

**LegCo Panel on Manpower
(Meeting on 17 July 2003)**

**Youth Work Experience and Skills Enhancement Programme
for the Manufacturing Industry**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the Youth Work Experience and Skills Enhancement Programme for the Manufacturing Industry (the “Programme”) organised by the Labour Department in collaboration with the Professional Validation Council of Hong Kong. This Programme is a special project under the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (“YWETS”).

2. Established in 1999, the Professional Validation Council of Hong Kong (formerly known as The Professional Validation Centre of Hong Kong Plastics and Metal Industries) is formed by 25 manufacturing-related trade associations with a total of 5 677 member organisations in Hong Kong. A list of the associations is at Annex. It aims at enhancing the professionalism of the manufacturing industry through a systematic assessment of the skills level of practitioners and assisting them to obtain recognized professional qualifications.

Objective of the Programme

3. The Programme aims to provide employment and training opportunities for young people and supply a pool of well trained personnel to meet the needs of the manufacturing industry. Through a 12-month on-the-job training in the manufacturing industry, complemented by off-the-job vocational training offered by recognized training institutions, the trainees will be better equipped for future employment in the manufacturing industry.

Demand for Manpower in the Manufacturing Industry

4. The manufacturing industry is an integral part of the economy of Hong Kong. Some sectors such as watches, toys, textiles and garments, and electronics are dominant players in the global market. Although the production process of the vast majority of our manufacturing

establishments has been relocated to the Mainland, there is still a need for well trained and qualified manpower locally to provide a full range of support services in their Hong Kong offices and the manufacturing plants on the Mainland in such areas as administration, marketing, engineering, design, research and development.

5. Notwithstanding persistently high unemployment in Hong Kong in recent years, our young people are generally lukewarm in joining the manufacturing industry. Some youngsters may have the misconception that there is little prospect in the industry and that the nature of work and general working conditions in factories may be less than satisfactory. Others may not possess the educational qualifications and vocational skills required by the industry. There is, therefore, a need to minimise the mismatch of the demand and supply of manpower in the manufacturing industry.

Employment and On-the-job Training

6. Under the Programme, about 500 young people with an education level of Form 5 and above will be employed as trainees to work in different manufacturing sectors such as watches, toys, electronics, electrical appliances and jewellery, and in different functional areas such as administration, marketing, design, engineering, and production control. They may have the opportunity of short-term attachment training at their employers' production plants in the Mainland. During the 12-month training period, trainees will have an employment relationship with the employer and will be paid a wage of \$4,000 per month. Depending on the response of the applicants and of the member organisations of HKPVC to the scheme, we may expand the intake beyond 500.

7. Employers will need to appoint experienced staff as mentors to provide guidance to the trainees throughout the period of training. For each trainee engaged, employers will receive a monthly training subsidy of \$2,000 from the YWETS. Upon satisfactory completion of on-the-job training, trainees will receive a certificate from their employer specifying the skills attained and their period of employment. Employers are encouraged to continue to employ those trainees who have performed well during the training period.

Off-the-job Vocational Training

8. To enhance the vocational qualifications of trainees, participating employers will sponsor their trainees, at a monthly rate of no less than

\$1,000 per trainee, to attend off-the-job vocational training courses offered by recognized training institutions such as the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Vocational Training Council. Trainees who pass the relevant examinations will, apart from the vocational certificates issued by the training institutions, also be awarded a certificate issued by the Professional Validation Council of Hong Kong. With the latter certificate, they will be eligible to register as affiliated members of the Council.

9. In addition to the designated training courses sponsored by employers, trainees may enrol in other suitable vocational training courses on an off-the-job basis. They are entitled to claim for reimbursement of course and examination fees from the YWETS if they pass the vocational examination or achieve a 90% course attendance, subject to a maximum amount of \$4,000.

Implementation Timetable

10. Young people interested in joining the Programme have to enrol for the YWETS when it opens for new applications in late July 2003. They will need to attend a 40-hour induction training course to acquire basic knowledge and skills in communication, interpersonal relations and workplace discipline. They will then be arranged to attend selection interviews with prospective employers under the Programme in September 2003.

11. It is expected that trainees engaged under the Programme will commence training in October 2003. Like other trainees of the YWETS, they will receive continual support service from their case managers who are registered social workers.

12. Members are invited to note this paper for information.

Labour Department
July 2003

**The Professional Validation Council of Hong Kong
List of Member Associations**

<u>Name of Association</u>	<u>No. of Member Establishments</u>
1. Chiu Chau Plastic Manufacturers Association	220
2. Federation of Hong Kong Machinery and Metal Industries	200
3. Hong Kong and Kowloon Electro-plating Trade Merchants Association	150
4. Hong Kong Auto Parts Industry Association	120
5. Hong Kong Composite Technology Association	100
6. Hong Kong Diecasting Association	200
7. Hong Kong Electrical Appliances Manufacturers Association	150
8. Hong Kong Foodstuffs Association	150
9. Hong Kong Foundry Association	150
10. Hong Kong Jewelry Manufacturers' Association	300
11. Hong Kong Metal Finishing Society	250
12. Hong Kong Metal Merchants Association	389
13. Hong Kong Metals Manufacturers Association	460
14. Hong Kong Optical Manufacturers Association	150
15. Hong Kong Plastic Bags Manufacturers' Association	100
16. Hong Kong Plastic Machinery Association	150
17. Hong Kong Plastic Material Suppliers Association	100
18. Hong Kong Printed Circuit Association	115
19. Hong Kong Rubber & Footwear Manufacturers' Association	220
20. Hong Kong Watch Manufacturers Association	700
21. Hong Kong Young Industrialists Council	150
22. The Federation of Hong Kong Watch Trades & Industries Ltd.	400
23. The Hong Kong Electronic Industries Association Ltd.	300
24. The Hong Kong General Chamber of Textiles	153
25. The Toys Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong	300
Total number of member establishments:	5 677