

香港特別行政區政府  
保安局



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The Government of the  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
Security Bureau

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Mrs Sharon Tong  
Clerk to Panel  
Legislative Council Panel on Security  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mrs Tong,

**Employment service support for rehabilitated offenders**

Further to the Legislative Council Panel on Security meeting on 2 March 2010, the Correctional Services Department has been taking various initiatives in enhancing employment service support for rehabilitated offenders. We have also responded, as requested by Panel Members, to the issues raised in the submission by the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong in its submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)985/09-10(04)), which is now set out at Annex. We also briefed Members on the latest development of rehabilitative services in the Panel meeting on 13 March 2012.

Yours sincerely,



(Peggy Siu)

for Secretary for Security

Response of the Security Bureau to the Society of Rehabilitation and  
Crime Prevention, Hong Kong on issues related to support for  
rehabilitated offenders

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) is committed to providing suitable rehabilitative services including vocational training for persons in custody, which will facilitate their re-integration into the community after serving their sentence.

Set out below is the Administration's response to the issues raised by the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong (SRACP) in its submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)985/09-10(04)).

**(1) Suggestion on providing more market-oriented pre-release vocational training and post release employment services**

To enhance the chance of rehabilitated persons in securing gainful employment after release, CSD is currently providing market-oriented vocational training programmes with external accreditation and recognised qualifications to local inmates in correctional institutions. CSD will continue to provide suitable vocational training courses to inmates and keep the content and training places of courses under review having regard to the market situation and inmates' feedback.

CSD has been working with various training providers such as the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), Construction Industry Council (CIC) and Vocational Training Council in providing full-time and part-time market-oriented vocational training courses to eligible adult persons in custody who are serving a sentence of no less than six months and with remaining sentences from three to 24 months on a voluntary basis. In 2010-11, CSD provided around 1280 training places while around 1300 persons in custody applied. In 2011-12, the number of training places provided by CSD was 1282 whereas that for 2012-13 will be increased to 1311. If an eligible inmate cannot enrol in a training course of his choice, he may apply for another course and CSD will make arrangements as far as practicable.

Six new training courses were introduced in 2011, including Chinese culinary and restaurant service, catering and banquet service, beauty care, warehouse keeping, webpage design and basic programming,

and overhead crane operator course. In 2012, CSD will offer new service industry training courses of tourism and product promotion.

At present, with annual subventions from the Social Welfare Department (SWD), SRACP has been providing follow-up employment services, for example, case follow up, group activities and job referrals etc., for rehabilitated persons through its four Employment Development Units. In March 2007, SRACP received funding from SWD to implement a two-year pilot project for provision of short-term rental assistance and enhanced employment service to assist needy discharged inmates. After a comprehensive review, SWD has turned the project into an annual subvented service in 2009-10. SWD will review the resources allocated for employment services for rehabilitated persons and seek additional resources as and when necessary.

**(2) Suggestion on setting up a specific fund to provide short-term financial assistance to rehabilitated persons**

CSD has taken the initiative to identify the needs and possible difficulties that inmates are expected to encounter after their discharge. With the consent of the inmates concerned, CSD would refer these cases to relevant government departments and non-governmental organisations including SRACP prior to their release for early follow-up actions. For instance, CSD may assist inmates with potential financial difficulty in submitting applications to SWD for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) before their discharge, as appropriate. Discharged inmates who are in need of financial assistance may also approach SWD's Social Security Field Units to apply for CSSA. With the funding from SWD, SRACP has been providing short-term rental assistance and petty cash to assist needy discharged inmates. Those rehabilitated persons who need temporary one-off financial assistance may approach SRACP.

To cater for the special short-term one-off financial need to support discharged offenders in job finding e.g. expenses on public transport, SWD has extended the scope of SRACP's petty cash grant to cover such purpose.

Since there is already an established mechanism to provide financial assistance to persons with financial difficulty, we do not see the need to set up another new fund to provide short-term financial assistance.

**(3) Suggestion on setting up a training fund**

The Government and various training bodies have been providing market-oriented vocational training courses. Some of the courses are free of charge and participants can receive allowance during the training period. Rehabilitated persons could benefit from these training courses and assistance to acquire vocational skills and attain relevant recognised qualifications.

Inmates may take vocational training courses offered by CSD in correctional institutions on a voluntary basis. For discharged inmates who are supervisees undergoing statutory post-release supervision and wish to pursue continuing education or vocational training courses to enhance their employability, CSD will assist them in enrolling in suitable courses and applying for financial assistance up to \$1,000 for each supervisee in each supervision period under an education assistance scheme set up by CSD since April 2002. As at end January 2012, more than 1060 rehabilitated persons were subsidised under the scheme and the total funding amount was about \$950,000. In 2011, 55 supervisees received subsidies under the Scheme.

Furthermore, rehabilitated persons can also apply for vocational training courses provided by different training bodies. For example, the ERB currently offers a wide variety of full-time placement-tied vocational skills training courses and part-time non-placement-tied generic skills training courses through a network of about 120 training bodies including SRACP. The full-time placement tied vocational training courses are free of charge and employment-oriented with the aim of helping the unemployed secure employment through appropriate skills training and job placement support services for a period of three months in general. Trainees will receive an allowance during the training period. Rehabilitated persons, as with other eligible applicants, may enrol in the training courses provided by ERB. The CIC Training Academy also provides some free training courses and allowance is available for the trainees who satisfy the attendance requirements.

**(4) Suggestions for the Government to encourage employers to provide more employment opportunities for rehabilitated offenders**

To enlist employers' support for offender rehabilitation, CSD will continue to organise symposiums on employment for rehabilitated persons, as well as employers' visits to correctional institutions. These activities promote better understanding of the vocational training courses for inmates and encourage employers to offer job opportunities to rehabilitated persons to facilitate their rehabilitation.

CSD has been collaborating with various employers and business organisations to help enhance the employability of rehabilitated persons. CSD has set up a network of Caring Employers to provide employment opportunities for rehabilitated persons. As at end-January 2012, a total of 249 organisations/companies/persons have registered as Caring Employers and offered 898 jobs to rehabilitated persons. CSD staff will provide job referrals and vocational guidance for rehabilitated persons having regard to their interest and expertise. They will also maintain liaison with the Caring Employers who have employed rehabilitated persons in order to follow up on their employment. Starting from 2011, CSD has also been cooperating with SRACP in providing persons in custody with information on job vacancies.

In August 2011, CSD jointly organised a Job Fair titled "Give Rehabilitated Offenders A Chance" with the Merchants Support for Rehabilitated Offenders Committee on a trial basis at Pik Uk Prison. 26 employers participated in the Job Fair to provide employment opportunities for local persons in custody who would be released within three months. Apart from providing persons in custody with opportunities to gain interview experience, the Job Fair also helped to promote the message of offender rehabilitation and extend the support network of Caring Employers, with a view to securing more equal employment opportunities for rehabilitated persons.

At present, applicants for all civil service posts are not required to declare their criminal records in the application form. This arrangement can enable rehabilitated persons the opportunity to be considered for appointment on equal footing with other candidates. As different works projects require employees with different skills, we consider it inappropriate to stipulate in outsourcing contracts the proportion of rehabilitated persons to be employed by a contractor. Staff employment of contractors, as that of all employers in Hong Kong, is subject to the human resource policies of the organisations concerned and the relevant legislation.