

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)868/15-16(05)

Ref. : CB1/PL/HG

**Panel on Housing**

**Meeting on 10 May 2016**

**Background brief on "Policy on Interim Housing"  
prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat**

**Purpose**

This paper provides information on the policy on Interim Housing ("IH") and gives a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by members of the Panel on Housing ("the Panel") on the subject.

**Background**

2. It is the Government's policy to ensure that no people will be rendered homeless as a result of natural disasters, fire, emergencies, as well as the Government's clearance and enforcement actions.

3. Currently, the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") operates IHs at Po Tin, Shek Lei and Long Bin. IH is transitional accommodation by nature. Households which are due for public rental housing ("PRH") allocation at the time of clearance of IH will be offered suitable PRH units according to their choices of PRH districts. Households which are not yet due for PRH allocation will be rehoused to other IH. As at end of December 2015, the number of IH households is 3 127.

4. HA decided in 2013 to clear Long Bin IH for public housing development. Rehousing arrangements are being implemented and affected households are gradually moving out.

5. At present, HA provides temporary accommodation to those in need in the Po Tin Transit Centre at Tuen Mun through the referral of the Buildings Department or the Lands Department. Those who have lived in the transit centre for three months, passed the "homeless" test, and fulfilled the eligibility criteria for PRH can be rehoused to IH while awaiting PRH allocation through the Waiting List system.

### **Deliberations by the Panel on Housing**

6. The Panel discussed the implementation arrangement for the clearance of Long Bin IH at its meeting on 10 February 2014. The major views and concerns related to the policy on IH and rehousing arrangements expressed by members are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

#### Rehousing arrangements for affected households

7. The Panel was keen to ensure that households affected by the clearance would be rehoused properly. Some members were concerned about households whose PRH applications would likely remain frozen<sup>1</sup> at the target clearance date. The Administration advised that for tenants whose applications were nearly due for defreezing by the clearance date, departmental directorate officers at Chief Housing Manager level had delegated authority to approve justified cases for rehousing to PRH on individual merits.

8. Some members considered it highly undesirable to rehouse IH households with immature PRH applications to another IH. The Administration advised that in line with other PRH applications, applications from the affected households had to go through the same detailed vetting process and wait for their application to be due for allocation within a year before a flat could be allocated to them through the Anticipatory Housing Scheme ("AHS")<sup>2</sup>. HA would strive to confirm their eligibility for PRH before the target clearance date.

9. In response to the concern on whether the affected households without PRH applications were allowed to stay in another IH, the Administration

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<sup>1</sup> An application can be frozen for various reasons, for example, when the applicant has yet to fulfill the seven-year residence requirement for flat allocation, the applicant has requested to put on hold his application pending family reunion, the applicant is in jail, or the applicant was evicted from PRH units due to previous misdeeds under the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estate or rent in arrears.

<sup>2</sup> Through AHS, eligible households who are subject to involuntary rehousing, including IH clearances, will be offered advance rehousing up to a maximum of 12 months. One-grade up allocation of the flats, i.e. from New Territories to Extended Urban or from Extended Urban to Urban can also be made. However, upon one grade-up, only refurbished flats will be offered.

explained that as these households did not meet the requirement for IH, mainly due to failure to meet the Comprehensive Means Test ("CMT"), they were allowed to stay in Long Bin IH for a maximum of one year and would then be served a Notice-to-Quit once their period of stay expired. However, HA would further assess these cases nearer the end of the allowed stay period and they would be rehoused to the IH in Po Tin Estate if they met the CMT by then.

### Policy on Interim Housing

10. Pointing out the poor living condition of temporary shelters and transit centres, some members urged the Administration to clear these centres and house victims of natural disasters and emergencies to IH directly. Some other members criticized the Administration for clearing a number of IH estates since 2000 and centralizing the provision of IH in Po Tin Estate, as the policy was grossly unfair to victims who lived in other districts. The Administration advised that as it would need to respond quickly in case of emergencies and the number of victims could not be anticipated, the most appropriate emergency accommodation would be the one with simple design and multiple functions so that assessments for rehousing and social services could be made speedily.

### **Council question**

11. Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki raised a question relating to the policy and implementation of IH at the Council meeting on 20 January 2016. The Council question is hyperlinked in **Appendix** for ease of reference.

### **Latest development**

12. At the Panel meeting on 15 October 2015, Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung requested the Administration to consult the Panel prior to taking forward its plan to demolish the Shek Lei IH Estate. The Administration will brief the Panel on relevant issue at its meeting on 10 May 2016.

### **Relevant papers**

13. A list of relevant papers is in **Appendix**.

**Policy on Interim Housing**

**List of relevant papers**

<b>Council/ Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Panel on Housing	10 February 2014	Administration's paper on "Implementation arrangement for the clearance of Long Bin Interim Housing" (LC Paper No. <a href="#">CB(1)840/13-14(03)</a> )  Background brief on "Policy on Interim Housing and the latest planning for the Long Bin Interim Housing estate" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. <a href="#">CB(1)840/13-14(04)</a> )  Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. <a href="#">CB(1)1504/13-14</a> )

Hyperlink to relevant Council Question:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Council Question</b>
20 January 2016	<a href="#">Council question</a> raised by Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki