

**For information
on 17 February 2005**

LEGCO PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Subcommittee on review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme

Specific reviews being undertaken by the Administration

This note outlines the progress of the reviews being undertaken by the Administration on specific aspects of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme with the aim to help able-bodied recipients achieve self-reliance.

REVIEWS

2. We are now conducting:
 - (a) an evaluation of the intensive employment assistance projects implemented since October 2003 to help employable CSSA recipients and the 'near-CSSA' unemployed move into work; and
 - (b) a review of existing CSSA arrangements and related services for single parent families on CSSA.

Initial results of these two reviews are expected to be available by the middle of this year.

3. We will also start a review of the provision of disregarded earnings under the CSSA Scheme shortly. Initial results are expected to be available towards the end of this year.

UPDATING OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE INDEX OF PRICES (SSAIP)

4. In addition to the above specific reviews, we are monitoring the SSAIP regularly. The SSAIP is specially compiled by the Census and Statistics Department to measure inflation/deflation according to the expenditure pattern of CSSA households. It consists of the same items as other consumer price indices except that items which are covered by special grants under the CSSA Scheme or provided free by the Government are excluded.

5. On top of the regular monitoring on the changes of the SSAIP, the weighting system of the SSAIP (i.e. the relative importance of individual items of goods and services covered by the index) are updated every five years on the basis of the findings of the household expenditure survey on CSSA households. The 2004-05 household expenditure survey for CSSA households is now underway. We hope to have some initial results by the end of this year which would give us a more updated picture of the expenditure pattern of CSSA recipients.

**Health, Welfare and Food Bureau/Social Welfare Department
February 2005**