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Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2012-13

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Transport and Housing

Session No. : 6

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)001

Question Serial No.

0697

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In paragraph 76 of the Budget Speech regarding public housing supply, it is stated that the Housing Authority will identify suitable sites for public housing development in various districts and develop the sites to their full potential to maximise public housing supply by relaxing restrictions on plot ratio and building height. With regard to monitoring the supply of public housing sites, please advise on:

- a) the total number of sites (breakdown by the 18 districts) already reserved for public housing development and the estimated number of public rental housing (PRH) flats to be constructed/supplied in Hong Kong; and
- b) the plot ratios of PRH estates and the average heights and numbers of storeys of buildings therein respectively for the past five years (from 2007-08 to 2011-12), breakdown by the completion years of the flats.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Hak-kan

Reply:

- a) According to the current five-year rolling Public Housing Construction Programme of the Hong Kong Housing Authority, the total anticipated new public rental housing (PRH) production during the five-year period starting from 2011-12 (i.e. 2011-12 to 2015-16) is about 75 000 flats with an average of about 15 000 flats per year. The location of new PRH by districts and estimated flat production is shown at Annex.
- b) The Housing Department (HD) plans and designs each public housing project according to the plot ratio and building height restrictions as advised by the Planning Department (PlanD) and those laid down in the Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) prepared by PlanD. The HD would liaise with the concerned parties, the District Councils and local communities, having regard to the site constraints and surrounding environment, to optimize the development potential of all housing sites, and to develop PRH under the principle of optimal utilization of land resources to maintain the most cost-effective and sustainable development.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

Production of PRH Flats in the Coming Five Years (2011-12 – 2015-2016)

Year of Completion / District [#]	Sub-District	Planned Flat Number
2011-2012		
Urban	Kowloon City	800
	Kwun Tong	3 500
	Sham Shui Po	5 600
	Wong Tai Sin	1 300
Sub -Total:		11 200
2012-2013		
Urban	Kowloon City	5 200
	Kwun Tong	2 700
	Sham Shui Po	1 400
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	2 800
New Territories	Tuen Mun	1 000
Sub -Total :		13 100
2013-2014		
Urban	Kowloon City	8 200
	Sham Shui Po	1 500
Extended Urban	Kwai Tsing	2 300
	Sha Tin	3 000
	Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O)	2 100
Sub -Total :		17 100
2014-2015		
Urban	Kwun Tong	900
	Sham Shui Po	2 900
	Wong Tai Sin	1 000
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	3 500
New Territories	North	1 300
	Yuen Long	4 900
Sub -Total :		14 500
2015-2016		
Urban	Kwun Tong	9 500
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	4 600
	Island (Tung Chung)	3 500
New Territories	Tai Po	500
	Yuen Long	1 600
Sub -Total :		19 700
Total :		75 600

(Based on the Public Housing Construction Programme as at December 2011)

Extended Urban areas include Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

THB(H)002

Question Serial No.

0698

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The Financial Secretary mentioned in his Budget Speech that the Housing Authority had initially identified six sites in Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing and Yuen Long for the first batch of developments under the new Home Ownership Scheme. In this connection, please advise on the specific locations of these six developments, their expected completion dates and the respective numbers of flats to be provided with a breakdown by flat types.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Hak-kan

Reply:

The first six New Home Ownership Scheme (New HOS) developments are located in:

1. Heung Fan Liu Street (junction of Mei Mun Lane), Sha Tin;
2. Pik Tin Street (junction of Mei Tin Road), Sha Tin;
3. Hin Tin Street (adjacent to Ka Tin Court), Sha Tin;
4. Ex-Tai Wo Hau Factory Estate Site at Sha Tsui Road, Tsuen Wan;
5. Ex-Chan Lai So Chun Memorial School Site at Cheung Ching Estate, Kwai Ching; and
6. Wang Yip Street (junction of Fu Yip Street), Yuen Long.

The Hong Kong Housing Authority is carrying out preparatory works for the first batch of New HOS projects including planning, design, site investigation and technical assessments, etc. It is anticipated that the first batch of New HOS will be completed in 2016-17 providing about 2 500 two-bedroom flats with a saleable area around 40 square metres.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)003

Question Serial No.

0699

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In respect of the programme of building survey conducted to address the problem of lack of repairs that has gradually surfaced in the estates under the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) in recent years, please advise on:

- a) the number of estates surveyed and the number of buildings involved over the past three years (2009-10 to 2011-12); whether there were estates in need of repair works after the survey; what the major dilapidation issues were; and
- b) whether resources have been set aside for injection into the TPS Maintenance Fund so as to ease the burden of residents in TPS estates.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Hak-kan

Reply:

- a) In the past three years (i.e. 2009 to 2011), the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department had surveyed five Tenant Purchase Scheme (TPS) estates, involving 22 residential buildings. No serious disrepair was detected. As a result, neither advisory letter nor statutory order had been issued by ICU requiring repair works to the estates concerned.
- b) When the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) put flats of the TPS estates for sale, it set up for each estate a Maintenance Fund to which a one-off sum equivalent to \$14,000 per residential unit was injected. The Maintenance Funds will be able to cover the expenses arising from major maintenance works in common area and facilities of the estate for ten years after the sale.

The sold flats in the TPS estates are no different from private domestic properties and their owners are liable for the payment of the maintenance fees of the estates. Being the owner of the unsold TPS flats, the HA pays the management fees according to the apportionment of management share every month and bears the payment of the maintenance fees with the other owners. The HA would not inject additional funding into the Maintenance Fund of the TPS estates.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)004

Question Serial No.

0015

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

How many buildings in total were surveyed by the Independent Checking Unit in each of the past three years? Of which, how many advisory letters or repairs orders were issued and how did the owners' corporations concerned follow up with the advisory letters or repairs orders? How many buildings are expected to be surveyed in 2012-13?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

In 2004, the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department formulated a five-year Planned Survey Programme for residential buildings of the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) courts and Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) estates. The surveys included the inspection and identification of unauthorized and dangerous building works, as well as the condition of common areas, external walls and drainage pipes. The ICU carries out enforcement actions against unauthorized building works or disrepair in accordance with the Buildings Ordinance under the delegated authority from the Director of Buildings. The Programme stipulated that comprehensive surveys would be carried out in the 160 buildings which were identified to have more severe conditions. This Programme was completed at the end of 2009.

From 2010 onwards, the ICU has made reference to the Buildings Department's annual large scale operation programme to tackle unauthorized building works and disrepair in private premises, and extended the above Planned Survey Programme to the remaining HOS courts and TPS estates. About 20-30 buildings will be selected each year for continuing the Planned Surveys.

In the past three years (i.e 2009-2011), ICU had completed the Planned Surveys on 24, 22 and 20 residential buildings respectively. We anticipate to carry out Planned Surveys for 20 residential buildings in 2012. In the abovementioned period, no serious disrepair was detected and thus no statutory order requiring repairs to the HOS courts or TPS estates concerned was issued. However, minor disrepair was identified in one court, the ICU issued an advisory letter to the Owners Corporation (OC) of the court to carry out the necessary repair. The repair works are being carried out.

The majority of the advisory letters issued by ICU relate to the removal of unauthorized building works. We do not keep figures on the type of recipients of advisory letters. In general, the majority of advisory letters were issued to individual owners of residential buildings and only a few of them were related to the OCs.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D. W. Pescod

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for
Transport and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)005

Question Serial No.

0016

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

What are the respective total numbers of restaurant license applications on which the Administration gave advice in each of the past 3 years? Of which, how many cases could not be completed within 12 working days? What are the reasons for the failure to give advice according to the target?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department would offer advice on restaurant license applications for premises within public rental housing estates, Tenants Purchase Scheme estates or Home Ownership Scheme courts, and properties divested to The Link Real Estates Investment Trust referred by Licensing Authorities. ICU's planned target in 2012 is to offer advice within 12 working days for 98% of the restaurant license applications under the Application Vetting Panel (AVP) system.

In the past three years (i.e. 2009-2011), the ICU offered advice to 423, 747 and 683 cases related to applications for restaurant license respectively. Among the aforementioned cases, 77, 93 and 83 cases respectively were restaurant license applications under the AVP system.

In 2009 and 2010, all cases under the AVP system were completed within 12 working days. In 2011, only one case under the AVP system could not be completed within 12 working days as site verification and detailed calculations were involved. The overall performance of 2011 was 98.8%.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)006

Question Serial No.

0017

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

As regards the monitoring of the regime of self-regulation undertaken by the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA), how many uncompleted residential developments being put up for sale were inspected by the Administration in each of the past three years? What are their respective percentages in the number of uncompleted residential developments being put up for sale in the corresponding years? How many cases of non-compliance with REDA's code of practice were found during the inspections and what follow-up actions have been taken?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Government is committed to maintaining the healthy development of the private residential property market, safeguarding the reasonable rights of consumers, and ensuring that consumers have access to accurate and comprehensive property information, in particular information on uncompleted first-hand residential properties. The Government adopts a multi-pronged mechanism to enhance the transparency of the sale of uncompleted first-hand residential properties, which includes the Lands Department (LandsD)'s Consent Scheme (the Consent Scheme), the guidelines issued by the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA), the regulatory work of the Estate Agents Authority, and the promotion and consumer education work of the Consumer Council.

For projects under the Consent Scheme, if the developer concerned is found to be in breach of the Consent Scheme requirements, the LandsD will take follow-up actions as appropriate depending on the severity of the breach, including giving written warning requiring rectification of the breach, and suspending/cancelling the consent given. According to the LandsD, the number of written warnings issued in 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 (as at January 2012) for rectification actions is as below. The cases primarily involved the failure of the developers to provide the required property information in the sales brochures as specified under the Consent Scheme. The developers concerned had subsequently taken appropriate rectification measures.

Year	Number of written warning issued
2009-10	8
2010-11	6
2011-12 (as at January 2012)	6

According to information provided by REDA, it received 16 complaints on alleged breaches of REDA's guidelines in 2011. Further to REDA's follow-up actions, the developers concerned took action to comply with the Guidelines as appropriate.

In 2012-13, Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) will continue to monitor the sale of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties to see if they comply with the requirements of the Consent Scheme and/or REDA's guidelines. In this regard, THB will continue to examine, among other things, the sales brochures, price lists and show flats of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties and will refer cases of non-compliance with the Consent Scheme requirements and/or REDA's guidelines to the LandsD and/or REDA for follow-up actions as appropriate. THB will continue to conduct surprise visits on the sales sites of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties. The number of surprise visits will depend on actual need.

Signature: _____
Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD
Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)
Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)007

Question Serial No.

0018

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the My Home Purchase Plan, please advise on the progress of negotiation with the Housing Society on the Shatin project, as well as the anticipated dates for the completion of premium payment and land grant, and the commencement of superstructure works in respect of the project.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Sha Tin project under the My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP) is located at Sha Tin Area 36C, near Siu Lik Yuen. The project would produce about 700 small to medium sized flats. The exact number of flats to be built has to be worked out after further study. The Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) will conduct studies on the need to carry out slope stabilization works for the site. The concerned site will also have to undergo the land grant procedure. We will continue to work closely with HKHS to implement the Sha Tin project as early as possible.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

THB(H)008

Question Serial No.

0019

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Appeal Panel (Housing)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

For the past three years, how many cases were actually required to be heard, and how many that had been heard were dismissed? How many working days are required on average for the arrangement of a hearing upon receipt of an application for appeal?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The relevant figures as requested in the above question for the past three years (i.e. 2009 to 2011) are as follows:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Number of cases heard	478	331	376
Number of notice-to-quit confirmed after hearing	258	158	192
Average waiting time for hearing (day) ^{Note}	94	77	104

Note: The relevant statistical data are on calendar day basis, thus we cannot provide figures in working days.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)009

Question Serial No.

0020

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

For the past three years, how many infrastructure projects were implemented in each year and how many of them were behind schedule or exceeded the project estimate? What were the reasons for the delay and over-spending?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

In the past three financial years (i.e. 2009-10 to 2011-12), infrastructure projects implemented under Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711 are as follows:

Year	Project
2009-10	29 projects in progress (including 3 new projects)
2010-11	26 projects in progress (including 2 new projects)
2011-12	26 projects in progress (including 4 new projects)

On the progress, all projects were on schedule. For the expenditure, there was one project with its expenditure over project estimate due to additional costs for implementing revised temporary traffic arrangements, modifications of drainage works and increased provision in price adjustment for remaining works. The increase in project estimate of the relevant project was approved by the Legislative Council Finance Committee in December 2010.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)010

Question Serial No.

0021

Head: 62 Housing Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Please tabulate the projects to be launched by the Department in 2012-13, and provide information on the housing estates involved, project estimates and the anticipated dates of completion.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The housing-related infrastructure projects under Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711 to be launched in 2012-13 are as below:

<u>Name of Projects</u>	<u>Name of Estate Involved/ Related Housing Sites</u>	<u>Project Estimate \$'000</u>	<u>Anticipated Completion Date</u>
District open space adjoining Lower Ngau Tau Kok public housing redevelopment	Public housing development at Lower Ngau Tau Kok	140,000	mid 2015
Development of Anderson Road Quarry—engineering study	Future housing development at Anderson Road Quarry	11,000	mid 2015
Planning and preliminary engineering feasibility study for public housing site at Hong Po Road, Tuen Mun	Public housing development at Hong Po Road, Tuen Mun	9,900	mid 2014
Improvement of infrastructure for proposed public housing development at Fo Tan, Sha Tin—detailed design and associated studies	Public housing development at Fo Tan, Sha Tin	4,700	early 2016

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)011

Question Serial No.

0330

Head: 62 Housing DepartmentSubhead (No. & title):Programme:Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and HousingQuestion:

It is stated in the Budget that "the Government will pay two months' base rent for tenants who are required to pay extra rent to the Hong Kong Housing Authority. For non-elderly tenants of the Hong Kong Housing Society's Group B estates, the Government will pay two-thirds of their rent for two months. This measure will involve an expenditure of \$1.9 billion." What is the detailed breakdown of expenditure of this \$1.9 billion and when can the tenants expect to benefit from it?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lamReply:

The proposal of paying two months' rent for public housing tenants by the Government involves expenditure of approximately \$1.9 billion. About \$1.8 billion will be paid to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and about \$96 million will be paid to the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS). The breakdown is as follows -

Payment to HA	
For paying two months' rent for tenants/ licencees of HA paying normal rent	About \$1.7 billion
For paying two months' net rent of HA tenant/ licencees paying additional rent	About \$72 million
<i>Sub-total</i>	About \$1.8 billion
Payment to HKHS	
For paying two months' rent for tenants of HKHS Group A estates and tenants of Elderly Persons' Flats in HKHS Group B estates	About \$90 million
For paying two-thirds of the net rent for two months for non-Elderly Persons' Flats tenants of HKHS Group B estates	About \$6 million
<i>Sub-total</i>	About \$96 million
Total	About \$1.9 billion

The Administration will seek funding approval from the Legislative Council Finance Committee (FC). Subject to the FC's approval, the HA and the HKHS will start the necessary preparatory work. It is expected that the proposed measure will take effect after mid-2012.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

THB(H)012

Question Serial No.

0331

Head: 62 Housing Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In 2011, a total of 80 households affected by squatter clearances or emergency clearances and illegal rooftop structure clearances were accommodated in public rental housing (PRH). Among these households, how many were rehoused locally in terms of District Council districts? Also, how many were found ineligible for PRH allocation in the process of eligibility vetting but were eventually granted the discretionary offer of PRH flats?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Housing Department (HD) does not have the breakdown of clearances rehoused locally in terms of District Council district. In 2011, the HD has arranged 80 public rental housing (PRH) offers to rehouse 44 eligible households to PRH. In addition, there were three affected households rehoused to PRH through Compassionate Rehousing upon the recommendation of the Social Welfare Department. Among the 74 households found ineligible for PRH allocation, 22 of them were accommodated in interim housing while the rest arranged for their own accommodation.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)013

Question Serial No.

0337

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

For the past 3 years, how many private residential units were completed on development sites which do not require lease modification, land exchange site, and urban renewal projects respectively?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

For the past three years (2009-2011), the numbers of private residential units completed on redevelopment sites which do not require lease modification, redevelopment sites which require lease modification/land exchange, or urban renewal projects are provided as below:

Year	Sites that had not undergone lease modification	Land exchange sites / sites that had undergone lease modification	Urban renewal projects	Total
2009	840	1 938	1 271	4 049
2010	532	4 177	96	4 805
2011	1 428	1 678	445	3 551

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)014

Question Serial No.

0341

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The Administration indicated that it would follow up recommendations made by the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation. Before the legislation is introduced, in what ways will the Administration protect the interests of flat buyers? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Government is committed to maintaining the healthy development of the private residential property market, safeguarding the reasonable rights of consumers, and ensuring that consumers have access to accurate and comprehensive property information, in particular information on uncompleted first-hand residential properties. The Administration adopts a multi-pronged mechanism to enhance the transparency of the sale of uncompleted first-hand residential properties, which includes the Lands Department (LandsD)'s Consent Scheme (the Consent Scheme), the guidelines issued by the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA), the regulatory work of the Estate Agents Authority (EAA), and the promotion and consumer education work of the Consumer Council (CC).

To further strengthen the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) established in October 2010 the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (the Steering Committee) to discuss specific issues pertaining to the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties by legislation. The Steering Committee submitted detailed recommendations to THB in October 2011. Having considered the recommendations made by the Steering Committee, THB prepared a draft of the proposed legislation to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties. The two-month public consultation exercise on the draft legislation ended on 28 January 2012. We will complete the public consultation report as soon as possible, and submit the relevant Bill to the Legislative Council in the first quarter of 2012.

In 2012-13, THB will continue to monitor the sale of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties to ensure that developers comply with the requirements of the Consent Scheme and/or REDA's guidelines. In this regard, THB will continue to examine, among other things, the sales brochures, price lists and show flats of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties and will refer cases of non-compliance with the Consent Scheme requirements and/or REDA's guidelines to the LandsD and/or REDA for appropriate follow-up actions.

Also, EAA will take disciplinary action against licensees which are found to be in breach of the Estate Agents Ordinance, its Code of Ethics or Practice Circulars. CC will take follow-up actions, including mediation, upon receipt of complaints.

The monitoring of the sale of private uncompleted first-hand residential properties is an on-going function of THB, and it forms part of the duties of a team under the Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing). We do not have a breakdown on the expenditure for this particular duty.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)015

Question Serial No.

0426

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Currently, how many surplus subsidised sale flats under the Hong Kong Housing Society are available for sale? What are the details of the sale of the surplus flats in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Hong Kong Housing Society has sold all of its surplus subsidised sale flats in 2010 (including flats under the Flat-for-Sale Scheme and the Sandwich Class Housing Scheme).

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)016

Question Serial No.

0427

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

With the Department's aim of monitoring the developments in the private residential rental market, and in view of the feverish property market and the persistent high rent of private residential flats, has the Administration devised any measures to ease the burden of rental payments of the public; and examined any measures to ease the burden of rental payments during the waiting period for those awaiting the allocation of public rental housing? If yes, how much manpower and expenditure are involved respectively? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

As at the third quarter of 2011, there were 2.37 million households in Hong Kong. Of those, 730 000 households live in public rental housing (PRH) units and 380 000 in self-owned units acquired with government subsidies. In other words, almost half of the households in Hong Kong benefit from some forms of housing subsidy provided by the Government. Of the 1.26 million households living in private properties, 880 000 are owner-occupants. Taken together, nearly 85% of households live in PRH units, subsidized home ownership scheme flats or their own private properties.

As for the tenants living in private accommodation, the level of rent of private accommodation is subject to a host of factors, including the macro-economic environment, property market sentiment, district development, market demand, age and quality of the building, etc. As the recent property market situation has been unusual, the Government has introduced long, medium and short-term measures to ensure the healthy and stable development of the property market, including increasing land supply to tackle the problem at source, combating speculative activities, enhancing the transparency of property transactions, and preventing excessive expansion in mortgage lending. The Government has set the target of making land available for an average of some 20 000 private residential flats per annum in the next ten years. This basket of measures has achieved results and speculative activities have abated significantly. We will continue the strategy that has proven to be effective in facilitating the healthy and stable development of the property market.

The Government has all along been providing PRH to low-income families who cannot afford private rental accommodation through the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA). It is the target of the Government and the HA to maintain the average waiting time at around three years for general Waiting List (WL) applicants.

The existing mechanism is to provide a safety net for those who cannot support themselves financially through the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA), such that their income will be brought up to a prescribed level to meet their basic needs. Rent allowance is payable to CSSA households on the WL to meet their accommodation expenses. The maximum rate of the rent allowance for a particular CSSA household is determined with reference to the number of members in the household who are eligible for

CSSA. As for other WL applicants who have a pressing need for housing but are not taking the CSSA, they can consider applying for Compassionate Rehousing (CR) through the Social Welfare Department, or for the Express Flat Allocation Scheme (EFAS) for earlier allocation of PRH flats. In respect of the Housing Department, CR and EFAS are part of its regular work and we do not have any breakdown of the expenditure and establishment involved.

Signature: _____
Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD
Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
 and Housing (Housing)
Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)017

Question Serial No.

1570

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

As announced in the Budget Speech, the Tsing Yi and Sha Tin projects under the My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP) will provide a total of 1 700 small and medium-sized flats. Would the Government advise whether there are other MHPP projects in the pipeline and on the number of flats to be provided?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Government has already earmarked sites in Tsing Yi, Diamond Hill, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Tuen Mun and other areas for about 5 000 flats under the My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP). The first two MHPP projects will be at Tsing Luk Street of Tsing Yi and Sha Tin Area 36C respectively. These two projects are expected to provide about 1 700 small and medium-sized flats altogether.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)018

Question Serial No.

3299

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In view of the difficulties faced by the grassroots in acquiring a home, does the Administration have plans to further explore measures to revitalise the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS)? If yes, what is the expenditure incurred? Will the Administration consider relaxing the restrictions on the HOS Secondary Market to allow those who can meet the White Form criteria to purchase HOS flats without paying the premium?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) Secondary Market Scheme (SMS) was launched in 1997. Under the Scheme, HOS flat owners are allowed to sell their flats to sitting or prospective public rental housing (PRH) tenants without payment of premium. The objective is to provide an avenue for sitting PRH tenants and Green Form certificate holders to attain home ownership and at the same time vacate more PRH units for allocation to other persons and families in genuine need. In 2010, the Hong Kong Housing Authority implemented several measures to revitalise the HOS Secondary Market, including the Premium Loan Guarantee Scheme, extension of the mortgage default guarantee period for HOS buyers to 30 years and streamlining administrative arrangements and enhancing publicity. We will continue to monitor the implementation of these measures. No additional expenditure and manpower will be incurred.

The proposal to allow those who qualify for White Form status to purchase second-hand HOS flats with premium not yet paid under the SMS requires detailed consideration. Issues to be considered include whether the proposal aligns with the objectives of SMS, which are to promote the mobility of PRH tenants and at the same time to recover PRH units for reallocation, whether the supply of HOS flats can effectively match demand. These will require careful deliberation.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)019

Question Serial No.

3300

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that "The Housing Authority has initially identified six sites in Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing and Yuen Long for the first batch of developments under the new HOS." Has the Administration already set aside the land for these six developments? Please advise on the specific locations.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The first six sites allocated for the New Home Ownership Scheme developments are located in:

1. Heung Fan Liu Street (junction of Mei Mun Lane), Sha Tin;
2. Pik Tin Street (junction of Mei Tin Road), Sha Tin;
3. Hin Tin Street (adjacent to Ka Tin Court), Sha Tin;
4. Ex-Tai Wo Hau Factory Estate Site at Sha Tsui Road, Tsuen Wan;
5. Ex-Chan Lai So Chun Memorial School Site at Cheung Ching Estate, Kwai Ching; and
6. Wang Yip Street (junction of Fu Yip Street), Yuen Long.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)020

Question Serial No.

3123

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

With regard to the second project in Sha Tin under My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP), when will the authorities announce the timetable for launching the project? Will the release of the various sites earmarked be deferred or will the authorities even consider scrapping the MHPP? What will be the impact on the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Mo-po, Paul

Reply:

The Government has already earmarked sites in Tsing Yi, Diamond Hill, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Tuen Mun and other areas for the provision of about 5 000 units in total under My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP).

The first two MHPP projects are located respectively in Tsing Luk Street of Tsing Yi and Sha Tin Area 36C near Siu Lik Yuen. The Tsing Yi project will be completed in 2014 and application for pre-letting will begin in the fourth quarter of 2012. As regards the Sha Tin project, the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) will conduct studies on the need to carry out slope stabilization works for the site. The concerned site will also have to undergo the land grant procedure. We will continue to work closely with the HKHS to implement the Sha Tin project as early as possible.

The Government has also started preparatory work for the other projects. We will announce the details of individual projects when the preparatory work is completed.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)021

Question Serial No.

3124

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that the Government will continue to identify suitable sites actively in different districts for public housing development. Would the Government provide information on the locations and sizes of the identified sites for the coming three years, and the numbers of units to be provided for applicants according to their household size?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Mo-po, Paul

Reply:

According to the Hong Kong Housing Authority's current Public Housing Construction Programme, the anticipated new public rental housing (PRH) production during the five-year period from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is about 75 000 flats, averaging about 15 000 flats per year. Of this, the anticipated new PRH production for the next three years (i.e. 2011-12 to 2013-14) is about 41 400 flats involving about 33 hectares of land. Their location by districts and estimated production is shown at **Annex**.

Among the 41 400 flats, there will be about 9 400 units of 1/2-person flat, 13 000 units of 2/3-person flat, 14 700 units of 1-bedroom flat and 4 300 units of 2-bedroom flat.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

Production of PRH Flats in the Coming Three Years (2011-12 – 2013-14)

Year of Completion / District [#]	Sub-District	Planned Flat Number
2011-12		
Urban	Kowloon City	800
	Kwun Tong	3 500
	Sham Shui Po	5 600
	Wong Tai Sin	1 300
Sub -Total:		11 200
2012-13		
Urban	Kowloon City	5 200
	Kwun Tong	2 700
	Sham Shui Po	1 400
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	2 800
New Territories	Tuen Mun	1 000
Sub -Total :		13 100
2013-14		
Urban	Kowloon City	8 200
	Sham Shui Po	1 500
Extended Urban	Kwai Tsing	2 300
	Sha Tin	3 000
	Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O)	2 100
Sub -Total :		17 100
Total :		41 400

Based on the Public Housing Construction Programme as at December 2011

Extended Urban areas include Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)022

Question Serial No.

3332

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

What are works that have been done by the Government under “providing analysis on developments in the private housing market”? What is the working plan prepared for this financial year? How much is reserved for this item of work under the current estimated budget?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) collects from relevant departments data which is useful for projecting the supply of first-hand private residential flats in that year and the coming few years, and makes projections on the number of private residential flats which commence construction in that year, the number of flats to be completed in that year, and the estimated supply of private residential flats in the coming few years. THB (and the former Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau) has been providing the aforementioned data in its website on a quarterly basis since November 2004.

THB will continue to undertake the above duties in order to ensure the healthy and stable development of the private residential market.

The above is an on-going function of THB, and forms part of the duties of a team under the Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing). We do not have a breakdown on the expenditure for the above duties.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)023

Question Serial No.

3333

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Please advise this Committee of the Government's specific work on "monitoring developments in the private residential rental market", as well as the expenditure to be incurred.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

The Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) is responsible for compiling the official price and rental indices on private residential properties. The indices are uploaded onto RVD's website on a monthly basis for public information. Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) will continue to monitor the relevant data of RVD.

In addition, THB collects from relevant departments data which is useful for projecting the supply of first-hand private residential flats in that year and the coming few years, and makes projections on the number of private residential flats which commence construction in that year, the number of flats to be completed in that year, and the estimated supply of private residential flats in the coming few years. THB (and the former Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau) has been providing the aforementioned data in its website on a quarterly basis since November 2004.

The above is an on-going function of THB, and forms part of the duties of a team under the Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing). We do not have a breakdown on the expenditure for the above duties.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)024

Question Serial No.

3359

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Appeal Panel (Housing)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

- (a) What is the work of the Appeal Tribunals which are appointed by the Chairman of the Appeal Panel?
- (b) What is the number of cases where the Appeal Panel allowed the appellant's appeal?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

- (a) The work of the Appeal Tribunals is to determine appeals lodged under the Housing Ordinance against the termination of leases by the Hong Kong Housing Authority.
- (b) Of the appeals heard in 2011, the number of notices-to-quit cancelled or amended by the Appeal Tribunals is 184.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)025

Question Serial No.

3360

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

What is the programme of activities of the Administration on the provision of land for public housing? How many sites in the urban area are expected to be made available for public housing development? What is the anticipated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

The Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply chaired by the Financial Secretary will co-ordinate the efforts of the departments concerned to ensure that issues relating to housing land will be dealt with as a matter of priority to safeguard a stable and adequate supply of land for housing development. The Housing Department will continue to liaise closely with the relevant bureaux and Government departments to identify suitable land for public housing development in different parts of the territory and to optimize the development potential of sites and increase public housing supply by relaxing plot ratio and building height restrictions without compromising the living environment.

According to the Hong Kong Housing Authority's current Public Housing Construction Programme, the anticipated new public rental housing (PRH) production during the five-year period starting from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is about 75 000 flats, averaging about 15 000 flats per year. Amongst which, about 60% of the new PRH flats will come from the urban areas (including Kowloon City, Kwun Tong, Sham Shui Po and Wong Tai Sin), about 30% from the extended urban areas (including Kwai Tsing, Shatin, Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung) and the remaining about 10% from the New Territories. These will involve approximately 30 sites in the urban area.

The necessary land and infrastructure for public housing development is provided by relevant bureaux and Government departments. Where required, we will seek funding from the Legislative Council to conduct planning and engineering studies and provide any necessary housing-related infrastructure. In 2012-13, the anticipated expenditure under Head 711 and Head 62 Programme (5) for this purpose is about \$560 million.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)026

Question Serial No.

2885

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Given that the authorities have indicated that they will make appropriate adjustment to housing production and increase the supply in order to maintain the average waiting time (AWT) at three years, should the AWT for public rental housing (PRH) exceed three years or more, do the authorities have any mechanism or procedures to adjust the supply of PRH? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply:

In implementing the Public Housing Construction Programme (PHCP), the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will continue to aim at maintaining the average waiting time (AWT) of general Waiting List (WL) applicants at about three years. The Government will ensure a steady and stable supply of land for the construction of 15 000 public rental housing (PRH) flats on average annually. However, the annual PRH production of 15 000 units is not a fixed target, the HA will continue to closely monitor the change in the number of applications on the WL, and roll forward the PHCP on a yearly basis having regard to the public demand for public housing. If necessary, the HA will adjust the level of PRH production and increase supply so as to maintain the AWT of general WL applicants at about three years.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)027

Question Serial No.

3364

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

- (a) How many new sites were used for public housing development by the Government last year? In what districts are they located? How many public rental housing (PRH) flats are expected to be provided from them?
- (b) How many sites originally earmarked for public housing development have been shelved in total? What are the reasons for that? What criteria does the Government employ in identifying sites for public housing development?
- (c) Did the sites for the new Home Ownership Scheme and the My Home Purchase Plan come from those originally earmarked for public housing development? If yes, how will the Government replenish the supply of new sites for public housing development so that the PRH production will not be affected?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply:

- (a) Each year, the Housing Department (HD) will carry out many studies to identify sites suitable for public housing development. The sites are of different sizes, in different locations and pose different degrees of complexity. According to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s current Public Housing Construction Programme (PHCP), the anticipated new public rental housing (PRH) production during the five-year period from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is about 75 000 flats, averaging about 15 000 flats per year. However, the annual PRH production of 15 000 units is not a fixed target, the HA will continue to closely monitor the change in the number of applications on the Waiting Listing (WL), and roll forward the PHCP on a yearly basis having regard to the public demand for public housing. If necessary, the HA will adjust the level of PRH production and increase supply so as to maintain the average waiting time of general WL applicants at about three years.
- (b) At present, we have no plan to give up land originally reserved for PRH development. The HD will continue to liaise closely with the concerned policy bureaux, government departments, district councils and local communities to identify suitable sites in different parts of the territory for PRH development. The HA will consider all suitable sites, regardless of their sizes, for PRH development under the principle of optimal utilization of valuable land resources to maintain cost-effective and sustainable development, in order to provide adequate PRH units to cater for the demand.

- (c) The Government currently has no plan to use PRH sites for the New Home Ownership Scheme or My Home Purchase Plan.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)028

Question Serial No.

3382

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

For the past five years,

- (a) how many flats under the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) were there in each district each year?
- (b) how many TPS flats were returned to the Housing Department (HD) each year?
- (c) how were the resale and rental positions of the TPS flats returned to the HD each year?
- (d) how many flats were public rental housing (PRH) units and no longer PRH units?
- (e) how many vacant PRH flats were there? Why were they left vacant?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply:

- (a) Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) flats are the flats sold under the TPS. For flats not yet sold in TPS estates, they are regarded as public rental housing (PRH) units. The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) had sold around 119 800 TPS flats as at the end of December 2011. The accumulated number of TPS flats sold in the past five years by region is as follows:

Region	The number of TPS flats sold as at the end of each year				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Urban	38 571	38 885	39 137	39 558	40 091
Extended Urban	39 715	40 022	40 201	40 550	40 962
New Territories	36 745	37 194	37 421	38 001	38 726
Total	115 031	116 101	116 759	118 109	119 779

- (b) A total of 178 TPS flats were bought back by the HA in the past five years, with the following distribution by region:

Region	No. of TPS flats bought back by the HA				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Urban	36	15	7	3	0
Extended Urban	24	9	13	3	2
New Territories	17	19	18	7	5
Total	77	43	38	13	7

- (c)&(d) When the HA buys back a TPS flat, the flat will be regarded as once again to be part of the PRH stock and will be allocated to Waiting List applicants. Whether to purchase the flat is a matter of personal choice for the tenants. We do not have statistics on flats bought back by HA and subsequently sold.
- (e) The HA will allocate new PRH flats or recovered flats with refurbishment completed as soon as possible for effective utilization of public housing resources. However, under certain circumstances, there may be flats left vacant for a period of time. For example, flats reserved for allocation to families affected by redevelopment or clearance exercises, recovered flats pending refurbishment, or less popular flats that have not been accepted after several offers, etc. The number of vacant flats in the past five years is as follows:

As at the end of each year	The number of lettable vacant PRH flat (vacancy rate)
2007	7 251 (1.1%)
2008	11 089 (1.6%)
2009	7 348 (1.1%)
2010	6 145 (0.9%)
2011	8 238 (1.1%)

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)029

Question Serial No.

0550

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In regard to paragraph 59 of the Budget Speech, which states, "Paying two months' rent for public housing tenants. The Government will pay two months' base rent for tenants who are required to pay extra rent to the Hong Kong Housing Authority. For non-elderly tenants of the Hong Kong Housing Society's Group B estates, the Government will pay two-thirds of their rent for two months. This measure will involve an expenditure of \$1.9 billion," will the Administration inform the Committee of: the detailed breakdown of the expenditure for paying rent for the above-mentioned tenant groups; the estimated earliest time to introduce the rent waiver; whether the Administration will also consider paying two months' rent for the tenants of Tai Hang Sai Estate, a private low-cost housing estate owned and managed by the Hong Kong Settlers Housing Corporation Limited; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The proposal of paying two months' rent for public housing tenants by the Government involves expenditure of approximately \$1.9 billion. About \$1.8 billion will be paid to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and about \$96 million will be paid to the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS). The breakdown is as follows –

Payment to HA	
For paying two months' rent for tenants/ licencees of HA paying normal rent	About \$1.7 billion
For paying two months' net rent of HA tenant/ licencees paying additional rent	About \$72 million
<i>Sub-total</i>	About \$1.8 billion
Payment to HKHS	
For paying two months' rent for tenants of HKHS Group A estates and tenants of Elderly Persons' Flats in HKHS Group B estates	About \$90 million
For paying two-thirds of the net rent for two months for non-Elderly Persons' Flats tenants of HKHS Group B estates	About \$6 million
<i>Sub-total</i>	About \$96 million
Total	About \$1.9 billion

The Administration will seek funding approval from the Legislative Council Finance Committee (FC). Subject to the FC's approval, the HA and the HKHS will start the necessary preparatory work. It is expected that the proposed measure will take effect after mid-2012.

As the Tai Hang Sai Estate is not under the HA or HKHS, those tenants are not covered by the proposal.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
 and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)030

Question Serial No.

0552

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In regard to paragraph 78 of the Budget Speech, which states "... the Government, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Housing Society, will continue to implement the My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP) to provide 'no frills' small and medium-sized rental flats for families with a relatively higher monthly income of up to about \$40,000 so that they will have time to save up. The Government has already earmarked a number of sites for 5 000 MHPP flats. The first development project at Tsing Yi will provide 1 000 small and medium-sized flats. They will be completed in 2014 and application for pre-letting will begin in the fourth quarter of this year. The second development project at Sha Tin will provide 700 small and medium-sized flats", will the Administration inform this Committee: whether the Administration expects to provide any funding to the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) for the launch of the MHPP in case of losses incurred by the HKHS because of the MHPP; and of the arrangements of various projects under the MHPP with the HKHS in terms of land premium, subsidies, the scale of development, flat prices, sizes and number of flats offered and the timing for sale?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Government has already earmarked sites in Tsing Yi, Diamond Hill, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Tuen Mun and other areas for about 5 000 flats under the My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP).

The first MHPP project at Tsing Luk Street of Tsing Yi will provide around 1 000 "no-frills" small and medium-sized flats. These flats are expected to be completed in 2014 and application for pre-letting should begin in the fourth quarter of 2012. The Tsing Yi project comprises three 38-storey residential tower blocks and a 3-level podium with carparks, landscaped area and recreational facilities. The saleable areas of the flats are around 400 to 700 square feet. The selling price and rental of MHPP flats will be set at market price but will reflect the "no-frills" nature of the flats. The initial market selling price of a flat will be the "ceiling price" of that flat. This will ensure that participants under the "rent-and-buy" option will not have their home ownership plan disrupted when property prices soar, and enable them to set more specific saving targets.

The second MHPP project is located in Sha Tin Area 36C near Siu Lik Yuen. The project is estimated to produce about 700 small and medium-sized flats, with tentative average saleable area of about 480 square feet. The exact number of flats to be built has to be worked out after further study. The Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) will have to conduct studies on the need to carry out slope stabilization works for the site. The Sha Tin site will also have to undergo the land grant procedure. We will continue to work closely with the HKHS to implement the Sha Tin project as early as possible.

The Government is discussing with the HKHS on the implementation details of the above two projects, including the financial arrangement and the enhancement measures. The Government's position is that the HKHS will not incur losses from undertaking the MHPP. While we will continue to facilitate the HKHS in its discussion with the relevant departments, we have no plan to provide funding to HKHS for the above two projects at this stage.

Apart from the above two MHPP projects, the Government has also started preparatory work for the other projects. We will announce the details of individual project when the preparatory work is completed.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)031

Question Serial No.

0553

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 77 of the Budget Speech that “The Chief Executive announced in last year’s Policy Address a new policy for the resumption of the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS). The new scheme will offer flats with a saleable floor area of about 400 to 500 square feet to families with a monthly household income under \$30,000, mainly first-time home buyers. The Housing Authority has initially identified six sites in Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing and Yuen Long for the first batch of developments under the new HOS. The respective District Councils will be consulted shortly. The Housing Authority has also initiated discussions on the implementation details of the scheme, including pricing principles and future premium payment arrangements.” In this respect, will the Administration advise this Committee: of the latest projections about the time that the first development under the new HOS will be completed and put up for sale; of the preliminary implementation details formulated by the Housing Authority, including pricing principles and the options for future premium payment arrangements; whether the new HOS flats are to be constructed and managed by the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS), if yes, the way that the HKHS will be subsidised for the relevant expenditure incurred; and of the additional staff requirement and recurrent expenditure expected to be incurred by the Housing Department under the new HOS?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

In response to the aspirations of low and middle-income families to buy their own homes under the current market condition, the Chief Executive has put forward a new policy for the resumption of the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) in the 2011-12 Policy Address. With the sites identified at this stage, the plan is to provide more than 17 000 flats over four years from 2016-17 onwards, with an annual production between 2 500 and 6 500 flats. For the first year, 2 500 flats can be made available. The first batch is expected to be ready for pre-sale in 2014 or 2015.

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will be responsible for producing flats under the New HOS. As regards the implementation details of the New HOS, the HA’s relevant committees have already begun discussions.

The HA is still working on the implementation details of the New HOS, while the Housing Department (HD) is reviewing the staffing implications of the New HOS on the department as a whole. HD will seek the extra staff from the Government to implement the New HOS as necessary.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)032

Question Serial No.

0554

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is stated in paragraphs 75 and 76 of the Budget Speech that "...According to the latest Public Housing Construction Programme of the Housing Authority, the total production of public rental housing (PRH) flats will be 75 000 in the five-year period starting from 2011-12. Our aim is to maintain the average waiting time for general PRH applicants at around three years. To this end, the Housing Authority will adjust and increase the production volume when necessary. ...We shall continue to identify suitable sites for public housing development in various districts. The Housing Authority will develop the sites to their full potential to maximise public housing supply by relaxing restrictions on plot ratio and building height. This will be done without compromising the living environment". Will the Administration advise this Committee of: the estimated annual production of PRH flats in the next five years; the expected year for adjusting the production volume and increasing the supply; the list of suitable sites for public housing development initially identified; and the public housing projects tentatively confirmed to be suitable for increasing housing supply by relaxing restrictions on plot ratio and building height with a view to maintaining the above target waiting time?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

According to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s current Public Housing Construction Programme (PHCP), the anticipated new PRH production during the five-year period from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is about 75 000 flats, averaging about 15 000 flats per year (**Annex** refers). However, the annual PRH production of 15 000 units is not a fixed target, the HA will continue to closely monitor the changes of number of applications on the Waiting List (WL), and roll forward the PHCP on a yearly basis having regard to the public demand for public housing. If necessary, the HA will adjust the level of PRH production and increase supply so as to maintain the average waiting time of general WL applicants at about three years.

We will continue to liaise closely with the relevant bureaux and Government departments to identify suitable land for public housing development in different parts of the territory, and to optimize the development potential of sites and increase public housing supply by relaxing plot ratio and building height restrictions without compromising the living environment. For example, having conducted various technical studies (including environmental, air ventilation and visual assessments) for the PRH project in Hung Shui Kiu Area 13, we have obtained the Town Planning Board's approval to increase the plot ratio and building height which will allow a higher level of PRH production.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

Production of PRH Flats in the Coming Five Years (2011-12 – 2015-16)

Year of Completion / District [#]	Sub-District	Planned Flat Number
2011-12		
Urban	Kowloon City	800
	Kwun Tong	3 500
	Sham Shui Po	5 600
	Wong Tai Sin	1 300
Sub -Total:		11 200
2012-13		
Urban	Kowloon City	5 200
	Kwun Tong	2 700
	Sham Shui Po	1 400
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	2 800
New Territories	Tuen Mun	1 000
Sub -Total :		13 100
2013-14		
Urban	Kowloon City	8 200
	Sham Shui Po	1 500
Extended Urban	Kwai Tsing	2 300
	Sha Tin	3 000
	Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O)	2 100
Sub -Total :		17 100
2014-15		
Urban	Kwun Tong	900
	Sham Shui Po	2 900
	Wong Tai Sin	1 000
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	3 500
New Territories	North	1 300
	Yuen Long	4 900
Sub -Total :		14 500
2015-16		
Urban	Kwun Tong	9 500
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	4 600
	Island (Tung Chung)	3 500
New Territories	Tai Po	500
	Yuen Long	1 600
Sub -Total :		19 700
Total :		75 600

Based on the Public Housing Construction Programme as at December 2011

Extended Urban areas include Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)033

Question Serial No.

0679

Head: 62 Housing Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

As regards the work described in the Brief Description about “co-ordinating the collection and checking the accuracy of overall public and private housing statistics and providing necessary data and analysis to relevant bureaux and departments for infrastructure and land supply planning”, will the Administration inform this Committee of the latest statistics of:

- (a) the total number of public rental housing (PRH) flats;
- (b) the number of households and population living in PRH;
- (c) the number of subsidised home ownership flats (breakdown by the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS), Sandwich Class Housing Scheme and Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS));
- (d) the number of households and population living in subsidised home ownership flats;
- (e) the number of HOS flats with the premium settled;
- (f) the number of TPS flats with the premium settled;
- (g) the number of private permanent housing flats;
- (h) the number of vacant private flats; and
- (i) the number of private flats that are over 30 years old,

and the reasons for the increase of 8% in the revised financial provision over the original one under this programme?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

- (a)&(b) As at end of 2011, there were in total about 761 000 public rental housing (PRH) units under the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS). According to the estimation of the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), population in PRH units under the HA and the HKHS amounted to about 2.12 million persons and about 730 000 households as at the third quarter of 2011.

- (c)&(d) Subsidized sale flats refer to those units with premium payment not yet paid hence they are still being subsidized by the Government. Those units with premium paid and hence tradable in the open market are not included. As at end of 2011, there were around 389 600 subsidized sale flats under the HA and the HKHS, including about 254 700 units under the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS), about 9 200 units under the Flat for Sale Scheme, about 7 000 units under the Sandwich Class Housing Scheme; and about 118 700 units under the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS). According to the estimation of the C&SD, population in subsidized sale flats amounted to about 1.24 million persons and about 380 000 households as at the third quarter of 2011.
- (e)&(f) As at the end of 2011, there were about 68 600 HOS units and 1 100 TPS units with premium paid respectively.
- (g)to(i) Based on Rating and Valuation Department’s record, as at end of 2010, there were about 1 102 900 private residential units (excluding village housing), of which about 51 500 units were vacant. About 379 800 private residential units were aged over 30 years.

The provision for 2011-12 revised estimate of Head 62 Programme (5) is \$0.9 million higher than the original estimate mainly due to the 2011 salary adjustment of civil servants.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)034

Question Serial No.

2741

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is mentioned in the Brief Description that the work involves “administering housing-related infrastructure projects under the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711 by providing intra-governmental services for implementation of these projects. The work involves liaison with concerned departments at various stages from project inception, feasibility study, funding approval, detailed design and construction...”. Please provide the annual expenditure on public rental housing (PRH) production, the average cost of each PRH unit and the number of employment places created in the past year, and the respective estimated figures for each of the next three years.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Government's expenses under the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711 are for implementation of housing-related infrastructure projects, whilst the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) would fund the construction cost of public rental housing (PRH).

According to the current five-year rolling Public Housing Construction Programme of the HA, the total anticipated new PRH production during the five-year period starting from 2011-12 (i.e. 2011-12 to 2015-16) is about 75 000 flats with an average of about 15 000 flats per year. In this five-year period, the anticipated average annual expenditure for the construction of public housing is about \$9 billion (including the construction cost of PRH, related carparking and retail facilities and manpower cost, etc). Estimated job creation is about 6 400 jobs per year and the average construction cost of each PRH unit is about \$0.49 million.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)035

Question Serial No.

2742

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the task “to monitor the progress on supply and timely availability of public housing sites” mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention, what concrete measures will be adopted by the Administration to ensure the timely availability of public housing sites? In respect of cases where difficulties were encountered in identifying public housing sites in the past, what were the developments involved, the causes of difficulties, and the measures to relieve and overcome the difficulties?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

There is an internal co-ordinating mechanism in the Government which operates through the Committee on Planning and Land Development, the Committee on Housing Development, and the Planning Department-Housing Department Liaison Meeting to monitor land supply for public housing. This is to ensure that the proposed land use can meet the overall development of society and that there is sufficient land supply to cater for the demand for public rental housing (PRH).

The Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply chaired by the Financial Secretary will co-ordinate the efforts of the bureaux and departments concerned to ensure that issues relating to land for public housing and private housing will be dealt with as a matter of priority to safeguard a stable and adequate supply of land, with a view to maintaining the average waiting time for general Waiting List applicants at around three years.

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will continue to liaise closely with the concerned policy bureaux, government departments, district councils and local communities to identify suitable sites in different parts of the territory for PRH development. The HA will consider all suitable sites, regardless of their sizes, for PRH development under the principle of optimal utilization of valuable land resources to maintain cost-effective and sustainable development, in order to provide adequate PRH units to cater for the demand.

Besides technical problems (such as development constraints, change in land use, land resumption, clearance and site formation, etc), difficulties may be encountered during consultation on individual sites with local communities such as concerns over transport impact, requests for community facilities, etc). In order to foster participation of the residents and the District Councils in PRH development projects, the HA has formalized a consultation process for major PRH developments. We gather views from the locals through organizing community workshops with a view to enhancing communication and achieving social cohesion. We also use these channels to address local demands and resolve any problems.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)036

Question Serial No.

1423

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the research on policy formulation and assessment (if any) commissioned to consultants by the Housing Department/Transport and Housing Bureau (Housing Branch) and the departments under its purview, please provide the relevant information in the following format.

- a) Using the following table, please provide this Committee with the relevant information on the funded public policy research projects and the strategic public policy research projects from 2009-10 to 2011-12:

Name of consultant	Means of granting of contract (open bid/tender/others (please specify))	Project name, contents and objective	Consultant fee (\$)	Date of commencement	Progress of research (in preparation/in progress/completed)	Details and progress of follow-up actions taken by the Administration (if any)	If completed, was it published? If yes, by what means was it published? If no, what were the reasons?

- b) In 2012-13, has funding been reserved to conduct consultancy research projects? If yes, please provide the following information:

Name of consultant	Means of granting of contract (open bid/tender/others (please specify))	Project name, contents and objective	Consultant fee (\$)	Date of commencement	Progress of research (in preparation/in progress/completed)	If the project is expected to complete in 2012-13, does the Administration plan to publish the project? If yes, by what means will it be published? If no, what are the reasons?

- c) What are the criteria for consideration when granting consultancy projects to the research bodies concerned?

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply:

- 1) The details of the consultancy study for which financial provision has been earmarked from 2009-10 to 2011-12 are as follows:

Name of consultant	Means of granting of contract (open bid/ tender/ others (please specify))	Project name, contents and objective	Consultant fee (\$)	Date of commencement	Progress of research (in preparation/ in progress/ completed)	Details and progress of follow-up actions taken by the Administration (if any)	If completed, was it published? If yes, by what means was it published? If no, what were the reasons?
Deloitte Consulting (Hong Kong) Limited	Tender	Overseas practices in regulating the sales of first-hand private residential properties	Around \$0.5 million	2011	Completed	-	The consultancy report was not published, but the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (Steering Committee) had taken into account the consultancy report in its deliberations on regulating the sale of first-hand flats by legislation. The Steering Committee submitted its report to the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) in October 2011 and contents of the report have been uploaded onto THB's website.

- 2) We currently do not have any plan to conduct further consultancy studies in 2012-13, and have not earmarked financial provision for such purpose.
- 3) We have taken into account the capability of the bidders and their charges when considering which bidder should be awarded the consultancy work.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)037

Question Serial No.

3099

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is mentioned in the report that during 2012-13, the Administration will continue to monitor the progress on supply and timely availability of public housing sites. Please inform this Committee of the specific criteria for "timely", and tabulate the details of the land supply for public rental housing (PRH) (such as location and size) together with the size breakdown of the flats to be constructed.

Asked by: Hon. IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina

Reply:

The Government will regularly monitor the land supply for public housing. "Timely" availability of land for public housing means allowing time for all issues including from the planning and infrastructure perspectives to be resolved in a satisfactory manner, to ensure an adequate and steady supply of land for the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) to construct on average of about 15 000 public rental housing (PRH) units each year.

According to the HA's current Public Housing Construction Programme (PHCP), the anticipated new PRH production during the five-year period from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is about 75 000 flats, averaging about 15 000 flats per year. For this year (i.e. 2011-12), the new PRH production is about 11 200 flats involving a total land area of about 10 hectares. The location of units by districts and estimated production is shown below. Among the 11 200 flats, there will be about 2 600 units of 1/2-person flat, 3 400 units of 2/3-person flat, 4 100 units of 1-bedroom flat and 1 100 units of 2-bedroom flat.

District	Sub-District	Planned Flat Number
Urban	Kowloon City	800
	Kwun Tong	3 500
	Sham Shui Po	5 600
	Wong Tai Sin	1 300
Sub -Total:		11 200

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)038

Question Serial No.

2356

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech (paragraph 85) that many people consider speeding up the redevelopment of old buildings a solution to the various housing problems such as sub-divided units. Apart from facilitating the redevelopment of old buildings to reduce the supply of sub-divided units, in what ways will the Administration reduce demand (e.g. by granting rent allowance to those in need) so as to resolve the problem of sub-divided units at source?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Sau-shing, Patrick

Reply:

As at the third quarter of 2011, there were 2.37 million households in Hong Kong. Of those, 730 000 households live in public rental housing (PRH) and 380 000 in self-owned units acquired with government subsidies. In other words, almost half of the households in Hong Kong benefit from some forms of housing subsidy provided by the Government. Of the 1.26 million households living in private properties, 880 000 are owner-occupants. Taken together, nearly 85% of households live in PRH units, subsidized home ownership scheme flats or their own private properties.

As for the tenants living in private accommodation, the level of rent of private accommodation is subject to a host of factors, including the macro-economic environment, property market sentiment, district development, market demand, age and quality of the building, etc. As the recent property market situation has been unusual, the Government has introduced long, medium and short-term measures to ensure the healthy and stable development of the property market, including increasing land supply to tackle the problem at source, combating speculative activities, enhancing the transparency of property transactions, and preventing excessive expansion in mortgage lending. The Government has set the target of making land available for an average of some 20 000 private residential flats per annum in the next ten years. This basket of measures has achieved results and speculative activities have abated significantly. We will continue the strategy that has proven to be effective in facilitating the healthy and stable development of the property market.

The Government and the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s subsidized housing policy is to provide PRH to lower-income families who cannot afford private rental accommodation, with a target of maintaining the average waiting time at around three years for general Waiting List (WL) applicants. Those who cannot afford private rental accommodation, including the residents in sub-divided flats, can apply for PRH if they are eligible. As for WL applicants who have pressing need for housing, they can consider applying for Compassionate Rehousing through the Social Welfare Department, or for the Express Flat Allocation Scheme for earlier allocation of PRH flats.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)039

Question Serial No.

0128

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The Housing Department (HD) estimates that the number of applications for rehousing to be processed next year will increase several times, yet the financial provision received by the HD under this Programme increases by only a few percentage points. How can the HD cope with the substantial increase in workload with such additional resources?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Wong-fat

Reply:

In 2012-13, it is estimated that a staff establishment of 29 non-directorate posts in the Housing Department (HD) is required to discharge the re-housing related duties. The related staff cost and other operating expenditure are estimated to be \$18.8 million. Although it is expected that the number of re-housing cases will increase in 2012, the HD will flexibly deploy manpower resources as appropriate to cope with the workload to ensure that the quality of service will be maintained and the affected residents will be rehoused as soon as practicable.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)040

Question Serial No.

1581

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The revised provision for 2011-12 nearly doubled the originally estimated provision. Please advise this Committee of the reasons and provide a breakdown of the expenditure in detail.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The revised financial provision in 2011-12 for Head 62 Programme (2) was higher than the original provision primarily because we required additional manpower and expenditures to carry out the work relating to regulating the sale of first-hand residential properties by legislation. The work involved includes providing support to the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential properties (the Steering Committee), preparing the proposed legislation taking into account the recommendations of the Steering Committee, conducting the public consultation exercise and preparing for the legislative process. We do not have a breakdown of expenditure on each of the tasks involved.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)041

Question Serial No.

2792

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under this programme, the Housing Department (HD) will work with the Estate Agents Authority (EAA) to closely monitor the adequacy and transparency of the sales information provided by vendors to purchasers of uncompleted residential units, and to improve the professionalism and service standards of estate agents. Please inform this Committee of the details on the work, the resources and manpower involved, and whether the Administration has evaluated the sufficiency of manpower and resources of the EAA for such purposes. If yes, what are the details; if no, will the Administration consider conducting such an evaluation?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The Government is committed to maintaining the healthy development of the private residential property market, safeguarding the reasonable rights of consumers, and ensuring that consumers have access to accurate and comprehensive property information, in particular information on uncompleted first-hand residential properties. The Administration adopts a multi-pronged mechanism to enhance the transparency of the sales of uncompleted first-hand residential properties, which includes the Lands Department (LandsD)'s Consent Scheme (the Consent Scheme), the guidelines issued by the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA), the regulatory work of the Estate Agents Authority (EAA), and the promotion and consumer education work of the Consumer Council.

In 2012-13, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) will continue to monitor the sale of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties to ensure that developers comply with the requirements of the Consent Scheme and/or REDA's guidelines. Specifically, THB will continue to examine, among other things, the sales brochures, price lists and show flats of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties and will refer cases of non-compliance with the Consent Scheme requirements and/or REDA's guidelines to the LandsD and/or REDA for appropriate follow-up actions.

The monitoring of the sale of private uncompleted first-hand residential properties is an on-going function of THB, and it forms part of the duties of a team under the Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing). We do not have a breakdown on the expenditure for this particular duty.

Meanwhile, the EAA will continue to enhance the professionalism and service standards of estate agents, including enhancing order at the sale sites of first-hand residential developments and their vicinity, stepping up inspections of estate agency shops, stepping up work relating to the investigations of complaints and disciplinary actions, and ensuring the provision of accurate information by estate agents when selling residential properties. The EAA will also continue to take disciplinary action against licencees who are found to be in breach of the Estate Agents Ordinance, its Code of Ethics or Practice Circulars.

Enhancing the professionalism and service standard of estate agents is an on-going function of the EAA. The EAA, which is an independent and self-financing body, will deploy its manpower to meet its operational requirements.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
 and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)042

Question Serial No.

2218

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Full implementation of the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) is expected to commence in the second quarter of 2012. How much manpower does the Independent Checking Unit have on its establishment to cope with the work? What are the buildings (provide the property names with a breakdown by districts as well as by categories of the Home Ownership Scheme/Tenants Purchase Scheme/retail facilities and car parks/public rental housing) targeted for the implementation of MBIS and MWIS (with a breakdown of the properties by types of mandatory schemes to be implemented) in the second half of 2012?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Wing-tat

Reply:

Basing on the delegated authority from the Director of Buildings, the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department will implement the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) in accordance with the Buildings Ordinance over properties sold under the Home Ownership Scheme and Tenants Purchase Scheme and the public housing estates with divested retail and carparking facilities. The ICU has allocated ten officers to implement the MBIS and MWIS.

The Buildings Department (BD) is still actively consolidating the implementation details of the MBIS and MWIS, the criteria for setting priority in selecting target buildings under the schemes is still under consideration. Once the BD sets out the relevant criteria, the ICU would select the target buildings for implementing the MBIS and MWIS in 2012 in accordance with BD's criteria.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)043

Question Serial No.

2219

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The work of the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) includes carrying out enforcement actions on unauthorised building works. How much manpower is responsible for the work? During the Planned Survey or the actions on unauthorised building works in 2010 and 2011, were any cases of unlawful rental sub-divided units encountered? If yes, what was the number of such cases? Did these cases come up in the processing of reports from members of the public in the past two years? If yes, what was the number of such cases?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Wing-tat

Reply:

A total of 29 staff members of the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department (including six Professionals, 18 Technical or Site Supervisory staff and five Clerical staff) administer the Buildings Ordinance under the delegated authority of the Director of Buildings in the former Hong Kong Housing Authority properties against unauthorized building works (UBWs), building disrepair and drainage pipes defects. Enforcement on UBWs forms a part of the work of the above staff members. We do not have a breakdown of the manpower involved in carrying out this part of the work.

With reference to the Buildings Department's annual large scale operation programme to tackle UBWs and disrepair in private premises, ICU carries out Planned Surveys in the domestic buildings of the Home Ownership Scheme courts and Tenants Purchase Scheme estates, aiming to inspect UBWs at the external walls and common areas, and the state of repair of these areas of the buildings. It does not cover inspection of the interior of individual units. Hence, the Planned Survey will not cover the situation of flat unit sub-division.

ICU's record of reports from members of the public on UBWs is not categorized according to the different nature of these UBWs.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)044

Question Serial No.

2220

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding "the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties by legislation", the Government is going to introduce a draft Bill into the Legislative Council. What is the earliest time anticipated for the draft Bill to be introduced? How much manpower does the Housing Department have in going through the legislative process of the draft Bill and setting up the proposed enforcement authority to implement the legislation upon enactment? What is the estimated staffing for the enforcement authority and the estimated expenditure required for setting it up?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Wing-tat

Reply:

To further strengthen the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) established in October 2010 the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (the Steering Committee) to discuss specific issues pertaining to the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties by legislation. The Steering Committee submitted detailed recommendations to THB in October 2011. Having considered the recommendations made by the Steering Committee, THB prepared a draft of the proposed legislation to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties. The two month public consultation exercise on the draft legislation ended on 28 February 2012. We will complete the public consultation report as soon as possible, and submit the relevant Bill to the Legislative Council in the first quarter of 2012.

Given the tight timeframe and the complexity of the tasks involved, THB has set up a time-specific Special Duties Unit (SDU) to fully focus on taking forward the legislative exercise and to set up the proposed enforcement authority. The SDU is headed by an Administrative Officer Staff Grade B, and is supported by an Administrative Officer Staff Grade C, two Senior Administrative Officers, a Senior Executive Officer, two Personal Secretary Is and a Personal Secretary II.

We will work out the resource requirements for the proposed enforcement authority and seek additional resources as necessary in accordance with the established resource allocation procedures in due course.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)045

Question Serial No.

2319

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Given that the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong suspects that the legislative proposals by the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (the Steering Committee), under which developers are allowed to quote flat prices on the basis of saleable area only and it is mandatory for the price lists to include a certain number of flats, are in contravention of the Basic Law, please advise us:

- a) whether the Government has sought legal advice to determine if the legislative proposals are subject to legal challenge; and
- b) whether the Government can ensure that, before its current term ends, the legislative proposals by the Steering Committee will be tabled at and endorsed by the Legislative Council.

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

To further strengthen the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) established the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (the Steering Committee) to discuss specific issues pertaining to the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties by legislation. The Steering Committee submitted detailed recommendations to THB in October 2011. Having considered the recommendations made by the Steering Committee, THB prepared the proposed legislation on regulating the sale of first-hand residential properties.

THB has sought the input of the Department of Justice in drafting the proposed legislation. Being a Government which respects the protection of human rights and is firmly committed to uphold the rule of the law, we will ensure the legislative proposals are in conformity with the Basic Law.

The two-month public consultation exercise on the draft legislation was completed. THB will complete the public consultation report as soon as possible, and submit the Bill into the Legislative Council in the first-quarter of 2012. We will make every effort to complete the legislative work in 2012.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)046

Question Serial No.

2570

Head: 62 Housing Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the Indicators of “programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances” and “illegal rooftop structure clearances” under this Programme, the estimated numbers of rehousing applications to be processed, offers to be made for public rental housing, offers to be made for interim housing and households to receive other housing benefits in 2012 increase substantially as compared with the actual figures in 2010 and 2011. Please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The reasons for the substantial increase in the 2012 estimated numbers and the details of the estimated clearance plans.
- (b) The details of the work, expenditure and manpower to be involved.

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

- (a) The number of rehousing cases required to be processed arising from programmed squatter clearances; and emergency clearances and illegal rooftop structure clearances under Head 62 Programme (4) depends on the actual number of planned clearances undertaken by the Lands Department (LandsD) and Buildings Department (BD) respectively in a particular year. As such, the actual number of rehousing cases in 2010 and 2011 cannot be compared directly with the estimated number of rehousing cases in 2012. The LandsD and BD are responsible for the clearance programmes, the details of which would only be made public when the LandsD conducts the pre-clearance registration; or when the BD issues the Statutory Order, so as to ensure that the occupants rehoused are those who are genuinely affected. As such, the LandsD and BD are unable to provide the concerned information.
- (b) The Housing Department (HD) is responsible for providing assistance to rehouse eligible clearances affected by the Government’s squatter clearances, illegal rooftop clearances and victims of natural disasters and other emergencies. The work involves screening rehousing applications referred by the LandsD and BD for verifying their rehousing eligibility, and allocating public rental housing or interim housing to eligible applicants, etc. In the financial year of 2012-13, it is estimated that the HD will require a staff establishment of 29 non-directorate posts to undertake the relevant duties. The related staff cost and other operating expenditure are estimated to be \$18.8 million.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)047

Question Serial No.

2586

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 75 of the Budget Speech that “According to the latest Public Housing Construction Programme of the Housing Authority, the total production of public rental housing (PRH) flats will be 75 000 in the five-year period starting from 2011-12. Our aim is to maintain the average waiting time for general PRH applicants at around three years”. Please advise on:

- (a) the details of how to reach this production volume and achieve the aim of maintaining the average waiting time for general PRH applicants at around three years; and
- (b) a breakdown by years and flat sizes of the production volume of PRH flats in the five-year period starting from 2011-12.

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

- (a) According to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s current Public Housing Construction Programme (PHCP), the anticipated new public rental housing (PRH) production during the five-year period from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is about 75 000 flats, averaging about 15 000 flats per year (**Annex** refers). However, the annual PRH production of 15 000 units is not a fixed target, the HA will continue to closely monitor the changes of number of applications on the Waiting List (WL), and roll forward the PHCP on a yearly basis having regard to the public demand for public housing. If necessary, the HA will adjust the level of PRH production and increase supply so as to maintain the average waiting time (AWT) of general WL applicants at about three years.

(b) The annual PRH flat production in the next five year period from 2011-12 to 2015-16, breakdown by flat types, is as follows:

Year of Completion	Flat Type ^{Note 1}				Year Total
	1/2-person flat	2/3-person flat	1-bedroom flat	2-bedroom flat	
2011/2012	2 600	3 400	4 100	1 100	11 200
2012/2013	3 000	4 500	4 400	1 200	13 100
2013/2014	3 800	5 100	6 200	2 000	17 100
2014/2015	2 900	3 700	6 200	1 700	14 500
2015/2016 ^{Note 2}	3 800	4 500	9 200	2 200	19 700

Note 1: Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and based on the PHCP as at December 2011.

Note 2: Actual flat mix may be subject to change at detailed design stage.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

Production of PRH Flats in the Coming Five Years (2011-12 – 2015-16)

Year of Completion / District [#]	Sub-District	Planned Flat Number
2011-12		
Urban	Kowloon City	800
	Kwun Tong	3 500
	Sham Shui Po	5 600
	Wong Tai Sin	1 300
Sub -Total:		11 200
2012-13		
Urban	Kowloon City	5 200
	Kwun Tong	2 700
	Sham Shui Po	1 400
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	2 800
New Territories	Tuen Mun	1 000
Sub -Total :		13 100
2013-14		
Urban	Kowloon City	8 200
	Sham Shui Po	1 500
Extended Urban	Kwai Tsing	2 300
	Sha Tin	3 000
	Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O)	2 100
Sub -Total :		17 100
2014-15		
Urban	Kwun Tong	900
	Sham Shui Po	2 900
	Wong Tai Sin	1 000
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	3 500
New Territories	North	1 300
	Yuen Long	4 900
Sub -Total :		14 500
2015-16		
Urban	Kwun Tong	9 500
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	4 600
	Island (Tung Chung)	3 500
New Territories	Tai Po	500
	Yuen Long	1 600
Sub -Total :		19 700
Total :		75 600

Based on the Public Housing Construction Programme as at December 2011

Extended Urban areas include Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)048

Question Serial No.

1705

Head: 62 Housing Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Private Housing

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under this Programme, the estimated provision for 2012-13 is \$34,100,000, representing a decrease of 6.1% against the revised provision for 2011-12. Please advise this Committee how the provision was/ will be used in 2011-12 and 2012-13 for the following purposes:

- (a) monitoring the regime of self-regulation undertaken by the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong to increase the transparency of sale of uncompleted residential units;
- (b) monitoring developments in the private residential rental market; and
- (c) bringing forward the recommendations of the "Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation".

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Kwan-yuen, Andrew

Reply:

- (a) The Government is committed to maintaining the healthy development of the private residential property market, safeguarding the reasonable rights of consumers, and ensuring that consumers have access to accurate and comprehensive property information, in particular information on uncompleted first-hand residential properties. The Administration adopts a multi-pronged mechanism to enhance the transparency of the sale of uncompleted first-hand residential properties, which includes the Lands Department (LandsD)'s Consent Scheme (the Consent Scheme), the guidelines issued by the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA), the regulatory work of the Estate Agents Authority, and the promotion and consumer education work of the Consumer Council.

Over the past three years, the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) has implemented, through the Consent Scheme and REDA's guidelines, a number of measures to enhance the transparency and clarity of the property and transaction information on uncompleted first-hand private residential properties. These include the implementation of the "nine new measures" on sales brochures, price lists, show flats and transaction information in June 2010.

In 2012-13, THB will continue to monitor the sale of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties to ensure that developers comply with the requirements of the Consent Scheme and/or REDA's guidelines. In this regard, THB will continue to examine, among other things, the sales brochures, price lists and show flats of uncompleted first-hand private residential properties and will refer cases of non-compliance with the Consent Scheme requirements and/or REDA's guidelines to the LandsD and/or REDA for appropriate follow-up actions.

- (b) The Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) is responsible for compiling the official price and rental indices on private residential properties. The indices are uploaded onto RVD's website on a monthly basis for public information. THB will continue to monitor the relevant data of RVD.

In addition, THB collects from relevant departments data which is useful for projecting the supply of first-hand private residential flats in that year and the coming few years, and makes projections on the number of private residential flats which commence construction in that year, the number of flats to be completed in that year, and the estimated supply of private residential flats in the coming few years. THB (and the former Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau) has been providing the aforementioned data in its website on a quarterly basis since November 2004.

THB will continue to undertake the above duties in order to ensure the healthy and stable development of the private residential market.

- (c) To further strengthen the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties, THB established in October 2010 the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sale of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (the Steering Committee) to discuss specific issues pertaining to the regulation of the sale of first-hand residential properties by legislation. The Steering Committee submitted detailed recommendations to THB in October 2011. Having considered the recommendations made by the Steering Committee, THB prepared a draft of the proposed legislation to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties. The two-month public consultation exercise on the draft legislation ended on 28 January 2012. We will complete the public consultation report as soon as possible, and submit the relevant Bill to the Legislative Council in the first quarter of 2012.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)049

Question Serial No.

1706

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under this programme, the estimated financial provision for 2012-13 is \$12.2 million. How will the Administration use the fund to monitor the progress on supply and timely availability of public housing sites?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Kwan-yuen, Andrew

Reply:

The land supply for public housing is monitored through liaison with relevant bureaux and government departments to ensure sufficient land supply to cater for the demand for public housing and to meet the overall development needs of the society. The Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply chaired by the Financial Secretary will co-ordinate the efforts of the departments concerned to ensure that issues relating to housing land will be dealt with as a matter of priority to safeguard a steady and adequate supply of land for housing development.

In relation to the administration of Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711, we will liaise and monitor the implementation and timely delivery of housing-related infrastructure projects so as to meet the public housing production programme. We will liaise with relevant bureaux and government departments on funding arrangements, seek funding approvals from the Legislative Council, and co-ordinate with relevant bureaux and government departments at various stages of the project.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)050

Question Serial No.

2907

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The Government has said that it will pay two months' rent for public housing tenants. Please inform this Committee for which two months the Administration will pay the rent, and how it will be paid.

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Kwok-hung

Reply:

The Administration will seek funding approval from the Legislative Council Finance Committee (FC). Subject to the FC's approval, the Hong Kong Housing Authority and the Hong Kong Housing Society will start the necessary preparatory work. The measure is expected to take effect after mid-2012, when the tenants/licencees concerned will not be required to pay all or part of the rent/licence fees for two months.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)051

Question Serial No.

0599

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In regard to the Government's paying two months' rent for public housing tenants, when is the estimated earliest time for the Government to pay the rent on behalf of them?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

The Administration will seek funding approval from the Legislative Council Finance Committee (FC). Subject to the FC's approval, the Hong Kong Housing Authority and the Hong Kong Housing Society will carry out the necessary work. The measure is expected to take effect after mid-2012, when the tenants/licencees concerned will not be required to pay all or part of the rent/licence fees for two months.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)052

Question Serial No.

0600

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

For the financial year 2011-12, how many eligible applicants were allocated public rental housing (PRH) units and interim housing units? Please provide the breakdown of the allocation figures by PRH estate/interim housing. Has the Administration conducted surveys on the average waiting time of the beneficiaries for being allocated a unit, counting from the date of their application to the time they moved in? How many applicants were considered by the Administration as ineligible and were not allocated housing units? What are the criteria used by the Administration to decide on the eligibility of the applicants?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

In the financial year of 2011-12 (as at end January 2012), 45 households (107 persons) and 13 households (25 persons) involved in clearance exercises were eligible for allocation of public rental housing (PRH) and interim housing respectively. The Housing Department does not keep the statistics on the average time for allocating a unit to beneficiaries, counting from the date of their application to the time they move in.

In the financial year of 2011-12 (as at end January 2012), there were 40 households (81 persons) not eligible for rehousing arrangement. To qualify for rehousing to PRH or interim housing, the occupants affected by squatters or illegal rooftop structures clearances are required to satisfy the rehousing eligibilities under the prevailing policy and the general eligibility criteria of the PRH Waiting List.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)053

Question Serial No.

0601

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

- a) As regards the programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances, the figures of 2010-11 dropped significantly as compared with those of 2009-10. How was the drop in the figures affected by the adjustment in the Lands Department's clearance programmes in 2011?
- b) As regards the programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances, please advise this Committee on the estimates of expenditure, staff establishment, and the progress and schedule of enforcement actions for 2012-13? Please also give a breakdown, by districts under various District Councils, of the number of squatters programmed for clearance known to the Administration, and the numbers of residents and households to be involved.

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

- a) The number of rehousing cases arising from programmed squatter clearances and emergency clearances under Head 62 Programme (4) depends on the actual number of planned clearances undertaken by the Lands Department (LandsD) in a particular year. In 2011, the LandsD re-scheduled or postponed some clearance projects. As such, the relevant actual rehousing applications in 2011 was lower than estimated.
- b) In the financial year of 2012-13, it is estimated that the Housing Department will require a staff establishment of 29 non-directorate posts to provide assistance to rehouse clearances affected by clearances, provide assistance to rehouse the occupants of illegal rooftop structures displaced by the Buildings Department's enforcement actions, and carry out other related work. The related staff cost and other operating expenditure are estimated to be \$18.8 million. We do not have a breakdown of the resources involved specifically for carrying out the rehousing duties arising from programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances.

The LandsD is responsible for the relevant clearance programmes, the details of which would only be made public when conducting the pre-clearance registration, so as to ensure that the occupants rehoused are those who are genuinely affected. As such, the LandsD is unable to provide the concerned information.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)054

Question Serial No.

0602

Head: 62 Housing Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

As regards the clearance of illegal rooftop structures, please advise this Committee on the estimates of expenditure, staff establishment, and the progress and schedule of enforcement actions for 2012-13. Please also give a breakdown, by districts under various District Councils, of the number of illegal rooftop structures programmed for clearance known to the Administration, and the numbers of residents and households to be involved.

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

In the financial year of 2012-13, it is estimated that the Housing Department (HD) will require a staff establishment of 29 non-directorate posts to provide assistance to rehouse clearerees affected by clearances, provide assistance to rehouse the occupants of illegal rooftop structures displaced by the Buildings Department's enforcement actions, and carry out other related work. The related staff cost and other operating expenditure are estimated to be \$18.8 million. We do not have a breakdown of the resources involved specifically for carrying out the rehousing duties arising from illegal rooftop structure clearance.

The Buildings Department (BD) is responsible for the relevant enforcement actions. BD will inform HD of the details of its enforcement actions only before it issues the Statutory Order to the concerned owner(s) under Section 24 of the Buildings Ordinance, so as to ensure that the occupants rehoused are those who are genuinely affected. As such, BD is unable to provide the concerned information.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)055

Question Serial No.

0802

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Support Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Among the Matters Requiring Special Attention under this Programme, it is mentioned by the Administration that the Housing Department will continue to “monitor the progress on supply and timely availability of public housing sites”. Please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) As regards the identification of sites for public housing development, how much time is required by the Administration on average to go through all the stages from planning to construction?
- (b) Given the large number of applicants currently on the Waiting List, will the Administration give due consideration to the housing need of these applicants when monitoring the availability of public housing sites? If yes, will the Administration increase the land supply for public housing development in response to the increasing number of applicants with a view to shortening the waiting time?
- (c) Apart from identifying public housing sites, the Administration is also required to allocate land resources for other types of subsidised housing such as the Home Ownership Scheme and My Home Purchase Plan. How does the Administration determine the allocation of land as well as the designation of land uses to ensure an adequate housing supply for all the three subsidised housing schemes?
- (d) As recently pointed out by the Secretary for Development, if private residential sites made available by the Government could not be absorbed by the market in the long run, the sites might be re-allocated elsewhere as appropriate, such as to the Housing Authority for public housing development. In this connection, are there any such sites currently available for the consideration by the department? Can the department take the initiative to request sites from the Development Bureau with a view to increasing the supply of subsidised housing?
- (e) How many sites suitable for public housing development were considered by the department in the previous year? What districts or lots are these sites located in? Have the plans of reserving the sites concerned for public housing development eventually been implemented?
- (f) In the past three years, how many sites which had originally been planned for public housing development were put on hold for some other reasons? If there were such cases, please list the reasons for the hold-up.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Production of PRH Flats in the Coming Five Years (2011-12 – 2015-16)

Year of Completion / District [#]	Sub-District	Planned Flat Number
2011-12		
Urban	Kowloon City	800
	Kwun Tong	3 500
	Sham Shui Po	5 600
	Wong Tai Sin	1 300
Sub -Total:		11 200
2012-13		
Urban	Kowloon City	5 200
	Kwun Tong	2 700
	Sham Shui Po	1 400
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	2 800
New Territories	Tuen Mun	1 000
Sub -Total :		13 100
2013-14		
Urban	Kowloon City	8 200
	Sham Shui Po	1 500
Extended Urban	Kwai Tsing	2 300
	Sha Tin	3 000
	Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O)	2 100
Sub -Total :		17 100
2014-15		
Urban	Kwun Tong	900
	Sham Shui Po	2 900
	Wong Tai Sin	1 000
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	3 500
New Territories	North	1 300
	Yuen Long	4 900
Sub -Total :		14 500
2015-16		
Urban	Kwun Tong	9 500
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	4 600
	Island (Tung Chung)	3 500
New Territories	Tai Po	500
	Yuen Long	1 600
Sub -Total :		19 700
Total :		75 600

Based on the Public Housing Construction Programme as at December 2011

Extended Urban areas include Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)056

Question Serial No.

0803

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Appeal Panel (Housing)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under this programme,

- (a) Among the cases pending hearing, how many years ago was the case with the longest waiting time submitted?
- (b) At present, what is the average waiting time for an appeal case to be heard?
- (c) Since the number of cases received each year was nearly three times the number of cases heard, what ways will the Administration adopt to prevent a prolonged accumulation of backlog cases?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

- (a) Among the cases pending to be processed, the case with the longest waiting time was submitted in December 2010. The hearing of the case was postponed twice due to the health problem of the appellant.
- (b) In 2011, the average waiting time for an appeal case to be heard was about three months plus.
- (c) We will closely monitor the situation, and take appropriate measures as necessary (such as increasing the number of cases to be heard in each hearing session) to expedite processing work.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)057

Question Serial No.

0804

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the Indicators under this Programme, will the Administration advise on:

- (a) the reasons for the reduction in the actual number of buildings targeted for clearance of unauthorized building works under Planned Survey from 22 in 2010 to 20 of 2011;
- (b) the reasons for lowering the estimated number for this Indicator to 20 in 2012; whether it has resulted in any changes in the estimate of expenditure involved;
- (c) among the advisory letters and removal orders issued, and the prosecutions referred to the Buildings Department against unauthorized buildings works last year, the respective numbers of letters and orders issued to and prosecutions brought against owners' corporations, individual owners or non-domestic users/shops.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

- (a) In 2004, the Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department formulated a five-year Planned Survey Programme for residential buildings of the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) courts and Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) estates. The surveys included the inspection and identification of unauthorized and dangerous building works, as well as the condition of common areas, external walls and drainage pipes. The ICU carries out enforcement actions against unauthorized building works or conditions of disrepair of common areas, etc in accordance with the Buildings Ordinance under the delegated authority from the Director of Buildings. The Programme stipulated that comprehensive surveys would be carried out in the 160 buildings which were identified to have more severe conditions. This Programme was completed at the end of 2009.

From 2010 onwards, the ICU has made reference to the Buildings Department's annual large scale operation programme to tackle unauthorized building works and disrepair in private premises, and extended the Planned Survey Programme to the remaining HOS courts and TPS estates. About 20 to 30 buildings will be selected each year for inspection as part of the Planned Surveys. The ICU would annually adjust the number of surveyed buildings according to the number of flats in the selected buildings, and the overall workload of ICU. In 2011, the ICU was further required to implement the Minor Works Control System and to handle more complaints on unauthorized building works. The ICU surveyed 20 buildings in 2011 and achieved the relevant indicator.

- (b) The ICU set the indicator for 2012 with reference to the situation in 2011. The ICU anticipated that the situation in 2012 would be similar to that in 2011, and set the indicator for Planned Surveys in 2012 at 20 buildings. There will be no change in the estimate of expenditure involved.

- (c) In 2011, the number of advisory letters and removal orders on unauthorized building works issued by the ICU were 1 151 and 409 respectively. It also referred 45 cases on removal of unauthorized building works to the Buildings Department (BD) for prosecution. We do not keep figures on the types of recipients of advisory letters or removal orders, nor the properties involved. In general, the majority of advisory letters or removal orders were issued to individual owners of residential buildings, only a few of them were related to the owners corporation or the owners of commercial facilities. For the cases referred to the BD for prosecution, all of them involved only individual owners of residential buildings.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
 and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)058

Question Serial No.

0805

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Building Control

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

As regards the financial and staffing provision under this programme,

- (a) the estimate for this year represents an increase of 16.3% over the revised estimate for last year. The Administration states that the increase in provision involves the deployment of three staff members for implementing the Minor Works Control System (MWCS). Please set out the respective posts, pay scales and work of the staff members concerned. Please advise on the areas that the increased provision will be spent on apart from the salaries and on-cost for the additional staff; and
- (b) how much manpower and provision will be set aside in 2012-13 by the Administration for the implementation of the MWCS, the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

- (a) The Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of Housing Department would deploy three staff members for implementing the Minor Works Control System (MWCS), including one Architect or Maintenance Surveyor grade officer (of which the pay scale is Master Pay Scale points 19-44), and two Technical Officer grade (of which the pay scale is Master Pay Scale points 9-22) or Clerk of Works grade (of which the pay scale is Master Pay Scale points 13-23) officers. Their main duty is to implement the MWCS according to the requirements as stipulated in the Buildings Ordinance and under the delegated authority from the Director of Buildings. Apart from salaries and on-cost for the additional staff above (representing about 2.6% among the overall increase), the remaining increased provision for Head 62 Programme (1) will mainly be spent on the following areas:
 - (i) other operating expenses for the MWCS such as duty traveling, postage and other necessary office expenditures (representing about 1% among the overall increase); and
 - (ii) additional expenditure for full year implementation of the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) in 2012-13 (representing about 12.7% among the overall increase). The team for implementing the MBIS and MWIS was established in the forth quarter of 2011-12. As such, the estimate for 2012-13 is higher than that for the last year.

- (b) The ICU will set aside three officers and about \$0.8 million (exclusive of staff cost) in 2012-13 to implement the MWCS. The ICU will also set aside ten officers and about \$9 million (exclusive of staff cost) to implement the MBIS and MWIS.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: D.W. PESCOD

Post Title: Permanent Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Housing)

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)059

Question Serial No.

2369

Head: 62 Housing Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

In regard to paragraphs 77 and 78 of the Budget Speech on the new Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) and My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP), what are the detailed locations of the sites which the Administration has given the go-ahead under the new HOS and MHPP and the respective scales as well as the commencement dates of construction?

Is the Government studying sites for the construction of flats under the new HOS and MHPP apart from those mentioned in the Budget? If yes, how many sites are involved? What is the estimated time required to complete the study?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

With the New Home Ownership Scheme (New HOS) sites identified at this stage, we plan to provide about 17 000 flats over four years from 2016-17 onwards, with an annual production of between 2 500 and 6 500 flats. It is anticipated that the construction works for the first six New HOS projects will commence in 2013 and be completed in 2016-17, providing about 2 500 two-bedroom flats with a saleable area around 40 square metres. These projects are located in:

1. Heung Fan Liu Street (junction of Mei Mun Lane), Sha Tin;
2. Pik Tin Street (junction of Mei Tin Road), Sha Tin;
3. Hin Tin Street (adjacent to Ka Tin Court), Sha Tin;
4. Ex-Tai Wo Hau Factory Estate Site at Sha Tsui Road, Tsuen Wan;
5. Ex-Chan Lai So Chun Memorial School Site at Cheung Ching Estate, Kwai Ching; and
6. Wang Yip Street (junction of Fu Yip Street), Yuen Long.

Apart from the above first batch of New HOS projects, the Hong Kong Housing Authority is actively conducting preliminary studies on the remaining sites.

On the My Home Purchase Plan (MHPP), the Government has already earmarked for the scheme sites in Tsing Yi, Diamond Hill, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Tuen Mun and other areas for about 5 000 flats.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)060

Question Serial No.

0342

Head: 162 – Rating and Valuation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Landlord and Tenant Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Please inform the Committee the number of tenancy enquiries and mediatory services provided in the last three years, and how many of the mediation cases result in a successful outcome.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Kam-lam

Reply:

The respective numbers of advisory and mediatory services on tenancy matters provided by the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) in the past three financial years (i.e. 2009-10 to 2011-12) are as below:

<u>Financial Year</u>	<u>No. of advisory services provided</u>	<u>No. of mediatory services provided</u>
2009-10	About 203 000	172
2010-11	About 220 000	190
2011-12 (as at January 2012)	About 170 000	145

RVD has not categorically asked the service users on whether they consider the mediation work successful.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MRS. MIMI BROWN

Post Title: Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

Date: 29.2.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)061

Question Serial No.

2209

Head: 162 Rating and Valuation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Landlord and Tenant Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Under this head, the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) is responsible for monitoring the operation of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance and providing the public with advisory and mediatory services on tenancy matters. Please inform the meeting of:

- (a) the number of tenancy disputes between landlords and tenants handled in 2011-12, the reasons for the disputes, and the number of cases where either the landlord or the tenant violated the law;
- (b) the number of cases seeking RVD's mediation in 2011-12, among which how many were settled through mediation and how many were referred to court;
- (c) the estimated departmental expenditure and manpower related to the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance for the coming year; and
- (d) the removal of the security of tenure for domestic tenancies since the amendment of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance in 2004 has given rise to more disputes between landlords and tenants, but no review has ever been conducted on this. Has RVD conducted any review on the ordinance and made any recommendations to the Transport and Housing Bureau? If so, what are the recommendations? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. PAN Pey-chyou

Reply:

- (a) The Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) provides free advisory and mediatory services on tenancy matters to landlords and tenants. As at January 2012, the number of advisory services on tenancy matters provided by RVD to landlords and tenants in 2011-12 was about 170 000. Some of the advisory services provided involved terms and arrangement of the tenancy agreement, whereas others involved recovery of possession by the landlord and the related procedures. RVD does not have statistics on the number of tenancy disputes related to the landlord or tenant breaching the law.
- (b) As at January 2012, the number of mediatory services on tenancy matters provided by RVD in 2011-12 was 145. RVD has not categorically asked the service users on whether they consider the mediation work successful. RVD does not have the statistics on the number of civil litigation cases relating to tenancy matters.
- (c) The expenditure to be incurred by RVD in administering the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance in 2012-13 is estimated to be \$27.8 million, and the estimated manpower is 66 staff members.

- (d) Upon the enactment of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Ordinance (the Amendment Ordinance) by the Legislative Council, rent control and security of tenure were removed in 1998 and 2004 respectively. The Amendment Ordinance was passed after public consultation and in-depth examination of the details by the relevant Bills Committee of the Legislative Council. It has struck a balance between the interests of landlords and tenants at different social strata. RVD is responsible for administering the Ordinance and will continue to provide landlords and tenants with free advisory and mediatory services on tenancy matters.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MRS. MIMI BROWN

Post Title: Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

Date: 1.3.2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

THB(H)062

Question Serial No.

0633

Head: Head 711 - Housing

Subhead (No. & title): B566CL - Development at
Anderson Road

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Civil Engineering and Development

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

The revised estimate of Development at Anderson Road for 2011-12 is \$430,000,000 and the estimate of the project for 2012-13 is \$425,000,000. However, according to the original proposal approved by the Finance Committee in 2007 – PWSC (2007-08) 57, the estimated expenditure on the project for 2011-12 and 2012-13 should be \$664,300,000 and \$771,000,000 respectively. What are the reasons for the lower than expected expenditure on the project? What is the latest progress of the project? Will the project be completed in December 2014 as scheduled? What enhanced measures will be adopted to expedite the project?

Asked by: Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply:

The change in cash flow requirement for 2011-12 and 2012-13 has taken into account the awarded contract price and the contractor's latest works programme.

The progress of the project is generally satisfactory. Two sites were handed over to Housing Department in October 2011 as scheduled for public housing development. The works contract is expected to be substantially completed by December 2014 as planned.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: C K HON

Post Title: Director of Civil Engineering and Development

Date: 28.2.2012