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Chairman, Licensing Appeals Board

稅務上訴委員會副主席

Deputy Chairman, Board of Review (Inland Revenue Ordinance)

行政上訴委員會副主席

Deputy Chairman, Administrative Appeals Board

金融糾紛調解中心紀律委員會主席

Chairman, Disciplinary Committee of Financial Dispute Resolution Centre

旅遊業監管局委員及其紀律委員會主席

Member of Travel Industry Authority and Chairman of its Disciplinary Committee

監管局主席廖玉玲太平紳士

An Interview with EAA Chairman, Ms Elaine Liu, JP

本期《專業天地》專訪了監管局主席廖玉玲太平紳士，了解她擔任監管局主席後的願景，以及分享她對業界的建議。

In this issue of *Horizons*, we interview our EAA Board Chairman Ms Elaine Liu, JP, about her vision after taking up the chairmanship of the EAA and her advice to the trade.

問 請問你心目中有沒有一些新里程碑希望在你出任監管局主席任內達成？

答 我很榮幸成為監管局董事局的第五任主席。在去年11月擔任主席之前，我已經在監管局董事局和不同委員會中服務了12年，對地產代理的執業有相當的了解。對於大部分香港市民來說，買樓仍然是一件大事，所涉及的金額可能是他們的大部份財產。地產代理參與其中，他們的行為操守以及專業水平，會對消費者、以至地產業界產生一定的影響。這些年來，我看到地產代理業界的表現逐步改善，而去年我們進行公眾調查所得的正面結果也正正反映了這些改進的存在。對於表現有所進步的代理，我表示欣賞，希望他們繼續進步，同時，必須保持警惕，因為地產代理行業的良好公眾形象需要很長時間才能建立起來，但也同時很容易在短時間內受到破壞。對於仍有很大進步空間的代理，我予以鼓勵，希望大家繼續努力。作為新任

Q Are there any new milestones that you would like to achieve during your chairmanship of the EAA?

A I am honoured to become the fifth Chairman of the EAA Board. I have served on the Board and different committees of the EAA for 12 years before I took up the chairmanship last November. I came to know fairly well the practices of estate agents. Buying a property is an important matter for most Hong Kong citizens. The money involved may be a substantial portion of their savings. The integrity and professional standard of estate agents who participated in the transaction are significant. Over the years, I saw some gradual improvement on the standard of estates agents as a whole. Such improvement was also reflected in the result of the public survey we did last year. I commend the estate agents who maintain a professional standard in their practice and contribute to the improvement of the trade's public image. They must also stay vigilant as the good public image of estate agents takes a long time to build up, yet it can also be easily tarnished in no time. To those estate agents who still have room for improvement, I encourage you to keep up with your efforts and hope these efforts will soon be materialized with benefit and positive result. As the new chairman, while I will uphold the regulatory work of the EAA, I would also like to lead the estate agency trade in becoming

主席，我會緊守局方的監管工作，同時我希望帶領地產代理行業變得更加專業，監管局會提供合適的渠道和平台以協助提升業界的專業水平，從而贏得公眾的更多尊重。未來幾年，監管局將不遺餘力地實現這目標。一方面，我們會透過規管和教育工作手段來提高持牌人的專業水平；同一時間，我們也會加大宣傳力度，以提高行業的正面形象。要實現這一目標，當然需要所有業界成員的共同努力。

問 你本身是一位大律師，也是監管局紀律委員會的前主席，不時會被傳媒問及你對懲處違規持牌人的看法。你可否也向專業天地的讀者分享一下呢？

答 我經常被問及對監管局的規管和紀律研訊方面的看法，可能由於我是大律師，並且曾擔任監管局紀律委員會主席的緣故吧。我樂意在此與大家分享。我主持了很多對地產代理的紀律研訊。我看到行業整體上有所改善，屢犯者數量不是很高。但是，仍然有發生涉及誠信問題並為消費者造成巨大損失的嚴重違規事件。監管局在處理每宗案件時都保持嚴謹和公正的態度，並繼續對違規者採取紀律處分。在有需要時，我們會考慮檢視制裁的程度，以增強阻嚇作用。不過，我們也應留意，要進一步提高業界的社會地位，僅僅依靠監管局不斷努力制裁違規持牌人是不足夠的，還需要業界的共同努力和決心。

問 疫情之下，地產代理的業務無可避免地受到影響。你可否向持牌人提供建議，可以如何保持競爭力嗎？

答 確實，地產代理無法避過疫情帶來的影響，監管局和政府去年提供的資助在一定程度上對他們有所幫助。在2021年，雖然監管局因為要保持財政穩健而無法提供更多的財政援助，但我們將為業界提供其他支持，以提高他們的專業水平和能力，特別是對於中小型地產代理公司。例如，持續專業進修計劃將會舉辦更多實用的講座，令持牌人在日常業務中掌握更多有用的技能。我鼓勵所有從業員保持積極、警覺和靈活，繼續推動行業良好發展，以正直、能幹和專業建立起蓬勃的業務。

more professional. The EAA will provide appropriate channel and platform to raise the trade's professional standard, so as to help the trade to gain greater respect from the public. The EAA will spare no effort in attaining this objective in the years to come. We will enhance the professional standard of licensees by our regulatory and educational tools, at the same time, we will strengthen our publicity effort to promote the positive image of the trade. Needless to say, a concerted effort from all trade members is necessary to achieve this goal.

Q **As a barrister and the former chairman of the EAA's Disciplinary Committee, you are always asked by the media on your views of the sanctions against non-compliant estate agents. Could you also share it with the readers of "Horizons"?**

A I was quite often asked about my views on the regulatory and disciplinary aspects of the EAA's work. This is probably because I am a practicing barrister and had chaired the EAA's Disciplinary Committee for the past 8 years. I am pleased to share my views with you here. I have chaired a substantial number of inquiry hearings on disciplinary matters and have seen an overall improvement in the trade's practice. The number of repeat offenders is not very high. However, there are still cases of serious breaches involving issues of honesty and resulting in considerable loss of the consumers. The EAA will stay stringent and impartial in processing each and every case, and will continue to take disciplinary actions against those who have committed breaches. When necessary, we will review the level of sanctions to get the appropriate deterrent effect. That said, one cannot lose sight of the fact that reliance only on the EAA's continuous effort in sanctioning the non-compliant licensees is not sufficient, the trade's unified effort and commitment are essential factors to achieving a raise of the trade's public image and social status.

Q **Under the pandemic, the business of estate agents is inevitably affected. Could you advise licensees on what they could do to maintain their competencies?**

A It is true that estate agents did not escape the pandemic. I hope the subsidies provided by the EAA and the Government last year helped them. Though the EAA is unable to provide any further financial assistance in 2021 as we need to maintain a healthy financial position, we will provide other supports to the trade to improve its professional standard and competency, in particular to the small-to-medium sized estate agency companies. For example, more seminars on practical topics will be organised under the Continuing Professional Development Scheme to equip licensees with useful skills for their daily businesses. I encourage all practitioners to remain positive, be vigilant and resilient, keep up with the good progress you have contributed to your profession, and continue to build up a thriving practice with integrity, competence and professionalism.