THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY

Memorandum for the Management and Operations Committee

Implications of District Boards (Amendment) Ordinance 1997 on Estate Management Advisory Committee Membership

PURPOSE

To inform Members of the implications of District Boards (Amendment) Ordinance 1997 on the appointment of Provisional District Board (PDB) members to Estate Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) and the Departmental action being taken.

BACKGROUND

2. The EMAC Scheme is a management initiative to enhance our services to the estate residents. The Scheme has been smoothly implemented in accordance with the schedule of extension. By now 129 rental estates have formed their own EMACs and 1150 EMAC members are officially appointed.

3. Each of these EMACs is chaired by the estate Housing Manager. Its membership comprises the then DB members whose constituency covered the estate, and representatives from Mutual Aid Committees (MACs), Residents’ Associations and Commercial Tenants’ Associations.

4. The District Boards (Amendment) Ordinance 1997 came into effect on 1 July 1997. The Ordinance provides for, inter alia, the establishment of PDBs in place of DBs. All incumbent DB members as well as 96 additional members were appointed to the eighteen PDBs for a term limited to not later than 31 December, 1999. The constituencies were repealed.
PRESENT POSITION

5. In the 129 estates where EMAC Scheme is in operation, a total of 148 PDB members have been appointed as EMAC members. Thirteen of these PDB members hold two EMAC seats and one of them even holds three as the boundary of the previous constituency crosses two or more estates.

6. The Scheme will roll out to the final batch of twelve estates in October 1997. As can be seen from the Annex, these twelve estates fall within seven PDBs involving 203 PDB members. Of these members, 130 are not serving EMAC, either because their previous constituency does not cover any public rental estate or they are newly appointed to the PDBs.

7. A total of 23 estates have not been batched for EMAC implementation due to imminent redevelopment (4 estates); being single block (2 estates) or insufficient formation of MACs (17 estates). New estates to be completed in future would also be committed to EMAC Scheme when they are fully occupied and have MACs formed in due course.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE ORDINANCE

8. For the existing EMAC estates, the then DB members have been appointed to EMAC in accordance with their individual constituencies. All constituencies are now repealed under the District Boards (Amendment) Ordinance 1997. Although EMAC appointment is not necessarily constituency-tied, the scrapping of constituencies within the districts now requires new consideration of the appointment of PDB members to EMAC.

DEPARTMENT’S VIEWS & ACTION TAKEN

9. The transitional arrangement for the PDB is being undertaken by the Home Affairs Department (HAD). Taking into account the implications of the District Boards (Amendment) Ordinance 1997 on EMAC membership, we are seeking the views of HAD on the selection of PDB representatives to the final batch of EMACs in order to match with the new election approach.

10. Meanwhile, in order to adhere to the schedule for extension of the EMAC Scheme, we are proceeding with the formation of EMACs in the final batch of estates in October 1997. Estate Housing Managers have commenced
to invite the prospective candidates, viz representatives of Mutual Aid Committees, Residents’ Associations and Commercial Tenants’ Associations, to participate in EMACs. The appointment of PDB members to the final batch of EMAC estates is withheld for the time being.

11. Members will be informed of the development and the Department’s proposal after the views of HAD are obtained.

INFORMATION

12. This paper is issued for Members’ information.

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