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25 October, 1978

## 300,000 face rent rise

About 300,000 families will have to pay between 20 and 30 per cent more for their housing estate flats from December 1.

A rent increase of nine cents per sq ft for Group B, or former resettlement estates, and former Government low cost housing (GLCH) estates was announced by the Housing Authority yesterday.

An estimated 1.5 million people who live in 90,000 Mark I and II, 138,000 Mark III to VI, and 70,000 former GLCH estate flats will be affected.

A Housing Authority spokesman said that the decision for the increase followed a recommendation of the 1977 Rents Policy Steering Group.

As a result of the increase, rent ranges will become 37 cents to 41 cents per sq ft for former resettlement estates and 49 cents to 57 cents per sq ft for former GLCH estates.

The rent of a typical 120 sq ft flat in a Mark I estate will go from \$33 to \$44 per month.

For a typical former GLCH flat of 234 sq ft, the rent will go from \$103 to \$124 per month.

The spokesman said the Housing Authority was obliged to cover the cost of rates and of recurrent expenditure of running estates.

"It is therefore working to establish a reasonable range of rents across all its estates, and over a period of years aims to correct the situation whereby the post-1973 estates in effect subsidise other estates," he said.

He also said that the authority, in following the recommendation of the Rents Policy Steering Group, pays particular regard to economic circumstances when considering rent levels.

"The improvements in wage levels since the increase in 1976 indicate that the new rent levels should not cause hardship," he said.

"Any tenant already receiving public assistance will automatically receive an increase in the allowances to cover the full amount of his rent increase," he added.

The authority yesterday began delivering notices to affected tenants notifying them of the rent increase.