

## **LegCo Panel on Manpower**

### **Information Note on the Proposed Qualifications Framework and the Associated Quality Assurance Mechanism**

At the meeting of the Panel on Manpower held on 21 November 2002, when discussing LC Paper No. CB(2)381/02-03(04) on the proposal to set up a qualifications framework and the associated quality assurance mechanism in Hong Kong, some members raised concern over:

- (a) whether the skills knowledge and relevant working experience of workers with low educational attainment, in particular those below secondary three level, could be recognised under the proposed QF; and
- (b) whether the proposed QF would create negative impacts on the employment of this group of workers.

2. The skills, knowledge and relevant working experience of workers with low educational attainment can be recognised under the proposed QF. It is our intention to introduce a system of skills assessment tests which would enable skills, knowledge and relevant working experience of workers to be recognised. Existing skilled workers who acquired their skills through practical experience or on-the-job training could undergo a skills assessment test at a recognised assessment centre or, possibly, even on-the-job at their workplace. If they are able to demonstrate that they possess the necessary level of skills through the skills assessment tests, they can acquire a qualification under the proposed QF.

3. The skills assessment arrangement can also be used by workers to gain exemption from modules of courses, or acceptance onto courses, in situations where they do not possess the desired academic

attainment for enrolment. However, the final decision on whether to grant an exemption remains with the institutions.

4. It should be pointed out that the qualification of a skilled worker will be classified under the proposed QF in accordance with the level of skill possessed by the worker. If the worker possesses sophisticated skills, his qualification can be classified at higher levels under the proposed QF regardless of his educational attainment.

5. The proposed QF should not create negative impact on the employment of in-service skilled workers with low educational attainment. Employers' interest will be to engage a worker who can do the job. In-service workers will have demonstrated to employers that they are capable of doing the job. It is unlikely that an employer will dismiss a worker merely because of the worker's lack of a recognised qualification.

6. For new entrants, however, a qualification under the proposed QF will enable them to demonstrate to their prospective employers that they possess the skill and knowledge to do the tasks expected of them.

7. In the longer term the proposed QF will help upgrade the quality of the local workforce and enhance the overall competitiveness of Hong Kong.