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Press Release

Estate Agents Authority promote the level of Qualifying Examinations to raise agents' standards

(31 January 2005) In order to raise the standard of new practitioners of the estate agency profession and to enhance protection for consumers, the Estate Agents Authority is going to enhance the standard of the Qualifying Examinations starting from July 2005.

Chairman of the Authority's Professional Development Committee, Mr. Joseph Tsang Hon-ping, said, "as the property market regained its buoyancy, the number of practitioners in the estate agency trade has been climbing. To ensure that new practitioners meet the professional standard and fulfil the many practical requirements of the job, the Authority considers it necessary to raise the level of the Qualifying Examination as a means to enhance protection for the public." The Authority's figures show that the number of individual licensees hit 18,675 in 2004, showing a more than 20 per cent increase compared to that of 2003.

Mr. Tsang added, "On one hand, the Authority will raise the standard of new practitioners through the enhancement of the level of the Qualifying Examination. On the other hand, it will implement the Continuous Professional Development Scheme in the second quarter of this year with a view to upgrading practitioners and enabling them to be abreast with time, and therefore the overall standard of practitioners in the long run."

Changes will be made to the future Qualifying Examination in two aspects:

To revise the format of the Estate Agents Qualifying Examination

In order to test the candidates' professional knowledge in a more comprehensive way, the Authority will revise the format of the



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Examination and extend the time of the Examination.

The current Examination consists of two parts. Part I is composed of 50 general questions while Part II is composed of 10 questions on case studies. The pass mark is for the overall Examination and is not further broken down for the component parts. Therefore, a candidate may do poorly in some essential aspects (such as land search) yet can still pass provided his overall mark is high enough. To improve this situation, candidates will be required to pass both parts in order to pass the Qualifying Examination in the future.

The revised Examination shall comprise two parts: Part I will consist of 30 questions to test candidates' knowledge on the various sections of the syllabus. Part II will consist of 20 questions relating to 1 or 2 comprehensive case studies portraying a real-life client situation to integrate tests on all the practical knowledge expected from an estate agent including interpretation of land search, completion of the prescribed forms, compliance with the legislative regime, practical issues such as estate agency law, conveyancing and tenancy.

To compensate for the more difficult features in the future Examination and allow sufficient time for the comprehension of the case studies in Part II, the duration of the Estate Agents Qualifying Examination will be extended from currently 2 hours to 3 hours.

To revise the syllabus of the Examination

Besides, in order to ensure that practitioners keep themselves informed of any laws, government regulations, essential facts and developments in the real estate market, the Authority will update the syllabus for both the Estate Agents Qualifying Examination as well as the Salesperson Qualifying Examination starting from July this year.



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The revision include adding the essentials of the Building Management Ordinance (Cap. 344). Candidates are presently required to know the consequences to an owner of an encumbrance registered against his property, but not specifically those registered against the Incorporated Owners. The Authority considers that practitioners should have knowledge on the Building Management Ordinance (Cap. 344) and therefore revise the Examination syllabus accordingly.

Also, as the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap.7) was amended last year by the Government, and the Land Registry has scheduled to commence the Integrated Registration Information System (IRIS) in February 2005, the Authority therefore updates the Examination syllabus to incorporate the above two features.

The Estate Agents Qualifying Examination is organized 3 times each year in March, July and November. The next Qualifying Examination will take place on 24 March 2005 which will be the last Qualifying Examination before the above revisions are implemented. The March Examination is now open for registration.

Passing the Qualifying Examination is one of the requirements for obtaining the licence. For enquiries regarding licensing requirements, please telephone the Authority's licensing hotline at 21113883 or visit the Authority's website at <http://www.eaa.org.hk>.

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