

## LCQ17: Promoting opening up of data

Following is a question by the Hon Charles Mok and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, in the Legislative Council today (November 7):

Question:

It has been reported that Hong Kong was ranked the 24th, a ranking lagging substantially behind those of Taiwan, Japan and Singapore, in the Global Open Data Index published last year by the Open Knowledge Foundation in the United Kingdom (UK). Hong Kong even scored zero in areas of open data for the company register and for land ownership. There are views that Hong Kong needs to catch up expeditiously in respect of opening up data. On the other hand, it is mentioned in this year's Policy Address that the Government has firmed up the policy and measures on opening up government data, and required all government departments to formulate and publish their annual open data plans (annual plans) by the end of this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will provide additional manpower and resources to the various bureaux/government departments for execution of the annual plans;
- (2) whether it took into consideration perspectives such as information security, personal privacy and government revenue when it formulated the policy on opening up data, and how it will determine the extent of opening up various types of data;
- (3) whether it will, by making reference to the relevant practices in the UK and Canada, draw up an "open government licence" to stipulate (i) that the Government is the copyright owner of the datasets concerned, and (ii) the rights and obligations of the users of the datasets, so as to facilitate the extensive use of the datasets;
- (4) whether it will, by making reference to the practices in other jurisdictions, (i) formulate open data lists for the Chief Executive's Office, the offices of the various Secretaries of Departments and Directors of Bureaux, as well as the various bureaux and government departments, and (ii) determine the extent of opening and reusing the data concerned;
- (5) whether it will add the following government datasets to the lists of government data to be opened up so that members of the public can use such data free of charge: (i) the Company Register, (ii) the Land Register, (iii) the Business Register, (iv) the register of vehicles, (v) bankruptcy and compulsory winding-up records, (vi) birth/death records and (vii) marriage records; if so, of the details and the timetable; if not, the reasons for that;
- (6) whether it will put in place the relevant performance indicators and

feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of government data being opened up;

(7) whether it will review the requests for access to government information previously made by members of the public, in order to gauge the public's demand for the various types of data, and establish a mechanism for receiving and handling the public's requests for access to datasets;

(8) whether it has plans to promote the opening up of data among the various District Councils, public bodies, universities and non-profit-making organisations, and issue codes of best practices to them;

(9) whether it will, in collaboration with public and private organisations, examine the obstacles hindering the opening up of data, and establish a platform to facilitate data sharing, with a view to promoting data sharing among various sectors in an equal, mutually-beneficial and safe manner; and

(10) whether it will adopt measures (e.g. providing relevant teaching materials and organising competitions on application development) to step up efforts to promote the use of those data opened up, so as to encourage the industry to use such data to develop various applications and tools?

Reply:

President,

In September 2018, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) issued guidelines to all government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) on the new open data policy and implementation measures. B/Ds are required to progressively open up their data under the "data.gov.hk" portal for free use by the public, and formulate and publish their annual open data plans on their websites every year. Their first annual open data plan should be published by end 2018.

After consulting the relevant B/Ds, our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

(1) B/Ds will formulate and implement their annual open data plans having regard to their manpower and resources. The OGCIO will render necessary technical and financial support to individual B/Ds for enhancing their departmental information technology systems for releasing relevant datasets.

(2) In formulating their annual open data plans, B/Ds will take into account factors such as information security, personal privacy and financial implications to the Government, in addition to the needs of the public and the industry, and ensure that the opening up of data complies with relevant ordinances such as the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). B/Ds should in principle open up their data for free use by the public as far as possible.

(3) and (4) In formulating the new open data policy and relevant measures, we

have made reference to the experience of other countries and regions, as well as relevant international reports and studies such as the analysis of the Global Open Data Index. The new policy requires B/Ds to release datasets in machine-readable format and with timely updates.

According to the existing terms and conditions in using the "data.gov.hk" portal, members of the public are allowed to browse, download, distribute, reproduce, print and hyperlink such data, on a free-of-charge basis, for both commercial and non-commercial uses, on the condition that they have to state clearly the data source in all copies and acknowledge the intellectual property rights of the Government.

(5) Regarding the suggestion to upload full information on the seven registers or records raised in this question to the "data.gov.hk" portal, the response from relevant B/Ds is as follows:

Items (i) and (v): Company Register and Bankruptcy and Compulsory Winding-up Records

The Companies Registry and the Official Receiver's Office provide company search service, and bankruptcy and compulsory winding-up search services respectively to the public in accordance with the relevant legislation. To prevent improper use of personal data obtained via the search services, the Companies Registry and the Official Receiver's Office require users to state the purposes of conducting the searches, in accordance with the recommendations made in the Privacy Commissioner's Report on Survey of Public Registers Maintained by Government and Public Bodies in July 2015.

Item (ii): Land Registers

At present, members of the public can either access through Internet or visit the Land Registry's Customer Centre and the New Territories Search Offices to conduct searches of land registers and place order for copies of land records for properties anywhere in the territory after paying the fees stipulated in the Land Registration Fees Regulations (Cap. 128B).

Item (iii): Business Register

According to the Inland Revenue Department (IRD), the public can enquire the business registration number of a business free of charge through the Online Business Registration Number Enquiry services via the GovHK portal ([www.gov.hk](http://www.gov.hk)). The IRD is planning to include from mid-2019 onwards the monthly number of newly registered businesses in the lists of government data to be opened up.

Item (iv): Register of Vehicles

According to the Transport Department (TD), information and data contained in the Register of Vehicles involve personal data of registered vehicle owners. Such information should only be used for traffic and transport matters. Currently, pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374E), residents can make application to the TD for Certificates of Particulars of Motor Vehicles online, by post or in person at the TD's licensing offices. Upon payment of a prescribed fee, residents can obtain information on individual vehicles as

listed out in the Register of Vehicles.

Items (vi) and (vii): Birth/Death Records and Marriage Records

Currently, members of the public may access the figures of registration of births, deaths and marriages in Hong Kong on the website of the Immigration Department (ImmD). The ImmD is actively considering inclusion of such figures in the lists of government data to be opened up.

(6)&(7) Under the new open data policy, B/Ds will take into account the views and suggestions of the public on their annual open data plans. Besides, the OGCI0 will play a co-ordinating role to collect the annual open data plans of B/Ds, and provide a full list under the "data.gov.hk" portal for soliciting views and suggestions from the public.

(8) Apart from opening up more government data, B/Ds are required to encourage public organisations (e.g. district councils, universities and non-profit-making organisations) and private enterprises to open up their data related to public facilities or with high degree of public interest, and include relevant specific measures in their annual open data plans.

(9) and (10) The OGCI0 will collaborate with public and private organisations through various channels, such as seminars and competitions, to promote open data and discuss the associated challenges and problems. For example, the OGCI0 organised the Data.One App Competition in 2014, and also supported industry organisations to organise Smart City Datathon 2018 in October 2018 to encourage various sectors to develop innovative application solutions using the open data on the "data.gov.hk" portal.

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## [Result of the tenders of the People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on November 7, 2018](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

Result of tenders of the People's Bank of China RMB Bills held on November 7, 2018:

### Tender Result

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Tender Date : November 7, 2018

Bills available for Tender : Three-month RMB Bills  
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Issuer : The People's Bank of China  
Issue Number : BCMKFP18022

Issue Date : November 9, 2018

Maturity Date : February 8, 2019 (or the  
closest coupon payment date)

Application Amount : RMB 42,615 million

Issue Amount : RMB 10,000 million

Average accepted Coupon  
Rate : 3.42 %

Highest accepted Coupon  
Rate  
(Bills' Coupon) : 3.79 %

Lowest accepted Coupon  
Rate : 2.50 %

Allocation Ratio : Approximately 34.87 %

#### Tender Result

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Tender Date : November 7, 2018

Bills available for Tender : One-year RMB Bills  
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Issuer : The People's Bank of China  
Issue Number : BCMKFP18023

Issue Date : November 9, 2018

Maturity Date : November 9, 2019 (or the closest coupon payment date)

Application Amount : RMB 32,855 million

Issue Amount : RMB 10,000 million

Average accepted Coupon Rate : 3.88 %

Highest accepted Coupon Rate (Bills' Coupon) : 4.20 %

Lowest accepted Coupon Rate : 2.80 %

Allocation Ratio : Approximately 46.99 %

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## [LCQ8: Opening up data of Government, public organisations and public utilities](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Wu Chi-wai and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, in the Legislative Council today (November 7):

Question:

The Chief Executive has mentioned in this year's Policy Address that the Government has firmed up the policy and measures on opening up government data, including the establishment of a mechanism that requires all government departments to publish annually their open data plans for the coming year, and the first of such plans are to be published by the end of this year. There are comments that public organisations and public utilities should also

open up their data to promote the development of Hong Kong into a smart city. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the government department or committee responsible for executing the aforesaid mechanism as well as the vetting and approval of the open data plans submitted by the various departments; the number of government datasets expected to be opened up next year;

(2) whether the first open data plans to be published by the various government departments will contain implementation timetables; if so, of the details;

(3) whether the various government departments will open up more real-time data which are related to people's livelihood (e.g. data on the utilisation rates of public swimming pool complexes and study rooms);

(4) whether it will request public organisations such as the Hospital Authority and the Town Planning Board to formulate open data plans; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(5) whether it has formulated strategies and work plans for encouraging public utilities to open up their data, including (i) reviewing the relevant legal framework and (ii) considering the addition of provisions on opening up of data to the franchise agreements to be signed in future; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

After consulting the relevant bureaux and departments, our reply to the five parts of the question is as follows:

(1) In September 2018, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) issued guidelines to all government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) on the new open data policy and implementation measures. B/Ds are required to progressively open up their data for free use by the public under the "data.gov.hk" portal, and formulate and publish their annual open data plans on their websites every year. Their first annual open data plans should be published by the end of 2018. In addition, relevant B/Ds should explore feasible options to encourage public and private organisations to open up their data related to public facilities or with high degree of public interest, and include specific measures in this regard in their annual open data plans. The OGCIO will play a co-ordinating role to collect the annual open data plans of B/Ds, and provide a full list under the "data.gov.hk" portal for soliciting views and suggestions from the public.

Since B/Ds are currently preparing the relevant plans, at this stage we are unable to provide the number of additional datasets to be released next year.

(2) In formulating their annual open data plans, B/Ds will take into account the needs of the public and the industry in assessing the priority and the

timetable of opening up different data.

(3) The data currently opened up or planned to be opened up shortly by B/Ds cover different areas, including medical and health, transport, education, commerce and economy, environment, leisure and culture, housing, land development and information relating to people's livelihood.

Currently, public libraries under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) do not have a system to collect and disseminate real-time facility utilisation data. In developing the new library system, the LCSD will actively study measures to open up more real-time data about the utilisation of library facilities, for example the usage and booking of computer workstations. As for public swimming pools, some of them display the attendance at the entrances. However, the information technology system is not equipped with a real-time attendance data transmission function, and therefore LCSD is not able to further open up such information.

(4) At present, open data collected and compiled by some public organisations (e.g. the Insurance Authority, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, the Hong Kong Housing Authority and the Hospital Authority (HA)) are already available on the "data.gov.hk" portal.

Data from the HA will form part of the Food and Health Bureau's annual open data plan. Currently, datasets from the HA which have been uploaded to the "data.gov.hk" portal include inpatient and day inpatient services throughputs, statistics on cancer, information of hospitals and clinics, etc. The HA will update the uploaded datasets regularly and will consider making available new types of data, such as waiting time for Accident & Emergency Departments and Specialist Out-patient Clinics.

The Town Planning Board (TPB) has already published information on planning applications, amendments to statutory plans, etc. via TPB's website for public inspection. The TPB is also preparing for releasing relevant information via the "data.gov.hk" portal starting from 2019.

(5) At present, the "data.gov.hk" portal has made available information related to public utilities, including:

- (i) MTR stations and services as published by MTR Corporation Limited;
- (ii) tramways main routes and tram stops as published by Hong Kong Tramways Limited;
- (iii) location of electric vehicle charging stations as published by CLP Power Hong Kong Limited; and
- (iv) location of electric vehicle charging stations, estimated power consumption for general office appliances, and defect rectification tips for customers' electrical installations as published by The Hongkong Electric Company Limited.

The "data.gov.hk" portal has provided information on timetables and fare tables of the franchised ferry services operated by The "Star" Ferry Company, Limited since September this year.



Moreover, the Government proposes in the 2018 Policy Address to fund and develop a data collection system and a mobile application, as well as install global positioning devices on green minibuses (GMB), so as to enable passengers to get access to the real-time arrival information of GMB routes through the Transport Department (TD)'s website and "HKeMobility" mobile application. The relevant data will also be released in machine-readable format via the "data.gov.hk" portal for free use by the public. It is expected that the system will be launched officially in early 2022.

On franchised buses, all franchised bus companies currently provide passengers with real-time bus arrival information on their regular bus routes through their websites and smartphone applications. They also work with the TD in providing the real-time arrival information in the TD's "HKeMobility" mobile application and website. The six bus franchises will only expire in 2023 or later. When the bus franchises are about to expire, the Government will continue to deal with the renewal applications in accordance with the relevant legislation and the established procedures, including consideration of adding clauses to the franchise to enhance services. The Government will continue to discuss with the public transport operators, and actively encourage and facilitate the opening up of their data in machine-readable format on the "data.gov.hk" portal, in the light of the Government's open data policy.

Besides, the two power companies are planning to provide more power consumption data, having regard to relevant factors including safeguards for customers' privacy and compliance with relevant legislation.

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## [LCQ16: Leave deduction arrangements for civil servants working under the six-day work week mode](#)

Following is a question by Dr Hon Elizabeth Quat and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, in the Legislative Council today (November 7):

Question:

A civil servants' trade union has relayed to me that under the existing requirement, when staff members take leave for one week, those who work under the six-day work week mode will have six days deducted from their annual leave balance, whereas their counterparts who work under the five-day work week mode will have five days deducted. In March last year, the union proposed that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) implement, for staff of the various grades in the Department working under the six-day work week mode, the following trial scheme: staff members who are absent from

work for seven days in a duty cycle will be subject to annual leave deduction of five days instead of six days. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the reasons why LCSD has not yet implemented the trial scheme after considering it for more than one year;
- (2) whether it has studied the feasibility of the trial scheme; if so, of the study outcome (including the implementation difficulties, and the workload implications on staff);
- (3) whether LCSD will implement the trial scheme first for the Amenities Assistant grade staff for a period of one year, and extend the scheme, after it has been proved to work, to cover other grades; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) as some trade unions have relayed that the Civil Service Bureau has set out a number of pre-conditions for LCSD to implement the trial scheme, of the relevant details; and
- (5) as the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) (i) introduced in December 2015 a similar trial scheme, (ii) has since January this year been testing the implications of the relevant leave deduction arrangement on the department, and (iii) is updating its e-leave system for implementing the said arrangement, whether LCSD has assessed if its e-leave system can dovetail with the implementation of the trial scheme; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the negative, of the details and whether it has any solution; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

As regards the various parts of the question, after consulting the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Civil Service Bureau (CSB), my reply is as follows –

(1), (2) and (4) The LCSD understands the concern of officers working on a non-five day week work pattern on their Leave Deduction Arrangements (LDA). CSB earlier invited all departments that had not fully implemented five-day week (including the LCSD) to explore the feasibility of revising the LDA for staff on non-five day work week pattern, but all LDA proposals should comply with the related basic principles, i.e. (a) no reduction in the conditioned hours of service of individual staff; (b) no additional manpower and no reduction in the level of service to public; and (c) existing rules governing leave remain intact.

The LCSD has conducted initial review on the operation of service units/venues under its purview. Given that the department manages a variety and large number of venues, and different venues have staff of different grades, with varying establishment, conditioned hours of work, job nature and

shift patterns, the LCSD needs more time to devise a pilot scheme that complies with the relevant basic principles. Careful consideration has also to be given to various aspects in order not to affect public service. The LCSD has yet to formulate a feasible pilot scheme of revised LDA for officers on non-five day week work pattern. Besides, the Electronic Leave Application and Processing System (ELAPS) currently used by the department cannot process revised LDA. It is envisaged that manual processing and calculation of such "leave deduction" will involve additional workload and may lead to problems on leave record management. The LCSD considers it necessary to duly address the issues mentioned above before proposing any pilot scheme.

(3) The LCSD understands the concerns of individual grades/staff unions on the progress of the revised LDA but the feasibility of implementing a pilot scheme of revised LDA is subject to consideration in multiple perspectives. The department will continue examining the feasibility of implementing a pilot scheme of revised LDA and relevant issues. A concrete trial plan and its timetable are not available at this stage.

(5) As mentioned in the reply to part (1) of the question, the ELAPS currently used by the department cannot process revised LDA. The LCSD will continue examining the feasibility of implementing a pilot scheme of revised LDA and other relevant issues. At this stage, there is no plan to update the ELAPS or develop a new system to cater for revised LDA.

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## [LCQ22: HOS flats for purchase by White Form applicants](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Wu Chi-wai and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (November 7):

Question:

It has been reported that an overwhelming response has been received for each sale exercise for Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats since the sale was resumed in 2014 by the authorities. At present, the ratio of the quota of HOS flats allocated to White Form (WF) applicants to the quota for Green Form (GF) applicants is 50:50. However, the number of WF applicants is many times higher than that of GF applicants. Some WF applicants who have applied for purchasing HOS flats for several times but in vain feel discouraged. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as the authorities decided in January this year to regularise the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme, those eligible for GF status will have a greater chance of acquiring homes than before, whether the authorities

will, in future, consider raising the ratio of HOS flats allocated to WF applicants; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the authorities have kept information on the numbers of previous attempts made by applicants for purchasing HOS flats; if so, of the highest number of unsuccessful attempts made by an individual applicant so far; if not, whether the authorities will consider keeping such information; and

(3) whether the authorities will consider, when putting up HOS flats for sale in future, increasing the chance of success in a ballot for those WF applicants who have been unsuccessful consecutively for a number of times; if not, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government has been striving to consummate the housing ladder by providing subsidised sale flats, including Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats, to help low to middle-income families to achieve home ownership. My reply to Hon Wu Chi-wai's questions is as follows:

(1) In line with established practice, prior to the launching of each HOS sale exercise, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will draw up the sales arrangements, including the quota between Green Form (GF) and White Form (WF) applicants, having regard to prevailing circumstances.

The quota between GF and WF applicants has varied over the years, with the GF portion ranging from 50 per cent to 80 per cent. HA resumed sale of HOS flats in 2014. The quota between GF and WF applicants was 60:40 for Sale of HOS Flats 2014, and changed to 50:50 for Sale of HOS Flats 2016 to Sale of HOS Flats 2018. Any remaining quota from the GF will be re-allocated to the WF queue, and vice versa.

In determining the quota allocation between GF and WF applicants for Sale of HOS Flats 2018, HA has taken into account the Subsidised Housing Committee (SHC)'s decision to regularise the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (GSH). The next GSH project will be launched in end-2018, providing more home ownership opportunities for GF applicants. SHC has also endorsed the launching of the White Form Secondary market Scheme (WSM) regularly. The 2018 WSM, with a quota of 2 500, provides WF buyers an additional avenue for home ownership. Balancing the home ownership aspirations between GF and WF buyers, the quota allocation between GF and WF applicants was maintained at 50:50.

The HA will continue to consider all relevant factors when determining the quota allocation between GF and WF applicants in future.

(2) The HA does not have records on the number of previous attempts made by applicants in purchasing HOS flats. The survey findings for Sale of HOS Flats 2016 conducted last year contain information on whether successful buyers had applied for the Sale of HOS Flats 2014. The relevant information has been

uploaded onto HA's webpage, and is extracted at Annex for Members' reference.

The Housing Department will review the information kept/compiled as and when necessary.

(3) As mentioned above, prior to launching each HOS sale exercise, the HA will formulate the relevant arrangements, including the applicants' order of priority for flat selection. Since the resumption of HOS in 2014, the HA accorded priority to certain categories of applicants, including applicants affected by the Government's clearance programme(s), applicants with elderly members and family applicants.

In determining the priority of flat selection for different categories of applicants, HA has to consider how to allocate limited resources to those with most pressing needs. Since the number of HOS flats put up for sale under each exercise is fixed, giving priority to certain categories of applicants means a lower priority for other categories.