

**Information Paper on
18 January 2000**

**Panel on Security
of the Legislative Council**

**Agenda item I - Follow-up on application and
verification procedures for a
Certificate of Entitlement and related issues**

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the current position of applications for Certificate of Entitlement (C of E) by Mainland residents and the repatriation of overstayers/illegal immigrants. The paper also provides an update on the arrangements for genetic test to verify the parentage of right of abode (ROA) claimants.

C of E Scheme

2. Since the promulgation of the new application procedure for C of E on 17 July 1999, the Immigration Department has received by 31 December 1999 a total of 20 157 C of E applications referred from the Public Security Bureau Offices. The number of C of E issued in the same period amounted to 19 619.

3. Between 17 July and 31 December 1999, a total of 11 518 C of E holders arrived in Hong Kong, representing a daily average of 69 persons.

4. The Immigration Department has recently published an information pamphlet on application procedures for C of E and the relevant complaint channels. The pamphlet is available to the public at all immigration offices. A copy is attached at *Annex*.

5. The Immigration Department will continue to monitor and facilitate the speedy arrival of eligible persons.

Repatriation of Mainland overstayers and illegal immigrants

6. Following the judgment of the Court of Final Appeal (CFA) delivered on 3 December 1999, 659 Mainland overstayers and illegal immigrants claiming ROA have voluntarily returned to the Mainland by 10 January 2000. In the same period, 33 overstayers/illegal immigrants were repatriated on removal orders. Another 48 ROA claimants are detained pending removal. The Immigration Department will continue to take enforcement action in accordance with the law and the CFA's judgment of 3 December 1999.

Genetic Test

7. With a view to introducing genetic test to help process ROA claims, we have earlier worked out a set of preliminary arrangements and passed them to the Bureau of Exit-Entry Administration (BEEA) for consideration. Feedback was received at the end of 1999 that an internal study and consultations held by an expert team of the BEEA were close to completion. The Director of the BEEA will visit Hong Kong early this

year to discuss with the Director of Immigration, amongst other things, practical arrangements between the Mainland authorities and HKSARG to conduct genetic test. Subsequent experts talks may be held on details of implementation.

8. Our initial information shows that by the end of 1999, the BEEA has received about 500 applications for exit to Hong Kong for settlement from persons born out of wedlock of Hong Kong permanent residents. Of these, 236 applications were submitted in Guangdong Province.

Security Bureau

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