



**EAA reviews its work in the first half of 2016 and  
introduces its initiatives for the second half**

(20 July 2016) The Estate Agents Authority (“EAA”) held a press conference today at which its Chairman, Mr William Leung Wing-cheung, SBS, JP, and Chief Executive Officer, Ms Ruby Hon Yuen-ping, reviewed the EAA’s work in the first half of 2016 and introduced its initiatives for the second half.

According to Mr William Leung, the total number of property transactions recorded a sharp decrease due to the unstable economic environment. In the first half of 2016, the EAA received a total of 248 complaints, an increase of 84% compared to the same period last year. Among the most common categories of complaints, “issuing non-compliant advertisements” saw an enormous increase from four cases in the first half of 2015 to 31 cases in the first half of this year, while “providing inaccurate or misleading property information” also recorded a significant increase from 35 cases to 93 cases in the same period, of which 48 cases relate to units in the same shopping mall, contributing considerably to the upsurge.

“Such a significant increase in the number of complaints is probably due to the economic downturn in the property market, fierce competition among the trade and the consequential enormous pressure faced by some individual practitioners. However, it should not be a justification for licensees’ non-compliance as it would not only make their clients suffer loss, but also bring disrepute to the trade and worst still affect their own career future. Estate agency companies are also undoubtedly accountable. They should not focus only on their businesses and neglect the pressure faced by their staff. Instead, they should provide their staff with



appropriate guidance.” Mr Leung commented.

The number of complaints in the sale of first-hand residential properties has also risen from 19 cases in the first half of 2015 to 46 cases in the first half of this year. On the issue of estate agents’ failing to honour a promised rebate to clients in first sale properties, 19 related complaints were received in the first half of 2016, representing an increase of 90% compared to that of last year.

During the first half of 2016, the EAA has issued two practice circulars about compliance with the Competition Ordinance and updated guidelines on the conduct of promotional activities in the first-sale of residential properties.

The EAA has also taken action or imposed sanctions on a total of 182 licensees in the first half of 2016. A total of 26 licences were revoked and 18 licences were suspended. Separately, the number of qualifying examinations candidates and individual licensees dropped in the first half of 2016 while there was a slight increase in the number of company licences, which has amounted to a record high of 3,266.

Stepping into the second half of 2016, the EAA will reinforce its effort on monitoring estate agents’ practice in the sale of various types of properties. That said, according to the EAA Chief Executive Officer Ms Ruby Hon, the EAA is very concerned with the order of estate agents at first-sale sites and will continue to closely monitor the situation. The recently issued related practice circular will become effective on 1 September 2016 and the EAA will also strengthen the inspection of online property advertisements to deter any non-compliance. In addition, regarding the recent cases of fake property vendors, the EAA will update



the existing related practice circular very soon.

Last but not the least, the EAA will also continue to maximise its efforts on educating both the trade and the public. The new structured programme for estate agency practice under the Continuing Professional Development Scheme will launch soon in the second half of 2016 and more public seminars will also be held.



EAA Chairman Mr William Leung Wing-cheung, SBS, JP and Chief Executive Officer Ms Ruby Hon Yuen-ping review the EAA's work in the first half of 2016 and introduce its initiatives for second half at the press conference.



EAA Chairman Mr William Leung Wing-cheung, SBS, JP and Chief Executive Officer Ms Ruby Hon Yuen-ping introduce the new leaflet of “Key Information of Residential Properties” issued by the EAA.

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