

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

**The Housing Authority's Quota and Points System for Non-elderly
One-person Applicants for Public Rental Housing**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the Housing Authority (HA)'s Quota and Points System (QPS) for non-elderly one-person applicants for public rental housing (PRH) and the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) Steering Committee's discussion on the matter.

QPS

Operation

2. It is the current policy of the Government and the HA to accord priority to general applicants (including family applicants and elderly applicants) over non-elderly one-person applicants in the allocation of PRH units. Towards this end, the QPS was introduced in September 2005 to rationalize and to re-prioritize the allocation of PRH to non-elderly one-person applicants. Under the QPS, the annual allocation quota for non-elderly one-person applicants is set at 8% of the number of PRH flats to be allocated to Waiting List (WL) applicants, subject to a ceiling of 2 000 units. Points are assigned to applicants based on three determining factors, namely, age of the applicants at the time of submitting their PRH applications; whether the applicants are PRH tenants; and the waiting time of the applicants. Details are as follows –

- (a) age of the applicant at the time of submitting his/her PRH application - zero point will be given to applicants aged 18. Three points will be given to those aged 19; six points to those aged 20 and so forth;
- (b) whether or not the applicant is a PRH tenant - for applicants living in PRH (including those living in rental housing operated by the Housing Society), 30 points will be deducted; and

- (c) the length of time the applicant has waited - one additional point will be received when the applicant concerned has waited on the WL for one more month.

3. Under the QPS, the older the applicant and the longer the applicant has waited, the higher the number of points. The higher the number of points accumulated, the higher the chance for an applicant to be offered a PRH flat earlier. The average waiting time (AWT) target of about three years is **not** applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS.

Latest position

4. As at end-December 2012, there were about 115 300 general applications and about 106 900 non-elderly one-person applications under the QPS on the WL. As compared with the position at end-December 2011, the number of general applications and non-elderly one-person applications under the QPS has increased by 20% and 34% respectively.

LTHS STEERING COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSION

5. The LTHS Steering Committee has reviewed the overall housing situation of the WL applicants, including the non-elderly one-person applicants. Members note that the number of general applicants on the WL, who might have more urgent needs for public housing, has been soaring.

Profile of non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS

6. Apart from the overall situation, the LTHS Steering Committee has also looked at the profile of the non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS. It notes that as at end-December 2012, among the 106 900 non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS, 67% (71 500) were aged 35 or below. As a point of reference, according to the HA's 2012 Survey on WL Applicants for PRH, among the non-elderly one-person applicants aged 35 or below, 34% were students when they applied for PRH, 47% of them had post-secondary or above education attainment, and 33% were PRH tenants. However, for those aged above 35, only 7% of them had attained post-secondary or higher education.

Considerations

7. Taking into consideration limited PRH resources, the overall housing situation and the lengthening WL, the LTHS Steering Committee has reaffirmed the policy that priority should be given to general applicants, including family applicants and elderly applicants, for PRH flats. It also considers that the QPS, including the annual quota of a maximum allocation of 2 000 PRH units to non-elderly one-person applicants, should be maintained.

8. Notwithstanding this, the LTHS Steering Committee takes the view that among the non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS, those who lack upward mobility and who might have greater difficulty to improve their living conditions on their own, should be accorded higher priority. Towards this end, the LTHS Steering Committee has considered whether the AWT target of about three years for WL general applicants could be extended to cover non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS who are over the age of 35. However, it is noted that extending the AWT target of about three years to non-elderly one-person applicants above the age of 35 would result in them taking up a greater share of PRH resources currently available for WL general applicants. While the LTHS Steering Committee considers that it should be the long-term target to extend the AWT target of about three years to non-elderly one-person applicants aged above 35, given limited PRH resources at the present moment and the surging number of WL general applicants, this should only be considered in future when more PRH resources are available. Nevertheless, when housing resources permit, consideration should be given to extending the AWT target of about three years to those non-elderly one-person applicants over a certain age under a phased approach, starting from, say, the age of 45 or 55 and progressively moving the eligibility point down to 35.

9. As a first step, the LTHS Steering Committee recommends that as an immediate measure, the QPS should be enhanced by allocating extra points to those above the age of 35 with a view to improving their chance to gain earlier access to PRH. Other than age, it might also be worthwhile to consider setting the criteria based on need, taking into account the specific circumstances of individual applicants. On the other hand, for the non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS who are currently on the WL, the LTHS Steering Committee considers that a periodic review of their income and assets might be conducted, with a view to removing the ineligible applicants from the WL, especially those who registered when they were students, and who are most likely to earn an income which will exceed the WL income limit after graduation.

WAY FORWARD

10. Members are invited to note the QPS and the LTHS Steering Committee's discussion on the matter. The public will be consulted on these QPS proposals when the public consultation document on LTHS is released. Thereafter, the proposals will be referred to the HA for deliberation. The HA will take the final decision on any modifications to the QPS.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
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