

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14(04)

Ref. : CB1/PL/HG

**Panel on Housing**

**Meeting on 4 November 2013**

**Background brief on "Housing situation of Waiting List applicants"  
prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the housing situation of applicants on the Waiting List ("WL") for public rental housing ("PRH"), and gives a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject.

**Background**

Average waiting time

2. The Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") currently implements the public housing programme and maintains a WL of PRH applicants. Under the current policy, priority for PRH is accorded to families and the elderly (i.e. the general applicants) over non-elderly one-person applicants. It is HA's target to maintain the average waiting time ("AWT") at around three and around two years for general applicants and elderly one-person applicants respectively, but the AWT target is not applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants who are now placed under the Quota and Points System ("QPS")<sup>1</sup>.

3. Under the established methodology, waiting time refers to the time taken between registration on the WL and the first offer of a flat, excluding any frozen period during the application period (for example, when the applicant has not

---

<sup>1</sup> QPS was introduced in September 2005 to rationalize and re-prioritize the allocation of PRH to non-elderly one-person applicants. Under QPS, points are assigned to applicants based on three determining factors: age at the time of application, PRH residency, and waiting time. An annual allocation quota is set under QPS at 8% of the number of flats to be allocated to WL applicants, subject to a maximum of 2 000 units. The number is broadly equivalent to the annual average of PRH units allocated to non-elderly one-person applicants over the 10 years before the introduction of QPS.

yet fulfilled the residence requirement; the applicant is imprisoned; the applicant has requested to put the application on hold pending arrival of family members for family reunion). The AWT for general applicants refers to the average of the waiting time of general applicants housed to PRH in the past 12 months<sup>2</sup>. As at end-September 2012, the AWT for general applicants and elderly one-person applicants were 2.7 years and 1.4 years respectively.

#### Housing situation of Waiting List applicants

4. Having regard to the increasing number of PRH applicants and the public concern over the waiting time of WL applicants, HA has conducted a special thematic analysis of the housing situation of WL applicants based on the data as at end-June 2012. The gists of the findings are as follow:

- (a) as at end-June 2012, there were about 106 100 general applicants and about 93 500 non-elderly one-person applicants under QPS on the WL for PRH;
- (b) among the 106 100 general applicants, about 15% (about 15 700 applicants) had waited for three years or above and without any flat offer. Of these, about half (about 7 800 cases) had already reached the investigation stage and the remaining about 7 900 cases were mainly opting for flats in the Urban and Extended Urban Districts;
- (c) as regards those cases on the WL with waiting time of five years or above and without any flat offer, 40% involved various special circumstances, including refusal to accept housing offer(s) before with reasons; change of household particulars; and other circumstances such as cancellation periods, location preference on social/medical grounds and applications for Green Form Certificate for purchasing Home Ownership Scheme units; and
- (d) of the some 15 000 general applicants housed between July 2011 and June 2012, 35% received their first offer within two years and over half (55%) got the first offer within three years. For those housed with waiting time of five years or above, roughly half (48%) of the cases involved special circumstances of various kinds (some cases involved two or more special circumstances), including

---

<sup>2</sup> According to the Administration, some applicants on the WL might have their cases cancelled due to different reasons, such as failure to meet income eligibility requirements in the detailed vetting stage, and failure to attend interviews. To give flexibility to these applicants whose circumstances might change thereafter, the Government's existing policy is that they may apply for reinstatement of their application if they could fulfill eligibility criteria again within a specific timeframe. The applicant is ineligible during the period from cancellation to reinstatement of application, and hence the period concerned should be excluded when waiting time is calculated. However, due to limitations in computer system, HA has not been able to exclude such periods in the calculation of AWT.

cancellation periods (the major reasons were failure to meet income eligibility requirements in the detailed vetting stage, failure to attend an interview, and inadequate documentary proof); QPS cases housed through the Express Flat Allocation Scheme; change of district choice; change of household particulars; and location preference on social/medical grounds.

5. According to the Consultation Document on the Long Term Housing Strategy, as at 30 June 2013, there were about 118 700 general applicants and 115 600 non-elderly one-person applicants under QPS on the WL for PRH. The AWT for general applicants and elderly one-person applicants was 2.7 years and 1.5 years respectively.

### **Deliberations by Members**

6. Members expressed views on the issue of WL for PRH at the meetings of the Panel on Housing ("the Panel") on 18 January and 8 February 2013 when the Panel received a briefing by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on relevant policy initiatives in the Chief Executive's 2013 Policy Address and in the course of discussing the 2012/13-2016/17 Public Housing Construction Programme respectively.

7. Having regard to the large number of PRH applicants on WL, Panel members doubted whether HA could fulfill its pledge of maintaining the AWT at about three years. Members generally saw the need to expedite and increase PRH production with a view to shortening the AWT for the over 200 000 applicants on the WL for PRH. Some members were of the view that more government sites, including those on the Application List, should be used for public housing production to meet the housing demand of WL applicants. Other members urged for the redevelopment of aged PRH estates, and relaxation of plot ratios and removal of height restriction in areas formerly under the flight path and the redevelopment of such areas through urban renewal. Some other members also supported making available more disposed sites and using the sites of the Urban Renewal Authority and MTR Corporation Limited for public housing production.

8. The Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy ("the Subcommittee") discussed QPS at its meeting on 30 April 2013. It also discussed issues relating to the WL for PRH at its meeting on 27 September 2013 when deliberations were made on the Consultation Document on the Long Term Housing Strategy.

9. Subcommittee members in general expressed concern on the significant upsurge in the number of non-elderly one-person WL applicants in recent years. They considered that QPS had lengthened the waiting time of non-elderly one-

person applicants and reduced their chance of being allocated PRH units, thus causing them to delay their marriage decisions. Some members opined that as education attainment might not necessarily be related to income level and social mobility positively nowadays, and that the demand for one-person PRH units would rise markedly in future in view of the trend of aging population, the Administration should expeditiously put forward effective measures to address the housing needs of singletons.

10. Some members urged the Administration to consider reinstating rent control for residential properties with a view to alleviating the housing burden faced by low-income families. Other members suggested that the Administration should offer rental subsidies to households which were eligible for PRH and were awaiting their turn for PRH allocation.

### **Council questions**

11. Hon Fred LI, Hon Cyd HO and Hon LEE Cheuk-yan raised questions relating to the waiting time for allocation of PRH units at the Council meetings on 25 April and 4 July 2012 and 30 January 2013 respectively. Details of the Council questions are hyperlinked in the **Appendix** for ease of reference.

### **Latest development**

12. The Administration proposes to brief the Panel on the analysis of the housing situation of WL applicants as at end-June 2013 at the Panel meeting on 4 November 2013.

### **Relevant papers**

13. A list of relevant papers is set out in the **Appendix**.

## Appendix

### Housing situation of Waiting List applicants

#### List of relevant papers

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Housing	18 January 2013	<p>Administration's paper on "2013 Policy Address Housing-related policy initiatives of Transport and Housing Bureau" (LC Paper No. CB(1)438/12-13(01)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0118cb1-438-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0118cb1-438-1-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)825/12-13) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20130118.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20130118.pdf</a></p>
Panel on Housing	8 February 2013	<p>Administration's paper on "2012/13 - 2016/17 Public Housing Construction Programme" (LC Paper No. CB(1)516/12-13(05)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0208cb1-516-5-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0208cb1-516-5-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)954/12-13) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20130208.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20130208.pdf</a></p>
Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy	30 April 2013	<p>Administration's paper on "The Housing Authority's Quota and Points System for non-elderly one-person applicants for public rental housing" (LC Paper No. CB(1)919/12-13(02)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/papers/hg_lths0430cb1-919-2-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/papers/hg_lths0430cb1-919-2-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1350/12-13) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/minutes/lths20130430.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/minutes/lths20130430.pdf</a></p>

<b>Council/ Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy	27 September 2013	<p>Administration's Consultation Document on "Long Term Housing Strategy: Building Consensus, Building Homes" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1756/12-13(01)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/papers/hg_lthscb1-1756-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/papers/hg_lthscb1-1756-1-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Administration's paper on "Long Term Housing Strategy Consultation Document" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1818/12-13(01)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/papers/hg_lths0927cb1-1818-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/hg_lths/papers/hg_lths0927cb1-1818-1-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Information note on "Long Term Housing Strategy" prepared by the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. IN27/12-13) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/sec/library/1213in27-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/sec/library/1213in27-e.pdf</a></p>

Hyperlink to relevant Council Questions:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Council Question</b>
25 April 2012	Council question raised by Hon Fred LI <a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201204/25/P201204250254.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201204/25/P201204250254.htm</a>
4 July 2012	Council question raised by Hon Cyd HO <a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201207/04/P201207040251.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201207/04/P201207040251.htm</a>
30 January 2013	Council question raised by Hon LEE Cheuk-yan <a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201301/30/P201301300329.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201301/30/P201301300329.htm</a>