

Our Ref: PC 01-14

Date: 20 January 2014

Key Executive Officers

Dear Sir/Madam

USAGE OF THE TERM "SMALL OFFICE HOME OFFICE" (SOHO)

On 25 Nov 2013, the Urban Redevelopment Authority ("URA") issued a Circular providing clarification on the use of the term "Small office home office" (SOHO). (Refer to the Circular URA/COH/2013-001 at <http://www.ura.gov.sg/uol/circulars/2013/nov/coh13-001.aspx>)

2. As stated in URA's Circular, SOHO is a marketing term. It does not refer to any specific use or type of development that is allowable or approved by the Competent Authority under the Planning Act. The planning permission for a unit marketed as a SOHO unit is for either residential or office use, but not for both uses. Estate agents and salespersons are to refer to the information and clarification provided in the URA Circular when they perform estate agency work.

3. Estate agents and salespersons are reminded to ensure that they provide accurate information about the allowable use of the development or property so that they would not misrepresent any information to consumers and clients. Where the term SOHO is used by estate agents and salespersons, they are to ensure that consumers understand accurately what the term means.

4. Paragraph 5(1) of the Code of Ethics and Professional Client Care of the Estate Agents (Estate Agency Work) Regulations 2010 states that estate agents and salespersons shall conduct their business and work with due diligence, despatch and care, and in compliance with all laws including statutory and regulatory requirements, and practice circulars and guidelines. In addition, paragraph 6(1) of the Code of Ethics states that estate agents and salespersons shall render professional and conscientious service to their clients and shall act with honesty, fidelity and integrity. For example, estate agents and salespersons must not mislead the client or provide any false information or misrepresent any relevant law or fact to the client.

5. Estate agents and salespersons are required to comply with this Practice Circular. Estate Agents should also manage and supervise their salespersons to ensure their compliance with this Circular.

6. If you require any clarification, please call us at 1800-643-2555, or e-mail us at feedback@cea.gov.sg.

Yours sincerely

Desmond Yeo
Dy Director (Inspection & Compliance)
for Executive Director
Council for Estate Agencies