

**Independent Committee in relation to the
Fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po**

**SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF
Mr KU SIU PING**

I, KU Siu Ping, Senior Maintenance Surveyor of Independent Checking Unit of the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Housing, Lung Cheung Office Block, 138 Lung Cheung Road, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon, do say as follows:-

1. I am the same Senior Maintenance Surveyor of the Independent Checking Unit of the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Housing (“**ICU**”) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

2. I make this second Witness Statement further to the first dated 16 January 2026 specifically to explain ICU’s actions in relation to a series of correspondences / complaints / enquiries (“**exchanges**”) relating to air-conditioning hoods (“**A/C hoods**”) and architectural features¹, including details of four related site inspections (they were briefly described in the Schedule of Site Visits [**ICU/C(2)/(i)/1**]).

3. Despite the fact that ICU has not been or has yet to be asked to address anything relating to such exchanges, it has come to my attention in the course of my preparation of my first Witness Statement that such exchanges involve some information relating to the use of foam boards in the renovation works of Wang Fuk Court (“**WFC Renovation**”); I thus consider it helpful for the

[ICU/C(2)/(i)/1]

¹ Including window canopy (窗簷), a canopy-like structure over a window; window sill (窗眉), a horizontal surface at the bottom of a window; and architectural fins (建築裝飾), the elements attached to a building’s façade.

relevant information to be provided to the Independent Committee (“**the Committee**”) for early information. I will address below the background of such exchanges and related site inspections, as well as documents / information received in ICU’s handling of such exchanges. Unless otherwise defined, the same abbreviations used in my first statement will be adopted herein.

4. I understand that ICU, further to the List of Documents provided to the Committee on 19 January 2026 (“**1st LoD**”), will provide to the Committee a Second List of Documents (“**2nd LoD**”), a draft of which I have read, indexing additional relevant documents concerning the WFC Renovation now identified in ICU’s possession. In this Witness Statement, I shall refer to documents in the 1st LoD by their designated reference, e.g., [**ICU/A/1**] denotes Item 1 in Part A of the 1st LoD. Documents in the 2nd LoD will be referred to by their corresponding designation, e.g., [**ICU2/A/1**] denotes Item 1 in Part A of the 2nd LoD.

5. In gist, subsequent to the two site inspections on 25 September 2024 and 28 October 2024 which addressed the use of foam boards to cover up the windows at Wang Fuk Court (details at paragraph 60 of my first statement), ICU conducted four other site inspections related to the A/C hoods and architectural features and received relevant information from the aforesaid exchanges. Some of the information also relates to the use of foam board in the WFC Renovation. ICU did not pay particular attention to the use of foam board as revealed in such information, mainly due to the fact that the relevant information was not provided to address the foam board issue, and under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (“**MBIS**”), the Registered Inspector (“**RI**”) and Registered Contractor (“**RC**”) are responsible for ensuring that the repair works (including the materials to be used) comply with the provision of the Buildings Ordinance, Cap. 123 (“**BO**”) and its

subsidiary legislation. The RI and RC should also possess the professional expertise and qualifications to discharge their duties properly. There was also no strong evidence that, at the time of our inspections or correspondences with the RI and RC of the WFC Renovation, that they were not performing their duties. A summary of our considerations is in the last section (**paragraphs 30 to 37**) of this statement for ease of reference.

(I) Three site inspections related to A/C hoods and architectural features between November 2024 and January 2025

6. On 7 November 2024, the company of the RI of Wang Fuk Court (i.e. Will Power Architects Company Limited (“WP”)) sent a letter to ICU, informing us that a lack of fixing reinforcement at A/C hoods and architectural features was identified during the course of the WFC Renovation [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/11]. While WP was not required under the MBIS to provide interim updates during the course of the WFC Renovation or seek ICU’s approval of the aforementioned works, WP did so since the issue identified might affect the subsequent external repair works / procedures and prolong the overall works progress. [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/11]
7. Also on 11 November 2024, ICU received an enquiry from a member of the public, Dr LAU Chung Man, on various issues related to the WFC Renovation (including cracks on external walls and statutory requirements of submissions for the relevant renovation works). He also sent in several further enquiries / complaints later (12 in total), the full set of which, together with ICU’s replies, is at [ICU/C(1)/22]. On a close-up review of such emails in the preparation of this statement, it is noted that some of Dr LAU’s incoming emails attached screenshots from Facebook showing windows of some individual flats being covered (see pages 65, 67, 70, 71 and 72 of [ICU/C(1)/22]). With the benefit [ICU/C(1)/22]

of hindsight, it appears that such windows might have been covered by foam boards, yet I should add that when and where the photos / screenshots were taken cannot be identified. It should also be highlighted that Dr LAU's complaints, and ICU's corresponding focus in handling the relevant complaints / enquiries, were purely related to structural and submission issues.

(a) Inspection on 15 November 2024

8. Upon receipt of WP's letter of 7 November 2024 and Dr LAU's enquiry on 11 November 2024, ICU had been made aware of the issues pertaining to A/C hoods and architectural features. As these issues were drawn to ICU's attention for the first time then, I carried out an unscheduled site inspection on 15 November 2024 on my own after a medical appointment nearby, with a view to getting an early understanding of the situation, while we were already planning to arrange a full-scale site inspection with the RI, RC and other ICU colleagues in the week of 18 November 2024.

9. At the time of this inspection, six of the eight blocks were already covered with scaffolding and scaffolding nets, making the A/C hoods barely visible. I was therefore only able to focus on the remaining two blocks not yet covered with scaffolding and nets where the A/C hoods and architectural features on the external walls were visible. On a close-up review of the photos taken that day in the preparation of this statement, it is noted that there were no foam boards covering any windows visible to me. The photos taken during the visit are at [ICU/D/(B)/3].

[ICU/D/(B)/3]

(b) Inspection on 18 November 2024

10. On 18 November 2024, I conducted a site inspection with Ms LAU Ka Man, Maintenance Surveyor/ICU4 and Mr LEE Ka Ho,

Assistant Clerk of Works/ICU26 in short notice. As indicated in the Schedule of Site Visits **[ICU/C(2)/(i)/1]**, this inspection was conducted in response to several complaints / enquiries related to cracks on external walls as well as complaints about scaffolding nets. For the latter, details are set out in paragraph 48(ii) of my first statement. For the former (i.e. complaints / enquiries related to cracks on external walls), we reminded the RI's assigned person that they should pay attention to and properly handle the related issues. During the inspection, I also enquired the RC's representative if follow-up actions had been taken subsequent to the site inspection conducted on 28 October 2024 as promised, and the RC's representative replied in the affirmative. [ICU/C(2)/(i)/1]

11. On 20 December 2024, WP sent a letter to ICU, informing us that the Incorporated Owners of Wang Fuk Court (“**WFC IO**”) decided to adopt “按現況進行收口” as a remedial proposal to address the reinforcement issues with A/C hoods and architectural features **[ICU/C(2)/(ii)/14]**. [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/14]

12. I understand that the repairs of A/C hoods and architectural features under the “按現況進行收口” proposal were categorised as Class I Minor Works (“**MW**”) under the Minor Works Control System (“**MWCS**”), where the Prescribed Buildings Professional concerned was required to submit Form MW01 - Notice of Commencement of Class I Minor Works (“**Form MW01**”). For the repairs of A/C hoods and architectural features at Wang Fuk Court, I understand that ICU's Minor Works Team received the Forms MW01 for Blocks F to H and Blocks A to E on 28 August and 21 November 2024 respectively. Copies of the Forms MW01 made for each block of Wang Fuk Court are at:-
 - (a) Block A at **[ICU/B/II/Block A/5]**; [ICU/B/II/Block A/5]
 - (b) Block B at **[ICU/B/II/Block B/5]**; [ICU/B/II/Block B/5]

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| (c) Block C at [ICU/B/II/Block C/5]; | [ICU/B/II/Block C/5] |
| (d) Block D at [ICU/B/II/Block D/5]; | [ICU/B/II/Block D/5] |
| (e) Block E at [ICU/B/II/Block E/6]; | [ICU/B/II/Block E/6] |
| (f) Block F at [ICU/B/II/Block F/6]; | [ICU/B/II/Block F/6] |
| (g) Block G at [ICU/B/II/Block G/6]; and | [ICU/B/II/Block G/6] |
| (h) Block H at [ICU/B/II/Block H/6] ² . | [ICU/B/II/Block H/6] |

(c) Inspection on 21 January 2025

13. As a follow-up to Dr LAU's chain of exchanges (mentioned in paragraph 7 above) as well as two other similar enquiries / complaints at [ICU/C(1)/24] and [ICU/C(1)/25], ICU sent an email to the RI on 17 January 2025 [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/16], asking for a site inspection to be scheduled. The site inspection eventually took place on 21 January 2025. [ICU/C(1)/24 and 25] [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/16]
14. On 21 January 2025, I conducted the said site inspection with Ms LAU and Mr LEE. The RI's assigned person explained the various remedial proposals explored, and told me and Ms LAU that they would adopt the “按現況進行收口” proposal. I said ICU would have no particular views on the proposals as long as they complied with the BO.
15. During the same site visit, ICU inspected the A/C hoods above the windows of a room located on the ground floor of Block H of Wang Fuk Court (i.e. Wang Chi House), which we understood was a management office and not for domestic use. Significant spalling concrete on the A/C hoods was observed. During our inspection, I and Ms LAU focused on the spalling concrete as it was the key issue raised in the complaints and enquiries which triggered this inspection.

² None of these MW submissions were selected for audit check under MWCS.

16. On a close-up review of photos of this inspection (see the photos at [ICU/D/(B)/5]) in the preparation of this statement, the windows of the office appeared to have been covered with temporary protection (presumably foam boards with the benefit of hindsight). Nonetheless, we did not pay particular attention to the window cover of the management office back then, because it was not unreasonable for a management office on the ground floor to have its windows covered for privacy reasons when the WFC Renovation was in progress. [ICU/D/(B)/5]
17. On 27 January 2025, WP sent another letter to ICU, seeking ICU's comments on the “按現況進行收口” proposal as the WFC IO planned to convene a meeting to confirm the remedial proposal to be adopted [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/18]. As explained in paragraph 12 above, such “按現況進行收口” proposal was classified as Class I MW subject to MWCS, and would not require consent and approval from ICU before the commencement of works. This notwithstanding, as WP requested comments from ICU for advising the residents at the meeting to be convened, ICU subsequently replied to WP [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/19], stating that:- [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/18]
- (a) it had no objection to the remedial proposal;
 - (b) the RI should ensure the relevant works and materials used for the renovation works comply with the BO and its subsidiary legislation, including the Building (Minor Works) Regulation, Cap. 123N, as well as other requirements under MWCS; and
 - (c) since the relevant works concerned the common parts of the housing estate, the WFC IO's consent must be obtained before commencement of such works.

(II) Extraordinary General Meeting (“EGM”) of Wang Fuk Court

18. On 10 and 11 March 2025, Mr LAI Hung Kit, a resident of Wang

Fuk Court who also appeared to be a former member of the WFC IO, emailed to the Chairman of the WFC IO, expressing his views on the agenda items of the WFC IO's upcoming EGM scheduled for 21 March 2025. The emails were also copied to Ms LAU, Maintenance Surveyor/ICU14 as well as subject officers of the Home Affairs Department and the Urban Renewal Authority. A copy of the agenda was attached to the emails at [ICU2/C(3)/(ii)/11].

[ICU2/C(3)/(ii)/11]

19. The agenda of the EGM attached to the emails indicated that the proposed solutions for issues related to A/C hoods and architectural features (i.e. agenda items 3, 5 and 7) would be discussed at the EGM. Ms LAU approached the RI's assigned person via WhatsApp on 12 March 2025 to see how the “按現況進行收口” proposal, which was mentioned in the 21 January 2025 inspection, would be presented to the residents. The RI's assigned person replied with a 79-page PowerPoint presentation (“**79-page PPT**”) [ICU2/C(2)/(ii)/23A] and two videos showing the process [ICU2/C(2)/(ii)/23A] of dismantling the architectural features [ICU2/C(2)/(ii)/23B] to [ICU2/C(2)/(ii)/23B] Ms LAU for reference (see [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/23] for the WhatsApp [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/23] messages between Ms LAU and the RI's assigned person). As the crux of the issues lied in the details of the remedial proposals for A/C hoods and architectural features, ICU focused on the remedial proposals, particularly Proposal 1 (as it was the same as the one the RI's assigned person briefed ICU during the inspection on 21 January 2025), when going through the 79-page PPT.
20. On a related note, in preparing this statement, ICU was able to download, from the WFC IO's website, a 102-page PowerPoint presentation used for the briefing session that took place on 14 March 2025 (i.e. before the EGM). It is noted that this PPT is by and large similar to the 79-page PPT, but with more textual descriptions on the remedial proposals. For the avoidance of

doubt, neither Ms LAU nor myself had been provided with a copy of such PPT; and ICU did not attend the said briefing on 14 March 2025 either.

21. On 13 March 2025, Ms LAU received an invitation from the WFC IO to bear witness (見證) the EGM scheduled for 21 March 2025. It should be noted that it is ICU's general practice not to attend owners' general meetings (業主大會), particularly if such meetings touch on contractual issues and cost of renovation works, because ICU is not in a position to get involved in the private contractual relationship between the Incorporated Owners and its contractors. Noting that many of the agenda items to be discussed at the said EGM were related to contractual issues and the cost of renovation works, upon discussing with me, Ms LAU declined the invitation via email, and I received a blind carbon copy of the said email [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/24]. [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/24]
22. After the EGM took place on 21 March 2025, the Property Management Company ("PMC") of Wang Fuk Court, ISS EastPoint Properties Limited, sent an email to Ms LAU on 25 March 2025, attaching the result of the EGM for information (a copy of the email is at [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/25]), which mentioned [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/25] amongst others, Proposal 1 for the remedial of A/C hoods and architectural features (i.e. "按現況進行收口") was approved at the EGM.
- (III) Joint site inspection conducted in response to a complaint about the lack of reinforcement at A/C hoods
23. On 22 May 2025, ICU received a referral of two complaints from a complainant who claimed to be an owner of Wang Fuk Court, enquiring about issues related to A/C hoods [ICU/C(1)/34]. [ICU/C(1)/34]

24. As the complaints concerned structural issues of A/C hoods and architectural features, Ms LAU referred the complaints, with the 79-page PPT attached, to two officers of ICU's Structural Vetting Team (i.e. Mr WONG Man Wai, Senior Structural Engineer/ICU4 and Mr LI Chak Tung, the then-Structural Engineer/ICU2 (who is now Structural Engineer/ICU16)) for joint handling. Subsequently, our team invited the said Mr LI to join our inspection to be conducted on 3 June 2025 in response to the emails mentioned in paragraph 23 above **[Enclosure F to ICU/C(2)/(i)/1]**. [Enclosure F to ICU/C(2)/(i)/1]
25. On 3 June 2025, I conducted the site inspection with Ms LAU, Mr LEE, the said Mr LI and Mr WONG Pak Lam, Technical Officer (ICU)/S14. During the inspection, we were given the understanding that the majority of the A/C hoods above the ground floor had been rectified (but they were still covered up by scaffolding). We were then arranged by the RI's assigned person and the RC's representative to inspect the structural elements of the A/C hoods at some locations on the ground floor. The photos taken on the day of site inspection are at **[ICU/D/(B)/7]**, which were taken outside the management office at Block H of Wang Fuk Court (i.e. Wang Chi House), i.e. same location where the photos at the 21 January 2025 visit were taken. As our focus was on the structural elements, and given the considerations set out in paragraph 16, we did not pay particular attention to the window cover of the management office back then. [ICU/D/(B)/7]
26. After the site inspection, as we would like to see the pre-rectification condition of the A/C hoods for preparing ICU's reply to the complaints of 10 and 13 May 2025, Ms LAU asked the RI's assigned person to provide relevant photos for reference. The RI's assigned person subsequently forwarded some photos via WhatsApp to us **[ICU/C(2)/(ii)/26]**. It is noteworthy that, as the [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/26]

photos provided by the RI's assigned person were without timestamp and were only showing parts of the building, ICU was unable to ascertain when and where the photos were taken. ICU did not find them useful in preparing the reply to the complaints; and such photos also did not suggest that the use of foam boards as temporary protection was extensive or remained in place after the hacking off works.

(IV) Handling of a complaint about A/C water dripping affecting waterproof works of A/C hoods

27. On 11 and 12 June 2025, ICU received a complaint from Ms LAM (who claimed to be the owner of Unit 25 [REDACTED] of Block [REDACTED] of Wang Fuk Court) (see [ICU/C(1)/35] for details), with a video showing [ICU/C(1)/35] water dripping from the A/C of Unit 26 [REDACTED] which affected the waterproof works of the A/C hood of Unit 25 [REDACTED] [ICU2/C(1)/35A]. [ICU2/C(1)/35A] To follow up on this complaint, Ms LAU wrote to the RI and RC on 19 June 2025, requesting them to look into the matter [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/27]. [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/27]
28. On 27 June 2025, the RC communicated with Ms LAU via WhatsApp, sending her two photos demonstrating that waterproof works had been carried out for the A/C hood of Unit 25 [REDACTED] [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/28]. On 2 July 2025, the RI's assigned person also [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/28] communicated with Ms LAU through WhatsApp, sending her six photos demonstrating that waterproof works had been carried out for the A/C hoods of both Units 25 [REDACTED] and 26 [REDACTED] [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/29]. [ICU/C(2)/(ii)/29] On 2 July 2025, Ms LAU replied to Ms LAM, that the RC had taken follow-up actions (see [ICU/C(1)/35] for details). [ICU/C(1)/35]
29. On a close-up review of these photos in preparation of this statement, photos sent by the RC and the RI's assigned person showed some windows being covered with certain materials in

white colour, but since ICU's focus was on the waterproof measures of A/C hoods, we did not pay particular attention to the specific materials involved. As a matter of fact, even when we reviewed the photos again in the preparation of this statement, we could not tell for sure whether the window protection materials in question were indeed foam boards or other materials.

Handling of foam board issues subsequent to inspections in September and October 2024

30. One might wonder why ICU, after flagging up the potential fire hazard in respect of the use of foam boards to cover windows in the inspections on 25 September 2024 and 28 October 2024, only enquired about the foam board issue again at the site inspection on 18 November 2024 but not in subsequent inspections or upon receipt of the 79-page PPT and two videos provided by the RI's assigned person on 12 March 2025. As explained in the above paragraphs and my first statement, based on ICU's understanding, covering up of windows was a temporary protection measure during the hacking off works and there was no statutory requirement on such temporary protection measure or on the materials used. To the best of my knowledge, the use of temporary protection measure to cover up windows during the hacking off works is not an uncommon practice, as it can serve to protect the windows, as well as residents and properties inside the flats, preventing accidents of another nature during the hacking off works (e.g. small debris from the hacking off works may break the window glass of a flat, resulting in injuries of the residents or damage to properties therein).
31. I must emphasise again that the responsibility of ensuring that the repair works (including the materials to be used) comply with the provision of the BO rests with the RI and RC. According to

paragraph 6.1.3 of the Code of Practice for the MBIS and MWIS [ICU/A/9], the RI and RC shall comply with the BO and regulations and shall provide supervision to the rectification and repair works to ensure that the works are prepared, carried out and completed safely and up to the required standards, and that the building has been rendered safe after completion of the repair works.

32. While it is the RI and RC's responsibility to make sure the works are carried out safely and properly, we had sought advice from the Fire Services Department and Mr Franko TSE, the then-Senior Building Surveyor/Building Control (one of the advisors seconded from BD who has now retired) regarding the use of foam boards to cover up the windows as temporary protection in the course of handling relevant complaints. ICU was given to understand that such use of foam boards was not considered as buildings works, and that there was neither requirement under the BO, nor stipulated guidelines in any regulations, rules, codes of practice and standards regarding the use of foam boards as temporary protection for windows.

33. Furthermore, in response to our enquiry during the site inspection on 28 October 2024, the RC, in the presence of the RI's assigned person, said that they would use non-combustible materials for temporary protection of windows during the hacking off works, which would be removed immediately upon completion of the relevant works. Such promise was also made know to the residents by way of a set of Q&As published by the WFC IO in end 2024 at [ICU2/C(1)/42], and the relevant extract is reproduced below for easy reference – [ICU2/C(1)/42]

2024年11月23日工程交流會問答概要

1)問：為何現時窗邊已沒有保護？

答：宏業表示打鑿時才会有保護，完成打鑿後會拆除窗外保護物。

34. As for the photos and videos showing the use of foam boards on windows upon ICU's close-up review in the course of preparing this statement, one can hardly conclude that the use of foam boards at Wang Fuk Court had been extensive merely based on such photos or videos, because they only capture certain individual flats when the hacking off or spalling concrete repair works were in progress.
35. Given the RC's promise to ICU at the inspection on 28 October 2024, WP's explanation to the residents as stated in paragraph 33 above, as well as the fact that ICU did not receive any further complaint in relation to the use of foam boards after October 2024, there does not seem to be any strong evidence contradicting the RI and RC's previous promise that the temporary protection on the windows was only in place during the hacking off works.
36. In addition, since there was neither statutory provision on the fire-retardant properties under the BO prohibiting or restricting the use of foam boards as temporary protection, nor clear guidelines from BD of the same that ICU could rely on to act on, ICU hence could hardly take further actions in this regard. ICU also had no basis to raise doubt or demand a test, as there was no standard to test against in the first place.
37. Since the complaints / enquiries elaborated in Sections I to IV in this statement were mainly about structural issues of A/C hoods and architectural features, and with due regard to the

considerations set out in paragraphs 30 to 36 above, ICU did not pay particular attention to the temporary protection on the windows when handling these complaints / enquiries. After all, the responsibility of ensuring that the repair works (including the materials to be used) comply with the provision of the BO and its subsidiary legislation rests with the RI and RC.

38. I confirm that the contents of this Witness Statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Dated this 28th day of January 2026.

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

KU Siu Ping