

Your Ref :
Our Ref : CIRD5/2-05



2 May 2009

The Editor
The New Paper
Forum Page

100 High Street
#07-01 The Treasury
Singapore 179434
www.psd.gov.sg

Dear Editor,

I refer to your article on pages 12 and 13 of The New Paper, "Why give us so little time to pack?" (2 May 2009) where among other things, it was stated that the decision to evacuate all holiday makers was a last-minute plan.

We are sorry that the chalet occupants highlighted in your report were unhappy. We would normally not disrupt the holiday plans of our customers. However, this was not a normal situation. Under the national Disease Outbreak Response System, once the alert level is raised to orange, designated premises would have to be secured and converted within a very short time. Our staff had explained to the occupants that the chalets were required for use as part of the national operations in containing the Influenza A (H1N1) outbreak.

We apologised for the inconvenience caused to the chalet occupants but we sincerely hope that they will understand why we had to activate our emergency plans. In fact, most were cooperative in vacating the premises as soon as possible within one hour, with those needing more time being allowed to do so. We deeply appreciate their understanding and cooperation in working with us in this national effort.

We will be refunding all affected occupants the full rental, regardless of use and stay. We are expediting the processing and expect to be able to refund within a week.

The media and the public have a crucial role to play during a crisis such as this. We seek their cooperation in supporting the government in implementing protective measures to contain this outbreak.

Thank you

Ms Bernadette Sim
Director, Personnel Policy
Public Service Division
Prime Minister's Office

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