

**For discussion on
16 March 2009**

LC Paper No. CB(1)978/08-09(05)

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

Civil Service-Related Issues in the 2009-10 Budget

Purpose

This paper provides details on the civil service-related issues in the 2009-10 Budget.

Background

2. Paragraph 24 of the 2009-10 Budget Speech recapitulates the initiatives the Government has introduced earlier to counter the global financial crisis, including recruitment of civil servants. Separately, the 2009-10 Draft Estimates of Expenditure project an increase in the civil service establishment. The following paragraphs provide more detailed information on these issues.

Recruitment of civil servants

3. As announced by the Chief Executive in December 2008 as part of the Government's efforts to preserve employment, bureaux/departments (B/Ds) are expediting recruitment to fill existing and anticipated civil service vacancies arising from retirement, resignation, etc. and newly created and to-be-created (in 2009-10) civil service posts. We aim to recruit suitable individuals to fill some 7 700 civil service posts from December 2008 to March 2010. These posts straddle various academic and professional entry requirements (covering below-Form Five requirements, Form Five qualification, post-secondary qualifications and degree/professional qualifications) and cover a wide

range of job categories (such as disciplined services jobs, clerical and professional jobs, etc). A breakdown of these posts by academic and professional entry requirements is at **Annex**. Members may wish to refer to LC Paper No. CB(1)790/08 -09(01) for a distribution of these posts by B/Ds.

4. As at end-February 2009, B/Ds have already filled some 1 400 vacancies, and offered appointments to another some 1 200 suitable candidates.

Control of the civil service establishment

5. The Government is committed to continuing to keep the civil service establishment under control in order to maintain a lean and efficient civil service. This is in keeping with the principle of prudent management of public resources. New civil service posts will only be created when the operational need is fully justified, when the work involved cannot be undertaken by re-deployment of existing staff, and when alternative modes of service delivery (e.g. outsourcing or hire of services) are considered inappropriate.

6. In the last three years, the civil service establishment has undergone the following changes –

- (a) end-March 2007: 161 015
- (b) end-March 2008: 161 960
- (c) end-March 2009: 164 174 (estimated)

7. For 2009-10, we consider it justified to allow a moderate increase of about 0.9% (about 1 530 posts) in the civil service establishment in view of the new initiatives to be pursued and the increasing demand on public services. Subject to approval of the Legislative Council of the 2009-10 Draft Estimates, the civil service establishment is estimated to stand at 165 703 posts by end-March 2010.

Way Forward

8. The civil service is the backbone of the Government. It contributes to the effective governance and stability of Hong Kong. In the face of the current global financial crisis, it is important that we maintain an efficient and effective civil service to serve and work together with the community of Hong Kong to mitigate the impact of the financial turmoil and maintain our economic vibrancy. While continuing to keep the size of the civil service establishment under control, CSB will work with B/Ds to ensure that there is adequate and appropriate manpower resources to implement policy initiatives and meet the community's increasing demand for public services.

Civil Service Bureau
March 2009

Annex

**Breakdown of projected civil service intake
from December 2008 to March 2010
by academic entry requirements**

Academic entry requirements	Examples of grades	Number of intake involved*
Grades not requiring five passes in Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE)	Postman, Supplies Assistant, Traffic Warden	190
School Certificate Grades & Technician/Technical Grades#	Aircraft Technician, Artisan, Assistant Officer (of Correctional Services), Ambulanceman, Clerical Officer, Customs Officer, Fireman, Hawker Control Officer, Housing Manager, Immigration Assistant, Junior Police Officer, Works Supervisor	4 780
Grades requiring two passes in Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination plus three credits in HKCEE & Diploma/Higher Diploma qualifications	Ambulance Officer, Health Inspector, Inspector of Customs and Excise, Immigration Officer, Inspector of Police, Law Clerk, Officer (of Correctional Services), Pilot, Registered Nurse, Social Security Officer, Station Officer/Divisional Officer (of Fire Services), Survey Officer	1 490
Professional Grades & Degree Grades	Architect, Engineer, Executive Officer, Labour Officer, Librarian, Medical and Health Officer, Social Work Officer	1 240
Total:		7 700

technician and technical grades refer to those mainly requiring certificate qualification or apprenticeship/craft/skills

* Numbers rounded to the nearest ten.