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LABOUR AND WELFARE BUREAU
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27 January 2014

Mr Derek Lo
Clerk to the Finance Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Lo,

**Written response to queries raised by Members at the Meeting of
Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on 20 December 2013**

I refer to your letter of 24 December 2013, requesting the Administration to provide, among others, further information relating to the Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) in response to queries raised by Members at the captioned meeting. Our replies are set out below for Members' reference.

- (a) Number of elderly recipients of the OALA who, before the commencement of the Scheme, either had been receiving support under (i) the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme; (ii) Old Age Allowance (OAA); (iii) Disability Allowance (DA); or had not been receiving any social security or welfare benefits

Among the 410 000 OALA recipients as at end-December 2013, about 270 000 were former OAA recipients who had been converted to receive OALA from April 2013 under the Phase 1 – “Auto-conversion” arrangement. These elderly persons include those aged 65 to 69 who had been receiving Normal OAA (NOAA) and those aged 70 or above who had

been receiving Higher OAA (HOAA) and had also received NOAA between the ages of 65 to 69, and thus had passed the relevant means test before the OALA was launched.

Besides, among the current OALA recipients, about 110 000 are former HOAA and Normal DA (NDA) recipients, who applied for OALA under the Phase 2 – “Postal Submission” arrangement. These elderly persons include those aged 70 or above who had been receiving HOAA and had not received NOAA between the ages of 65 to 69 and those aged 65 or above who had been receiving NDA, before the OALA was launched. SWD does not have a breakdown of those recipients who were former recipients of the HOAA or DA.

The remaining 30 000 OALA recipients are applicants under the Phase 3 – “New Application” arrangement. These elderly persons are aged 65 or above who had not been receiving OAA or NDA before the launch of the OALA.

After the launch of the OALA in April 2013, the number of OAA recipients decreased by 352 000, from 546 000 in March 2013 to 194 000 in September 2013. On the other hand, the number of NDA recipients decreased by 24 000, from 128 000 in March 2013 to 104 000 in September 2013.

SWD does not have information on the number of OALA recipients who are former CSSA recipients.

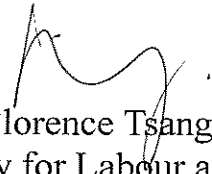
- (b) The number of recipients of OAA who were (i) aged 65-69; and (ii) aged 70 or above

The OALA is a means-tested allowance for elderly persons aged 65 or above, with the same income and assets requirements of the former NOAA. Hence, after the launch of OALA, those eligible for OALA will be receiving OALA rather than the NOAA or HOAA. In other words, there are no longer NOAA recipients aged 65 to 69, except those under the Guangdong Scheme which was launched in October 2013 whereby eligible Hong Kong elderly people who choose to reside in Guangdong will continue to receive the OAA. Non-means-tested OAA (formerly HOAA) is payable to eligible elderly persons aged 70 or above. As at September 2013, there were about 194 000 OAA recipients and they were aged 70 or above.

- (c) The number of elderly people aged 65 or above who were not receiving any type of social security or welfare benefits

As at September 2013, a total of 779 000 elderly persons aged 65 or above were receiving social security benefits, including 154 000 on the CSSA Scheme and 625 000 on the Social Security Allowance Scheme (comprising the OAA, DA and OALA). According to the latest provisional figure from the Census & Statistics Department, as at June 2013¹, there was about 1.03 million of elderly persons aged 65 or above. Hence, we estimate that as at September 2013, about 251 000 elderly persons were not receiving any social security benefits.

Yours sincerely,



(Florence Tsang)
for Secretary for Labour and Welfare

- cc. Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
(Attn: Ms Alison Lai)
Director of Social Welfare
(Attn: Mr Chan Wing-hoi)

¹ The Census & Statistics Department updates and releases population estimates biannually in every June and December. The latest available figure is as of June 2013.