



**Estate Agents Authority demands management of
estate agency companies to ensure order at first-sale sites**

(16 August 2004) Steven Poon Kwok-lim, Chairman of the Estate Agents Authority (EAA), had a meeting this morning with the senior management of the four estate agency companies frequently engaged in the promotion of first-sale properties. At the meeting, Mr Poon demanded the management of these companies to ensure the maintenance of good order at first-sale sites, and to take effective and appropriate measures.

At the meeting, Mr Poon indicated that the EAA had recently enhanced the manpower for first-sale site inspection. From 27 July to 15 August 2004, EAA enforcement personnel had, during the course of inspection, discovered 90 cases of suspected disorderly behaviour. In the meantime the EAA had issued verbal warnings and/or letters of advice to the agents concerned, and severe penalties will be meted out to those whose breaches are substantiated by the investigation that is now under way.

Mr Poon reiterated the great importance that the EAA attached to law and order at the first-sale sites. He said, “conflicts among estate agents at first-sale sites as they scrambled for clients happen from time to time. Such acts have damaged the reputation of the industry, and created concern in the community at large. The management of estate agency companies must take this issue seriously and prevent similar occurrences in future”.

Representatives of the four companies were in agreement with the EAA that the offenders must be dealt with severely. They also acknowledged that the management of individual companies had the responsibility to supervise their employees so that they conduct themselves in an orderly manner at the first-sale sites. They were unanimous in maintaining that their respective companies would not connive at employees engaged in any act against law and order, and those who were would be duly punished. The companies will issue internal guidelines to their staff to ensure orderly and compliant practice.

The Chairman of the EAA demanded that the four companies formulate more concrete measures for the further improvement of order at



first-sale sites. At the meeting, the Chief Executive Officer of the EAA, Ms Sandy Chan Pui-shan, also reminded practitioners that they should refrain from disseminating unfounded and inaccurate market information, including information issued in the form of advertisements. She noted that it would be an offence to do so.

At present, estate agents who are involved in altercations in public places, who cause nuisance to citizens as they canvass for business, and who act in such a way on the road as to cause danger to themselves and/or other road users, are in breach of the Code of Ethics promulgated by the EAA and may have even committed an offence against the law. Offenders may be subject to penalties including the revocation of licence, and serious cases will be referred to the Police.

In addition, the Estate Agents Ordinance Prescribes that Licensed estate agents are not allowed to issue any advertisement that is false or misleading, and disciplinary action will be taken against those who do. The licence will be revoked in the case of a serious offence.

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