

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.