



Dear Licensees,

Re: New Inspection Regime under the Companies Ordinance

The Estate Agents Authority (“EAA”) is writing to draw your attention to the operation of the new inspection regime under the Companies Ordinance whereby the Companies Register of the Companies Registry (“CR”) will eventually make available for public inspection correspondence addresses of directors in place of their usual residential addresses (“URAs”) and partial identification numbers (“IDNs”) of directors and company secretaries in place of their full IDNs.

The new inspection regime will be implemented in three phases:

Phase 1 : With effect from 23 August 2021, companies may replace URAs of directors with their correspondence addresses, and replace full IDNs of directors and company secretaries with their partial IDNs on their own registers for public inspection.

Phase 2 : With effect from 24 October 2022, URAs and full IDNs (“Protected Information”) on the Index of Directors on the Companies Register will be replaced with correspondence addresses and partial IDNs for public inspection. Protected Information contained in documents filed for registration after commencement of this phase will not be provided for public inspection.

Phase 3 : With effect from 27 December 2023, data subjects could apply to the CR for protecting from public inspection their Protected Information contained in documents registered with the CR and replace such information with their correspondence addresses and partial IDNs.



Under the new inspection regime, certain specified persons could apply for access to the Protected Information of the relevant individuals. Designated non-financial businesses and professionals such as estate agents to which the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance (“AMLO”) applies are specified persons under the Companies Ordinance.

As such, estate agents may, after the commencement of Phase 2, apply to the CR for access to the Protected Information of directors and other persons if (i) the information is required by them for the purpose of, or in connection with, the performance of their functions conferred or imposed on them under the AMLO; and (ii) the information would be used only for that purpose.

Licenses are reminded to use the Protected Information obtained upon the abovementioned application strictly in the performance of their functions. Licensees who misuse the Protected Information may breach the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and be also subject to disciplinary action by the EAA.

For more details on Phase 1 of the new inspection regime, licensees may visit the CR’s website to read the related external circular (www.cr.gov.hk/en/publications/docs/ec1-2021-e.pdf).

Estate Agents Authority

20 August 2021