

NOTE About housing performance evaluation

Although the performance of a car can be described with clear-cut metrics such as engine displacement and horsepower, there are few metrics that can be used to describe the performance of housing. The reason for this is that—as recent reports on housing defects suggest—there seems to be a growing disparity in housing quality as a result of the majority of the work having to be done on site. In order to make the purchase of housing as safe as possible and to facilitate the comparison of housing, the housing performance indication system, which was developed with reference to systems employed in other countries, was introduced in October 2000 based on the Housing Quality Assurance Act. This system is optional, but if the building owner decides to take advantage of it, a housing performance evaluation report is issued, assigning the building ratings of between 2 and 5 for 10 categories (e.g. building stability and air quality).

The housing performance evaluation report is made up of two documents: a housing design performance evaluation report,

which is for the design stage, and a housing construction performance evaluation report, which is usually issued after at least four post-construction site inspections have been conducted. In fact, this report could almost be described as a birth certificate for the building. The report is issued by a registered housing performance evaluation organization that has been accredited by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, and all such bodies are in the private sector. There are a number of benefits that come from using this system, including the following: (1) an objective comparison of housing performance can be made; (2) mistakes involved in the construction of the building can be avoided; and (3) disputes concerning housing for which a housing construction performance evaluation report has been issued can be quickly resolved by a housing dispute resolution body (the local bar association for the relevant area). The conducting of housing performance evaluations is now standard practice for condominiums.

