

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1329/09-10
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Ref : CB1/PL/ PS/1

Panel on Public Service

**Minutes of meeting held on
Monday, 21 December 2009, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan (Chairman)
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon Margaret NG
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
- Members attending** : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
- Members absent** : Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
- Public officers attending** : **Agenda item III**

Miss Denise YUE, GBS, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Andrew H Y WONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Patrick CHAN Nim-tak, JP
Director of General Grades

Agenda item IV

Miss Denise YUE, GBS, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Andrew H Y WONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mrs Agnes ALLCOCK, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 3

**Attendance by
invitation**

: **Agenda item III**

Hong Kong Civil Servants General Union

Mr CHUNG Tak-cheung
Vice Chairman

Mr AU YEUNG Chun-kit
Vice Chairman

HKSAR Government Employees General Union

Mr SIU Leung-hing
Chairman

Mr NG Yu-hin
Vice Chairman

Government Employees Association

Mr CHEUNG Wai-kuen
Vice Secretary

Mr Steven TSE
Rights Affairs Officer

Hong Kong Leisure Services Staff General Union

Mr CHEUNG Siu-wing
Chairman

Ms KAN Yuk-ching
Deputy Secretary

Rights Association of Hongkong Post Contract Staff

Mr TSE Tin-wing
Chairman

Mr CHAN Wai-man
Vice Chairman

Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association

Mr Peter WONG Hyo
President

Mr LAU Wing-shing
Deputy Secretary General

Government Frontline Employees Union

Mr CHAN Pok-yin
Director

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Mock 1
Staff Branch

Ms LEUNG Tai-tai
Director

Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre

Miss LEUNG Ching-shan
Labour Affairs Organizer

HK Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Staff
Rights Union

Ms LI Mei-siu
Chairman

Leisure and Cultural Services Department Contract Staff
Branch of the Government Employee Solidarity Union

Mr CHAN Wei-san
Chairperson

Hong Kong Government Lifeguards General Union

Ms LAM Siu-lan
Chairman

Mr FONG Chi-keung
Deputy Chairman

Hong Kong Federation of Civil Service Unions

Mr CHAN Wai-keung
Vice Chairman

HK Confederation of Trade Unions

Miss CHUNG Wai-yan
Organizing Secretary

Clerk in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Sarah YUEN
Senior Council Secretary (1)6

Miss Winnie CHENG
Legislative Assistant (1)5

Action

I Information papers issued since last meeting

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (LC Paper No. CB(1)446/09-10(01) | — Submission on use of hire cars for enforcement from a member of the public |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)520/09-10(01) | — Administration's response to the complaint from Marine Department Staff Alliance Branch of the Government Employees Solidarity Union against the Marine Department regarding the posting of slogans |

- LC Paper No. CB(1)623/09-10(01) — Submission requesting the provision of incremental credits to newly recruited Technical and Survey Officers according to working experience from the Association of Government Technical and Survey Officers
- LC Paper No. CB(1)565/09-10(01) — Administration's paper on joint-user complex at Bailey Street, To Kwa Wan Reclamation
- LC Paper No. CB(1)730/09-10(01) — Reply letter from the Highways Department to the submission from the Association of Government Technical and Survey Officers requesting the provision of incremental credits to newly recruited Technical and Survey Officers)

Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

- II Items for discussion at the next meeting scheduled for 18 January 2010**
(LC Paper No. CB(1)597/09-10(01) — List of outstanding items for discussion
LC Paper No. CB(1)597/09-10(02) — List of follow-up actions)

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting on 18 January 2010 –

- (a) Use of agency workers; and
- (b) Update on national studies programme and Basic Law training for civil servants.

Members also agreed to invite deputations from major civil service consultative councils and staff associations to give views on item (a) above.

III Employment of non-civil service contract staff

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)597/09-10(03) — Administration's paper on employment of non-civil service contract staff
- LC Paper No. CB(1)674/09-10 — Background brief on employment of non-civil service contract staff prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

Presentation of views by deputations

Hong Kong Civil Servants General Union
(LC Paper No. CB(1)661/09-10(01))

3. Mr CHUNG Tak-cheung briefed members on the following salient points of the General Union's views as detailed in its submission –

- (a) The General Union was opposed to the arbitrary recruitment of non-civil servants to handle work that should more appropriately be performed by civil servants and opined that the Government should convert positions presently filled by non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff to civil service posts as appropriate;
- (b) The Government should improve the unreasonable and unfair employment terms and conditions of NCSC staff; and
- (c) It was not known whether the 16 186 full-time NCSC staff employed by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) as at 30 June 2009 included agency workers. The figure might even be larger than it appeared because many NCSC staff were deliberately arranged to work for less than 18 hours each week, so as to avoid being counted as full-time staff under the Employment Ordinance (EO) (Cap. 57).

4. Mr CHUNG Tak-cheung pointed out that the statement that all the eight constituent staff associations/unions of the Model Scale 1 Staff Consultative Council opened their membership to NCSC staff was incorrect. He pointed out that the General Union's membership was not open to NCSC staff although it supported the pursuit of reasonable rights by all Government employees.

HKSAR Government Employees General Union

5. Mr NG Yu-hin pointed out that the NCSC Staff Scheme had given rise to many problems, such as "different pay for the same job", unreasonable employment terms, deterioration of service quality, abuse of the Scheme to meet long-term service needs, staff and experience retention problem, etc. In addition, the entry

requirements for NCSC staff of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Department of Health were lower than those for civil servants in comparable civil service ranks. As a result, despite years of service these NCSC staff could not secure civil service appointment when the relevant NCSC positions were converted to civil service posts. The Administration should therefore accord priority to NCSC staff with relevant working experience when conducting open recruitment for civil service posts.

6. Mr SIU Leung-hing supplemented that the NCSC Staff Scheme introduced ten years ago amidst the then economic downturn should be only a make-shift arrangement to be reviewed in response to changes, instead of being abused to meet long-term service needs under various pretexts for cost-saving purposes. The Government should convert NCSC positions to civil service posts, especially those NCSC positions which had been created for a long time. Besides, the Government should offer fair and reasonable employment terms and conditions for NCSC staff.

Government Employees Association
(LC Paper No. CB(1)727/09-10(01))

7. Mr CHEUNG Wai-kuen briefed members on the Association's submission, which highlighted a case where the contracts of more than 600 NCSC staff of the Buildings Department (BD) would not be renewed because BD could not secure funding to extend its current programme on the removal of unauthorized building works (UBWs) beyond March 2010. The representatives of the staff concerned opined that they should be retained in the Government as civil servants to continue to perform the above important task. The Association further opined that NCSC staff should be given the opportunity to apply for civil service posts through internal recruitment, so that their relevant working experience could help them meet the relevant entry requirements. The civil service establishment should also be suitably enlarged to meet increasing service needs.

Hong Kong Leisure Services Staff General Union
(LC Paper No. CB(1)612/09-10(01))

8. Mr CHEUNG Siu-wing briefed members on the General Union's submission. In gist, the General Union opined that the NCSC Staff Scheme, which was originally designed as a contingency scheme to meet short-term special needs, should be phased out in consideration of the many problems so arising, such as deterioration of service quality, labour exploitation, experience retention problem, succession problem, etc. The General Union requested the Panel to monitor the NCSC Staff Scheme and review whether there was any abuse.

Rights Association of Hongkong Post Contract Staff (the Rights Association)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)682/09-10(01))

9. Mr TSE Tin-wing briefed members on the Rights Association's submission, pointing out that Hongkong Post, because of its operation as a Trading Fund, had hired as many as 2 300 NCSC staff to meet long-term service needs to save costs. These staff members had worked for years without any promotion prospect or salary increments. The Rights Association considered that there were established service needs for retention of the relevant positions which should be converted to civil service posts. In addition, the NCSC staff concerned should be considered for appointment to fill the relevant civil service posts by "through train" arrangement.

Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association
(LC Paper No. CB(1)740/09-10(01))

10. Mr WONG Hyo briefed members on the Association's submission. In gist, the Association called upon the Government to improve the NCSC Staff Scheme as follows –

- (a) Contract renewal notice of at least one month should be given to provide the staff concerned sufficient time to make relevant preparations;
- (b) The contract periods should be longer and more specific to minimize uncertainty;
- (c) The Administration should consider stipulating in civil service recruitment advertisements that priority would be given to those applicants who had previous relevant working experience in the Government; and
- (d) NCSC staff should be able to enjoy free medical service at Government general clinics.

11. The Association also urged that in the longer term, communication with NCSC staff should be improved. The Government should not only aim to ensure that the employment terms and conditions for NCSC staff were no less favourable than those provided for under EO. The Association considered that the NCSC Staff Scheme had been abused to avoid creating new civil service posts required to meet long-term service needs. In fact, many NCSC staff members had been in continuous employment for a long time and had their contracts renewed every year or even at a shorter interval of six months. The Association considered that the above approach was divisive and damaging to labour relations and Government's image, and would give rise to grievances and in turn social problems.

Government Frontline Employees Union
(LC Paper No. CB(1)740/09-10(02))

12. Mr CHAN Pok-yin briefed members on the Union's submission. He highlighted the plight of Government frontline employees who had no job security after having worked for the Government for years, and their pay and benefits were worse than those of their civil service counterparts. He urged the Government to convert NCSC positions into civil service posts to meet long-term service needs.

*Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Mock 1 Staff Branch
(LC Paper No. CB(1)740/09-10(03))*

13. Ms LEUNG Tai-tai briefed members on the Branch's submission. In gist, the Branch was concerned about the continued outsourcing of FEHD's services, which would render its NCSC staff jobless, and requested that these NCSC staff who had served in the same positions for ten years be converted to civil servants under a "through train" arrangement. Ms LEUNG further opined that it was both discriminatory and divisive that the pay and benefits of these NCSC staff were much worse than those of their civil service counterparts. It was also undesirable that FEHD was the only Government department that did not offer NCSC staff any gratuity payment.

Neighbourhood & Worker's Service Centre

14. Miss LEUNG Ching-shan pointed out that in converting NCSC positions to civil service posts, many departments would first terminate the contracts of the NCSC staff concerned, and they were required to apply for civil service vacancies through open recruitment. This arrangement was undesirable because, if their applications failed, they would be rendered jobless and the resources used to train them up would be wasted. It was also undesirable that the some 4 000 NCSC positions identified in 2006 for conversion to civil service posts were all senior positions, while those NCSC positions at basic ranks, though continuously filled by NCSC staff for ten years or more and hence the relevant service needs confirmed, were not converted. The contracts of the NCSC staff of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department were repeatedly renewed every six months.

Hong Kong Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Staff Side Union

15. Pointing out that the NCSC Staff Scheme was divisive and exploitative, Ms LI Mei-siu indicated opposition to the continued outsourcing of services by FEHD, and support for NCSC staff's direct transfer to the civil service. She also considered it undesirable that while FEHD was recruiting short-term contract staff, it had refused to renew the contracts of NCSC staff who had been in continuous employment for ten years or more. As a result of that, resources used for training them had been wasted and unnecessary recruitment costs incurred.

*Leisure and Cultural Services Department Contract Staff Branch of the Government Employee Solidarity Union (the Staff Branch)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)740/09-10(04))*

16. Mr CHAN Wei-san briefed members on the Staff Branch's submission. In gist, he highlighted the unfairness of considering NCSC staff alongside outside candidates in filling civil service posts, and urged the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to consider creating civil service posts of "Librarian" and "Library Assistant" which at present were filled by NCSC staff.

Hong Kong Government Lifeguards General Union

17. Ms LAM Siu-lan said that the General Union opposed that lifeguards, who possessed specialized skills, were categorized as the "Artisan" grade. Moreover, many government lifeguards had been continuously employed on NCSC terms for over ten years and, being dissatisfied with the unfair employment arrangement, they generally lacked a sense of belonging to the Department. To boost their morale, these NCSC staff should be converted to civil servants.

Hong Kong Federation of Civil Service Unions (HKFCSU)

18. Mr CHAN Wai-keung highlighted the following points –

- (a) The employment of a large number of NCSC staff for project management and maintenance works had resulted in frequent staff turnover and insufficient monitoring to ensure quality of work;
- (b) Individual departments' requests for replacing their NCSC positions with civil service posts were often not granted in full, and staff shortage had always remained; and
- (c) Most retiring civil servants' applications for extension of service by 90 days, which had always been approved in the past, were turned down because of SCS's recent instruction in this regard.

*HK Confederation of Trade Unions
(LC Paper No. CB(1)740/09-10(05))*

19. Miss CHUNG Wai-yan briefed members on the Confederation's submission, which highlighted the unfairness of the NCSC Staff Scheme as follows –

- (a) The employer's Mandatory Provident Fund contribution was deducted from the gratuity payment to the NCSC staff concerned;

- (b) The employment terms and conditions for NCSC staff were mean, being only no less favourable than those provided for under EO;
- (c) NCSC staff could not be converted to civil servants under a "through train" arrangement;
- (d) Even if NCSC staff had successfully applied for civil service posts, they were arranged to fill the civil service posts at the starting salary point as their period of previous employment with the Government on contract terms were not taken into account; and
- (e) No incremental credits were provided for NCSC staff regardless of their length of continuous service in the Government.

20. Members thanked the deputations for their views. Ms LI Fung-ying requested them to provide their views in writing to the Panel after the meeting if they had not done so. Members also noted that the following organizations, which did not send representatives to the meeting, had each provided a submission for members' reference –

- (a) Civil Servants & Subsidized Organizations Committee of The Federation of Hong Kong & Kowloon Labour Unions (LC Paper No. CB(1)597/09-10(04)); and
- (b) Contract staff representatives of BD (LC Paper No. CB(1)727/09-10(02)).

21. In response to HKFCSU's concern at paragraph 18(c) above regarding retiring civil servants' applications for extension of service, SCS pointed out that further employment of a civil servant upon reaching the normal retirement age was processed in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures under the Civil Service Regulations. To ensure consistency in processing such applications among B/Ds, she had recently reminded Heads of B/Ds (HoDs) of the need to abide by the long-standing principle of approving such cases only when there was a justifiable operational need, or the special circumstances of the civil servant concerned warranted compassionate consideration.

Discussion

Specific concerns raised by deputations

22. In response to Mr WONG Kwok-hing's enquiry about the number of agency workers engaged by the Government, SCS said that the figure was not available at the moment but it would be provided in the paper on the use of agency workers to be discussed at the Panel meeting on 18 January 2010.

23. Dr PAN Pey-chyou considered it undesirable that the some 700 NCSC staff employed by BD as mentioned above would lose their jobs upon completion of the UBW removal programme and urged the Government to make proper arrangements for them, such as by extending their contracts or redeploying them to other departments. SCS responded that the NCSC staff concerned were employed in connection with the removal of UBWs and improvement of the safety standards of existing buildings under a ten-year programme ending in March 2010. It was up to BD and the Development Bureau to decide whether the programme would need to be extended. As she understood, BD would carefully work out the phasing out arrangement and maintain close dialogue with the affected NCSC staff. BD was also willing to provide reference letters to the NCSC staff concerned if their performance was satisfactory. She said that a mechanism was in place to inform the NCSC staff concerned of civil service vacancies that arose.

24. Mr IP Wai-ming considered that the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) should take the initiative to provide active assistance to the NCSC staff concerned and liaise with BD and the Development Bureau on the proper arrangements to be made for those staff. Highlighting the long-term need for removal of UBWs, he further opined that the NCSC staff concerned should be converted to civil servants and continue to be engaged for undertaking the removal work. Dr Margaret NG suggested that the Administration might apply for additional funding from the Finance Committee (FC) for the continued engagement of the NCSC staff concerned to carry out the removal work under the UBW removal programme.

25. SCS explained that the future of the UBW removal programme and its continuation were matters under the policy purview of the Development Bureau. In fact, when the programme was first launched, it was clearly stated that it was a time-limited project. SCS further explained that NCSC staff were employed on a fixed-term contract basis mainly to meet service needs which were time-limited, and the UBW removal programme was an example of such kind of service needs. When the work which a NCSC staff member was employed to do was completed and there was no longer such a service need, his employment contract would not be renewed.

26. In response to the Chairman's enquiry about the employment of 2 300 NCSC staff by Hongkong Post, SCS said that about half of the NCSC staff concerned in fact worked less than the conditioned hours required of their civil servant counterparts. She noted that the employment of NCSC staff by Hongkong Post was considered necessary as a flexible means of employment to respond to changing service needs as a result of market fluctuations. The Chairman considered that there were established service needs for the employment of at least 80% of the remaining half of these 2 300 NCSC staff on a long-term basis. He suggested that consideration should be given to converting at least 80% of these 1 100 to 1 200 NCSC staff to civil servants. He requested CSB to review with Hongkong Post the latter's employment of NCSC staff and explore whether there was room for conversion of the relevant positions to civil service posts.

27. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered that if B/Ds could slow down their pace of outsourcing, NCSC staff might be able to secure longer contract durations for their employment. He expressed support for the suggestion made by some deputations that FEHD should stop further outsourcing in recognition of the problems so arising, such as labour exploitation, staff shortage, staff retention problem, quality assurance problem, etc. SCS explained that outsourcing of Government services was in line with the principle of "Big market, small government", and the pace of outsourcing would be determined by the B/Ds concerned having regard to their own operational circumstances and staffing position.

28. Dr Margaret NG enquired about the rationale of engaging NCSC staff to fill the positions of "Librarian" and "Library Assistant" and whether it was possible to convert the positions concerned to civil service posts. SCS responded that many NCSC staff were temporarily employed to provide the services concerned because LCSD had earlier commissioned the Efficiency Unit (EU) to review and recommend how the frontline and support services of public libraries should be delivered. LCSD was currently examining EU's recommendations. She noted that LCSD would consult the staff sides on the recommendations in due course.

Need for a comprehensive review of the NCSC Staff Scheme

29. In consideration of the many concerns and problems highlighted by the deputations, Ms LI Fung-ying considered it necessary for the Administration to conduct a comprehensive review of the NCSC Staff Scheme and make improvements to the employment terms and conditions of service of the NCSC staff. Dr Margaret NG queried whether the real purpose of introducing the NCSC Staff Scheme was to control the permanent civil service establishment and to reduce cost by employing NCSC staff whose employment terms and conditions were worse than their civil service counterparts to meet long-term service needs. She considered that the different problems associated with the NCSC Staff Scheme as pointed out by deputations together with the growing use of agency workers had culminated in labour exploitation, necessitating a comprehensive review of the Scheme.

30. SCS responded that a comprehensive review on the employment of NCSC Staff had been conducted in 2006. The findings of the review showed that NCSC staff could effectively complement the civil service workforce in the delivery of services to the public. The Administration was of the view that there was a continued need to employ NCSC staff under a fixed term contract to meet service needs which were time-limited, or seasonal, or subject to market fluctuations, or which required staff to work less than the conditioned hours of civil servants, etc. She emphasized that under the principle of "Big market, small government", flexible utilization of public resources was necessary to provide timely and quality service to the public.

31. Ms LI Fung-ying and the Chairman urged the Administration to consider that for cases where the NCSC staff had been working in the same NCSC positions continuously for over ten years, the long-term operational need for these NCSC positions should be recognized and these positions should be converted to civil service posts. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that the NCSC Staff Scheme was a political issue. He called on the Administration to scrap the Scheme and convert the existing NCSC staff to civil servants.

32. Dr PAN Pey-chyou pointed out that as different from civil service posts, NCSC positions offered no job security, and the employment terms were very mean as exemplified by a recent case where the family members of a NCSC staff member who died while in service after working for 21 years were not entitled to receive death payment from the Government as their civil service counterparts because the deceased had been employed on NCSC terms. Moreover, NCSC staff did not have medical benefits, promotion prospect and incremental credits. He further pointed out that the principle of "Big market, small government" only meant minimizing Government intervention and not minimizing its expenditures through staff exploitation. Mr IP Wai-ming also expressed regret at the lack of progress in addressing problems associated with the NCSC Staff Scheme and that the Government had set a very bad example as an employer under the Scheme.

33. SCS explained that the NCSC Staff Scheme allowed flexibility in the operation of B/Ds and enabled them to respond more promptly to changing service needs. She said that generally speaking, NCSC staff, unlike civil servants employed to meet long-term service needs, were not part of the permanent civil service establishment. Hence, it was inappropriate to compare the employment terms and conditions of service of the NCSC staff with those of civil servants. HoDs had full discretion to determine the employment package for their NCSC staff having regard to the job nature, condition of the employment market, as well as their management and operations considerations, insofar as the terms of employment of NCSC staff were overall speaking no less favourable than those provided for under EO. SCS added that as she understood, the terms of employment offered by many B/Ds were more favourable than those provided for under EO.

34. The Chairman considered it undesirable for the Government to only adhere to the principle that the terms and conditions of service for NCSC staff would be no less favourable than those provided for under EO, which, in his view, were only the minimum standards.

35. Mr WONG Kwok-hing proposed that the NCSC Staff Scheme should be scrapped and all existing NCSC staff be converted to civil servants under a "through train" arrangement and put under the central deployment of CSB to different departments as service needs arose. He also reminded the Administration that the Chief Executive had pledged in 2005 to convert NCSC positions with established long-term service need to civil service posts and progress

made in this regard was regrettably slow. He added that a large number of NCSC staff had in fact already continuously served the Government for five years or more.

36. SCS responded that the above proposal was not feasible because NCSC staff were not recruited centrally but by individual B/Ds to meet their own operational needs. Since they were employed to perform specific tasks, they might not be able to carry out duties of positions in other departments. Mr WONG Kwok-hing, however, opined that some NCSC positions had existed for a long time and were generic in nature. He strongly requested the Administration to consider his proposal.

37. Ms LI Fung-ying opined that NCSC staff should be given priority for consideration in the selection of appointees for filling civil service posts by according priority to applicants who had relevant working experience in the Government, or even by directly converting NCSC staff to civil servants under a "through train" arrangement.

38. SCS responded that to ensure fairness to those persons who had not worked as NCSC staff but wished to join the civil service, appointment of civil servants should be through an open, fair and competitive process, and NCSC staff would be considered alongside other candidates in filling civil service posts instead of under a "through train" arrangement. However, CSB had already requested all B/Ds to give due regard to "relevant experience" when selecting candidates for filling civil service posts. NCSC staff with relevant working experience would therefore enjoy a competitive edge over other candidates in the open recruitment exercises. In fact, of the some 2 800 out of the 4 000-odd NCSC positions that had been converted to civil service posts, about 1 500 had been filled by former NCSC staff. As far as application for civil service posts was concerned, the average success rate of applicants who were former NCSC staff was around 20% whereas the success rate of other applicants was only about 2%.

39. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung considered that it was solely out of cost consideration that the Government was reluctant to directly convert NCSC staff to civil servants. The Chairman considered that the above quoted success rate reflected that the success rate of former NCSC staff remained low. He urged the Government to review the arrangements for recruitment of NCSC staff to fill civil service posts, particularly the weightings accorded to "relevant work experience" of applicants. He pointed out that if the weighting accorded to "academic qualifications" was too high, a NCSC staff member who was not a university graduate would definitely be at a disadvantage in competing with other candidates who were university graduates. He requested the Administration to provide for the Panel's information the marking schemes or general recruitment guidelines in this regard.

40. SCS responded that different departments set different entry requirements for different posts in their departments in the light of the relevant operational needs. As such, no general marking scheme for selection of candidates was available. That notwithstanding, CSB had already required B/Ds to give due regard to relevant working experience when selecting candidates for filling civil service posts.

41. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered it unreasonable that NCSC staff whose contracts had been renewed time and again were not directly converted to civil servants, so that for want of job security they were afraid to make suggestions for improvements in service standard. Since their suitability for the jobs concerned should have already been established through their years of service, it was unfair to require them to apply for the relevant civil service posts through open recruitment.

42. Dr Margaret NG considered it unfair that there were occasions that when a NCSC position was converted into a civil service post, the entry requirements for the post were raised. As a result, the incumbent NCSC staff member, though having worked for years in the relevant NCSC position, was unable to meet the entry requirements. SCS responded that B/Ds might do so when converting a NCSC position into a civil service post in order to recruit better qualified persons to fill the post. In such situation, if the NCSC staff concerned met the entry requirements, his relevant working experience would certainly give him an edge over other applicants for the civil service posts. Dr NG considered that if the Administration decided to raise the entry requirements for a civil service post which was previously a NCSC position, the Administration should provide the information to the incumbent NCSC staff concerned, including the additional requirements imposed and training required to be completed in order to meet the higher entry requirements. This would help the incumbent NCSC staff understand what he should do to upgrade his knowledge and skills for meeting the higher entry requirements.

(To allow sufficient time for discussion, the Chairman extended the meeting by 15 minutes.)

IV Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2009

(LC Paper No. CB(1)597/09-10(05)

— Administration's paper on Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2009)

43. SCS briefed members on the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2009 (the Award Scheme) which aimed to motivate civil servants to deliver quality service that could meet the rising expectations of the community.

44. The Chairman said that from his experience in participating in the adjudication of the Award Scheme, he felt that the Award Scheme could really inspire other departments and civil servants to emulate the best practices of award-winning departments and teams for continuous improvement in the delivery of public services.

45. Ms LI Fung-ying enquired whether the awards under the Award Scheme would be recorded in the personal files of the civil servants concerned. SCS replied in the negative, explaining that the awards presented under the Award Scheme were team awards, departmental awards and even inter-departmental Partnership Awards. She, however, agreed to consider the possibility of recording the awards in the personal files of the civil servants concerned to show appreciation of their contribution to winning the awards for their teams.

V Any other business

46. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:55 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
12 March 2010