

**LegCo Panel on Public Service
Meeting on 15 May 2006**

List of follow-up actions

1. Implementation of five-day week in the Government

- (a) To address members' concern about the non-provision of some counter services offered by the Labour Department (LD) on Saturdays upon the implementation of five-day week on 1 July 2006, CSB undertook to take the following actions:
- (i) To convey to LD the following views of members:
- Given that most employees needed to work from Mondays to Fridays, they would only be available to approach LD on Saturdays for submitting applications or seeking assistance in matters relating to labour relations and employees' rights and benefits, such as compensation for work injuries and arrangement of conciliation meetings, etc. Hence, the relevant counter services should be maintained on Saturdays; and
 - If it was finally decided that some of the counter services of LD would be closed on Saturdays, the opening hours lost on Saturdays (which was three hours in most cases) should preferably be compensated by extending the opening hours for three hours on a particular weekday instead of extending the opening hours for around half an hour on Mondays to Fridays.
- (ii) In connection with (i) above, to provide information on the types of counter services of LD which would cease to be provided on Saturdays, and those which would continue to be provided on Saturdays, upon the implementation of five-day week on 1 July 2006.
- (b) CSB undertook to consider a member's view that upon the implementation of five-day week on 1 July 2006, the deadline for the payment of government fees and voter registration, etc. should preferably not fall on Fridays.
- (c) To facilitate the Panel's consideration of a member's proposal for the Panel to discuss the issues relating to the adjustment of working hours of the foreman

grade in the Pest Control Teams of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department from 44 hours per week (including lunch hours) to 45 hours per week (excluding lunch hours), the Administration was requested to take the following actions:

- (i) To provide background information on the case, including -
 - the number of working hours stipulated in the terms and conditions of service of the staff concerned;
 - any previous agreement between the Administration and the staff concerned on the actual number of working hours; and
 - the reasons for the recent adjustment of working hours;
- (ii) To seek legal advice from the Department of Justice (DoJ) on whether the proposed adjustment of working hours was lawful. In this connection, DoJ was invited to consider a member's view that as the staff concerned had been required to work only 44 hours per week (including lunch hours) for the past 14 years, they had a reasonable expectation that this requirement formed part of their terms and conditions of service. It was therefore unfair for the Administration to adjust their working hours unilaterally; and
- (iii) To provide written information on the legal advice on (ii) above

2. Mechanism for handling staff complaints

CSB undertook to update the Panel on the outcome of its examination of the account provided by the Social Welfare Department on how the department had handled the complaint from the Medical Social Worker in relation to the case quoted in the Ombudsman's report (paragraph 12 of LC Paper No. CB(1)1440/05-06(05)), including whether any improvement measures would be introduced to enhance the effectiveness of the existing mechanism for handling staff complaints