

# GLASS PANEL EXTERNAL WALLS LARGE SIGNBOARDS AND TV DISPLAYS IN PEDESTRIANISATION AREAS



Pedestrianisation Area  
步行街









**The** increasing number of unauthorized structures, in particular glass panels, large advertising signboards and TV displays installed on external walls of buildings in areas with heavy pedestrian flow and commercial activities have aroused concerns to the safety of the

public. While recognizing the desire to advertise and promote the products and services provided in these busy areas, owners of premises and operators of businesses have the responsibility to protect the safety of the public in these areas.

## **Owners' and business operators' responsibility**

### ***Carry out building works legally***

The construction of large glass panels as external walls of buildings, the erection of advertisement signboards, and the installation of TV displays on the external wall of buildings are building works which are subject to the control of the Buildings Ordinance (BO). Like any other building works, prior approval of building plans and consent to commence the work are required under the BO from the Building Authority (BA) for the installation of large glass panels, advertising signboards and TV displays on external walls of buildings.

These building works are required to meet the relevant design and construction standards under the BO to ensure -

- ❑ the safety of the works to withstand the effect of wind and their own weight;
- ❑ the safety of the structure of the building to which they are attached;
- ❑ the availability of lighting and ventilation to the building to which they are attached; and
- ❑ that the glass panel external wall is able to function as a protective barrier to prevent persons or objects from falling out from the building, and have adequate fire-resistance to prevent the spread of fire between floors through the external wall.





Building owners or business operators should, therefore, enlist the service of an Authorised Person and, if necessary, a Registered Structural Engineer to submit plans to the Building Authority for approval before carrying out any of these works.

Building owners or business operators are also advised to check the Deed of Mutual Covenant (DMC) of the subject building to ensure that any proposed building works involving common areas (e.g. external wall) of a building comply with the provisions of the DMC.

### ***Remove unauthorised building works (UBW) immediately***

Signboards, TV displays and glass panel external walls constructed without approval and consent of the BA are UBW. Similar to other UBW projecting from the face of the building, such as flower racks, metal cages, large canopies and supporting frames for air-conditioners, they pose a risk to public safety. Building owners and business operators of premises with UBW should take the initiative to remove the UBW without delay.

### **Government's supportive measures**

- ❑ To facilitate the speedy approval of building plans of installation of new signboards, TV displays or glass panels on external walls of existing buildings legally and in compliance with the provisions of the BO, the BA has put in place a fast-track system for processing applications for such approval. Under this system, the plans submitted will be processed within 30 days of receipt of the submission provided it contains sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the relevant standards.



- ❑ Owners in need of financial assistance in the carrying out of any necessary removal or rectification works may apply for a loan under Buildings Department's Building Safety Loan Scheme (BSLS) at a low interest rate.

### **Buildings Department's enforcement actions**

Over the years, BD has been taking enforcement action against UBW with obvious or potential danger to life or property on a building by building basis in large scale clearance operations. In 2006, BD will direct its clearance operation of UBW at areas with heavy pedestrian flow to protect the safety of the public in these areas by removing any potential risk to public safety posed by glass external walls, large signboards and TV displays. BD will, based on the seriousness and extent of the UBW problem in and around designated pedestrianisation areas, identify target buildings for inclusion in the operation. BD will issue advisory letters to be followed by statutory orders to building owners, occupants and business operators requiring them to remove the UBW in these buildings. The department may also issue orders to require building owners to rectify any building defects, and any other dangerous structures on the external walls of the target buildings.





## **New UBW**

As part of BD's action to control the proliferation of any new UBW, the department has assigned private consultants to carry out patrols in and around designated pedestrianisation areas to report any new ones for enforcement action.

## **Penalty**



Owners who carry out building works without obtaining prior approval and consent from the BA may be prosecuted and are liable on conviction to a penalty of:

- ❑ a maximum fine of \$400,000 and to imprisonment for 2 years; and
- ❑ a daily fine of \$20,000

Owners who, without reasonable excuse, fail to comply with a statutory removal order may be prosecuted and are liable on conviction to a penalty of:

- ❑ a maximum fine of \$200,000 and to imprisonment for 1 year; and
- ❑ a daily fine of \$20,000

Any statutory removal or repair orders will also be registered in the Land Registry until the satisfactory completion of the removal / rectification works as specified in the order.



## Enquiries

**For enquiries,  
please call BD's hotline 2626 1616.  
(This hotline is handled by "1823 Citizen's  
Easy Link" of the Government.)**

**For enquiries concerning BSLS,  
please call 2626 1579.**



Hi-Fi

