

For information on
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Legislative Council Panel on Security

Manpower Situation of the Immigration Department

Introduction

This paper aims to brief Members on the manpower arrangement of the Immigration Department (ImmD).

Overall Workload

2. In recent years, the overall workload of ImmD has been increasing as a result of the commissioning of new control points and the implementation of certain policies (such as the Enhanced Torture Claim Screening Mechanism and strengthened assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress outside Hong Kong). In this connection, ImmD has continued to carry out “Business Process Reengineering” in various areas so as to streamline procedures and improve efficiency. For example, ImmD streamlined the document verification procedure in mid 2009 to reduce the waiting time in visa application for foreign domestic helpers. The Application and Investigation Easy System (APPLIES) and the Electronic Passport System are among other measures being implemented.

3. The control points have been coping with increases in the overall passenger and vehicular traffic in recent years (see Annexes I & II), which put heavy pressure on manpower requirements. Apart from flexible staff deployment, ImmD has also adopted a number of measures to alleviate the workload of the control points. These include more publicity in peak periods of cross-boundary passenger flow (during long holidays and festive seasons) to discourage passengers from crossing the border during such busy times; staying

in contact with the tourism industry to forecast passenger flow, as well as uploading the daily passenger throughput of the control points to the website for the reference of passengers. During peak periods, ImmD will also set up a Command Centre jointly with the relevant departments (including the Police, Transport Department and Customs and Excise Department) and the MTR Corporation to monitor closely the passenger flow, and to take relief measures, such as deploying staff from non-control point sections for reinforcement as required.

4. In the long term, ImmD has been enhancing its automatic clearance systems to strengthen the handling capacity of its control points. The number of e-Channels has increased by 3 (to a total of 36) at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point in May this year; will increase by 9 (to 18) at the Man Kam To Control Point next year; and by 23 (to 43) at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point in 2013. Furthermore, to tie in with the initiative of the Mainland authorities to issue electronic "Exit-Entry Permits for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao" to Mainland residents by phases starting from 2012, ImmD will allow eligible Mainland visitors to use the e-Channel service after enrolment early next year.

Establishment

5. The establishment of the uniformed staff in ImmD in recent years are 5,141 in 2009-10 (comprising 1,706 posts in the officer grade and 3,435 posts in the rank and file grade) and 5,168 in 2010-11 (comprising 1,793 posts in the officer grade and 3,375 posts in the rank and file grade) respectively. The establishment is estimated to be 5,190 in 2011-12 (comprising 1,787 posts in the officer grade and 3,403 posts in the rank and file grade). As shown in Annex III, ImmD aims to recruit 240 staff (100 in the officer grade and 140 in the rank and file grade) in 2011-12.

6. In June and September this year, new recruits of about 130 staff in the officer grade and 140 staff in the rank and file grade will assume duty after completion of their induction training. It is expected that the present manpower stringency will be improved by then.

7. To conclude, ImmD will continue to cater for the overall operational needs through enhancement of automatic clearance systems, optimisation of business process and flexible staff deployment on the one hand, and to seek additional manpower and other resources as necessary through the Resource Allocation Exercise on the other. ImmD will maintain close communication with the representatives from staff associations on these issues.

Security Bureau

June 2011

Overall Passenger Traffic Statistics

	Passengers (Million)		
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Hong Kong Residents	162.2	164.6 [+1.5%]	168.9 [+2.6%]
Visitors	59.3	61.6 [+3.9%]	74.2 [+20.5%]
(Mainland visitors included)	34.3	37.1 [+8.3%]	46.8 [+26.3%]
Total	221.5	226.2 [+2.1%]	243.1 [+7.5%]

[] denotes percentage change over the preceding year.

Annex II

Vehicle Traffic Statistics

	Vehicles (Ten thousand)		
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Goods Vehicle	808.9	794.9 [-1.7%]	829.2 [+4.3%]
Private Vehicle	554.7	589.7 [+6.3%]	620.8 [+5.3%]
Coach *	95.6	99.3 [+3.9%]	92.8 [-6.5%]
Total	1,459.2	1,483.9 [+1.7%]	1,542.8 [+4.0%]

[] denotes percentage change over the preceding year.

* Excluding shuttle bus service for Huanggang / Lok Ma Chau.

Annex III

Establishment of Uniformed Staff of the Immigration Department

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12 (Estimate)
Officer	1,706 (+20)	1,793 (+87)	1,787 (-6)
Rank and File	3,435 (+100)	3,375 (-60)	3,403 (+28)
Total	5,141 (+120)	5,168 (+27)	5,190 (+22)

() denotes change over the preceding year.

Recruitment Figures of Uniformed Staff of the Immigration Department

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12 (Target)
Immigration Officer	64	132	100
Immigration Assistant	132	0	140
Total	196	132	240