

LCQ11: Windows provided for units of transitional housing

Following is a question by the Hon Jeremy Tam and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (May 8):

Question:

Section 30 of the Building (Planning) Regulations (Cap. 123 sub. leg. F) provides that every room used for habitation shall be provided with natural lighting and ventilation by means of one or more windows which shall be so constructed that the percentage of the aggregate superficial area of glass in the window or windows facing directly into the external air is not less than 10 per cent of the area of the floor of the room (window area/floor area ratio). On the other hand, the Government indicated, in reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council on March 20 this year, that it would support and facilitate the implementation of various short-term initiatives put forward and carried out by community groups to increase the supply of transitional housing, including considering waiving some requirements for the provision in the living areas of windows that conform to the specification requirements. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the total number of transitional housing units in Hong Kong which were occupied or were ready for occupation as at February 28 this year, and set out in the table below the respective numbers and percentages of such units whose window area/floor area ratio belonged to the ratio ranges set out in the table?

Window area/floor area ratio (Rounded to the nearest 0.01 per cent)	Number and percentage of units
0 per cent	
0.01 per cent to 2.5 per cent	
2.51 per cent to 5 per cent	
5.01 per cent to 7.5 per cent	
7.51 per cent to 10 per cent	
10.01 per cent or above	

Reply:

President,

The Task Force on Transitional Housing has, over a period of time in the past, facilitated the implementation of a number of transitional housing projects initiated by the community. As at February 2019, a total of nine

major non-profit making community organisations/social enterprises provided about 610 transitional housing units, of which about 220 were launched under the "Community Housing Movement" of Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS). Details of these projects are set out below:

Service Operators	Project	Number of Units
Light Be	Light Home Light Housing	70 40
Society for Community Organization	Prior Community Social Housing Community Joy's To Gather Rooms for Rent	14 39* 4*
Lok Sin Tong	Lok Sin Tong Social Housing Scheme	20* 55
St. James' Settlement	James' House	14*
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council	Good Homes	60*
The Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service	Best Neighbour Walk Together	16*
The Salvation Army	Home Plus	53*
Hong Kong Housing Society	Transitional Rental Housing Scheme – Yue Kwong Chuen	217
Yan Oi Tong	Green Garden	11*
Total number of Units		613

* Units launched under the "Community Housing Movement" operated by HKCSS.

According to the Circular Letter to the industry issued on October 25, 2018, Buildings Department (BD) taking into consideration of the planning and design limitations in the old-style domestic buildings, will grant some "Modifications" or "Exemptions" concerning the provision of transitional housing units inside old-style domestic buildings. The provision of compensatory measures will be required at the same time, so as to ensure the "Modifications" or "Exemptions" granted will not affect the safety and hygiene standards including the natural lighting requirement for the habitable areas, as stipulated in the Building Ordinance. Generally speaking, the related "Modifications" or "Exemptions" applications only involve parts of the transitional housing units. The aforesaid Circular Letter has stipulated the compensatory measures needed which include the annual inspection and submission of the inspection report by an Authorized Person to ascertain the relevant compensatory measures and the conditions imposed in the "Modifications" or "Exemptions" Permits were complied.

Both the Transport and Housing Bureau and the BD had not prepared the

statistics of the total glazing area of external facing windows in relation to the floor area of the transitional housing units.