

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)980/12-13

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/PS

Panel on Public Service

**Minutes of meeting held on
Monday, 17 June 2013, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon Claudia MO
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, JP
Hon TANG Ka-piu
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members attending : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung

Member absent : Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

Public Officers attending : Agenda item IV

Mr Paul TANG, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Raymond H C WONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Ms May CHAN, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 2

Miss Winnie CHUI
Principal Assistant Secretary (Pay & Leave)
Civil Service Bureau

Agenda item V

Mr Paul TANG, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Raymond H C WONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Eddie MAK, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 1

Clerk in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Chief Council Secretary (4)1

Staff in attendance : Ms Shirley CHAN
Senior Council Secretary (4)1

Ms Angela CHU
Council Secretary (4)1

Ms LAM Yuen-kwan
Legislative Assistant (4)1

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(4)772/12-13 -- Minutes of meeting on 15 April 2013)

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2013 were confirmed.

II. Information paper issued since the last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(4)774/12-13(01) -- Hospital Authority's response to the submission on the information technology services contract workers of the Hospital Authority)

2. Members noted that the above paper had been issued since the last meeting.

III. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper No. CB(4)771/12-13(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(4)771/12-13(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration at the next regular Panel meeting to be held on 15 July 2013 –

- (a) Conditioned hours of work and leave arrangement for staff in the Hospital Authority; and
- (b) Pay policy of the Government in the calculation of salaries of government school teachers.

(Post-meeting note: As proposed by the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, the wording of item (a) above was revised as "Conditioned hours of work and leave deduction

Action

arrangement for civil servants working 45 hours net per week in the Hospital Authority".)

4. Regarding the Agenda Item IV on "2013-14 Civil Service Pay Adjustment" of the present meeting, the Chairman suggested and members agreed that a special meeting be held as soon as possible to receive views from relevant civil service associations/unions. Mr SIN Chung-kai suggested that members of the public should also be invited to give views on this matter.

(Post-meeting note: A special meeting was held on 2 July 2013 to receive views from civil service associations/unions and members of the public on the 2013-14 civil service pay adjustment.)

5. Regarding Agenda Item V on "Employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service" of the present meeting, Ms Emily LAU proposed and members agreed that relevant organizations and members of the public should be invited to give views on this subject at a future meeting. Ms LAU further said that the scope of discussion should be extended to cover government-funded public bodies. Ms Claudia MO expressed support for the proposal.

(Post-meeting note: With the concurrence of the Chairman, an item for receiving views from deputations and members of the public on the subject was included in the agenda for the Panel meeting on 15 July 2013.)

6. The Chairman referred members to a letter dated 14 June 2013 from Mr IP Kin-yuen tabled at the meeting proposing the Panel to discuss the policy of granting training leave to civil servants, in view of the recent public concern about the grant of such leave to an Assistant Director of Health to undertake barrister pupillage. As the subject might be of interest to the Panel on Health Services ("HS Panel"), the Chairman consulted members on whether a joint meeting should be convened. Ms Claudia MO expressed support for convening a joint meeting with HS Panel. Ms Emily LAU did not have strong view on the arrangement of meeting as long as representatives from all relevant bureaux/departments ("B/Ds") would be invited to attend the meeting. To facilitate members' discussion, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan requested the Administration to provide information on the relevant policy and cases of granting such leave to civil servants. Noting the quorum requirement of a joint meeting was one-third of the

Action

members of the two Panels, the Chairman directed the Clerk to make suitable arrangement with HS Panel. Members agreed.

(Post-meeting note: Mr IP's letter was issued to members on 18 June 2013 after the meeting vide LC Paper No. CB(4)791/12-13(01). HS Panel decided at its meeting on 17 June 2013 that HS Panel would not discuss the issue nor hold a joint meeting with the Panel on Public Service to discuss the issue. With the concurrence of the Chairman, an item on "Policy of granting paid study leave to civil servants" was included in the agenda for the Panel meeting on 15 July 2013 and members of HS Panel were invited to attend the meeting.)

IV. 2013-14 Civil Service Pay Adjustment

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| (File Ref.:
CSBCR/PG/4-085-001/72 | -- Legislative Council Brief on "2013-14 Civil Service Pay Adjustment" issued by the Civil Service Bureau on 4 June 2013 |
| File Ref.:
CSBCR/PG/4-085-001/72 | -- Legislative Council Brief on "2013-14 Civil Service Pay Adjustment" issued by the Civil Service Bureau on 11 June 2013 |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)771/12-13(03) | -- Updated background brief on 2013-14 Civil Service Pay Adjustment prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)778/12-13(01) | -- Joint letter from Hon TANG Ka-piu and Hon KWOK Wai-keung |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)778/12-13(02) | -- Submission from HKSAR Government Employees General Union) |

Action

7. Members noted the following submissions tabled at the meeting –
- (a) submission from the Hong Kong Senior Government Officers Association; and
 - (b) submission from the Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association.

(Post-meeting note: The above submissions were issued to members on 17 June 2013 after the meeting vide LC Paper No. CB(4)791/12-13.)

8. Secretary for the Civil Service ("SCS") briefed members on the decision of the Chief Executive-in-Council ("CE-in-Council") at its meeting on 11 June 2013 that, with retrospective effect from 1 April 2013, civil service pay for 2013-14 should be increased by 2.55% for civil servants in the directorate and upper salary band, and by 3.92% for civil servants in the middle and lower salary bands.

Factors taken into consideration in making the pay adjustment decision

9. Pointing out that the staff sides of the four civil service central consultative councils were dissatisfied with the CE-in-Council's decision, Mr WONG Kwok-hing asked if the Administration would make further efforts to communicate with the staff sides and all relevant civil service unions/associations with a view to reaching a consensus before the submission of the relevant funding proposal to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council ("LegCo"). Mr LEUNG Che-cheung and Mr TANG Ka-piu expressed similar views. Mr TANG said that civil service pay adjustment should be settled by mutual agreement between employers and employees. The members also enquired about the mechanism for arbitration on the civil service pay adjustment.

10. SCS said that while the pay rise for 2013-14 might fall short of some civil servants' expectation, he assured members that the CE-in-Council had made the decision in strict accordance with the established mechanism and all six factors had been fully taken into account. The decision to follow the net Pay Trend Indicators ("PTIs") for the respective salary bands was a final decision made by the CE-in-Council, having regard to all the relevant considerations and was in line with the policy of maintaining broad comparability between civil service and private sector pay. SCS also clarified that the 1968 Agreement between the

Action

Government and the three constituent associations of the staff side of the Senior Civil Service Council ("SCSC") provided for the appointment of an independent Committee of Inquiry by the Chief Executive to deal with disputes between the management side and staff side of the SCSC if the matter of dispute was not trivial, not a matter of settled public policy or would not affect the security of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The mechanism was not an arbitration mechanism per se and had only been invoked on two occasions in the past.

11. Ms Claudia MO criticized that it was only a formality for the Administration to brief the Panel on the 2013-14 civil service pay adjustment, as the CE-in-Council had already made the final decision. She opined that the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") had the responsibility to strive for the benefits of civil servants in this regard. SCS responded that while the CE-in-Council had made a final decision on the pay adjustment, the pay adjustment could only be effected with the approval of the Finance Committee of the LegCo. The Administration fully respected the constitutional role of LegCo in this regard. While it was understandable that the staff sides would prefer a higher pay rise, CSB, being the subject bureau, was also obliged to give due regard to the macro socio-economic situation of Hong Kong and other relevant factors in considering the annual pay adjustment.

12. Mr WONG Kwok-hing and the Deputy Chairman referred to the submission of the Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association ("HKCCSA") tabled at the meeting, and shared the concern expressed by the Association about the assertion of the Administration in paragraph 14 of the LegCo Brief issued on 4 June 2013 that "the pay offers are pegged to the net PTIs". They requested the Administration to explain whether and how the CE-in-Council had taken into consideration the other five relevant factors, and if so, what weighting had been given to each of the factors.

13. SCS reiterated that in determining the 2013-14 pay adjustment, the CE-in-Council had considered all the six relevant factors, namely the net PTIs, the state of Hong Kong's economy, changes in the cost of living, the Government's fiscal position, pay claims of the staff sides and civil service morale. Details of the consideration were set out in paragraphs 3 to 12 of the LegCo Brief issued on 4 June 2013. He said that paragraphs 13 and 14 of the LegCo Brief should be read together and in context of paragraphs 3 to 12 of the Brief. No numerical weighting had been given to each of the factors but care had been exercised to strike a balance. Apart from the net PTIs, the other five factors could not be easily quantified and required the

Action

exercise of judgement. In determining the civil service pay adjustment, it was the established practice of the CE-in-Council to consider the net PTIs and the other five relevant factors before making final decisions.

14. Mr IP Kin-yuen considered it unacceptable for the CE-in-Council to have made a decision to adjust the 2013 pay rise based exactly on the net PTIs after considering all relevant factors, as this suggested that the CE-in-Council had not given sufficient consideration to the other five relevant factors. Mr KWOK Wai-keung queried whether the CE-in-Council had adopted a predetermined stance on pegging this year's pay adjustment to the net PTIs. In reply, SCS said that the decision of the CE-in-Council did not imply that it had lost sight of the other five relevant factors and followed the net PTIs mechanically. As a matter of fact, the CE-in-Council had, after considering all relevant factors, decided to adjust the civil service pay according to the net PTIs on most occasions since 1989-90.

15. Dr LEUNG Ka-lau's enquired about the special circumstances and considerations under which civil service pay adjustment did not follow the net PTIs in the past. SCS advised that, according to his observation, such cases could be generalized into three situations, namely, when the inflation rate was high at double-digit level, when the net PTIs were negative, or when the net PTI of the lower salary band was lower than the net PTI of the middle salary band, under which the "bring-up" arrangement might be adopted. He pointed out that although the CE-in-Council would make reference to the past practices in determining each year's civil service pay adjustment, each pay adjustment exercise was a separate exercise and each decision was made on the basis of the prevailing circumstances at that time.

Changes in the cost of living

16. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan was of the view that the failure for 2013-14 civil service pay adjustment to catch up with inflation would set a very bad example for the subvented and private sectors. Noting that the CE-in-Council had decided to maintain its pay offers after considering the pay claims from the staff sides, he expressed doubt on the sincerity of the Administration in conducting the consultation with the staff sides on the pay offers. In order to increase the bargaining power of civil servants, he urged the Administration to replace the current consultation process with a collective bargaining mechanism.

Action

17. SCS said that one of the main objectives of the civil service pay policy was to maintain broad comparability with private sector pay. Neither the Pay Trend Survey ("PTS") nor the civil service pay adjustment aimed at tracking inflation. Under the current mechanism, civil service pay adjustment could be higher or lower than the inflation rate. In fact, since 1989-90, there had been 13 occasions on which the annual civil service pay adjustment for all salary bands was higher than the Composite Consumer Price Index and eight occasions with the opposite situation.

Civil service morale

18. Noting that since 1990, the annual civil service pay adjustment mostly followed the net PTIs, Mr Tony TSE asked if the Administration had undertaken a review to find out why civil servants were greatly dissatisfied with this year's adjustment. He was concerned that the grievances against the Administration might have an adverse impact on the civil service morale.

19. Ms Emily LAU commented that the new term Government had encountered great difficulties in implementing policies. This had undermined the morale of civil servants and jeopardized the governance of the Government. She urged the Administration to listen to the views of all parties concerned in formulating policies, and to fully consult LegCo and relevant stakeholders before making decisions.

20. SCS said that the Administration attached great importance to staff morale and duly noted the disappointment with this year's pay rise decision. However, it was imperative for the Government to uphold the well-established practice since policy consistency was also important to the maintenance of civil service morale and the credibility of the civil service pay policy. He assured members that the Administration would continue to work on various fronts to sustain staff morale. Such measures included the provision of additional manpower as appropriate to alleviate the increasing work pressure among civil servants and the enhancement of communication between the management and staff.

21. Mr KWOK Wai-keung was dissatisfied with the arrangement that SCS had announced the pay offers to the mass media before consulting the staff sides. In his view, this arrangement had caused much misunderstanding among the public of the staff sides' demands and damaged the trust of the staff sides towards the management.

Action

22. SCS explained that as the civil service pay adjustment involved the use of public funds and was an issue of wide public concern, the Administration had the responsibility to explain the policy to the public. He clarified that as soon as the CE-in-Council had decided on the pay offers on 4 June 2013, CSB immediately conveyed the decision to the staff sides and to seek their response to the pay offers

Improvement of the pay adjustment mechanism

23. Noting that the findings of the 2013 PTS were not fully accepted by the staff sides, Mr SIN Chung-kai enquired about the selection and composition of companies included in the 2013 PTS.

24. SCS said that the 2013 PTS was conducted in strict accordance with the established mechanism and methodology agreed by the Pay Trend Survey Committee ("PTSC"), which comprised representatives of the staff sides, the Administration as well as two independent advisory bodies on civil service salaries and conditions of service. In preparation of each new round of PTS, the PTSC convened meetings to review the survey methodology and also the list of companies in the survey field. To ensure continuity and year-on-year comparability, companies which had participated in the previous PTS would normally be approached for inclusion in the survey field of the new PTS. Hence, a majority of the companies participated in the 2013 PTS had also participated in the past exercises.

25. On the selection of companies, Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 2 ("DSCS2") supplemented that the 2013 PTS had collected the pay adjustment data of the employees in 109 companies which consisted 82 larger companies and 27 smaller companies. When selecting companies for the survey field, the PTSC had considered a number of factors to ensure that these companies were generally known as good and steady employers, and that the distribution of the companies selected could reflect the overall distribution of Hong Kong's economically active population employed in companies of comparable scales.

26. The Deputy Chairman enquired whether other forms of special payments granted to the employees of the selected companies, in addition to the basic salaries, had been included in 2013 PTS. SCS replied that it was agreed at the meetings of the PTSC that year-end bonuses were included in PTSs, but long-term incentive awards, such as shares and options, were not included in the calculation of PTIs on consideration of the difficulty in

Action

quantifying these payments in monetary terms. SCS noted that some representatives from the staff sides had criticized the non-inclusion of some additional benefits offered to the employees of the selected companies in the calculation of PTIs. He had invited the PTSC to review the existing PTS methodology with a view to identifying improvements acceptable by both the staff sides and the public for the 2014 exercise.

27. Mr IP Kin-yuen said that the "payroll costs of increments" incurred for civil servants in each salary band had been deducted from the gross PTIs to come up with the net PTIs and the annual pay adjustment was based mainly on the net PTIs. He opined that this arrangement was unfair to those civil servants who had reached the maximum pay point of the pay scale of their rank. Noting from DSCS2 that about 60% of civil servants had reached the maximum point of the pay scale of their rank, Mr TANG Ka-piu requested the Administration to provide detailed breakdowns in this regard. He also requested the Administration to provide the number of civil servants who would reach the maximum pay point of the respective pay scale in the next five years.

(Post-meeting note: The relevant information provided by the Administration was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)882/12-13(01) on 9 July 2013.)

28. Noting that some representatives from the staff sides had announced their withdrawal from the PTSC, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung and Mr TANG Ka-piu enquired about the measures of the Administration in dealing with such undesirable situation. SCS said that the Administration would continue to maintain active and close communication with relevant staff representatives. He hoped that all staff representatives would continue to participate in the PTSC so as to reflect the views of the civil servants they represented and make proposals for improving the PTS mechanism.

V. Employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service

(LC Paper No. CB(4)771/12-13(04) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)782/12-13(01) -- Letter from the Administration on employment of persons with disabilities by

Action

government-funded public
bodies

LC Paper No. CB(4)771/12-13(05) -- Background brief on the employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

29. Members noted the following papers tabled at the meeting –

- (a) figures provided by the Administration on the employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service; and
- (b) joint letter from Hon Emily LAU and Hon Fernando CHEUNG to the Secretary for the Civil Service regarding the employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service.

(Post-meeting note: The above papers were issued to members on 17 June 2013 after the meeting vide LC Paper No. CB(4)791/12-13.)

30. SCS briefed members on the employment of persons with disabilities ("PwDs") in the civil service by highlighting the salient points in the discussion paper. He said that the Administration's policy in this regard was to enable candidates with disabilities to compete with able-bodied candidates on an equal footing, thereby allowing them to have equal access to job opportunities in the Government. A number of suitable facilitating measures had been put in place to facilitate PwDs in applying for government jobs. For example, an appropriate degree of preference might be given to PwDs found suitable for appointment by placing them ahead of able-bodied candidates whose suitability for appointment was considered comparable to the former. SCS further advised that the Administration had not adopted any quota system for the employment of PwDs in the civil service in view that such system had not been proven successful overseas in helping PwDs secure employment and that the prevailing trend was to enhance support measures for PwDs so they could have equal employment opportunities.

Action

Ratio of PwDs being employed in the civil service

31. Noting from the discussion paper provided by the Administration that the number of PwDs being employed in the civil service was about 2% of the strength of the civil service, Ms Claudia MO and Ms Emily LAU considered that the ratio was too small, and urged the Administration to devise measures to encourage B/Ds as well as government subvented organizations to employ more PwDs. Ms Claudia MO also enquired how the Administration would ensure that disabled candidates could compete with able-bodied candidates for civil service posts on an equal footing, and requested the Administration to provide a breakdown by B/Ds and types of disability of the disabled candidates recruited.

32. In reply, SCS said that appointments to the civil service were based on the principle of open and fair competition. Candidates for civil service posts, able-bodied and disabled alike, would be assessed on the basis of their ability and performance, having regard to the stipulated entry requirements of the concerned posts. To enable candidates with disabilities who met the basic entry requirements to compete with able-bodied candidates on an equal footing, a number of facilitate measures had been implemented. In addition, as revealed from the findings of the surveys conducted by CSB, for the 227 civil service recruitment exercises launched and concluded in 2010-11 and 2011-12, among the 3 152 qualified candidates who had declared their disabilities, 94 of them were subsequently offered appointment. The ratio of appointments offered to qualified candidates who had declared their disabilities was 3%, whereas the overall ratio of appointments offered to qualified applications during the period was 1.9%. SCS remarked that the facilitating measures were effective in enabling candidates with disabilities to compete with able-bodied candidates on equal footing.

33. With regard to the ratio of PwDs being employed in the civil service, SCS clarified that under the prevailing policy, there was no mandatory requirement for civil service job applicants and serving officers in the Government to declare their disability, if any. The "2%" was compiled on the basis of information available to B/Ds, for example, through job applicants' requests for special arrangements in attending the recruitment interviews, and serving officers' applications for the central fund to finance the purchase of technical aids for employees with disabilities to facilitate their performance of duties. He said that mandating job applicants and civil servants with disabilities to declare their disability status might give rise to concern about discrimination. As to the

Action

number of disabled new recruits with breakdowns by the types of disability and recruiting B/Ds, SCS agreed to provide the information after the meeting.

34. Mr TANG Ka-piu suggested that the Administration seek the views of PwDs and advocacy groups proactively on the effectiveness of those facilitating measures in helping PwDs applying for civil service posts. He also suggested that the Administration publicize success stories on the employment of PwDs in the Government so as to encourage B/Ds and public organizations to employ more PwDs. As regards the "3%" quoted by the Administration being the success rate of qualified disabled candidates who were offered appointments during 2010-11 and 2011-12, Mr TANG opined that it would be more appropriate to compare the respective ratios of appointments offered to able-bodied and disabled candidates on the basis of the total number of appointments offered in the period, so as to better assess the recruitment situation of PwDs in the civil service. He requested the Administration to provide related information in this regard.

35. SCS replied that ongoing efforts had been made to encourage more job seekers with disabilities to apply for government jobs. In this connection, CSB would work closely with the Labour Department ("LD") to promote the Administration's policy and facilitating measures on the employment of PwDs. He agreed to look into Mr TANG's request for the relevant information after the meeting.

36. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that according to the information provided in the Administration's paper, there were 476 000 qualified applications in the civil service recruitment exercises concluded in 2010-11 and 2011-12. Given that the overall ratio of appointment offered to qualified applications was 1.9%, the total number of appointments offered during the period would be about 9 000. Answering the question put forward by Mr TANG Ka-piu, Dr CHEUNG said that the ratio of disabled candidates offered appointment on the basis of the total number of appointments offered during the period was therefore about 1% only. He further suspected that the ratio of "2%" of the number of PwDs being employed in the civil service included those civil servants who became disabled after joining the civil service. He accused the Administration of playing a "number game" and urged the Administration to provide a full and accurate picture on the employment situation of PwDs in the civil service by providing statistics on the number of PwDs recruited each year for the past 10 years.

Action

37. SCS replied that the number of appointments offered to candidates with disabilities would depend on a number of factors, including the number of qualified applicants with disabilities, as well as their suitability for employment having regard to the requirements of the posts concerned. He said that it was more appropriate to compare the ratios of appointment for able-bodied candidates and candidates with disabilities on the basis of qualified applications rather than on the total number of appointments offered.

Requiring civil service job applicants and serving employees to disclose their disability

38. Noting that the Administration would not require civil service job applicants and serving employees to declare their disability status on a mandatory basis, Ms Emily LAU enquired whether such practice was in line with international practices, and whether the Equal Opportunities Commission had been consulted in this regard. SCS replied that as far as the employment of PwDs in the civil service was concerned, the Government followed a broad definition in respect of disability. In line with the prevailing guidelines, he considered it appropriate to give civil service job applicants and serving employees the option whether to declare their disability status. Permanent Secretary for Civil Service added that there was a previous complaint from a civil servant with disability who alleged that the Administration had intruded into his privacy by requiring him to disclose his disability status. The existing arrangement, under which job applicants and serving employees with disabilities could choose to disclose their disability status or not, was considered more appropriate.

Employment situation of visually impaired persons in the civil service

39. Mr IP Kin-yuen referred to the submission from the Hong Kong Blind Union, and expressed concern over the employment situation of visually impaired persons in the civil service. He said that the number of new recruits who were visually impaired had been on a continuous decline from 2008 to 2012. He enquired about the reasons for the decline, and whether the Administration would review the employment situation of visually impaired persons in the civil service with a view to creating more job opportunities for such persons. He also requested the Administration to provide statistics on the employment of visually impaired persons in the civil service since 1997. Ms Emily LAU suggested that the

Action

Administration consider engaging visually impaired persons in suitable posts like telephone operator.

40. SCS replied that the employment situation of visually impaired persons in the civil service depended on different factors including the number of visually impaired applicants applying for civil service posts, and their suitability for employment having regard to the requirements of the concerned posts. It would be difficult for the Administration to devise measures specifically for the employment of a particular disability group. CSB would further impress upon B/Ds the importance of facilitating the employment of PwDs in the civil service, and cultivate appreciation and peer acceptance of staff with disabilities. SCS further advised that in general each civil service grade was required to discharge a range of duties and it would not be feasible to engage PwDs as "telephone operator" to perform solely telephone operation work. He agreed to provide statistics on the employment of visually impaired persons in the civil service after the meeting.

Referrals by the LD for PwDs to apply for civil service posts

41. Ms Emily LAU and Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern over the decrease in both the number and success rate of referrals made by the Selection Placement Division ("SPD") of LD for PwDs to apply for civil service posts. They enquired about the reasons for the decrease. Deputy Secretary for Civil Service 1 ("DSCS1") said that as advised by LD, the number of referrals for jobs in the Government made by SPD would depend on a number of factors including the number of government vacancies available and the preference of job seekers with disabilities to apply government jobs through SPD or to submit job applications to the recruiting B/Ds direct. He said that CSB would work with LD to step up promotional efforts with a view to encouraging more PwDs to apply for civil service posts.

Assistance provided to PwDs working in the Government

42. Ms Emily LAU enquired about the details of the central fund managed by CSB for financing the purchase of technical aids for PwDs working in the Government, including the establishment date of the fund, success rate of applications and reasons for rejected applications, if any. DSCS1 replied that the central fund was set up in 1996 to provide on-the-job assistance and reasonable accommodation to PwDs working in the Government so as to facilitate them in discharging their duties.

Action

Applications would be approved if the requests were job-related. So far, a total of \$4.11 million had been disbursed from the fund. At the request of Ms LAU, DSCS1 agreed to provide further details of the central fund to the Panel after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response to the issues raised at the meeting was issued to members on 16 July 2013 vide LC Paper No. CB(4)902/12-13(03).)

VI. Any other business

43. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:53 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
11 September 2013