

LCQ16: Reinstatement works for public rental housing flats

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Hak-kan and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (June 27):

Question :

At present, tenants of public rental housing (PRH) units are obliged to reinstate all the original fixtures and fittings and remove items added by them (reinstatement works) at their own expenses upon moving out of their units. However, if both the outgoing and incoming tenants of a unit wish to retain the fixtures and fittings added to the unit and if such fixtures and fittings meet the requirements, the Housing Department (HD) will normally allow such fixtures and fittings be retained. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of (i) the number of PRH units surrendered by tenants upon their moving out, (ii) among such units, the number of those for which reinstatement works had been carried out before they were surrendered, and (iii) the number of tenants who were allocated such reinstated units, in each of the past three years (set out by District Council district);

(2) whether it knows the time taken and the expenses incurred in general for carrying out reinstatement works;

(3) of the number of complaints received by HD in each of the past three years about the nuisances caused by reinstatement works;

(4) whether it has assessed the quantity of construction waste generated by reinstatement works in each of the past three years; and

(5) whether HD will review the current reinstatement requirements and improve the existing arrangements for granting exemption to reinstatement works (including establishing a matching service/platform for outgoing and incoming tenants), with a view to reducing (i) the need for carrying out reinstatement works and (ii) the construction waste so generated?

Reply:

President,

My consolidated reply to various parts of the question raised by the Hon Chan Hak-kan is as follows.

According to the prevailing arrangement of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA), HA will conduct comprehensive inspections on the fixtures and fittings inside public rental housing (PRH) units before their tenants move

out, so as to assess and decide whether the items therein are retainable, or require repair or replacement. Under normal circumstances, HA would allow the fixtures and installations installed by outgoing tenants such as wall-mounted kitchen cabinet, water closet pan with flushing cistern, etc. to be retained without reinstatement if they are in good condition. The incoming tenants may choose to continue to use these installations. However, if they opt to accept the fixtures and fittings installed by the outgoing tenants, the responsibility of future repair and maintenance of these fixtures and fittings will rest with them. In addition, after the existing tenants move out of their PRH units, HA will, depending on the individual circumstances of the PRH unit, carry out vacant flat refurbishment works.

In the past three years (i.e. 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18), HA recovered 12 400, 12 000 and 13 300 PRH units respectively. We do not have information on the time spent and costs required for the reinstatement works by the outgoing tenants before their removal as well as the number of units involved. We also do not maintain consolidated statistics on nuisance complaints caused by reinstatement works.

As regards the allocation of refurbished units, since application for PRH is only divided into four districts, namely the Urban (including Hong Kong Island and Kowloon); Extended Urban (including Tung Chung, Sha Tin, Ma On Shan, Tseung Kwan O, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi); New Territories (including Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai, Sheung Shui, Fanling and Tai Po); and Islands (excluding Tung Chung), the allocation of PRH unit is therefore arranged according to these four districts. In the past three years (i.e. 2015-16 to 2017-18), figures on allocation of refurbished units breakdown by district are as follows. We do not have figures breakdown by District Council district.

| Year/ District | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Urban | 5 721 | 6 266 | 6 569 |
| Extended Urban | 3 357 | 3 506 | 3 925 |
| New Territories | 2 524 | 2 409 | 2 278 |
| Islands | 83 | 62 | 65 |
| Total | 11 685 | 12 243 | 12 837 |

Since solid waste generated by flat reinstatement works of PRH units would be handled together with other construction waste, we do not maintain information on solid waste generated by flat reinstatement works of PRH units. Nevertheless, HA would require the relevant contractors to put in place good practices in waste management in order to minimise the adverse impact on the environment.