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16 April 2014

Ms Anita SIT  
Clerk to Panel on Public Service  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central  
Hong Kong

Dear Ms SIT,

**Panel on Public Service  
Meal break arrangements for the disciplined services**

I refer to your letter of 20 March 2014, requesting information on the respective conditioned hours of work and meal break arrangements for various disciplined services. In consultation with the disciplined services and the Security Bureau, I provide the requested information in the ensuing paragraphs.

**Conditioned hours of work**

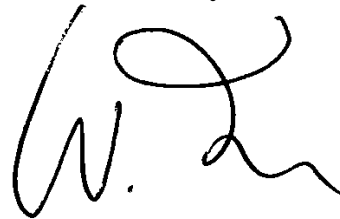
As explained at previous Panel meetings, there is no uniform conditioned hours of work in the civil service. There are two systems of conditioned hours of work: gross (i.e. inclusive of meal breaks) and net (i.e. exclusive of meal breaks). Specific conditioned hours of work are laid down for different grades of civil servants, including civilian and disciplined services staff, according to operational requirements and other relevant considerations.

All disciplined services staff are on the gross system. In accordance with the Civil Service Regulations, the conditioned hours of work for members of disciplined services are governed by their operational needs and determined in relation to the total responsibilities of each service, its complement and the actual manpower situation. The current conditioned hours of work of various disciplined services are set out at **Annex A**.

### **Meal break arrangements for the disciplined services**

Apart from different conditioned hours of work, various disciplined services have different shift patterns and meal break arrangements to suit their particular operational needs. Disciplined services staff may be called out during normal meal breaks due to actual operational needs. The issue is primarily a management issue within individual departments having regard to their operational needs, service requirements and other relevant considerations. We have consolidated information obtained from disciplined services pertaining to their meal break arrangements, which is set out at **Annex B**.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. TSE', written in a cursive style.

(Miss Winnie TSE)

for Secretary for the Civil Service

- c.c. Secretary for Security (Attn : Miss Bella MUI)
- Commissioner of Correctional Services (Attn : Ms NG Sau-wai)
- Commissioner of Customs and Excise (Attn : Mr Alan YUNG)
- Director of Fire Services (Attn : Ms Carey YEUNG)
- Controller, Government Flying Service (Attn : Ms May LEE)
- Commissioner of Police (Attn : Mr Eddy SIT)
- Director of Immigration (Attn : Mr Antony LEUNG)

### Conditioned Hours of Work of the Disciplined Services

<b>Disciplined services</b>	<b>Conditioned hours of work per week</b>	
Correctional Services Department	48 hours gross	
Customs and Excise Department	48 hours gross	
Fire Services Department	Ambulance Officer grade	44 hours gross
	Fireman / Station Officer grades (Control Stream) and Ambulanceman grade	48 hours gross
	Fireman / Station Officer grades (Operational / Marine Stream) *	54 hours gross (Undergoing a trial scheme on the feasibility of reducing the conditioned hours of work from 54 to 51 hours gross per week)
Government Flying Service	44 hours gross	
Hong Kong Police Force	48 hours gross	
Immigration Department	44 hours gross	

\* Including staff of the Control Stream who are deployed to undertake duties related to Fire Stream operations.

## Annex B

### Normal Meal Break Arrangements for the Disciplined Services

Disciplined services	Normal Meal Break Arrangements
Correctional Services Department	One one-hour meal break per shift
Customs and Excise Department	For shifts of longer than 24 hours, two one-hour meal breaks per shift  For other shifts, one one-hour meal break per shift
Fire Services Department	Frontline operational staff may take their meal within a designated period. For each 24-hour shift, there are two designated periods. For other shifts, there is one designated period. The duration of each designated period varies from about one to three hours for different streams/units <sup>Note</sup>  For other staff, one one-hour meal break per shift
Government Flying Service	One one-hour meal break per shift
Hong Kong Police Force	One one-hour meal break per shift
Immigration Department	For shifts of 8 hours or longer, one one-hour meal break per shift

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<sup>Note</sup> In recognition of the relatively high frequency of call-out for frontline ambulancemen, the Fire Services Department has put in place special measures to facilitate meal-taking by these staff. If ambulancemen are called out during the designated period before they have taken a continuous 30-minute meal break, they may be compensated with another 30-minute meal break afterwards within the designated period. In the event that ambulancemen are unable to take a continuous 30-minute meal break during the designated period, they may take a 30-minute compensatory meal break afterwards, during which they will be free from attending ambulance calls.