

For Information
18 March 2010

Legislative Council Panel on Manpower

Entry Arrangement for Training in Hong Kong

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the immigration arrangement for persons entering Hong Kong for training.

Existing Arrangement

2. The entry arrangement for training in Hong Kong has been implemented since 1970s. It mainly aims to allow employees of the outward branches, subsidiaries, or business associates of enterprises located in Hong Kong to enter for training and acquiring local knowledge, experience or skills, and to facilitate business operation and development. This arrangement plays an important role in maintaining Hong Kong's position as an open market economy and a prime global financial and trade centre.

3. Persons from around the world who wish to enter Hong Kong for training need to first apply for a training visa/entry permit from the Immigration Department (ImmD). The relevant duration of stay in Hong Kong is normally 12 months at most. For individual applications which request a longer training duration, ImmD will consider on a case-by-case basis and they will only be approved if fully justified. Major eligibility criteria for the relevant visa/entry permit are as follows –

- (a) The bona fides of the applicant and the sponsoring company are satisfied;
- (b) The sponsoring company is well-established and capable of providing the relevant training; and
- (c) The sponsoring company guarantees in writing the maintenance and returning of the applicant.

4. Currently, Mainland residents eligible for applying for the relevant visa/entry permit must be employees or business associates of multinational companies based in Hong Kong or other well-established

enterprises. This entry arrangement also does not apply to nationals of Afghanistan, Albania, Cambodia, Cuba, Laos, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Nepal and Vietnam.

Vetting Mechanism

5. Persons granted with the visa/entry permit are to attend training in their sponsoring companies, but not to fill local staff positions. In processing such applications, ImmD requests the sponsoring companies to provide their company background information; relevant training contracts; details of the training programmes (including content and duration); etc. The sponsoring companies need to justify that the need for training is genuine.

6. In the past three years, an average of 6 000 applicants per year were approved for training in Hong Kong. About half of them were from the Mainland and the other half from other places. The major sectors to which they belonged were finance, banking and accounting; logistics and transport; and academic and education. The proposed training duration of most of the approved applications was no more than six months. Relevant figures are as follows:

	Total	Approved	Training Duration			
			Under 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 to 12 months	Over 12 months
2007	6 004	5 629	1 824 (32%)	2 479 (44%)	1 088 (19%)	238 (4%)
2008	7 301	6 923	2 667 (39%)	2 775 (40%)	1 305 (19%)	176 (3%)
2009	5 706	5 360	2 317 (43%)	1 991 (37%)	910 (17%)	142 (3%)

() denotes percentages out of approved applications, which may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Conclusion

7. The entry arrangement for training has been a long-stand practice. Numerous local employees have also attended training outside Hong Kong. Such exchanges are beneficial to both trainees and enterprises, as well as to Hong Kong's development. ImmD will endeavour to facilitate the entry of persons who have genuine needs for training in Hong Kong.

8. ImmD will maintain vigilance in processing such applications. When there are complaints or suspected cases, such as abnormally frequent training arrangements or repeated trainings of an individual in a short period, ImmD will follow up and investigate as appropriate.

**Security Bureau /
Immigration Department
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