market rent or above and for not less than 183 days in aggregate during the reporting period. Special Rates are chargeable at a flat rate of 200 per cent of the rateable value of the subject target unit.

"To allow sufficient time for the RVD and the trade to get prepared for the submission of the first return under the Special Rates regime, we propose that the Bill, subsequent to its passage in the Legislative Council, should come into operation three months after its gazettal," the spokesman said.

The Bill will be introduced into the Legislative Council at the regular Council meeting following the first Council meeting in the 2019-20 legislative session.