

香港特別行政區政府
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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12 March 2013

Clerk to LegCo Panel on Housing
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

(Attn: Ms Miranda Hon)

Dear Ms Hon,

**Panel on Housing
Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy**

Follow-up to the meeting on 30 January 2013

Thank you for your letter of 7 February 2013. The information requested is set out at **Annex**.

Yours sincerely,

(Original Signed)

(Vincent TANG)

for Secretary for Transport and Housing

Existing schemes to give priority to the elderly in the allocation of public rental housing (PRH) units and whether the Harmonious Families Priority Scheme can be further enhanced

The Government's elderly policy is to encourage the elderly to "age in place", with the principle of supporting "ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up". In line with this objective, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) currently offers a number of housing schemes which cater for the specific housing needs of the elderly who meet the general eligibility criteria for PRH -

- (a) Single Elderly Persons Priority Scheme – under this scheme, priority processing is accorded to elderly one-person PRH applicants who wish to live alone, ahead of applications from ordinary families. The elderly applicants must be 58 years of age or above, and must have attained the age of 60 at the time of flat allocation. At present, our pledge is that the waiting time for eligible applicants under this scheme would be around two years. As at September 2012, the average waiting time (AWT) for PRH applicants under this scheme is 1.4 years;
- (b) Elderly Persons Priority Scheme – under this scheme, priority processing is accorded to two or more elderly persons who undertake to live together upon flat allocation. The applicants must be 58 years of age or above, and must have attained the age of 60 at the time of flat allocation; and
- (c) Harmonious Families Priority Scheme – this scheme is designed to encourage younger family members to take care of their elderly parents/dependent relatives (who must have reached the age of 60 at the time of application) and to promote harmony in the family. Eligible families may opt to live in one flat or two nearby flats according to their choice of district and the number of flats available given their family circumstances. Both enjoy a credit waiting time of six months.

According to our past experience, the credit waiting time of six months has proven to be attractive enough to encourage younger generations to live with their elderly parents/dependent relatives. We consider it appropriate to maintain the status quo for the

scheme, bearing in mind that further enhancement to the scheme (i.e. giving a longer credit waiting time) would result in longer waiting time for the other family applicants.

Number of non-elderly one-person applicants on the Waiting List and their background

2. As at end September 2012, there were some 100 000 non-elderly one-person applications under the Quota and Points System (QPS) on the Waiting List (WL). According to the HA's administrative records, about 20% of these non-elderly one-person applications under the QPS were living in PRH.

3. The Housing Department (HD) conducted a survey in 2012 to get a better understanding of the profile of the WL applicants. The survey identified the following key issues regarding the background of the non-elderly one-person applicants:

Results of the Survey on WL Applicants for PRH 2012			
With post-secondary or above education attainment	Not living alone	Was student when they applied for PRH	Reason for application: wanted to live alone
34%	85%	23%	68%

Demand forecast and allocation standards for PRH flats of different types and sizes

4. At present, new PRH projects provide flats of four different types, namely "one to two-person (1/2P)" flats, "two to three-person (2/3P)" flats, "one-bedroom (1B)" flats and "two-bedroom (2B)" flats.

5. For any target year, the demand for PRH flats of different types and sizes will be met by units from the existing stock available for allocation as well as from newly built PRH flats. Given the lead time for planning and construction, the flat mix for new PRH flats in any particular year will normally be determined five years ahead. The HA will regularly assess and update the flat mix for new PRH production

taking into account the latest distribution of household size among WL applicants, the standard for allocating different sizes of PRH flats, etc.

6. To better utilize PRH resources, the HD has set standards of allocation ranges for flat types of various designs and areas so that allocation can be flexibly made to applicants of different household sizes. For example, a 1B flat (internal floor area (IFA) around 30 m²) can be allocated to a family with three to four members; a 2B flat (IFA around 40 m²) can be allocated to a family with four to five members etc. All flats types have similar allocation ranges.

7. Under the prevailing allocation policy, households are defined as overcrowded families if the IFA of the flats is less than 5.5 m² per person subsequent to addition of family members due to marriage, births or additional family members settling in Hong Kong.

8. Overcrowded families can apply through the “Territory-wide Overcrowding Relief Transfer Exercise” for relocation to larger flats. Those families with IFA below 7 m² per person can apply through the “Living Space Improvement Transfer Scheme” to improve their living conditions.

Possibility of relaxing the plot ratio of recreation sites in Yuen Long and Tai Mei Tuk

9. The “Recreation” (“REC”) zone on the Outline Zoning Plans in the New Territories is intended primarily for recreational developments for the use by the general public. The purpose is to encourage the development of active and/or passive recreation and tourism/eco-tourism. In general, there are no specific restrictions on development intensities for recreational development, but residential development within a REC zone is subject to a maximum plot ratio of 0.2. In view of the planning intention of the “REC” zone, only residential development ancillary to recreational use may be permitted subject to the Town Planning Board’s approval. There is no intention to relax the plot ratio in “REC” zones to facilitate residential development on land within such zones.

10. Nonetheless, as part of the Administration’s multi-pronged approach to increasing land supply to meet housing and other needs, we will explore the potential of rezoning land including “REC” sites at suitable locations for other uses.