

## **JOINT BCA/HDB STATEMENT**

### **MEASURES TO ENSURE WINDOW SAFETY IN PRIVATE AND HDB ESTATES**

1. In view of the rising incidence of fallen window incidents in recent years, the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) and the Housing and Development Board (HDB) are taking various measures to ensure the safety of windows in private and HDB estates.

#### **Rising Trend Of Fallen Windows**

2 The number of reported fallen windows from high-rise buildings has risen sharply over the last 4 years. From 2000 to 2003, there was a total of 190 fallen window cases – 166 in HDB blocks and 24 in private buildings [see [Annex](#)]. Almost 80% of windows which had fallen in HDB blocks were casement windows. The majority (75%) of the fallen casement windows were installed by HDB flat lessees themselves.

#### **Measures Taken To Minimise Incidence Of Fallen Windows**

3 Under the terms of the Lease, HDB flat lessees are responsible for maintaining the windows in their flat in good working condition. Since 1999, HDB has embarked on a programme to educate lessees on the need to ensure proper maintenance of their windows. On 16 Nov 03, HDB launched the HDB Residents' Handbook to help lessees carry out simple maintenance and repairs to their flat. In addition, lessees are required to hire only HDB-trained window contractors to carry out window installation and repair works with effect from 1 Dec 03.

4 For strata-titled developments, the Management Corporation is responsible for the maintenance of external windows. BCA issued advisory notes to Management Corporations in Nov 03 to advise them on the importance of proper maintenance of windows.

5 Despite these efforts, the number of fallen window cases has increased from 1 per week in 2002 to 2 cases per week in 2003. In the last four months of 2003, there were more than 3 fallen window incidents per week.

### **Additional Measures To Ensure Window Safety**

#### Legislation to regulate the safety of windows and require periodic inspection of windows

6 To ensure window safety, BCA intends to introduce legislation later this year to regulate the design and installation of windows. The legislation will apply to all types of high-rise properties. BCA will work in close consultation with industry bodies to put in place the necessary legislation to ensure that acceptable safety standards are adhered to. The legislation will also require property owners to retrofit their existing windows to comply with these same safety standards. In addition, BCA will also put in place a framework for authorised persons to carry out periodic inspection of windows and certify their safety.

#### Goodwill programme for replacement of aluminium rivets of casement windows installed by HDB

7 HDB will carry out a one-off goodwill rivet replacement programme for 43,000 flats which have aluminium rivets for casement windows installed by HDB. Under this programme, HDB will co-pay 50% of the cost of replacing the aluminium rivets with stainless steel rivets for casement windows installed by HDB and the flat lessee will pay the remaining 50%. This programme will not include flats with casement windows which are installed by the flat lessees themselves.

8 This one-off goodwill rivet replacement programme will run from Mar 2004 to Feb 2005. HDB will be writing to the individual flat lessees to inform them of the details.

### **Reminder to Homeowners**

9 BCA and HDB would like to remind all home owners to check their windows regularly, and repair them if necessary, to ensure that their windows are always safe and secure. Private property owners can refer to BCA's website at [www.bca.gov.sg](http://www.bca.gov.sg) for information on window maintenance. HDB flat lessees can refer to HDB's InfoWEB at <http://www.hdb.gov.sg> for information on window maintenance or approach the HDB Branch Office managing their flat for assistance.

### **Enquiries**

10 For enquiries, the public can contact:

(a) Mr Tan Kok Chuan and Mrs Ling-Yap Kim Har from BCA at Tel: 63257389 and Tel: 63258649

(b) the Branch Office Service Line at Tel : 1800 866 3030

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**NUMBER OF FALLEN WINDOWS IN HDB BLOCKS AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS IN 2000-2003**

