



Property & Facility Management Division
Sr Prof Eddie Hui, MH PFMD Council Chairman

The Property Management Services Authority (物業管理業監管局)

The Property Management Services Authority (PMSA) held its first meeting on 21 February to discuss issues relating to its functions and operations, procedural rules, the mechanism for the declaration of interests, the setting up of standing committees, and its work plan. The Chairman of the PMSA, Sr Tony Tse Wai-chuen, said:

The PMSA is an independent statutory authority responsible for regulating the provision of property management services through a licencing regime; promoting the integrity of property management companies and property management practitioners; and enhancing the status of the profession.

To discharge its responsibilities, the PMSA has to set up five standing committees, namely:

- (i) the Finance and Strategic Development Standing Committee
- (ii) the Disciplinary Standing Committee
- (iii) the Licencing Standing Committee
- (iv) the Practice and Examining Standing Committee
- (v) the Professional Development Standing Committee

The PMSA was established pursuant to the Property Management Services Ordinance (Cap 626). It comprises 20 members appointed by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR for a period of three years with effect from 1 December 2016. Among those members are Sr Tony Tse, Sr Dick Kwok, and Sr Professor Eddie Hui.

Research Studies and Related CPD Event

Nowadays, web-based tools have increasingly become popular in Hong Kong's property and facility industry. The PFMD earlier commissioned the University of Hong Kong to conduct a study of how local property management companies used web-based tools in the territory and if the tools were being used effectively.

Now the research project has been successfully completed and a full report has been submitted to the HKIS. The PFMD wants to thank the research team for its efforts. Particular gratitude goes to the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies for sharing its resources with the researchers. Thanks also go to those who participated in the study and shared their valuable views and insights on the use of web-based tools in the property management industry.

The research team will share its findings with members in a CPD event, which will tentatively occur on **Wednesday, 26 April 2017**. All HKIS members are welcome to attend this talk, during which the team will enlighten them on its important findings that pertain to local web-based tool applications, while addressing the research questions laid down above. Before that, the Division will be more than happy to take this opportunity to pre-release some of the research team's key points (from the Executive Summary) in this issue for members' information, as follows:

The Effective Use of Web-based Tools for Property Management Companies in Hong Kong

by Dr Daniel Ho and Cynthia Hou

Department of Real Estate & Construction
The University of Hong Kong

The aim of this research project is to study how to use web-based technology to provide process enhancement to the property and facilities management profession.

The objectives of this study are:

- to investigate the current developments in web-based property management tools in Hong Kong;
- to understand how the user-friendliness of the current user-interface can be improved, so that residents can accomplish the available functions more effectively; and
- to explore the extent to which the capabilities of web-based and 'cloud' technologies are maximised to benefit the property and facilities management profession.

A desktop study of Hong Kong's private residential estates that provided web-based property management tools was carried out, followed by face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with experienced property managers. Feedback from residents served with web-based property management tools was collected by means of a questionnaire survey.

The study was conducted in three stages. Stage 1 aimed to explore the current developments in web-based property management tools in Hong Kong, including the scope of property management services provided by local property management companies, the number of private residential estates that used such tools, and their local distribution. Stage 2 aimed

to identify the weaknesses of and challenges for the current development of web-based property management tools through interviewing professional property management managers and practitioners. Stage 3 aimed to investigate users' habits of using web-based property management tools, their personal experiences of using such tools, and their levels of satisfaction.

The findings of this study showed that a number of property management companies did provide web-based property management system (WPMS) services to residential buildings. Some companies committed a considerable amount of financial resources to develop web-based property management tools as platforms to improve property management services and collect feedback from users. Meanwhile, these companies strived to enlarge the scope of property management services through WPMS and encouraged residents to use it to request services. However, the results of the survey contained in this study showed that the usage rate of WPMS among residents was rather low. Even though Hong Kong's principal property management companies actively promote WPMS and commit a considerable amount of resources to WPMS development, most Hong Kong residents have yet to form a habit of requesting property management services through WPMS. They still prefer direct interactions with service providers to making phone calls to or informing estate security to request property management services.