

**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in
examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06**

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Session No. : 10

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)01

Question Serial No.

SV21

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question:

To provide details of the jobs registered with the Labour Department which could not be filled despite direct referrals by LD, such as their number, job nature, etc.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily

Reply:

The job vacancies received by the Labour Department (LD) are displayed at all its Job Centres, Interactive Employment Service website on the Internet and vacancy search terminals installed at the Job Centres, the Social Security Field Units of the Social Welfare Department and District Offices of the Home Affairs Department. Apart from direct referrals made by the LD, job-seekers may also apply to employers direct for the vast majority of vacancies. As employers placing vacancies with LD may also recruit staff through other channels and as some of them do not inform the LD whether their vacancies have been filled, we do not have details of the vacancies which could not be filled. However, our experience indicates that jobs such as farm workers, elderly home care workers, sales representatives and promoters are more difficult to be filled largely because of their obnoxious job nature, unstable income or irregular/unsocial working hours.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MATTHEW CHEUNG KIN-CHUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Economic
Development and Labour (Labour)/
Commissioner for Labour

Date 18 April 2005

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)02

Question Serial No.

SV23

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question:

To provide details of the 6 730 job placements made by LD with monthly wages of less than \$4,000, such as whether they are part-time or full-time jobs, the job nature, etc. Please also explain the criteria, if any, according to which LD would decide whether to refuse to register a job.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

Of the 6 730 placements with salary at or below \$4,000, 82% were part-time or temporary jobs. As for the remainder, some carried a performance-related commission in addition to the basic salary offered.

The LD would not accept vacancies when the wage offer is obviously out of line with market rates.

Signature _____

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Date 18 April 2005

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)03

Question Serial No.

S64

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No.: EDLB(L)039, will the Administration provide the breakdown of earnings and working hours in the table concerning earnings and placement?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

We do not have breakdown statistics for placements by working hours. In general, many of the jobs carrying relatively lower wages are of part-time or temporary nature. For example, of the 6 730 placements achieved by the Labour Department in 2004 with salary at or below \$4,000, 82 % were part-time or temporary jobs.

Signature _____

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)04

Question Serial No.

SV24

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question:

To provide information on success cases of job placement for ethnic minorities.

Asked by: Hon. TSANG Yok-sing, Jasper

Reply:

The Labour Department provides free employment services to all job-seekers irrespective of their ethnic origin. Ethnic minorities seeking employment assistance can approach our Job Centres. They can also make use of our Telephone Employment Service and Interactive Employment Service on the web to apply for jobs. We do not have separate figures on registrants and placements by ethnic origin.

Signature _____

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)05

Question Serial No.

S19

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question :

As wage default and infringement of employees' rights and benefits are serious, why does the Administration not consider increasing the number of field labour inspectors?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The Labour Department takes a serious view on wage and statutory benefit offences. In 2005, we will adopt a more focused and tactical approach in tackling such offences. We will mount more targeted operations and conduct speedy investigation into reported cases. As this mode of operation should be highly effective in offence detection, we therefore have no plan to increase the number of field inspectors.

Signature _____

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Date 18 April 2005

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)06

Question Serial No.

S20

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question:

In deploying 12 labour inspectors from 3 enforcement teams to check compliance with labour laws by contractors of government service contracts, what will be the implication of such deployment on the workload or enforcement operation of the 3 enforcement teams?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The redeployment aims at strengthening the monitoring of contractors of government service contracts regarding the compliance with labour laws. To enhance the effectiveness in safeguarding employees' rights and benefits, we will streamline our working procedures and re-engineer our support service through computerization and co-location of offices to ensure the optimal use of manpower resources and greater flexibility in staff deployment.

Signature _____

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Date 18 April 2005

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-EDLB(L)07

Question Serial No.

S21

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Labour) /Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Question:

The Special Incentive Allowance Scheme for Local Domestic Helpers (LDHs) aims to encourage LDHs to work across districts or during unpopular hours. However, there will be no incentive for LDHs to work across districts or during unpopular hours once the Scheme comes to an end. Will the Administration provide funding for extending this Scheme?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The Special Incentive Allowance Scheme for Local Domestic Helpers (LDHs) seeks to promote employment opportunities for LDHs by addressing the mismatch in supply and demand arising from geographic location and working hours. With the offer of the incentive allowance, it is hoped that more LDHs are willing to take up work outside the district where they reside or during unsocial hours. We believe that many LDH participants, after establishing a good working relationship with their employers, would continue with their employment even without the incentive.

As at end-February 2005, some 3 800 places under the Scheme were still unfilled, whilst most of the LDHs taking part in the Scheme have not yet reached the time-bar of 12 months or exhausted the maximum amount of allowance. We have no plan to provide funding to further extend the Scheme at this stage. Nevertheless, we would keep in view the effectiveness and implementation experience of the Scheme as well as the feedback from the participants.

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