THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY

Memorandum for the Housing Authority,
Management and Operations Committee
and the Complaints Committee

Statistics on Complaints
(January to March 1997)

PURPOSE

This paper reports on the complaints received and handled by the Housing Department and the Complaints Committee during the quarter from January to March 1997.

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Number of Complaints

2. The Housing Department received a total of 1,387 complaints in the quarter, representing a decrease of 33.5% over the total of 2,086 cases received in the last quarter of 1996. The consistent downward trend in the number of complaints received since the first quarter of 1996 is indicative of improved services and an enhanced public image of the Department after it has embarked upon various performance improvement initiatives, including inter alia, the introduction of performance pledges and the formation of Estate Management Advisory Committees. Seasonal fluctuations, with the first few months of the year being characterized by festivals and fine weather, may also explain the decrease in complaints statistics in the quarter.

3. A chart showing the monthly average number of complaint cases received since the first quarter of 1995 is at Table 1 of Annex A.
Categories of Complaints

4. The pattern of distribution of complaints by nature resembles those of the previous quarters, with 1,015 cases (73.2%) pertaining to building and environment related matters, including, inter alia, building services, structural related building works, cleaning, hygiene and environmental nuisances. Tenancy related matters account for 14.3% of the complaints, with pets and noise nuisance being the usual major item. A chart showing the distribution of complaints by nature is at Table 2 of Annex A. These complaints are lodged mainly by public housing tenants (41.5%) and HOS/PSPS residents (14.5%). A chart indicating the source of complaints is at Table 3 of Annex A.

Complaints Received by Regions

5. As in the previous quarter, the four regions of estate management account for the majority (95.5%) of the complaints. The distribution of complaints in the four regions by categories is shown at Table 1 of Annex B.

6. Further breakdown of the complaints received by districts in the four regions is presented at Table 2 of Annex B. The districts with comparatively higher number of complaints are Sheung Kwai Chung, Hong Kong East and Kowloon West.

7. 8% (111 cases) of the complaints are outstanding as at the end of the quarter. On average, 9.1 days are required to handle a complaint.

COMPLAINTS REFERRED FROM THE OMBUDSMAN

8. During the same period, The Ombudsman has referred a total of 53 cases to the Department, reflecting a decrease of 40.5% over the preceding quarter. Of these, 38 cases are referred under the Internal Complaints Handling (INCH) Programme whereby simple complaint cases not meriting formal investigation are referred to the department for direct handling and reply to the complainants. The breakdown of the nature of complaint cases referred under the INCH programme is shown at Table 1 of Annex C.
9. In addition, The Ombudsman has referred 15 cases to the Department for enquiries and investigation. Out of this number, 3 cases are for formal investigation under section 12(1) of The Ombudsman Ordinance while 12 cases are for enquiries. A breakdown of these complaints by nature is shown at Table 2 of Annex C while a synopsis of the cases under formal investigation is provided at Table 3 of Annex C.

COMPLAINTS ADDRESSED TO THE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

10. A synopsis of the cases lodged to/handled by the Complaints Committee during the period is at Annex D. Departmental directorate officers also handled 10 complaints during the quarter. A summary of the cases is at Annex E.

REQUESTS RECEIVED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT

11. The Department has received a total of 184,086 requests during the quarter. This amounts to an increase of 10,844 cases or 6.3% over the past quarter. Most of the requests are related to building and environment (66.2%), public housing application (17.5%), housing policies (9.3%) and tenancy (5.4%) matters. These requests are mainly made by public housing tenants (62.2%) and applicants (16.4%) direct. On average, 12.1 days are required to handle a request upon receipt.

INFORMATION

12. This paper is issued for Members’ information.

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