

Two property owners fined over \$10,000 in total for failing to comply with Fire Safety Improvement Directions

Two property owners were convicted and each fined \$5,295 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts early this month for failing to comply with fire safety improvement directions issued under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (FS(CP)O) (Cap. 502).

The Buildings Department (BD) issued fire safety improvement directions under section 5(1A) of the FS(CP)O to the property owners of two premises in a 40-year-old specified commercial building at Ma Tau Wai Road, Kowloon City, requiring them to comply with certain fire safety construction requirements, which include providing fire-rated doors at the unit entrances and fire-rated walls separating the units from the common corridor.

Failing to comply with the statutory directions, the property owners were prosecuted by the BD and were convicted and fined by the court on August 4.

"According to the FS(CP)O, failing to comply with a statutory direction issued under the ordinance without reasonable excuse is a serious offence. The BD may instigate prosecution proceedings against the owner of the specified commercial building under the ordinance", a spokesman for the BD said today (August 22).

Pursuant to section 5(7)(b) of the FS(CP)O, any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a statutory direction, 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 against the owner under section 6(1) of the FS(CP)O directing the owner to comply with the requirements of the direction.