

Housing Society's manager and two others jailed for bribery over renovation contracts

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An Assistant Manager of the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) and two others, charged by the ICAC, were today (Thursday) each sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment at Tuen Mun Magistracy for bribery in relation to renovation contracts of three private residential buildings in Yuen Long.

Jimmy Ying Jim-ming, 45, Assistant Manager of HKHS, was found guilty of three counts of public servant accepting an advantage, and one of public servant conspiring to accept advantages. Ying was also ordered to pay \$16,500 in restitution to HKHS.

Co-defendants Kwong Chiu-kiu, 46, director of W.K. Construction Company Limited (W.K. Construction), and Chao Tak-kwong, 39, former shareholder of Prestige Construction and Engineering Co. Ltd., were convicted of three joint charges of conspiracy to offer advantages to a public servant.

In sentencing, Deputy Magistrate Ms Amy Chan Wai-mun described the bribery offences committed by the defendants as a well-organised crime, perpetuating a long period of time.

The magistrate added that custodial sentences must be imposed on the defendants to reflect the seriousness of the bribery offences.

The court heard that at the time of the offences, Ying and Chu Ka-hang were respectively Assistant Manager and Senior Officer of the Yuen Long Office of the Property Management Advisory Centre (PMAC) of HKHS.

As officers of PMAC, Ying and Chu were responsible for encouraging flat owners to take part in the Building Management Incentive Scheme of HKHS, which subsidises flat owners to carry out repair works at common areas of their buildings.

The officers also offered guidance to flat owners or incorporated owners (IO) in the procurement and tendering of repair and maintenance works.

The court heard that the incorporated owners of three private residential buildings in Yuen Long applied to HKHS for subsidies for renovation.

In early 2007, Ying and Chu came up with a plot to provide corrupt assistance to consultancy firms and renovation contractors in securing consultancy and renovation contracts of the buildings under their charter. They agreed to equally share the corrupt proceeds.

With the assistance of Ying and Chu, the IO of Kwan Wah Building (KWB) invited tenders for a consultancy contract of the building.

The court was told that Chao, a friend of Chu, had sought Chu's assistance in securing a \$1.4 million renovation contract of KWB for Kwong and offered Chu a reward equivalent to 3% of the contract value.

On February 5 last year, Chao met Chu in a public toilet in Yuen Long, and handed over about \$13,000 to him on behalf of Kwong.

On April 1 last year, Chao gave \$13,000 to Chu at a shopping centre in Kowloon Tong. The duo were arrested by ICAC officers after the transaction, and the bribe money was recovered from Chu.

The court heard that Chu also accepted \$20,000 from Chao and Kwong in 2007 for assisting W.K. Construction to obtain a \$2.6 million renovation contract of Fook Shun Building, another building in Yuen Long.

In March last year, Chu solicited from Chao and Kwong about \$40,000 for assisting W.K. Construction in obtaining a renovation contract worth over \$4 million of a third

residential building in Yuen Long - Ho Fat Building.

Chu, 29, was also charged by the ICAC for his role in the case. He earlier pleaded guilty to four bribery offences, and will be sentenced on May 14.

The prosecution was today represented by prosecuting counsel Phil Chau, assisted by ICAC officers Daniel Mui and Rita Li.