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Title	Progress on Implementation of Housing Production Target and Housing Undertakings in the Governor's Policy Addresses
CONTENTS	<p>HA 20/95</p> <p>THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY</p> <p>Memorandum for the Housing Authority</p> <p>Progress on Implementation of Housing Production Target and Housing Undertakings in the Governor's Policy Addresses</p> <p>PURPOSE</p> <p>This note informs Members of progress up to end 1994 in achieving our housing production target and in implementing the housing undertakings in the Governor's Policy Addresses in 1992, 1993 and 1994.</p> <p>PRODUCTION TARGETS</p> <p>Public Housing Production for the LTHS</p> <p>2. At the Development Committee (DC) meeting on 10 November 1994, Members noted an aggregate production target of 472,600 flats for the decade 1991/92 to 2000/01, including a safety margin of 11,700. According to the Housing Authority (HA)'s assessment shown in the December 1994 Public Housing Development Programme (PHDP) (Annex A), the forecast production for the decade is 449,100 flats, which is 23,500 flats short of the target.</p> <p>3. To make up the shortfall forecast in the December 1994 PHDP, the Housing Authority assesses that some 38 ha of land will be required. Taking into account the production lead time of 61 months, new and potential sites must be included in the PHDP before end 1995 and be available for construction works to commence in the first quarter of 1998 in order to complete the flats by March 2001. The Authority has already written to relay its concern to the Administration.</p> <p>4. The Administration is of the view that an inter- departmental Working Group on Housing Demand (WGHD) is undertaking a systematic and comprehensive assessment of housing demand. Subject to the findings of this assessment, which should be available by the middle of the year, the Administration will take positive action to identify and allocate more sites to the Housing Authority.</p> <p>5. The Housing Department is, in consultation with other government departments, examining the development feasibility and potential of a number of housing sites,</p>

including some Temporary Housing Area (THA) sites, "task force" sites and ex-military sites. However, many of the sites are unlikely to be available within the time frame being considered. On the other hand, the availability of a number of sites already in the PHDP for actual development remains uncertain and their production is susceptible to slippage beyond 2001 (Annex B). It is estimated that some 12,300 flats scheduled for completion in 2000/01 might fall out of the PHDP.

Roll-forward of the LTHS Beyond 2001

6. The WGHD convened by the Planning Department is expected to produce estimates of housing demand in both the public and private sectors between 1994/95 to 2003/04 by mid 1995. The Housing Authority (HA) will be consulted on the findings. Separately, the Government has announced its intention to formulate post-2001 housing strategies in the light of these assessments. The HA is expected to be consulted in respect of the public sector contribution to the LTHS.

REHOUSING TARGETS

Clearance of Outstanding Demand for Public Rental Housing (PRH)

7. At the end of August 1993, there were 165,000 live applications on the Waiting List, of which 77,000 were estimated to be effective demand. At the mid-term review of the LTHS conducted in 1994, it was anticipated that about 70% of the Waiting List applicants as at August 1993 could be rehoused by 1997/98, and the remaining in the following two years.

8. During the period from September 1993 to December 1994, 21,000 Waiting List applicants have been rehoused. At the end of 1994, there were some 144,000 applications on the Waiting List, of which about 116,000 applications were received prior to August 1993. Good progress is being made in achieving the target as set out in the mid-term review.

Squatter Clearance

9. The Governor pledged in October 1992 that all urban squatters on government land would be cleared by March 1996. In 1992, there were a total of 56,300 squatters living in the urban areas, of which 33,300 were on government land. As at the end of 1994, some 23,900 on government land had been cleared and rehoused with another 9,400 remaining. Clearance Application Forms in respect of most of these remaining squatter areas have been received, and their clearances will commence as soon as possible.

10. Given that the number of temporary housing spaces is decreasing due to the accelerated THA clearance programme, the Management and Operations Committee (MOC) decided in May 1994 that squatter clearances who satisfy all PRH rehousing eligibility criteria except the 7-year residence rule should be offered refurbished vacant flats in older rental estates. This will help in our clearance operations and contribute to our efforts in meeting the target, which also depends on the acceptability of the reception facilities to the clearances.

Clearance of Temporary Housing Areas (THAs)

11. In his Policy Address in 1992, the Governor undertook to rehouse by 1997 three-quarters of the residents then living in THAs. In October 1993, he further pledged to clear by 1996 all THAs built before 1984 and to make at least one rehousing offer to those living in THAs then by 1997.

12. There were 65,600 THA residents in October 1992. To achieve the 1992 undertaking will require rehousing of at least 49,200 persons by 1997. As at end 1994, we had rehoused 29,500. The situation is shown in Annex C. Present indications are that this undertaking will be achieved, provided that THA residents are co-operative in their selection of flats.

13. In October 1993, there were 14 THAs which had been built before 1984. Up to the end of 1994, five such THAs had been cleared. Clearance of six pre-1984 THAs are in progress, with two scheduled for clearance completion in early 1995, four in mid 1995. The clearance of the other three will be announced within 1995/6. The Governor's undertaking will be achieved, subject to THA residents' co-operation in rehousing operations. (Annex D)

14. Of the total THA population of 62,800 in October 1993, we have made rehousing offers to 27,800 by end 1994 through various channels, viz. clearances, trawling, the Waiting List and the HOS/HPLS. Some THA residents have declined offers of refurbished flats and have indicated their strong preference for rehousing in new flats. Since new flats account for only one-half of our rental supply, it is often not possible to satisfy their demand. We shall offer rehousing to another 20,000 THA residents before the end of 1995. We are confident that by 1997 we would be able to achieve the target of making at least one rehousing offer to all those who were living in THA in October 1993. However, the number of THA residents who will actually be rehoused will depend on their attitude in housing selection.

Housing for the Elderly

15. In his 1993 Policy Address, the Governor promised to:

- (a) rehouse by 1997 4,000 elderly single people on the Waiting List in 1993;
- (b) give priority to elderly people who apply for public housing; and
- (c) tackle urgently the problem of some 27,000 elderly people living in sub-standard accommodation in the private sector but have not come forward to register on the Waiting List.

In 1994, the Governor made a further pledge that in the next four years, some 22,300 flats should be allocated to the elderly.

16. Up to end 1994, some 1,600 elderly people on the Waiting List had been rehoused. We should be able to rehouse at least 1,000 elderly people each year up to 1997.

17. Priority in housing allocation is being given to elderly people (aged 58 or above) who agree to live together. Under the Elderly Persons Priority Scheme, allocation of public housing can normally be made within two years after registration subject to meeting the prevailing eligibility criteria. In 1994, 1,788 allocations were made. Under the Families with Elderly Persons Priority Scheme, nuclear families with at least one elderly parent or dependent relative aged 60 or above will have their housing allocation advanced by three years¹, subject to meeting the prevailing eligibility criteria. In 1994, 915 families benefited from this scheme.

18. Other than the rehousing of eligible single elderly people through compassionate rehousing on recommendation of the Social Welfare Department, we have encouraged those elderly who are not on the Waiting List to come forward for public housing through our publicity efforts. A large scale publicity programme was launched in late 1994. The opening of two Housing Information Centres (HICs), one in Wan Chai and the other to be set up in Mongkok, also helps to reach out to and assist elderly persons in housing application.

19. To increase the supply of flats suitable for allocation to elderly people, we are building on four new urban sites as well as infill sites and on low-rise structures. Where possible, annex blocks are incorporated within estates. As at end 1994, a total of 33,400 units suitable for allocation to the elderly, including Housing for Senior Citizens (HSC), will become available in the four years from 1995/96 to 1998/99. Some of these units will be used to rehouse non-elderly single people affected by our clearance and redevelopment operations but no less than 22,300 units will be allocated for elderly people in the coming four years.

IMPROVEMENTS TO HOUSING PROVISION

Quality of Management

20. In the 1993 Policy Address, the Housing Authority was asked to raise the quality of life in public housing estates through:

- (a) improved commitments to prompt repairs and maintenance;
- (b) improved security measures;
- (c) a long-term commitment to higher quality housing management.

In his 1994 Address, the Governor further committed \$3.3 billion to maintaining and improving public housing in 1994/95.

21. As regards maintenance and repairs, in addition to the application of stringent performance standards to both day-to-day and emergency/urgent repairs, the Housing Department has completed a review of its various arrangements for handling minor building works maintenance. Improvement proposals were endorsed by the Authority at its meeting on 5 January 1995 vide paper No. HA 68/94. Essentially, a computer-aided system is being developed to help manage tenants' requests on minor building maintenance, dedicated contracts will be let for minor maintenance works (two of

twelve contracts have been awarded), and a Minor Maintenance Section has been established under the Estate Management Branch to spearhead the changes. A total of \$512M maximum will be spent in the three years between 1994/95 and 1996/97. We will roll out 29 estates on trial on 1 April 1995, and subject to review, plan to implement the new arrangements in all public housing estates by mid 1996. Communications with tenants will also be strengthened by improvements to procedures which include the acknowledgment in writing of defects reported and the making of appointments with tenants. All these are aimed at making improvements to our services to tenants.

22. On improved security measures, the MOC approved on 24 September 1994 that Harmony and Trident blocks would be provided with a security package (System A) which would include a tower guard, security gates at all entrances, a telephone entry system, and close-circuit television (CCTV) inside lift cars as well as at the main entrance. For blocks of other designs, it was approved that they would be provided with CCTVs inside the lift cars which will be centrally monitored in a control room at the estate office (System B). It is anticipated that some 330 blocks in 38 estates will be fitted with security measures during the first phase of implementation from October 1994 to December 1995. Two bulk contracts for the first phase were awarded in October last year and the second lot of contracts will be awarded in early 1995. Details for the second phase will be worked out later this year in the light of experience gained in phase one. The Department is confident that the improvement programme which will cost a total of about \$327M (at 1994 prices) will be completed by the end of 1997, for the benefit of some 1,000 rental blocks.

23. At the same time, the following improvement measures which are part of the on-going improvement programme in estates will be implemented where necessary -

- (a) brightening up of dim areas within buildings;
- (b) general improvement to finishes of lift lobbies at main entrance to give a brighter outlook;
- (c) installation of pay-phones at convenient locations within estates; and
- (d) for blocks to be provided with security package System A, the installation of nests of letter-boxes on the G/F will tie in with the security upgrading programme.

24. As regards overall estate management, the Housing Department is committed to providing a high quality of service, and constant improvements are made to our services. Notable new initiatives include the stationing of a Customer Service Assistant in each estate office and the launching of the Estate Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) pilot projects in eight housing estates in April 1995. Each EMAC will comprise representatives from every Mutual Aid Committee (MAC) in the estate, qualified residents' association, where applicable, commercial tenants' association in the estate, and the elected District Board member whose constituency covers the estate. Other than Housing Department representatives (Assistant Housing Manager and maintenance staff) who would be in regular attendance, representatives from other Government departments would be invited to attend on a need basis.

25. The EMAC will provide a dedicated forum for the Housing Manager, who chairs the meeting, to communicate with and consult tenants on estate management matters, including building management and environmental improvement matters. An amount of funds determined at a rate of \$100 to \$200 per flat will be allocated to each estate. Use of the funds will, as far as possible, be in accordance with priorities agreed by the EMAC. EMACs are expected to provide a formal avenue to involve tenants in public housing management and to further decentralize estate management to local staff. They will help to contribute to better management services to meet tenants' needs and aspirations and increase the openness and public accountability of the Housing Authority.

SUMMARY

26. To sum up -

(a) the HA assesses that at least another 38 ha of land would have to be included in the PHDP before the end of 1995 in order to achieve the LTHS production target;

(b) the Government's view is that subject to the findings of a comprehensive assessment of housing demand being conducted by the WGHD, sufficient sites will be identified and allocated to the HA to meet confirmed demand;

(c) good progress is being made in rehousing some 70% of the Waiting List applicants as at August 1993 by 1997/98, and the remainder within two years thereafter;

(d) subject to clearerees' co-operation in rehousing operations, we aim to clear all urban squatters on government land (9,400 remaining) by March 1996;

(e) subject to THA residents' co-operation in flat selection, we should be able to -

(i) rehouse three-quarters of the THA residents in October 1992 by 1997;

(ii) clear all pre-1984 THAs by 1996; and

(iii) make at least one rehousing offer by 1997 to those living in THAs in October 1993;

(f) (I) we are making constant improvements to our maintenance and repair services; with the implementation of new arrangements for minor maintenance in all public rental housing estates by mid-1996 at a cost of \$512M;

(ii) over 1,000 blocks will be provided with security measures by end 1997 at a cost of \$327M; and

(iii) our on-going improvements to overall estate management will be reinforced by the implementation of the EMAC pilot schemes in April this year; and

(g) (i) some 4,000 elderly single people on the Waiting List in 1993 will be rehoused by 1997;

(ii) people who apply for public housing under the Elderly Persons Priority Scheme and the Families with Elderly Persons Priority Scheme will continue to receive priority in accordance with policy; and

(iii) barring any major delay to our housing productions, at least 22,300 housing units, including HSC, would be allocated to the elderly people in the coming four years.

27. We are reasonably confident that we will be able to achieve the Governor's undertakings as discussed above, subject to no significant slippages of housing production and the timely availability of new sites. The co-operation of clearerees in accepting refurbished flats, flats in different locations, and lower floor flats will also be important. Our ability to clear the Waiting List backlog as at August 1993 by the end of the decade will, inter alia, depend on no major change in housing policies, such as creation of new committed rehousing categories.

INFORMATION

28. This paper is issued for Members' information.

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Annex B

PHDP SITES SUSCEPTIBLE TO SLIPPAGE BEYOND 2001 (Excluding CRP Projects)

Flat
Project Production Completion

2000/01

1. Lei Yue Mun 850* 2/01
2. Sha Tin Area 4C/38A Ph1 2,277 3/01
3. Sha Tin Area 36C 1,920 7/00
4. TSW Res Zone North 3,000 12/00
5. TSW Res Zone East Ph1-2 4,300 5/00

Total : 12,347

* Note : Flat production could potentially be much higher at Lei Yue Mun depending upon resolution of environmental constraints.

Annex D

Progress on Clearing Temporary Housing Areas Built Before 1984 (As at end of 1994)

S/N THA to be cleared Progress

1. Cornwall Street THA)
2. Yick Yuen THA)
3. Yau Shing Street THA) Cleared
4. Tai Woh Ping THA)
5. Fat Kwong Street THA)

6. # Yuen Chau Kok THA) Under clearance.
7. * Yue Wan THA) Scheduled for completion of clearance in early 1995.
8. Kai Cheung THA) Under clearance.
9. Ping Shek THA) Scheduled for completion of
10. Shun Lee Tsuen THA) clearance in mid 1995
11. Welfare Road THA)

12. Shatin Tau THA) Scheduled for announcement
13. Mui Lee THA) of clearance in 1o995/96
14. Sheung Shui THA)

Clearance completed on 13.1.1995

* Clearance completed on 10.1.1995