

**Subcommittee on Strategy and Measures to Tackle Family Violence
Meeting on 28 November 2006**

Supplementary Information

The Administration's responses to Members' requests at the captioned meeting are as follows –

Paragraph 8 of the minutes of meeting – See Annex A

Paragraph 12 of the minutes – See Annex B

Paragraph 20 of the minutes – See Annex C

Paragraphs 32 and 39 of the minutes – See Annex D

Paragraph 43 of the minutes – See Annex E

Paragraph 44 of the minutes – See Annex F

Response to paragraph 8

Between January and November 2006, the Social Welfare Department had referred a total of 1599 cases to the Housing Department for compassionate rehousing / conditional tenancy, among which the Kwun Tong District processed 183 cases (11.5% of the total number of applications). Of the 183 cases, 97 cases involved families with domestic violence problem (53%) and 22 of them living in Sau Po area (23%).

Social Welfare Department
January 2007

Response to paragraph 12

Effectiveness of Sau Po Project

The Sau Po Project was launched from January to September 2005 in the locality falling within the service boundary of Sau Po Integrated Family Service Centre (SPIFSC) operated by the Social Welfare Department (SWD). It aimed at, among others, promoting early identification of and intervention to at-risk families or those with domestic violence problem through cross-sector and multi-disciplinary cooperation and a user-friendly case consultation and reporting network provided by the ex-Family and Child Protective Services Unit (East Kowloon) [ex-FCPSU(EK)]^{Note1}.

2. Service records showed that ex-FCPSU(EK) received a total of 210 referrals / public enquiries in 2004, among which 46 required follow up on the domestic violence problems by the unit and 23 families were referred to SPIFSC for welfare follow up on marital or relationship problem^{Note2}. In 2005, the unit received and handled a total of 552 referrals / public enquiries which were related to families living in Sau Po area with spousal battering and other family conflict, among which 132 families were referred to SPIFSC for relationship problems whereas 71 cases involving spousal battering were followed up by ex-FCPSU(EK). While the sharp increase could attribute to the achievement of professional training and focused community programmes of the Sau Po Project, the lessening of the severity in case nature of the received referrals/ public enquiry was related to the success of the project in terms of early identification of and intervention to the at-risk families.

3. In 2005, ex-FCPSU(EK) also received a total of 337 enquiries from personnel of different sectors for professional consultation in handling and referring families living in Sau Po area with various family problems, which was an increase by six-fold as compared with the figure of 56 in 2004. While

^{Note1} FCPSU(EK) was split into FCPSU(Kwun Tong) and FCPSU(Wong Tai Sin/Sai Kung) with effect from 1 April 2006

^{Note2} FCPSUs of SWD are responsible for rendering crisis intervention and specialised services to battered spouse cases whereas Integrated Family Service Centres in the district will take care of families with marital conflict and other family relationship problems.

the number of newly reported battered spouse cases was on the rise in Kwun Tong District and the whole territory since 2004, the Sau Po Project was seen to have developed a shared platform to facilitate professionals from various sectors to acquire knowledge, skills, confidence and professional backup in early identification of at-risk families and to make referral to the welfare sector for timely intervention.

Social Welfare Department

January 2007

Response to paragraph 20

If there are child abuse and spouse battering cases requiring urgent outreaching service during office hours, social workers of Family and Child Protective Services Units and Integrated Family Service Centres will follow up. If such situations occur after office hours, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) Hotline Service Unit, Family Crisis Support Centre (FCSC) or Suicide Crisis Intervention Centre (SCIC) will contact the SWD After Office Hours Outreaching Teams to handle the cases.

2. In 2006, there were a total of 86 case referrals to SWD After Office Hours Outreaching Teams by SWD Hotline or FCSC (including the direct referral line for Police) and SCIC hotlines, of which outreaching visits were conducted for 34 cases.

3. Breakdown of the calls received from the Police through the direct referral lines between 18 October 2006 and 16 November 2006 is as follows –

Action Taken	No. of Calls		Total
	SWD	FCSC	
Referral to After Office Hours Outreaching Teams [No. of outreaching visits conducted]	1 [1]	2 [1]	3 [2]
Referral to refuge centres for women, suicide crisis intervention centre / provision of services by FCSC e.g. live-in service / day programme / drop-in counseling	0	14	14
Referral (new / reactivated / active cases) to relevant service units i.e. Integrated Family Service Centre, Family and Child Protective Services Unit, Medical Social Services Unit, Probation Office, etc	10	4	14
Information / advice giving (i.e. no follow-up action by SWD hotline service unit or FCSC staff after giving information/advice)	31	27	58
Others: wrong calls	2	0	2
Total	44	47	91

Response to paragraphs 32 and 39

The function of the District Liaison Group on Family Violence (DLGFV) is to share and improve the measures in handling domestic violence cases among related frontline professionals in the district level. Hence, the membership of DLGFV consists of the main units in handling domestic violence cases, e.g. Integrated Family Service Centres, Family and Child Protective Services Units, Medical Social Service Units and the Police, etc.

2. Regarding venue for the other bodies to share their views, various platforms have been in place in the central and the district levels for the discussion and handling of domestic violence problem, including the Working Group on Combating Violence and different district co-ordinating committees, etc. The views of the service users can also be reflected through different channels. The “Family Support Programme” launched by the Social Welfare Department this year will also invite those people who have overcome similar problems or crisis to help other people in need. Besides, the Convenor of DLGFV can invite other related organisations to attend the meeting according to district characteristics and needs.

3. The concerns of Councilors and concerned parties were shared with the District Social Welfare Officers.

Social Welfare Department
January 2007

Response to paragraph 43

In view of the complexity of divorce matters, a common sense and flexible approach, taking individual circumstances into consideration, is always adopted by the Housing Department (HD). HD does not take active step to secure removal of either party during their separation as they may only create burden to the family in crisis, and exclude the chance of reconciliation. Neither does the department encourage them to live together. HD will seek their consent to refer their case to social workers for counselling and appropriate assistance. Although not every divorce case involves domestic violence, the department has alerted the staff to be vigilant of signs of domestic violence in order to arrange promptly emergency accommodation to needy tenants on the advice of SWD.

2 Records of reconciled cases are not kept by HD.

Housing Department
January 2007

Response to paragraph 44

There are 11 requests for tenancy splitting on the ground of disharmony among family members from the tenants of Wong Chuk Hang Estate affected by the Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme. Neither domestic violence nor allocation of flats under the Conditional Tenancy policy is involved.

2. Under the current policy on tenancy splitting, all branch families of the household seeking for splitting have to undergo the Comprehensive Means Test (CMT) and also the No Domestic Property test. Of the 11 cases mentioned, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) is assessing the location preference of one case. Two other cases are with doubtful occupancy position and no addition/splitting could be acceded to. Six others failed the CMT. Further views from the SWD are being sought. For the remaining two, SWD recommends “one tenancy, two flats” to solve the housing problem of one family and is assessing the need of the other one.

3. Despite some of the households have failed the CMT, the Housing Department (HD) has offered the allocation of flats under the “one tenancy, two flats” model to solve their problems between family members.

4. The HD is in close contact with SWD to provide the appropriate housing assistance to the families concerned.

Housing Department
January 2007