

OFFICIAL RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 7 January 2015

The Council met at Eleven o'clock

MEMBERS PRESENT:

THE PRESIDENT

THE HONOURABLE JASPER TSANG YOK-SING, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALBERT HO CHUN-YAN

THE HONOURABLE LEE CHEUK-YAN

THE HONOURABLE JAMES TO KUN-SUN

THE HONOURABLE CHAN KAM-LAM, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LEUNG YIU-CHUNG

DR THE HONOURABLE LAU WONG-FAT, G.B.M., G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE EMILY LAU WAI-HING, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TAM YIU-CHUNG, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ABRAHAM SHEK LAI-HIM, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TOMMY CHEUNG YU-YAN, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE FREDERICK FUNG KIN-KEE, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE VINCENT FANG KANG, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE WONG KWOK-HING, B.B.S., M.H.

PROF THE HONOURABLE JOSEPH LEE KOK-LONG, S.B.S., J.P., Ph.D.,
R.N.

THE HONOURABLE JEFFREY LAM KIN-FUNG, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ANDREW LEUNG KWAN-YUEN, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE WONG TING-KWONG, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE RONNY TONG KA-WAH, S.C.

THE HONOURABLE CYD HO SAU-LAN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE STARRY LEE WAI-KING, J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE LAM TAI-FAI, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN HAK-KAN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN KIN-POR, B.B.S., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE PRISCILLA LEUNG MEI-FUN, S.B.S., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE LEUNG KA-LAU

THE HONOURABLE CHEUNG KWOK-CHE

THE HONOURABLE WONG KWOK-KIN, S.B.S.

THE HONOURABLE IP KWOK-HIM, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE PAUL TSE WAI-CHUN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALAN LEONG KAH-KIT, S.C.

THE HONOURABLE LEUNG KWOK-HUNG

THE HONOURABLE ALBERT CHAN WAI-YIP

THE HONOURABLE WONG YUK-MAN

THE HONOURABLE CLAUDIA MO

THE HONOURABLE JAMES TIEN PEI-CHUN, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE NG LEUNG-SING, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE STEVEN HO CHUN-YIN

THE HONOURABLE FRANKIE YICK CHI-MING

THE HONOURABLE WU CHI-WAI, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE YIU SI-WING

THE HONOURABLE GARY FAN KWOK-WAI

THE HONOURABLE MA FUNG-KWOK, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHARLES PETER MOK, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN CHI-CHUEN

THE HONOURABLE CHAN HAN-PAN, J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE KENNETH CHAN KA-LOK

THE HONOURABLE CHAN YUEN-HAN, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LEUNG CHE-CHEUNG, B.B.S., M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KENNETH LEUNG

THE HONOURABLE ALICE MAK MEI-KUEN, J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE KWOK KA-KI

THE HONOURABLE KWOK WAI-KEUNG

THE HONOURABLE DENNIS KWOK

THE HONOURABLE CHRISTOPHER CHEUNG WAH-FUNG, S.B.S., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE FERNANDO CHEUNG CHIU-HUNG

THE HONOURABLE SIN CHUNG-KAI, S.B.S., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE HELENA WONG PIK-WAN

THE HONOURABLE IP KIN-YUEN

DR THE HONOURABLE ELIZABETH QUAT, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MARTIN LIAO CHEUNG-KONG, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE POON SIU-PING, B.B.S., M.H.

THE HONOURABLE TANG KA-PIU, J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE CHIANG LAI-WAN, J.P.

IR DR THE HONOURABLE LO WAI-KWOK, B.B.S., M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHUNG KWOK-PAN

THE HONOURABLE CHRISTOPHER CHUNG SHU-KUN, B.B.S., M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TONY TSE WAI-CHUEN, B.B.S.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

THE HONOURABLE MRS REGINA IP LAU SUK-YEE, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL TIEN PUK-SUN, B.B.S., J.P.

PUBLIC OFFICERS ATTENDING:

THE HONOURABLE MRS CARRIE LAM CHENG YUET-NGOR, G.B.S., J.P.
THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION

THE HONOURABLE JOHN TSANG CHUN-WAH, G.B.M., J.P.
THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

THE HONOURABLE RIMSKY YUEN KWOK-KEUNG, S.C., J.P.
THE SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE

MR YAU SHING-MU, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING

THE HONOURABLE TSANG TAK-SING, G.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS

THE HONOURABLE MATTHEW CHEUNG KIN-CHUNG, G.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE

PROF THE HONOURABLE K C CHAN, G.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY

THE HONOURABLE GREGORY SO KAM-LEUNG, G.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE HONOURABLE RAYMOND TAM CHI-YUEN, G.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS

THE HONOURABLE LAI TUNG-KWOK, S.B.S., I.D.S.M., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR SECURITY

MR KEVIN YEUNG YUN-HUNG, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION

THE HONOURABLE PAUL TANG KWOK-WAI, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE

DR THE HONOURABLE KO WING-MAN, B.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH

THE HONOURABLE WONG KAM-SING, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

THE HONOURABLE PAUL CHAN MO-PO, M.H., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR DEVELOPMENT

MR SHIU SIN-POR, S.B.S., J.P.
HEAD, CENTRAL POLICY UNIT

MS FLORENCE HUI HIU-FAI, S.B.S., J.P.
UNDER SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS

PROF SOPHIA CHAN SIU-CHEE, J.P.
UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH

CLERKS IN ATTENDANCE:

MR KENNETH CHEN WEI-ON, S.B.S., SECRETARY GENERAL

MRS JUSTINA LAM CHENG BO-LING, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL

MISS FLORA TAI YIN-PING, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

MISS ODELIA LEUNG HING-YEE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

MR MATTHEW LOO, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will the Clerk please ring the bell to summon Members to the Chamber.

(After the summoning bell had been rung, a number of Members entered the Chamber)

TABLING OF PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table under Rule 21(2) of the Rules of Procedure:

Subsidiary Legislation/Instruments	<i>L.N. No.</i>
Prisons (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2014	157/2014
Drug Addiction Treatment Centre (Nei Kwu Correctional Institution) (Amendment) Order 2014	158/2014
Drug Addiction Treatment Centre (Lai King Correctional Institution) (Amendment) Order 2014	159/2014
Banking (Disclosure) (Amendment) Rules 2014	160/2014
Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2014 (Commencement) Notice.....	1/2015

Other Paper

Report No. 8/14-15 of the House Committee on Consideration of Subsidiary Legislation and Other Instruments

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Questions. First question.

Provision of Medical Beds in Public Hospitals

1. **DR LEUNG KA-LAU** (in Cantonese): *President, I have recently received complaints that the management personnel of a public hospital reduced the number of medical beds in that hospital on their own volition without seeking their supervisors' prior approval, thereby affecting the services provided to patients. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether it knows the actual numbers of medical beds providing in-patient care in various public hospitals at present, as well as whether there is any difference between such numbers and the planned numbers of such beds; of the relevant numbers in each of the past five years;*
- (2) *whether it knows if the Hospital Authority (HA) will conduct an investigation into the aforesaid incident of reduction in the number of medical beds and assess the impact of the incident on the services provided to patients, including whether patients in the Accident and Emergency Department waited for a longer time before admission to the medical wards as a result; if the HA will conduct such an investigation, of the details; if the HA will not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *how the Government monitors if the actual numbers of various types of in-patient beds in public hospitals differ from the respective planned numbers, for instance, whether a Hospital Chief Executive is required to report to the Chief Executive of HA and the Secretary for Food and Health prior to reducing the number of in-patient beds of a particular specialty; if there is such a requirement, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): *President, the Hospital Authority (HA) manages all public hospitals in Hong Kong. It is projected that the HA will be providing a total of 27 645 hospital beds as at 31 March 2015. Beds may be classified, in terms of types, into general beds, infirmary beds, beds for the mentally ill and beds for the mentally handicapped. General beds are further classified into beds for major specialties, for example,*

medicine, surgery, gynaecology, obstetrics, paediatrics, orthopaedics and otorhinolaryngology, and so on, and beds for other sub-specialties like oncology, neurosurgery and emergency medicine.

The HA will assess the demand for different types of beds as well as the demand for beds among different specialties having regard to the number of patients, types of diseases and severity of patients' conditions. The HA will then allocate hospital beds taking into account the actual circumstances and the healthcare model to cater for the needs of patients.

Given the varying seasonal demand, the HA will temporarily provide additional beds as appropriate. For example, the HA is planning to provide 282 additional beds during winter surge this year to meet extra demand.

Concomitant with the growth and ageing of population, we understand that the demand for healthcare services in the community, especially the demand for hospital beds, will continue to increase. Over the years, the HA has rolled out various measures to reduce public demand for in-patient services. For example, outreach services are provided for elderly patients residing in residential care homes and the community; transitional integrated support services are provided for high risk elderly patients who have been discharged from hospital but may need emergency hospital readmission any time. The Community Health Call Centre of the HA also provides support services for discharged high risk elderly patients living in the community through communications by telephone.

Moreover, we are planning to embark on a number of projects, including the construction of the Tin Shui Wai Hospital and the Hong Kong Children's Hospital; the redevelopment of the United Christian Hospital, the Kwong Wah Hospital, the Queen Mary Hospital and the Kwai Chung Hospital; and the planning for a general acute hospital in the Kai Tak Development Area, so as to enhance service capacity and provide more hospital beds to cater for public needs.

I note that Dr LEUNG points out, in the preamble of the question, that he has received a complaint involving a certain public hospital reducing the medical beds on its own volition without seeking proper prior approval. I have verified the issue with the HA, which has confirmed that it has not received the relevant complaint. As the question has neither mentioned the hospital involved nor provided any specific information regarding the complaint, I can, in such circumstances, only give an overall and general reply to various parts of the

question. If Dr LEUNG has more specific information, I am happy to follow up separately later.

- (1) The number of medical beds provided by various clusters of the HA in the past five years is set out at Table 1 in the written reply distributed to Members.

Table 1: Number of medical beds provided by various clusters of HA

Year	<i>Number of medical beds (as at 31 March)</i>							
	<i>Hong Kong East</i>	<i>Hong Kong West</i>	<i>Kowloon Central</i>	<i>Kowloon East</i>	<i>Kowloon West</i>	<i>New Territories East</i>	<i>New Territories West</i>	<i>Total</i>
2010	819	936	1 128	982	2 245	1 256	895	8 261
2011	863	947	1 120	1 020	2 245	1 303	940	8 438
2012	863	958	1 117	1 020	2 245	1 328	943	8 474
2013	866	950	1 115	1 020	2 239	1 330	968	8 488
2014	872	950	1 091	1 132	2 267	1 361	987	8 660

Overall speaking, the total number of medical beds provided by the HA in the past five years has increased on a year-on-year basis from 8 261 in 2010 to 8 660 in 2014, representing an increase of 5%. Over these five years, the number of medical beds in six clusters has all recorded an increase. The only cluster which has recorded a slight drop in the number of medical beds is Kowloon Central. The reason for such a slight drop includes the need to transfer some beds in medicine to orthopaedics in the Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital to facilitate the establishment of the Joint Replacement Centre; and the classification of 24 beds in the Special Observation Wards in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital from medicine to mixed specialties to more accurately reflect the mixed operation model of the beds concerned (it should be noted that such change in classification had no effect on the actual service provision). Individual clusters might add or reduce the number of medical beds during certain periods having regard to the actual operational needs and changes in healthcare models. However, any adjustment on the number of beds and any re-allocation of beds among specialties are undertaken with formal approval in accordance with procedures. And if the

number of medical beds is reduced, the number of beds for other specialties will be increased correspondingly through re-allocation. As such, the total number of beds provided by the HA has remained unchanged and the overall services provided for patients has not been reduced.

(2) and (3)

Hospital beds are crucial medical resources. The HA has put in place a mechanism to monitor the operation of hospital beds in the clusters. The use and allocation of hospital beds must be approved by the Cluster Chief Executives concerned and reported to the HA Head Office. The HA is required to regularly report the overall number of hospital beds to the Food and Health Bureau *via* the Controlling Officer's Report. The Food and Health Bureau will also set out the number of hospital beds provided by the HA in its Controlling Officer's Report under the relevant Head in the annual Estimates for inspection by the Legislative Council and the public.

All in all, the HA attaches great importance to the use of such crucial medical resources as hospital beds, and has put in place a mechanism to ensure that these resources are used properly to meet actual needs. I would reiterate that should Dr LEUNG have any specific information regarding any incident of the reduction in beds without proper prior approval, he could convey the information to us and I will ask the HA to follow up and conduct a thorough investigation.

DR LEUNG KA-LAU (in Cantonese): *President, when I asked my question, I expected the Secretary to provide the data on individual hospitals, yet the Secretary has provided the combined figures of hospitals in individual clusters as a whole. Let me cite a detailed example to illustrate my point. The document I have at hand is the annual Statistical Report of the HA. Using the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) as an example, there are 713 medicine beds in it. There is another paper provided by the HA to its executive officers under the Electronic Patients Administration System. It is stated in the paper that on 19 November 2014, the total bed day available at the PMH for medicine speciality was 608, which is 100 short of the 713 beds set out in the report mentioned just now. The total bed day occupied on that day was 653, which*

exceeded the 608 beds, so the overall occupancy on that day was 107%. Last week was the peak season for influenza, and there were a lot of reports about shortage of beds in medicine wards. In fact, reports on shortage of beds were also made at the end of last month. The occupancy rate of the PMH was 113%, which was calculated according to the internal information captured under the Patient Administration System which stated that the number of beds available in the PMH was 608, 100 short of the 713 beds stated in the report. May I ask the Secretary to explain this?

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, I am sorry that I cannot provide a specific reply to the question concerning the detailed figures presented by Dr LEUNG Ka-lau impromptu. I hope to look into the relevant figures later and then give an account to the Legislative Council and Dr LEUNG Ka-lau.

I would like to point out that if the information can be provided to us beforehand, I will be able to provide a more desirable reply. Some time ago, we did ask Dr LEUNG Ka-lau about the details of the complaint, yet we could not obtain other information. We have done our level best to provide the information available to Members, and I hope the President and Honourable Members will understand it.

PROF JOSEPH LEE (in Cantonese): *President, the Secretary mentioned in the main reply that the total number of medical beds in the past five years had increased by 5%, which was some 400 beds. May I ask the Secretary whether the manpower of nurses has been increased accordingly? If it has, what is the ratio after the increase and whether the target ratio of 1:6 has been attained?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, the number of beds has been increased in recent years and the relevant figures have already been submitted. The manpower of other healthcare workers has also been increased. However, I need to know the periods the Member intends to make a comparison in order to provide the specific figures. If Prof LEE may specify the periods he intends to draw a comparison, we may provide supplementary information later.

MR LEUNG CHE-CHEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, we understand that the number of beds of the HA is relatively inadequate. However, according to the information on the number of beds provided by the Secretary, there are 987 beds in New Territories West which has a population of almost 2 million, and the percentage of beds provided is lower compared to other districts. May I ask the Secretary of the methods to quickly increase the number of beds for New Territories West within a short time to cope with the shortage of beds?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): *President, first of all, I have to point out that I understand that Members may compare the number of beds of individual clusters with the population of the corresponding cluster. However, apart from the actual population, we have to consider the distribution of age groups in the population. Moreover, due to some historical factors and other reasons, certain patients can get the required service only across the clusters. On the other hand, certain services are provided on a centralized basis only, which means individual services are provided by individual clusters but not all the seven clusters. Under these circumstances, patients must go to another cluster to obtain services. Therefore, it is inappropriate to make a direct comparison of the number of beds or resources of individual clusters and their respective populations.*

MR WONG KWOK-HING (in Cantonese): *President, I noticed the Secretary has pointed out in the main reply that there is an increase of only 5% in the number of beds over the past five years, which is limited. The Secretary has also pointed out that the HA has implemented various measures to lower the demand for in-patient services. I strongly support the provision of community care and nursing services. As such, may I ask the Secretary how he would expend additional resources and implement measures to promote community care and nursing services as a means to lower the demand for in-patient services? I would like to cite an example to illustrate this. A site adjacent to the Siu Sai Wan Complex was earmarked for the establishment of a community health service centre by the HA some time ago, and it was by last year that the Under Secretary eventually responded by announcing the commencement of the project. In connection with this example, may I ask the Secretary whether the Government will inject additional resources for and speed up the construction of community health service centres with a view to reducing the demand for in-patient services?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, rightly as Mr WONG pointed out, we have responded to the specific example cited by him. Perhaps I may explain certain overall arrangements and use the winter season or the peak season of flu we are now facing as an example. All along, the HA has adopted various measures to cope with the extra increase in demand arising from society at different intervals. First, in respect of in-patient services, we have laid down plans to increase the relevant services step by step. In addition, to cope with unexpected demands or the demand of individual districts, hospitals of the HA may plan to increase a certain number of additional beds within a specified period, and these hospitals will also provide additional beds in certain wards during some peak seasons.

On the whole, the management of community services is very important. Since most of the existing patients are elderly people, the HA has plans to step up its support for residential care homes for the elderly in the community by means of providing community geriatric assessment services, community nursing services and the visiting medical officer scheme, so that simple cases may be treated outside hospitals, thus reducing the need for the elderly to be admitted to hospitals.

Other examples are about stepping up the efforts in gate-keeping to reduce unnecessary admission, so that patients with a genuine need for in-patient services may use the required facilities. For example, we will set up some observation areas in accident and emergency departments, enhance viral screening services to determine whether children patients should be admitted, increase manpower, improve the flow of patients and enhance crowd control in response to extended waiting time and this includes an appropriate increase in the number of beds. These measures may be permanent or temporary. Moreover, as I mentioned earlier, we will reinforce certain community services and demand-side management measures in community services, and so on.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): *President, anyone who does not know the actual situation may believe what the Secretary said, that is, there are adequate beds in New Territories West. In the past five years, there was only an increase of less than 100 beds for New Territories West. In fact, inter-cluster deployment of beds for acute medicine cases cannot be made as the Secretary claimed. Members all know that acute cases like acute pneumonia, fever, stroke and heart*

attack, and so on, are in direct proportion to the population and the elderly population. May I ask the Secretary to tell us clearly in what way the elderly population in New Territories West is particularly smaller than other districts, which obliges the Government or the HA to provide such a small number of beds, and the calculation method adopted?

As we all know, by 2023, the number of people in the population aged 65 or above will be almost doubled in comparison with that of the previous 20 years. Will the Secretary tell us whether he has any major plans to ensure that there will be sufficient beds for acute medicine cases to meet the demand arising from the ever increasing elderly population, particularly in New Territories West, the hardest hit area? The Secretary should stop lying.

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, I must clarify that I have not said there are adequate beds in New Territories West as Mr KWOK alleged. In fact, a new hospital is now under construction in Tin Shui Wai and 300 more beds will be provided. As I explained some time ago to the relevant panel of the Legislative Council, overall speaking, we have to increase the total number of beds in the medium-to-long term and to increase the number of beds according to the needs of individual districts.

As for the case of New Territories West, we have all along been concerned about it, and many colleagues and members in the community have pointed out the problem. Moreover, during the review of the operation of the HA, we have raised a number of concerns regarding the matching of resources we allocate to individual districts through the HA and the need of the population. The Steering Committee on Review of Hospital Authority has considered these issues thoroughly and the review will soon be completed. We will announce the report within this year, and problems concerning individual clusters considering resources allocated not matching the respective population will be addressed.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): *President, I have put forth two supplementary questions to the Secretary very clearly just now. First, regarding the figures...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Members are allowed to ask one supplementary question only. Please repeat your supplementary question.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): *I asked the Secretary to give figures explaining why the elderly population of New Territories West is only allocated such a small number of beds. Will the Secretary provide some data to us?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, I must clarify once again that I have never said the elderly population of New Territories West does not need more beds. I have already pointed out that overall speaking, the hospital to be built in Tin Shui Wai will at least provide 300 additional beds in New Territories West. Although the number of beds to be allocated for the elderly, medicine and surgery specialities and other ratios concerning the 300 additional beds have yet to be finalized at the present stage, we will certainly take into account the demand of the population, particularly that of the elderly, in the district or cluster, to make a suitable allocation of resources.

MISS ALICE MAK (in Cantonese): *President, the Secretary said in the main reply that he could not find the complaint raised by Dr LEUNG Ka-lau, yet Dr LEUNG Ka-lau pointed out earlier that those problems were found in individual hospitals. It is evident that "regionalism" is adopted by various clusters under the huge structure of the HA, a problem pointed out by us all along, and there is a problem with the distribution of resources among clusters of the HA.*

As for my supplementary question, the Secretary has already mentioned it earlier. I believe the fundamental solution to the problem is a review of the overall structure of the HA. May I ask the Secretary when the relevant review will be completed? After the completion of the review, what specific measures will the authorities propose to prevent the recurrence of similar situations?

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, as I said earlier, the relevant review is now underway. Yet, I can tell Members that it is

almost completed. The Food and Health Bureau is now collating the views collected during the review, including the views obtained during the community consultation and the consultation with the sector and front-line colleagues. We are now collating these views and will publish the report soon. Regarding Miss MAK's concern about the existence of "regionalism" within the HA and the appropriate utilization of resources allocated to clusters, we will put forth corresponding proposals.

MR SIN CHUNG-KAI (in Cantonese): *President, the population of Kowloon is obviously smaller than that of New Territories West, yet the number of beds in Kowloon is around 4 300 to 4 400 and that of the New Territories as a whole is only around 2 200 to 2 300. Moreover, apart from the hospital providing 300 beds to be built in Tin Shui Wai, the authorities will build a general hospital in the Kai Tai Development Area. It is evident that the growth in the number of beds in the New Territories as a whole is slow, failing to meet the demand arising from the growing population. May I ask the Secretary whether he has any plans to continue to increase the number of hospitals and beds in the New Territories?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Cantonese): President, as I mentioned earlier, we have briefed the Panel on Health Services of the Legislative Council some time ago that the public healthcare system as a whole will be expanded and the number of beds will be increased to cope with the growth in population and the ageing population in the next 30 years. In addition to the projects to be carried out in New Territories West mentioned just now, projects will also be carried out in New Territories East for we know that New Territories East also faces the same problem. In the relevant report and the exchange with the Panel on Health Services which I mentioned, we have talked about the relevant projects. For example, the Phase One expansion project of the Prince of Wales Hospital has just completed and we are asking the HA to carry out planning for a Phase Two expansion project. We have also earmarked sites in the Tai Po Hospital for expansion. In fact, regarding the overall needs of the population of the New Territories, we have made provision in the medium-to-long-term bed expansion plan in the future.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): We have spent more than 23 minutes on this question. Second question.

Air Quality in Tung Chung

2. **MR ALBERT CHAN** (in Cantonese): *President, quite a number of members of the public have relayed to me that the air pollution problem in Tung Chung has worsened in recent years, especially during summer time. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the respective numbers of times in each of the past five years, as recorded by the Tung Chung Monitoring Station, in which the concentrations of fine suspended particulates (PM2.5), effluvia, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide exceeded the Air Quality Objectives (AQO) or the relevant objectives, and the details of the exceedance of each type of pollutants, including the respective average and maximum extent of exceedance and concentrations;*
- (2) *whether it has analysed the major sources of air pollutants in Tung Chung; if so, of the outcome; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *whether measures are in place to improve the air quality in Tung Chung; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHAN, the pollutant you are concerned about in part (1) of the main question should be ozone rather than effluvia.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. It should be ozone.*

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President,

- (1) The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) operates an air quality monitoring station in Tung Chung. According to the data recorded, the air quality of Tung Chung had been improving progressively in the past five years from 2010 to 2014. Concentrations of fine suspended particulates (PM2.5), respirable suspended particulates (PM10) and carbon monoxide showed a downward trend. Sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide were

generally stable. Ozone, affected by the regional photochemical smog, had been on the rise.

- (i) Compared the data recorded at the Tung Chung Air Quality Monitoring Station in 2010 and 2014 respectively, the annual average concentrations of respirable suspended particulates, fine suspended particulates and carbon monoxide had reduced by 6 µg/cu m (13%), 5 µg/cu m (17%) and 196 µg/cu m (27%) respectively. Those of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and ozone had slightly increased by 1 µg/cu m (8%), 1 µg/cu m (2%) and 3 µg/cu m (7%) respectively.
- (ii) From 2010 to 2013, except the one-hour concentration of ozone, other major air pollutants in Tung Chung met the prevailing short-term and long-term AQO. During the four-year period, the highest one-hour average concentrations of ozone were 341 µg/cu m, 312 µg/cu m, 383 µg/cu m and 314 µg/cu m respectively, which were on a par with 355 µg/cu m recorded in 2014.
- (iii) Our new AQO came into effect in 2014. According to the data not yet fully validated, apart from the eight-hour concentration of ozone and the annual concentration of nitrogen dioxide in Tung Chung, other major air pollutants all met the new short-term and long-term AQOs. The annual concentration of nitrogen dioxide was at the level of 45 µg/cu m, exceeding the respective limit by 5 µg/cu m. The number of exceedances of the eight-hour concentration of ozone was 18, with the highest level seen at 278 µg/cu m, exceeding the limit by 118 µg/cu m. The highest hourly average concentration was 355 µg/cu m.

For the detailed data, please see Annex.

- (2) The major source of pollution in Tung Chung can be analysed in two aspects. First, ozone is a regional air pollution phenomenon. It is formed by photochemical activities under unfavourable dispersion of air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds from pollutant emission sources in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) Region. Poor dispersion of air pollutants in the PRD

coupled with light northerly to north-westerly wind raise the concentration of ozone to a significant level.

For nitrogen dioxide, the hourly average of Tung Chung meets the requirement of the AQOs but not its annual AQO. Nitrogen dioxide is mainly caused by photochemical reactions of vehicular emissions of nitrogen oxide with ozone.

- (3) To improve the air quality of Hong Kong (including Tung Chung), we are committed to reducing the emission of local pollutants. The Environment Bureau released A Clean Air Plan for Hong Kong (The Air Plan) in March 2013 which sets out in detail policies and measures on improving air quality covering sea and land transport, power plants and non-road mobile machinery, and so on. Meanwhile, we are stepping up our collaboration with Guangdong so as to improve the regional air quality in the PRD.

To reduce the emission of nitrogen oxides from vehicles, the key measures we launched include phasing out pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles by way of a subsidy-cum-mandatory scheme, strengthening the emission control from petrol and LPG vehicles and retrofitting Euro II and III franchised buses with selective catalytic reduction devices. We have launched the ex gratia payment scheme to phase out pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles since 1 March 2014. As at the end of November 2014, (that is, during the first nine months of the scheme), about 19 800, representing 24% of the pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles took part in the scheme, were off-road. Initiatives to strengthen the emission control for petrol and LPG vehicles have also come into force since 1 September 2014. Franchised buses are expected to have their selective catalytic reduction devices installed by the end of 2016.

To control emissions from marine vessels, a new piece of legislation was enacted in April 2014 to tighten the sulphur limit of local marine light diesel from 0.5% to 0.05%. We are drafting a new piece of legislation to mandate ocean-going vessels to switch to cleaner fuel (sulphur content not exceeding 0.5%) while at berth in Hong Kong for implementation in mid-2015. In addition, we are working on a new piece of legislation to control the emissions from non-road mobile machinery which will take effect within 2015. To regulate

the emissions from power plants, the Legislative Council endorsed the Fourth Technical Memorandum for Allocation of Emission Allowances in Respect of Specified Licences in December 2014 to further tighten the emission caps for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and respirable suspended particulates from 2019 onwards by 11%, 2% and 7% respectively as compared with the 2017 emission cap levels. The Environment Bureau is reviewing the long-term fuel mix for electricity generation for Hong Kong and will review the feasibility of further tightening the emission allowances for electricity generation in 2020 and beyond in the light of the findings of the review.

Lastly, regarding the control of regional air pollutants, the Governments of Guangdong and Hong Kong have set emission reduction targets for 2015 and 2020 in respect of the sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, respirable suspended particulates and volatile organic compounds in the PRD Region for the purpose of improving the regional air quality in a sustainable manner. These measures, which can reduce the precursor pollutants which generate ozone and directly help to control regional ozone and photochemical smog, are the right cure.

Annex

Annual average concentration of air pollutants recorded at the Tung Chung Air Quality Monitoring Station between 2010 and 2014

<i>Pollutants (µg/cu m)</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014*</i>
Respirable Suspended Particulates (PM10)	45	47	45	42	39
Fine Suspended Particulates (PM2.5)	29	32	28	26	24
Ozone	44	44	47	44	47
Sulphur Dioxide	12	13	13	14	13
Nitrogen Dioxide	44	51	43	49	45
Carbon Monoxide	737	660	671	665	541

Note:

* The data of 2014 have yet to be fully validated.

Comparison of the annual monitoring data recorded at the Tung Chung Air Quality Monitoring Station with the current AQOs between 2010 and 2014

<i>Pollutants</i>	<i>Concentration Limit ($\mu\text{g}/\text{cu m}$)</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014*</i>
Respirable Suspended Particulates (PM10)	50	45	47	45	42	39 (objective achieved)
Fine Suspended Particulates (PM2.5)	35	29	32	28	26	24 (objective achieved)
Nitrogen Dioxide	40	44	51	43	49	45 (objective not achieved)

Notes:

- (1) The annual average concentration of air pollutants is in $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu m}$.
- (2) The current AQOs which took effect on 1 January 2014 are not applicable to the monitoring data recorded between 2010 and 2013. However, for the sake of comparison with the monitoring data of 2014, the data of all years in the table are compared against the current AQOs.

* The data of 2014 have yet to be fully validated.

Number of exceedances in short-term monitoring data as recorded at the Tung Chung Air Quality Monitoring Station when compared with the current AQOs between 2010 and 2014

<i>Pollutants</i>	<i>Averaging Time</i>	<i>Concentration Limit ($\mu\text{g}/\text{cu m}$)</i>	<i>Number of Exceedances Allowed</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014*</i>
Respirable Suspended Particulates (PM10)	24-hour	100	9	16 (475) [®]	19 (142)	18 (162)	16 (133)	9 (125)
Fine Suspended Particulates (PM2.5)	24-hour	75	9	11 (119)	11 (96)	9 (103)	10 (93)	3 (85)

<i>Pollutants</i>	<i>Averaging Time</i>	<i>Concentration Limit ($\mu\text{g}/\text{cu m}$)</i>	<i>Number of Exceedances Allowed</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014*</i>
Ozone	8-hour	160	9	10 (246)	16 (228)	22 (268)	15 (234)	18 (278)
Sulphur Dioxide	10-minute	500	3	n.a. [#]	n.a. [#]	n.a. [#]	n.a. [#]	n.a. [#]
	24-hour	125	3	0 (59)	0 (52)	0 (38)	0 (54)	0 (41)
Nitrogen Dioxide	1-hour	200	18	20 (255)	5 (228)	4 (236)	2 (210)	7 (275)
Carbon Monoxide	1-hour	30 000	0	0 (2 910)	0 (2 290)	0 (2 660)	0 (1 810)	0 (2 236)
	8-hour	10 000	0	0 (2 469)	0 (2 188)	0 (2 461)	0 (1 640)	0 (1 561)

Notes:

- (1) Figures in brackets denote the highest concentrations recorded in respect of the pollutant (in $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu m}$).
- (2) The current AQOs which took effect on 1 January 2014 are not applicable to the monitoring data recorded between 2010 and 2013. However, for the sake of comparison with the monitoring data of 2014, the data of all years in the table are compared against the current AQOs.

* The data of 2014 have yet to be fully validated.

@ The respirable suspended particulates data marked with "@" in the table were recorded in March 2010 when Hong Kong was affected by the sand and dust weather originating from northern China.

The note "n.a." means having no such data.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, the Secretary has not cited key data illustrating the worst Air Quality and Health Index (AQHI) reached in Tung Chung. Between 1 December and 31 December 2014, the AQHI in Tung Chung hit the worst level and this remained so for 15 hours, which was higher than that in the Central and Western District by 15 times, and the serious level had maintained for three hours continuously. The situation in Tung Chung was unique as no other district in Hong Kong hit the serious level during the same period. Although the Secretary explained that the two main sources of air pollution were local vehicles and marine vessels as well as pollutants from the Mainland, he did not explain and point out the air pollution problems caused by aircraft.*

Last year, the Government pointed out in reply to a question raised by me in the Legislative Council that the nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide generated by aircraft per annum reached 4 770 tonnes and 2 340 tonnes

respectively, which had a serious impact on the air quality in Tung Chung. Can the Secretary explain why he has not mentioned anything about the impact of the air pollutants generated by aircraft on Tung Chung residents? What can the Secretary do to step up control of the pollutants generated by aircraft in order to improve the air quality in Tung Chung?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr CHAN for the supplementary question. I understand that the Airport Authority (AA) has reduced the emission of air pollutants in various aspects as appropriate. Maybe I add a few points here. Tung Chung is situated on the southeast side of the Airport Island. According to the meteorological data collected on the Airport Island, since the easterly wind blows in Tung Chung most of the time, the pollutants emitted from the airport seldom blow directly towards Tung Chung.

A study conducted by The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and commissioned by the AA in 2011 has used the data recorded between March 2006 and February 2010 by the air quality monitoring station near the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) as well as other relevant data to analyse the interaction between the emissions from the HKIA and those from other areas on North Lantau. According to the findings of the relevant analysis, the impact of the emission from the HKIA on the concentrations of the pollutants in Tung Chung, including respirable suspended particulates, ozone, sulphur dioxide, and so on, was insignificant, and its overall impact on the concentration of nitrogen dioxide in Tung Chung was also small, ranging from 4% to 20% during daytime.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, why was pollution in Tung Chung the worst in Hong Kong? If the Secretary considers the impact of aircraft on air pollution insignificant, why did the several sets of data all show that air pollution in Tung Chung was the worst in Hong Kong?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add regarding the data mentioned by Mr CHAN?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, I believe Mr CHAN was referring to the method of measurement of the AQHI. I can provide some additional information on this point.

In 2014, the General AQHI was recorded as at a high health risk level or above for 97 days in total and a serious health risk level for 12 days in a row. The air quality monitoring stations recording a relatively larger number of high health risks or above were situated in the three districts near the PRD Region, including Tuen Men, Yuen Long and Tung Chung. A relatively high AQHI is recorded mostly when the regional photochemical smog is active, which results in a relatively high concentration of ozone. Compared with other districts in Hong Kong, these districts actually face a similar air pollution problem, though being more vulnerable to the effects of ozone caused by regional photochemical smog.

Ozone is a regional air pollution phenomenon. It is formed by photochemical activities under unfavourable dispersion of air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds from pollutant emission sources in the PRD Region. Poor dispersion of air pollutants or air pollution in the PRD coupled with, as I pointed out just now, light northerly to northwesterly wind from the north make the ozone problem more prominent, thus pushing the AQHI up to a higher level.

Generally speaking, insofar as the General AQHIs recorded across the territory over the past five years between 2006 and 2014 are concerned, the concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and respirable suspended particulates recorded by the general air quality monitoring stations actually showed a downward trend. Meanwhile, in general, the ozone in air showed a 25% or so upward trend, reflecting the worsening problem of regional photochemical smog. In brief, since the relevant districts are in closer proximity to the PRD, they are open to the northeasterly wind from the north and, therefore, to a more serious air pollution problem.

DR LAU WONG-FAT (in Cantonese): *President, my supplementary question is quite similar to the question raised by Mr Albert CHAN.*

Have the authorities studied whether the deteriorating air quality in the district is related to the large number of infrastructure projects being carried out in the waters off it and the increase in air traffic movements? If so, has the

Government considered the possibility of the air pollution problem in Tung Chung being aggravated by the construction of a third runway?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, I thank Dr LAU for the question.

As I mentioned just now, it appears that the air quality of the district is not satisfactory. The two major contributory factors are: First, nitrogen oxide, which is mainly related to vehicles; and second, the relatively high level of pollutants such as ozone, which is caused primarily by regional pollution. Hence, the airport and developments are not the most direct and important factors affecting air quality. The right cure should be prescribed by, firstly, reducing the relevant vehicular emissions. As I mentioned just now, we will phase out old diesel vehicles, introduce improvements to buses and taxis, and enact legislation to regulate the emissions of local marine vessels and even ocean-going vessels.

Secondly, in order to enhance improvement to the overall emissions of Hong Kong and the PRD, the Governments of Guangdong and Hong Kong have set emission reduction targets for 2015 and 2020, with a view to ameliorating emissions of major pollutants in these two places in a few years' time. To this end, we will target vehicles, and through collaboration of the two places, to bring improvements to the overall regional air quality.

MR CHAN HAK-KAN (in Cantonese): *President, I would like to pinpoint part (3) of the main reply, that is, the question put by Mr Albert CHAN to the Secretary regarding what targeted measures will be put in place to resolve the pollution problem confronting Tung Chung. Although a series of territory-wide emission reduction strategies have been cited, the Secretary has failed to pinpoint how the air pollution problem in Tung Chung can be resolved.*

May I ask the Secretary, given the relatively unique geographical condition of Tung Chung and its remoteness from the urban areas, whether the Government will set up a low emission zone in Tung Chung in which only low emission or electric vehicles are allowed, with a view to reducing pollution in Tung Chung?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr CHAN for the supplementary question.

As I mentioned earlier, the two major sources of air pollution in Tung Chung, which are a special concern to the authorities, are related to vehicular and regional emissions. Mr CHAN has rightly said that reducing vehicular emissions can minimize the impacts. Besides some territory-wide measures, environmentally-friendly planning can actually be made in Tung Chung or new development areas (NDAs) in the future to include some transport improvement measures to further reduce the impacts of emissions, especially those from traffic and transport. In fact, we maintain communication with the Development Bureau in the hope of reducing emissions through the implementation of some environmentally-friendly planning measures in the NDAs.

PROF JOSEPH LEE (in Cantonese): *President, the new AQHI, or the new index introduced last year, was mentioned by the Secretary in both the main reply and his reply to the question raised by Mr Albert CHAN.*

I have this question for the Secretary. As pointed out by the Government, some efforts in emission reduction can be made. However, efforts may not be made in terms of infrastructure and air, land or sea traffic, which might be closely related to ozone. In fact, the relevant index may reflect its relationship with the health trend. May I ask the Secretary, given the poor AQHIs in the three districts, namely Yuen Long, Tung Chung and Tuen Mun, if the Secretary can provide some figures to show that the AQHIs will increase the risk of respiratory ailments, and so on? Will the Secretary collaborate with other departments to adopt measures of protecting the residents in these three districts to reduce their morbidity rates?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, I thank the Honourable Member for the supplementary question. As I pointed out in the main reply just now, generally speaking, the major air pollutants in Hong Kong show a trend of gradual mitigation. However, some individual pollutants show an upward trend due to individual factors. Hence, the Air Plan has been launched to fully reduce the impacts on these fronts through local vehicles, marine vessels, power plants and even cross-boundary collaboration.

Certainly, public health is a great concern to us. Hence, the communication with the relevant stakeholders was enhanced after the release of the Air Plan. For instance, during the past year, we have maintained closer co-operation with relevant parties in the medical profession in the hope of enhancing people's understanding of the new AQHI and further protecting public health. Insofar as such efforts are concerned, we will enhance communication in the coming year with a view to making further improvements on this front.

In my opinion, however, the key lies in how to solve the air pollution problem in Hong Kong through the gradual implementation of the various measures in the Air Plan already drawn up, including the phasing out of diesel vehicles, conversion of vehicles, enactment of new legislation, and so on.

PROF JOSEPH LEE (in Cantonese): *The Secretary has not answered my question. Actually, my question is most direct...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Please repeat your supplementary question.

PROF JOSEPH LEE (in Cantonese): *As the AQHI is so high that the respiratory system can be affected, thereby causing people with respiratory problems to face high risks, can the Government provide figures in respect of the risks faced by the districts and will it collaborate with other departments to adopt measures of protecting public health? The Secretary has not given a reply to this point.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have any information about the AQHIs in those districts?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, the AQHI can precisely provide better information to Hong Kong people in various districts. In this respect, we will enhance co-operation with the relevant departments and study in the coming year how to interpret and understand the new AQHI and ways to further protect public health, as well as strengthening education and publicity on this front.

PROF JOSEPH LEE (in Cantonese): *Please provide the figures after the meeting.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, can you provide the relevant figures after the meeting?

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): No problem. (Appendix I)

MR KENNETH LEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, I would like to follow up part (2) of the Secretary's main reply regarding the major pollutants in Tung Chung. I wonder if the Secretary has any data illustrating the extent of impact of emissions from the two power plants on air pollution in Tung Chung. In the long run, if the two power plants use natural gas to generate electricity, will the pollution in Tung Chung see any change? Can the Secretary request your colleagues after the meeting to prepare some projections for Members' reference?*

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Cantonese): President, I thank the Honourable Member for the supplementary question. The pollutants generated by power plants are emitted mainly from relatively tall chimneys. Under general circumstances, relatively effective results can thus be achieved. Hence, power plants will not have a significant impact on air pollution in isolated areas, such as Tung Chung. Insofar as the entire region is concerned, however, emissions from power plants are an important source of regional air pollution. Therefore, the Government will tighten the emission caps of power plants through various policies, including the promulgation of technical memoranda. Members are concerned about the steps taken by us to progressively further encourage the use of more clean energy in the fuel mix for power generation through various new policies or reviews, which are conducive to the entire region. I would like to point out from the macro perspective that air pollution is not necessarily linked to individual districts such as Tung Chung.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): We have spent nearly 24 minutes on this question. Third question.

Measures to Increase Supply of Rental Residential Units

3. **MR WU CHI-WAI** (in Cantonese): *When releasing the new Long Term Housing Strategy last month, the Transport and Housing Bureau pointed out that the Government had updated the projection of long-term housing demand for the next decade and, on this basis, had set a total housing supply target for that period. However, housing will still be in short supply. Some members of the public propose that the Government sell the newly built public rental housing (PRH) units to existing PRH households, so that the PRH units vacated by them may be allocated to PRH applicants and future maintenance expenses of the Hong Kong Housing Authority may be reduced. Some members of the public also propose that the Government relax the restrictions on renting out the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) units as well as the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) units, so as to increase the supply of private rental residential units and lower their rentals. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

(THE PRESIDENT'S DEPUTY, MR ANDREW LEUNG, took the Chair)

- (1) *of the respective numbers of HOS and TPS units the premium-payment procedures for which were completed, the respective numbers of cases uncovered by the authorities in which HOS and TPS units with unpaid premium were illegally rented out, as well as the total supply of private rental residential units, in each of the past three years;*
- (2) *whether it has plans to change some of the PRH units to be completed within the next five years to be HOS units for sale; if it has such plans, of the details; whether it has plans to offer a greater discount rate for calculation of premium so as to attract eligible Green Form HOS applicants to purchase newly built HOS units, thereby speeding up the turnover of PRH units; and*
- (3) *whether it has plans to relax the restrictions on renting out HOS and TPS units with unpaid premium, by allowing the owners concerned to rent out their units but they have to share the rental income with the Government; if it has such plans, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the Government announced the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) in December 2014. This is the first long-term strategy document on housing since 1998. We have adopted the recommendations of the LTHS Steering Committee in its Report on Public Consultation, and made a major policy shift by adopting a supply-led strategy, with a view to averting the current state of serious supply-demand imbalance in housing.

The new LTHS sets out three major strategies: firstly, to build more PRH units and to ensure the rational use of PRH resources; secondly, to provide more subsidized sale flats, expand the forms of subsidized home ownership and facilitate the market circulation of existing flats; thirdly, to stabilize the residential property market through steady land supply and implementation of demand management measures, and to promote good sales and tenancy practices for private residential properties. With the major direction and main framework set under the LTHS, subsequent reforms will continue to be rolled out accordingly and will incorporate feasible suggestions from the community in a timely manner. My reply to the three-part question raised by Mr WU Chi-wai is as follows:

- (1) The number of HOS and TPS units with premium paid in the past three years of 2012, 2013 and 2014 (as at the third quarter) are at Annex.

As for the number of cases on the alleged illegal letting of units with premium not yet paid between 2012 and 2014, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) received 14 reported cases or complaints about alleged illegal letting of units by HOS or TPS owners with premium not yet paid in 2012 to 2014, seven of which involve HOS units while the other seven are about TPS units. After preliminary investigation, the Housing Department considered that two cases, involving one HOS unit and one TPS unit respectively, were *prima facie* cases and hence initiated prosecution. The two cases were convicted in court in 2013 and 2014 respectively.

On private residential property, the Government does not keep the supply figures of rental units in the private residential market as it is difficult to determine whether individual units would be put up for letting or for sale in a specific period.

- (2) We appreciate that for the lower-to-middle-income households, HOS units and other forms of subsidized sale flats are the first step for achieving home ownership. At present, a 60:40 public-private split has been set for the new housing production for the next 10 years under the LTHS. However, within public housing, there is no rigid ratio between the number of rental units and subsidized sale flats. The Government will, from time to time, review the proportion of PRH relative to subsidized sale flats in public housing, so as to respond to changing market situations and evolving needs of the community in an effective manner.

We note that during previous discussions, there were views that the Government should provide more forms of subsidized sale flats to meet the needs of different people. There were also views that the Government should explore ways to provide more incentives to encourage home ownership of those PRH tenants whose financial circumstances have improved, so that their PRH units can be released for re-allocation to families on the waiting list for PRH. In the context of reinforcing the housing ladder and promoting social mobility, we will consider how to expand the forms of subsidized home ownership and, where appropriate, introduce supplementary schemes of subsidized sale flats.

In addition to opening up more opportunities for home ownership, the Government will continue to increase the supply of PRH units, so as to achieve the target of maintaining the average waiting time for general applicants for PRH (that is, family and elderly one-person applicants) to receive their first housing offers at around three years.

According to the established HOS pricing formula, selling prices for HOS flats are determined by applying a discount to the market value to ensure that the flats are affordable to eligible households. Affordability is determined on the basis of the principle that for at

least 50% of the flats for sale, eligible White Form applicants at the HOS income limit can achieve a mortgage-to-income ratio of not more than 40% after they purchased the units. In general, the HA will sell HOS units at 30% discount from the market value. However, the HA will consider offering a higher discount if the above affordability criteria could not be met. At present, PRH tenants who apply for the purchase of new HOS flats with Green Form status are exempted from meeting the income and asset criteria, which is already a more favourable arrangement as compared to White Form applicants. We have no plan to provide them with an additional discount rate for HOS units.

- (3) Before the payment of premium, HOS and TPS units are subsidized housing. The subsidy is provided by the Government to assist beneficiaries to improve their living environment and to meet their housing needs. Under this policy principle, subsidized housing with premium not yet paid should only be used for self-occupation.

If those owners no longer need the flats they occupied due to changes in circumstances, they can sell their subsidized sale flats to households with Green Form status without the payment of premium in the Secondary Market. Moreover, the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation's Premium Loan Guarantee Scheme facilitates owners in taking out a loan on top of the existing mortgage loan through their mortgage banks to pay off the premium. Upon payment of the premium, HOS owners can dispose of the property according to their wishes, including arranging to let out their flats.

As stated in the LTHS, the Government will continue to explore effective means to facilitate better use of HOS and TPS units and to promote their market circulation. We will make reference to feasible proposals and discussions in the community.

Number of HOS and TPS units with premium paid in the past three years

<i>Year</i>	<i>HOS</i>	<i>TPS</i>
2012	1 465	214
2013	886	166
2014 (as at September)	764	100

Note:

The number of HOS units covers mainly those built by the HA and from the Private Sector Participation Scheme. The figure also covers units from other subsidized sale schemes introduced by the HA in the past (that is, the Middle Income Housing Scheme, Buy or Rent Option Scheme and Mortgage Subsidy Scheme).

MR WU CHI-WAI (in Cantonese): *The LTHS proposes to increase the supply of housing as a means to address the supply-demand imbalance and this obviously cannot address the pressing problem. However, close to 300 000 HOS and TPS units with premium not yet paid in Hong Kong cannot become a source of additional supply of rental units due to the rigid policy, which means letting slip of a way to buy time for the Government's LTHS and wasting valuable social resources.*

Under Article 6 of the Basic Law, "the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall protect the right of private ownership of property in accordance with law". May I ask the Secretary why the Government can impose man-made restrictions to deprive HOS and TPS owners of their right to use their property. Why does it not allow these owners to rent out their units and share the rental income with the Government, so as to return to the owners their right to use their property? This can provide a certain number of rental units for society and also protect the right of private ownership. I would like the Bureau to explain why this cannot be done.

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, on the question raised by Mr WU, insofar as HOS units are concerned, the owners do not have 100% ownership of their units. As all the HOS units are subsidized housing, the owners are not 100% entitled to the right to live in, occupy or possess their units. Therefore, (Appendix 1) they must act in

accordance with the stipulations in the relevant legislation in renting out or selling their units in any way, and the objective of the legislation is to ensure that HOS units are primarily used for self-occupation, not for making a profit.

In this connection, if the owners need to use their units for purposes other than self-occupation, such as renting out or selling their units, they are required to make arrangements for the payment of premium with the HA. After making such arrangements, they are at liberty to let out or sell their units. If they do not wish to do so but wish to sell their units, they can make the relevant arrangements through the Secondary HOS Market.

MR WU CHI-WAI (in Cantonese): *He did not answer my question. I asked the Bureau why they cannot consider allowing owners to let out their units because they have 70% ownership of their units ...*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): You need only point out which part of your question has not been answered.

MR WU CHI-WAI (in Cantonese): *He did not answer why the Bureau does not allow owners to use their share of ownership of their HOS units, because I am talking about letting out the units according to the percentage of their ownership ...*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): You have made your question clear. Please sit down. Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, as I said clearly in the main reply, the LTHS has put forward a main framework which mentioned that the Government can consider various forms of subsidization or expanding the forms of subsidization to allow more choices for the public. Certainly, the Government will also make reference to different views or discussions.

MR VINCENT FANG (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, in part (2) of the main reply the Secretary said that they will "consider how to expand the forms of subsidized home ownership and, where appropriate, introduce supplementary schemes of subsidized sale flats", and one of the ideas is to sell the newly built PRH units to Green Form applicants. This measure can certainly ease the pressure of cost recovery and financial commitment on the HA, but I hope that these newly built PRH units must be sold on a block basis, rather than adopting the past practice under the HOS of selling the units together with their maintenance right separately. May I ask the Government with regard to these units already sold separately, what measures the authorities have in place to address the problems in respect of repairs and maintenance?*

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, as Mr FANG has pointed out, under the TPS, fragmented ownership of the units has indeed given rise to many problems in respect of management, and we have received a lot of complaints about these problems in managing the housing estates. Therefore, these problems are worthy of our attention and particularly, in making any decision on the sale of PRH units, we must handle it very carefully. In this connection, when considering any scheme to further sell PRH units, we must tackle the problems in respect of management with care. From the past experience, it is not easy to handle these problems, and over a period in the past and also in the public consultation conducted by the LTHS Steering Committee, we have also heard a lot of opposition views in this respect. Deputy President, this is what I wish to say.

MR ABRAHAM SHEK (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, about 260 000 applicants are currently on the waiting list for PRH and there are about some 740 000 PRH units. In Report No.61 of the Director of Audit, it is pointed out that 21% of lettable PRH units had been vacant for a whole year, of which about 2% had been vacant for five years. Can the Government tell us whether this situation has improved? If not, why not? Because these rental units can be allocated to those 260 000 applicants on the waiting list.*

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, we have explained the reasons for the vacant PRH units before. Some of the units may be pending final refurbishment, whereas some others may

require repair or touch-up works before they can be ready for rent again after the previous tenants have moved out, thus resulting in such so-called natural vacancy. Certainly, we will keep watch on the situation. As we understand that PRH units are very precious resources, our colleagues in the department have all along been making an effort to carry out the required work for the vacant units and keeping them in view in the hope that these vacant PRH units can be put up for rent as soon as possible.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr SHEK, has your supplementary question not been answered?

MR ABRAHAM SHEK (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, he did not answer my supplementary question. He said that the units had been vacant because of the refurbishment works required but the figures show that 21% had been vacant and when we take into consideration the 740 000 PRH units, the vacant units are indeed very large in number, and these are not luxurious flats, Deputy President. Why should they need refurbishment for one year or even five years? There are as many as 260 000 applicants on the waiting list. Why should the refurbishment works take so long that the applicants on the waiting list are made to put up with the appalling living environment in the old districts? Deputy President, he did not answer my question.*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, just now I was not saying that all the vacant units are under renovation. Quite a number of these units may not be fully completed and are pending allocation. I can provide the specific figures (Appendix II) for Mr SHEK's reference later, so that he can find out the progress made to date. As for the various reasons for these units being left vacant, we have given explanations before, but according to our records, the overall vacancy rate is actually not high, which is about less than 2%.

MR WONG KWOK-KIN (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, in the main reply the Government mentioned that they have taken on board the recommendations of the LTHS and adopted the supply-led strategy. He also mentioned that the LTHS has three major strategies: Firstly, to build more PRH units; secondly, to provide more subsidized sale flats; and thirdly, steady land supply. In fact, land is the key to all of these three major strategies. In this connection, may I ask the Government whether sufficient land has been identified to guarantee that the production volume can reach 200 000 PRH units and 90 000 HOS units in the coming decade? Can the Government guarantee the supply of these numbers of housing units?*

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, the long-term supply target that we have now set is clearly explained in the LTHS document. Certainly, we must admit that concerning the production volume of 290 000 PRH units, actually we have yet been able to supply all the units but as at today, we have identified land for developing some 250 000 units and we think that the progress is good. In this period of 10 years, it is actually quite good that we can already achieve some 250 000 units when we have just made a start. In the days to come, we will certainly adopt various measures to increase land supply resolutely and unrelentingly, in order to identify sufficient land to develop public housing to meet the needs of the public.*

MR FREDERICK FUNG (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, in part (2) of the main reply the Secretary said that the new LTHS has three major strategies: Firstly, to build more PRH units and to ensure the rational use of PRH resources. Of course, there are two types of PRH resources. The first is the existing units and as Mr Abraham SHEK mentioned earlier, the time required for carrying out refurbishment works on vacant units before they can be let out again is unacceptable. The Government should expedite the repair works.*

The second source is the redevelopment of old housing estates. Two years ago the Hong Kong Association for Democracy and the People's Livelihood provided the Bureau with a list of 30 housing estates aged over 30 years with 14 to 20 storeys, and the redevelopment of these housing estates should lead to a two-fold increase in the supply of PRH units. Last year, the Government announced that consideration can be given to redeveloping 22 housing estates which are 90% the same as those estates suggested in our list, but the authorities have only announced that redevelopment can be carried out at Wah Fu Estate. Half a year ago we talked to the officials at the highest level responsible for redevelopment and found that even for Wah Fu Estate, the Government still had

not started to plan how redevelopment should be carried out. The redevelopment plan for the other estates of those 22 on the list is but empty. Redevelopment can enable the Government to increase land supply and develop many more PRH units. Why has the Government implemented redevelopment projects at such a slow pace?

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the redevelopment of housing units will certainly help revitalize the district. If their plot ratio is not fully utilized and they have potentials for providing more units, the number of units to be supplied will increase. This, we agree. This is why redevelopment is a part of public housing development and we will actively take it into consideration.

However, as for which specific housing estates can be reprovisioned, we actually need to consider quite a number of factors because in the short term, we cannot increase the supply of units immediately through redevelopment and on the contrary, given the need to make reprovisioning arrangements for the tenants affected by redevelopment, it may be necessary to take up some of the units which can be provided otherwise for immediate allocation to applicants on the waiting list. For this reason, the supply of units may not necessarily increase in the short term. However, we will consider several aspects in deciding whether some housing estates have the conditions for redevelopment. These conditions, as I have just mentioned, include whether the housing estate has the conditions to increase the supply of units, whether there are places for rehousing the tenants affected by redevelopment or resources for rehousing, so to speak, or the current conditions of the housing estate as a whole, such as the quality of the blocks, and so on. After considering these various aspects comprehensively, we will take forward the redevelopment project in a gradual and orderly manner.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr FUNG, has your supplementary question not been answered?

MR FREDERICK FUNG (in Cantonese): *The Secretary did not answer my supplementary question because the list of those 22 housing estates identified for redevelopment and even the redevelopment of Wah Fu Estate have already been announced by the Government. I assume that the Government has already made consideration and concluded that the redevelopment of these housing estates are viable ...*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Please point out which part of your question has not been answered.

MR FREDERICK FUNG (in Cantonese): ... *before making the announcement, but the Secretary presented a lot of questions and said that he must consider this and that. Did the authorities not make consideration first before announcing the list of those 22 housing estates?*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, when we announced this list, we already stated clearly that this is not a list of estates for redevelopment. We said if these housing estates could be redeveloped, meaning that the housing estates may have the conditions or potentials to supply more housing units, we would, over a period in the future, consider the many factors mentioned just now, and after examining and studying these factors one by one, we will make an announcement in due course.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Fourth question.

Official Elucidation on Provisions of Basic Law and Related Concepts

4. **MS CLAUDIA MO** (in Cantonese): *The "Hong Kong Fact Sheet" (Fact Sheet) series published by the Information Services Department (ISD) provides information on various aspects of Hong Kong on a topical basis. The Fact Sheet on the topic of the Basic Law, as published in August 2013, contained the following sentence: the Basic Law "enshrines within a legal document the important concepts of 'one country, two systems', 'a high degree of autonomy' and 'Hong Kong People ruling Hong Kong', in which "Hong Kong People ruling Hong Kong" was the English rendition of "港人治港". However, in the updated version of December 2014 of this Fact Sheet, the English rendition of "港人治港" has been changed to "Hong Kong People administering Hong Kong", that is, the word "ruling" has been replaced by the word "administering". Moreover, among the three concepts listed in that sentence, "a high degree of*

autonomy" has been relegated from the second place to the third place. There are comments that the word "administering" implies that the Government of the Special Administrative Region is merely responsible for implementing the instructions handed down by the Central People's Government and, therefore, the aforesaid changes were made to deliberately play down the importance of "a high degree of autonomy" in Hong Kong's constitutional system. Regarding the official elucidation on the provisions of the Basic Law and related concepts, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the justifications for the authorities making the aforesaid changes to the Fact Sheet; the procedures that the authorities are required to follow in amending the official elucidation relating to the contents of the Basic Law, as well as the rank of the officials who make the relevant decisions; whether the authorities have assessed the reaction of members of the public to the aforesaid changes;*
- (2) whether the authorities last year amended, apart from the aforesaid Fact Sheet, the elucidation on the concepts of "one country, two systems", "a high degree of autonomy", "Hong Kong People ruling Hong Kong", and so on, in any other official documents, publications or on government websites; and*
- (3) why it is that in the printed version of the aforesaid Fact Sheet, only Article 28(1) of the Basic Law (that is, "The freedom of the person of Hong Kong residents shall be inviolable) is quoted whereas in the electronic version of the Fact Sheet on the website of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, Article 28 is quoted in full, that is, apart from Article 28(1), Article 28(2) (which is "No Hong Kong resident shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful arrest, detention or imprisonment. Arbitrary or unlawful search of the body of any resident or deprivation or restriction of the freedom of the person shall be prohibited. Torture of any resident or arbitrary or unlawful deprivation of the life of any resident shall be prohibited) is also quoted; apart from the printed version of the aforesaid Fact Sheet, whether the authorities last year amended the elucidation on any provision of the Basic Law in other official documents, publications or on government websites?*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the Preamble of the Basic Law stipulates that the People's Republic of China has decided that, upon China's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, a Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will be established in accordance with the provisions of Article 31 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, and that under the principle of "one country, two systems", the socialist system and policies will not be practised in Hong Kong. In accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the National People's Congress (NPC) enacted the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, prescribing the systems to be practised in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), in order to ensure the implementation of the basic policies of the People's Republic of China regarding Hong Kong.

Article 1 of the Basic Law states that "the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China". Article 2 of the Basic Law clearly stipulates that "the NPC authorizes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to exercise a high degree of autonomy and enjoy executive, legislative and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication, in accordance with the provisions of this Law". Article 12 of the Basic Law also provides that "the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be a local administrative region of the People's Republic of China, which shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy and come directly under the Central People's Government". Article 5 of the Basic Law stipulates that "the socialist system and policies shall not be practised in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and the previous capitalist system and way of life shall remain unchanged for 50 years". Article 3 of the Basic Law prescribes that "the executive authorities and legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be composed of permanent residents of Hong Kong in accordance with the relevant provisions of this Law". Many provisions of the Basic Law, including Articles 44, 61 and 55, and so on, prescribe respectively that the Chief Executive, Principal Officials and Members of the Executive Council of the HKSAR shall be Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of the Region with no right of abode in any foreign country.

Given the aforementioned articles of the Basic Law, it is evident that "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy are being implemented through relevant provisions of the Basic Law.

Our reply to Ms Claudia MO's question, after consulting the ISD, is as follows:

- (1) Compiled by the ISD, the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets" series aim to provide basic information about Hong Kong on over 60 topics covering government structure, the Judiciary, public finance, and financial services, and so on. The ISD regularly invites relevant Policy Bureaux, departments and organizations to assist in updating and editing the contents of the various "Hong Kong Fact Sheets" topics to reflect the latest information and data, as well as to meet the requirements of word count and typesetting for publication.

When updating the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets", relevant officers of the Policy Bureaux, departments and organizations will review the contents that are relevant to their purview and provide necessary updates, or add new information, or make editorial refinements.

The recent update of the topical "Hong Kong Fact Sheets — The Basic Law" made some editorial refinements and did not involve revisions of any content and information. In fact, public documents about the policy initiatives of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau submitted to the Panel on Constitutional Affairs of the Legislative Council by the Bureau have also adopted the order of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy". As such, the order used in the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets" is not exceptional.

Adopting the translation of "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" in the English version of the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets" is for the consistency of word choice. The word was first used in the Hong Kong Yearbook 2007. We have also noted that Clause 1 of Article 22 of the Basic Law reads "... the affairs which the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region administers on its own in accordance with this Law". Besides, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau has also adopted the translation of "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" in its replies to the questions on the estimates of expenditure in the Legislative Council.

Deputy President, I reiterate that the update of the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets — The Basic Law" is purely based on editorial refinement considerations. It is not intended to and will definitely not affect the provisions and the underlying principles of the Basic Law. The revisions will definitely not affect the People's Republic of China's authorization of the HKSAR to implement the principles of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy" in accordance with the Basic Law.

- (2) As stated in paragraph (1) of the reply, the HKSAR Government regularly updates and edits various government publications, government websites and other information papers issued by the Government. The Basic Law is the constitutional document of the HKSAR. Any update of background information or editorial refinements will not affect the legal effect of the provisions or the underlying principles of the Basic Law.
- (3) The full text of the Basic Law includes the Preamble, nine chapters (consists of a total number of 160 articles) and three annexes. In view of space constraints, the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets — The Basic Law" has all along only provided brief introduction on some important provisions of the Basic Law to illustrate the basic policies of the People's Republic of China regarding Hong Kong. We have provided the website of the Basic Law in the "Hong Kong Fact Sheets — The Basic Law" for the convenience of readers who wish to view the specific details of the full text of the Basic Law.

In addition, information on the Basic Law posted on the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau's website contains mainly the background and summaries of provisions of the Basic Law. As the design of the website is more flexible with fewer restrictions in word count, we are able to set out Article 28 of the Basic Law in full on the website.

MS CLAUDIA MO (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, I have worked in the press for three decades and since the 1980s, the English rendition of the concept of "港人治港" has always been "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" because "rule" includes "administer" but "administer" does not include "rule". Therefore, "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" has become merely Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong, so they only have a share in its administration but not in its rule. The Secretary suddenly said something about 2007 for no particular reason. The year 2007 is a decade after 1997. Since the authorities like to change words for no particular reason and if you like the word "administer" so much, why do you not use the word "govern"? "Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong" would also do.*

The Secretary replied at length to my main question. Regarding the three introductory paragraphs at the beginning, I did not ask any question in this regard at all but the Secretary offered all those comments without solicitation, so this smacks heavily of a guilty person giving himself away by conspicuously protesting his innocence.

Deputy President, my supplementary question is: The British novelist, George ORWELL, said in his allegorical novel, 1984, that people in power would resort to all sorts of ways to control and change the political language, so that the effect of "brainwashing" the political mindset of the entire society can be achieved. Is the Secretary now changing "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" to "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong", such that they only have a share in administering Hong Kong but not in ruling it?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I believe Ms MO, in asking her supplementary question, does not need to be unduly concerned because I have looked up the information on "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and according to the information on hand, as early as June 1984, when Mr DENG Xiaoping met the prominent members of the business sector in Hong Kong, including Mr CHUNG Sze-yuen, he also used the expression "港人治港" in the comments made by him in public. Just now, I cited the provisions of the Basic Law, including Article 3, which spell out the principle of "港人治港" by way of provisions.

Just now, I also made a quote from the outset, saying that the Chief Executive, the executive, Principal Officials and of course, Members of the Legislative Council, shall all be Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of Hong Kong with no right of abode in any foreign country, so all these are manifestations of "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong". Therefore, no matter how we put it in English, this is basically just a translation that would not affect the meaning and expression of the Chinese phrase "港人治港". This has never changed.

On the English version, just now, I also said in the main reply that over the years, the Government has used various terms to translate "港人治港", for example, we have used "administering", as well as "running", "ruling", and so on. All these have been used before. In recent years, we have used the term "administering" more often but no matter what the translation is, as I said in the main reply just now, we only adopted and used this term when making editorial refinements. It does not affect the meaning of the Chinese phrase *per se*.

MS CLAUDIA MO (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, he did not answer my supplementary question.*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Which part of your supplementary question has not been answered?

MS CLAUDIA MO (in Cantonese): *We are not talking about making editorial refinements, rather, we are talking about the exposition of a fundamental concept. He must answer me if nowadays, it is "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" or "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong".*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Ms MO, please sit down. Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Of course, it is always "港人治港".

MR JEFFREY LAM (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, we should understand that it is the Chinese version of the Basic Law that prevails. If any translation is not appropriate, revisions should be made. We should also know that under "one country, two systems", the Central Authorities agree to let Hong Kong people run Hong Kong but not rule Hong Kong, so I think "administrating" is appropriate.*

I also noticed that in the Fact Sheet ...

(Ms Claudia MO stood up to speak)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Ms MO, this is the time for Mr Jeffrey LAM to ask a question.

MS CLAUDIA MO (in Cantonese): *We are not talking about "administrating" but "administering".*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Ms MO, please sit down. Mr Jeffrey LAM, please go on asking your question.

MR JEFFREY LAM (in Cantonese): *I hope Members would show respect for themselves and refrain from causing any disturbance at will when others are speaking. I also noticed that in the Fact Sheet, the Government swapped the positions of "a high degree of autonomy" and "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong". May I ask the Secretary what the reason is?*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I thank Mr Jeffrey LAM for his supplementary question. When we say these phrases, often, we would habitually say "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a

high degree of autonomy". In my main reply, I said that such an order was only an order of expression and it does not affect the implementation and the underlying principles of the relevant provisions in the Basic Law. In fact, I also noticed that in the past, apart from the SAR Government, in some of the motion debates or speeches made by Members in the Legislative Council, no matter to which sector or political parties and groupings these Members belong, the order of expression of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy" was also adopted. Therefore, I suppose we do not have to wrangle over the order of expression in this regard. We only need to know that the three principles of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy" are being implemented through specific provisions in the Basic Law.

MR GARY FAN (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy" are important constitutional principles for the SAR and this is indeed a serious matter, so it is not right to make changes casually. Just now, the Secretary did not answer part (2) of Ms Claudia MO's question, that is, if any other official documents, publications or government websites had been amended. Why does the Secretary have to be so secretive and sneaky? As a Director of Bureau and as one of the trio in the constitutional reform team, he has removed the word "ruling" from the welcome message on the website of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau as well as the website for the consultation on constitutional reform, so why did he not answer Ms Claudia MO's question clearly?*

Deputy President, my supplementary question is: In making those changes, is the Secretary toeing the line of the Central Authorities? Why am I saying this? Because the Premier of the State Council, LI Keqiang, delivered his first Government Work Report on 5 March 2014 and in the part about China and Hong Kong and Hong Kong and Macao, for the first time in a decade, no reference was made to the very important principles of "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy". For this reason, the perception was that the power to rule Hong Kong now rests with Beijing rather than Hong Kong people. Why was such a change made? Secretary, is this the underlying cause and the real underlying reason that necessitated making this change of removing the word "ruling"?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, although I noticed that when Mr Gary FAN spoke just now, some of his comments had stepped on the line because they were personal attacks, the Deputy President did not react to them, so I am not going to pursue this anymore.

In fact, his question is inaccurate because he said we had removed one word and that is not correct. We only used different English translations to express the phrase "港人治港". Just now, in my main reply, I explained that this is only a matter of making editorial refinements. As regards the mention of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy" by leaders of the Central Authorities, I remember that in the past, concerning the example cited by Mr FAN, I also said in the Legislative Council and on the occasions when I met reporters that no matter how, "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy" are being implemented by us according to the Basic Law. If Members have ever paid any attention, recently, the leaders of the Central Authorities, including the President of China, all made comments on issues related to Hong Kong. For example, in some articles of the Xinhua News Agency, these three principles were also expressed in this way. Mr Gary FAN may not have paid any attention to this. Therefore, I believe that in this regard, often, Members do not have to make excessive conjectures. In fact, this is all about nothing. Therefore, often, we believe that so long as we follow the Basic Law from the Preamble to the Annexes and implement all of them faithfully, this would do. This is the most important point.

MR ALAN LEONG (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, the LEUNG Chun-ying Administration ought to understand that its integrity is bankrupt, so no matter what action it takes, it should expect that overreaction would be aroused, even though it is just about making changes to translations or editing.*

Obviously, "administer" and "rule" are two English words of different concepts. If he said that both "rule" and "administer" could be found in a host of documents and given that he chose to change "rule" to "administer", may I ask the Secretary why he did not change "administer" into "rule" in his attempt to achieve consistency, so that "ruling" would be used in all documents?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, on this point, all that I can say is: Even if Members look up an English dictionary, the meaning of the word "administer" also includes ruling a country, a region, a government, and so on. As regards the detailed meaning, I believe Members can look it up in dictionaries. However, what I wish to say is — and I have also said this in the main reply just now — this is an English rendition of the phrase "港人治港".

As regards what expression is the most appropriate, my field of study was not English but I believe a number of Members have expressed their views. On going back, I will refer these views to my colleagues in charge of editing.

MR ALAN LEONG (in Cantonese): *He did not answer my supplementary question. Why did he not change the word "adminster", which is inconsistent, to "rule" or change "administering" into "ruling" instead? Deputy President, he did not give any reply to this.*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I have already answered it. I said I would refer Members' views to the colleagues in charge of editing for their reference.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): *The English standard in Hong Kong is falling. Of course, this is not a good example, rather, this is actually "hypocritical rhetoric", the perpetration of a gigantic fraud and deliberate misrepresentation.*

If Members care to look up the word, the free dictionary provided by Cambridge University Press says "ruling" means "in control and making all the decisions", whereas "adminstering" means "control the operation". Simply put, in Chinese, one refers to management and the other, governance.

In fact, Ms Claudia MO asked the Secretary a question but he did not answer it. Regarding how the word "administer" came into being and the decisions not to use "ruling", be it in the Fact Sheet of 2007 or that of 2014, what was the rank of the officials in the SAR Government who made the decisions and was it LEUNG Chun-ying? Or was the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region or the Central Government also consulted prior to making the changes and it was considered that using "adminster" was more in line with the situation in Hong Kong, that is to say, "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" now exists only in name?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I believe there is no need to trouble the Chief Executive in such matters as translation.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): *My question asked very clearly what the rank of the officials was? Answer me.*

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): I have talked about this in my main reply.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Fifth question.

Development of Renminbi Business in Hong Kong

5. **MR MARTIN LIAO** (in Cantonese): *Deputy President, this year marks the 10th anniversary of the development of offshore Renminbi (RMB) business in Hong Kong. To tie in with the launch of the Shanghai-Hong Kong Stock Connect, the Mainland authorities removed on November 17 last year the conversion limit for Hong Kong people of RMB 20,000 yuan per day, thereby creating opportunities for further development of RMB business in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *given that in response to the removal of the RMB conversion limit for Hong Kong people, quite a number of banks have introduced, one after another, a variety of RMB time deposits and structured products with different interest rates and tenors, and it has been reported that a survey found that the majority of investors did not quite understand RMB investment products and hence members of the public were exposed to considerable risks when choosing among a myriad of products, what measures the authorities will take to help investors assess the risks and returns of these new RMB investment products;*

- (2) *given that the current daily remittance limit of RMB 80,000 yuan to the Mainland by Hong Kong residents is kept unchanged because regulation of cross-border capital flows in the Mainland is involved, whether the authorities have discussed with the Mainland authorities the timetable for removing such limit; if they have, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *given that some members from the finance industry have pointed out that with the removal of the RMB conversion limit for Hong Kong people, the interactions between the RMB offshore and onshore markets will increase, which will in turn lead to higher volatility in both the RMB exchange rates and interest rates, and yet the foreign exchange control imposed by the Mainland authorities may not effectively regulate cross-border capital flows, what measures the authorities have put in place to prevent "grey" and "black" funds from entering Hong Kong, so as to uphold Hong Kong's reputation as an international financial centre?*

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): Deputy President,

- (1) The Investor Education Centre (IEC) conducts investor education through various channels and means, including publications, its website, seminars, media interviews and columns as well as programmes and education videos on television and radio. The educational activities cover a range of issues relating to investment and financial products, for instance, the features of and risks associated with RMB products. These activities aim to remind investors of the need to pay attention to macroeconomic risks and promote a responsible investment attitude such as exercising discipline when trading derivatives and structured products and not following the herd when making investment.

(THE PRESIDENT resumed the Chair)

In view of the recent relaxation of RMB conversion limit and strong market interest in RMB investment products, the IEC is putting together the necessary educational resources to help remind the public of the features of the products and the risks involved. Relevant messages will also be disseminated in the public seminars organized by the IEC in future. Last year, the IEC organized a seminar which covered a dedicated session entitled "Global economic view and RMB products" on the features and risks of popular investment products, and provided investor education activities in light of the launch of Shanghai-Hong Kong Stock Connect.

As regards regulatory requirements, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) requires banks to adopt additional safeguards in the sale of currency-linked investment products to retail customers. These include: (i) providing "Important Facts Statements" which present the features and risks of the products in a clear and concise manner; and (ii) allowing at least two calendar days' "Pre-Investment Cooling-Off Period" for less sophisticated customers to understand the product and consider their investment decisions before confirming an order.

In selling securities products, financial institutions must follow the relevant regulatory requirements, including disclosure of the features and risks of the products and ensuring that the recommendation or solicitation is reasonable.

- (2) In 2004, Hong Kong launched offshore RMB business, including facilitating remittance of funds to the Mainland by Hong Kong residents, with the objective of facilitating economic and social exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland. In 2005, upon the Mainland authorities' agreement, the remittance limit was relaxed from RMB 50,000 yuan to RMB 80,000 yuan per person per day. Since remittance of funds to the Mainland by Hong Kong residents involves cross-border capital flows, whether the current limit can be further relaxed is subject to the relevant requirements of the Mainland. The HKSAR Government will, having regard to actual situations and needs, continue to liaise with the Mainland authorities on measures to expand the circulation and use of RMB funds between the onshore and offshore markets.

- (3) Currently, RMB business involving cross-border capital flows with the Mainland, including cross-border trade settlement or remittances, is subject to the rules and requirements promulgated by the Mainland authorities. Furthermore, financial institutions and money changers are required to comply with the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing (Financial Institutions) Ordinance (Cap. 615) when handling cross-border fund flows (including RMB-related business), and adopt prudent risk management measures to prevent money laundering. The relevant regulatory authorities have also issued guidelines to assist financial institutions in formulating and implementing their own anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing policies, procedures and controls so as to meet the statutory requirements.

MR MARTIN LIAO (in Cantonese): *Trade between Hong Kong and the Mainland has been growing increasingly frequent. At present, Hong Kong has a RMB liquidity pool exceeding RMB 1,000 billion yuan, but corresponding changes have yet to be made to the daily remittance limit of RMB 80,000 yuan to the Mainland by Hong Kong residents, thus causing continual inconvenience to cross-border trade and impeding the further development of RMB business in Hong Kong.*

President, may I ask the Bureau if it will consider holding intensive discussions with the Mainland authorities to at least make a slight adjustment to the relevant limit, such as raising the remittance limit in phases?

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): President, Mr Martin LIAO mainly asked about remittances by individuals. For business fund movements, as long as they are compliant with the relevant requirements, such as making cross-border fund remittances, such remittances will not be subject to any restriction under the relevant requirements. However, remittances by individuals are subject to restrictions. This relates to the financial reform in the Mainland, especially the pace and progress of the liberalization of capital account.

As far as I understand it, remittances to the Mainland by Macao residents are also subject to restrictions imposed on individuals. The limit is RMB 50,000 yuan per person per day. Taiwan also has similar arrangements under which the limit is RMB 80,000 yuan. This shows that the Mainland currently has its own comprehensive consideration concerning the arrangements in this regard. Certainly, as I have just said, we will seek to understand the progress of liberalization in this regard when the actual circumstances permit. Nevertheless, I believe Members will understand that this relates to the overall pace of the Mainland's liberalization policy of capital account. We will keep a close watch on it and follow it up.

MR CHUNG KWOK-PAN (in Cantonese): *President, I believe many investors are rather unfamiliar with these new RMB-related investment products as they cannot anticipate the development of these new products. As I recall, the Lehman Brothers incident occurred in 2008. At that time, there were a number of products called accumulators. The Secretary only came to learn about the existence of such products at a rather late stage. May I ask the Secretary how the authorities will, based on such experience, protect the investors and make them understand these new and special RMB products instead of just relying on seminars and columns? We wish to prevent the recurrence of "I kill you later".*

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): *President, I think in the past few years, the sale of investment products has undergone substantial changes, particularly at the retail level where requirements relating to the sale of investment products, especially structured products, have become much more stringent.*

Let me first make a few points. When the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) processes applications under its remit, it will consider whether the applications are in compliance with the relevant product codes applicable to collective investment schemes in accordance with the statutory requirements, and whether the information contained in the offering documents has included statements covering such aspects as investment risk. And we often touch upon the currency-linked products and interest rate-linked products mentioned in the main question. They are commonly issued by banks. The

HKMA has also developed templates for "Important Facts Statement" with reference drawn to the principles of the "Product Key Facts Statement" compiled by the SFC, requiring banks to adopt such templates in the sale of currency and interest rate products to retail customers.

In view of the recent popularity of structured products, especially RMB products, the HKMA issued a relevant circular in relation to the sale of those products to banks yesterday. The circular only serves as a reminder reiterating its established position, so as to brief banks on the points to consider or note in the sale of products, including an assessment of whether the products are appropriate for investors, namely the fairness of the products. As Members may notice, the relevant requirements relating to the sale of structured products at the retail level are rather stringent.

MR YIU SI-WING (in Cantonese): *President, in part (3) of the main reply, the authorities pointed out that the relevant regulatory authorities had issued guidelines to assist financial institutions in formulating and implementing their own anti-money laundering policies, so as to meet the statutory requirements. May I ask about the effectiveness of the guidelines issued? How do various financial institutions follow the guidelines?*

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): President, I do not have on hand any data or information in this regard, but certainly, over the past many years, we have all along been committed to combating money laundering and terrorist financing, and in many cases, we have also initiated prosecutions.

At the international level, actions taken by Hong Kong in this regard are recognized by international bodies. Our work in this area makes the grade. Therefore, in view of the rising trend of cross-border fund activities, our existing anti-money laundering ordinance is sufficiently extensive to cover such financial institutions as banks, securities firms, insurers and brokers, remittance agents and money changers for the reason that we have to carry out the operations on a comprehensive scale.

MR LEUNG KWOK-HUNG (in Cantonese): *President, according to the Secretary, we are committed to combating money laundering. But the current RMB business has made it harder for us to combat money laundering because the influx of RMB into Hong Kong has flooded us with money. According to the latest data, 20% of the lending business of banks in Hong Kong are loans to the Mainland. But the Mainlanders are probably not so stupid as to borrow the low-value Hong Kong dollar for use on the Mainland. Instead, they will only borrow RMB. Have the authorities kept any statistics to see why a large quantity of RMB is hoarded in Hong Kong, which is then borrowed and brought to the Mainland? Should they be counted as black money? Among ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEUNG, you have raised your supplementary question. Please sit down and let the Secretary give a reply.

MR LEUNG KWOK-HUNG (in Cantonese): *Why did the investigation into the mega-wealthy ZHOU Yongkang bear no fruit?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEUNG, please sit down.

MR LEUNG KWOK-HUNG (in Cantonese): *Have you imported funds into Hong Kong, and then brought them back to the Mainland by means of loans? This is the father of ZHOU Yongkang? President, Mr NG Leung-sing said it was actually the father of ZHOU Yongkang who had earned money from him. This is what he said.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEUNG, you should sit down after you have raised your question. Secretary, please reply.

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): President, certainly, many of the loans offered by banks are normal activities within their scope of business, which are also subject to their own risk control and the supervision of the Office of the Commissioner of Banking. Certainly, as I said, in order to combat money laundering, we have imposed stringent requirements to prevent all financial institutions from engaging in money laundering.

MR LEUNG KWOK-HUNG (in Cantonese): *President, he has not answered my supplementary question. A large quantity of RMB of unknown source has flown into Hong Kong, and when these black funds are deposited into banks and become bank funds, they can be turned into "white money" by means of loans and brought back to the Mainland for use. If this is not money laundering, what is it then? Is it "white money" laundering?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): I do not think this metaphor makes any sense.

(Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung stood up)

MR LEUNG KWOK-HUNG (in Cantonese): *How come it does not make any sense?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEUNG, please sit down.

MR NG LEUNG-SING (in Cantonese): *I hope some Members can refrain from asking questions beyond their own understanding.*

Let me first declare that the unit which I serve is also engaged in RMB business. Part (1) of the main reply mentioned the IEC. Its education service covers the provision of information about the features of and risks associated with RMB products. As we all know, risks and returns are correlated. At this juncture when RMB is undergoing development at the macro level, no matter whether it is for individuals or society, especially a financial centre, the returns from it may actually include employment and contribution to the GDP, and so on. May I ask if the relevant education centre is given ample information to educate the public insofar as offshore RMB business is concerned?

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): President, Mr NG has made a very good suggestion. We also wish to conduct an economic analysis in relation to this aspect. Although I do not have much data on hand, I have noticed that banks and other relevant financial institutions have indeed made a great leap in RMB business over the past few years. Many relevant banks have introduced a number of new products and services in RMB business. I certainly believe this has made enormous contribution to Hong Kong's finance and overall GDP, but at present, we have yet to collect the relevant data. Nevertheless, it is my pleasure to follow up and analyse the overall return from RMB business to Hong Kong.

MR PAUL TSE (in Cantonese): *President, given the geographical factors of both China and Hong Kong, particularly the increasing number of cross-boundary vehicles travelling between both places, no matter whether it is from common sense, news reports or the experience of cases handled by me, quite a number of cases reveal that Mainland residents have actually put money into a suitcase before taking it across the border. Will the authorities advise me whether, according to their observation, this situation is worsening? And what has been done in terms of safeguards?*

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): In respect of our anti-money laundering work at the international level, we are keeping an eye on the issue of cross-border cash. In this regard, we will probably consider introducing some declaration procedures. We will put declaration procedures in place for cross-border cash, and the relevant tasks will be implemented later.

MR PAUL TSE (in Cantonese): *It seems that the authorities are still considering the issue, but in this regard, is there any existing measure to act as a safeguard? And is the situation serious?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): I believe I can make one point, and that is, we have made reference to the international trend of cross-border cash, and we also hope to meet international requirements. In this regard, we will introduce a declaration system.

MR NG LEUNG-SING (in Cantonese): *President, I wish to raise a supplementary question on this issue. In the middle of last month, the Financial Services Development Council issued a report stating that Hong Kong was estimated to write an additional turnover of RMB 22 billion yuan in the reinsurance market of Greater China. May I ask if the authorities will introduce any new initiatives to promote the future development of offshore RMB reinsurance business?*

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): It is a very good supplementary question, which is also a direction for development identified by the Government and regulatory authorities. As I recall, around last year, we started to study this issue with the relevant Beijing authorities. If we are to encourage the development of RMB reinsurance business, the key lies in securing the approval of Mainland authorities for certain policies, such as allowing Hong Kong or overseas insurers to invest in the Mainland bond market. In this regard, we must secure the support of relevant Mainland authorities in order to open up the target market. We have explored this aspect and make some progress.

MR WONG TING-KWONG (in Cantonese): *President, may I ask the Secretary whether a study has been conducted on the impact of the removal of the remittance limit of RMB 80,000 yuan daily? If the study suggests that impact will arise, what will it be?*

SECRETARY FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND THE TREASURY (in Cantonese): President, certainly, the remittance limit of RMB 80,000 yuan daily is set by the Central Authorities, and this limit is also commensurate with the extent to which capital account is liberalized in the Mainland. I agree that before capital account is fully liberalized, relevant limits of similar nature are

necessary. But I believe as the pace of the liberation of capital account continues to accelerate, such limit may be altered in due course. In this regard, we will gauge the views of relevant Mainland authorities as far as practicable.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Last oral question.

Constitutional Development of Hong Kong

6. **DR LAM TAI-FAI** (in Cantonese): *President, some members of the public have pointed out that the decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) made on 31 August last year regarding the constitutional development of the Hong Kong SAR has laid down the framework for the specific proposals for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017, and the subsequent unfurling of the Occupy Central movement plunged society into an unprecedented dissension. They have also pointed out that although the Government has repeatedly emphasized that there is still room for discussion on the constitutional development (such as the composition of the nominating committee, the nomination threshold for the Chief Executive candidature, the voting method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, and so on), views in society remain greatly diverse. Moreover, as the endorsement of the relevant proposal (constitutional reform package) by a two-thirds majority of all the Members of this Council is required for amending the method for selecting the Chief Executive as set out in Annex I to the Basic Law, it will be very difficult to implement the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017. Therefore, various sectors of the community are concerned about whether the Government can properly carry out the second round of public consultation and expectation management so as to prevent the recurrence of large-scale protests. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *as some members of the public have criticized that one of the causes for the occurrence of the Occupy Central movement is the dissatisfaction among some members of the public about the incomplete reflection of public views in the report prepared by the Task Force on Constitutional Development on the first round of public consultation on constitutional development, whether the authorities have comprehensively reviewed the deficiencies in that round of public consultation; if they have, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*

- (2) *given that the second round of public consultation will be shorter in duration than the first round, whether it has assessed if there will be sufficient time for gauging the views of various parties; whether it will, during the consultation period, make arrangements for all the Members of this Council to go to Beijing to directly express to the Central Authorities their aspirations regarding constitutional development, and whether it will meet or attend open forums together with members of the Hong Kong Federation of Students and the Scholarism as well as the three initiators of the Occupy Central movement; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *whether it has assessed the consequences of the constitutional reform package not being endorsed by this Council, including whether a governance crisis will emerge and the relationship between the executive authorities and the legislature will deteriorate; whether it has assessed if the road occupation movement will recur during or after the second round of public consultation, and of the Government's means to prevent the occurrence of such movement; if it has assessed, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): President, our reply to the questions raised in Dr LAM's question is as follows:

- (1) The five-month first round consultation on the methods for selecting the Chief Executive in 2017 and for forming the Legislative Council in 2016 was launched on 4 December 2013 and ended on 3 May 2014. During the consultation period, the Task Force on Constitutional Development attended a total of 226 consultation events, and received about 124 700 written submissions from different political parties and Members of the Legislative Council, different groups from various sectors of the community, as well as individuals. In addition, through arrangements made by the Chief Executive, Members of the Legislative Council paid a visit to Shanghai on 11 April 2014 to meet and exchange views directly on constitutional development issues with officials of the Central Authorities responsible for constitutional development issues.

On 15 July 2014, the Government published the Report on the Public Consultation on the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive in 2017 and for Forming the Legislative Council in 2016, to objectively and truthfully reflect the views received during the consultation period, as well as related opinion polls conducted by various groups and organizations, which were all made public and uploaded to the website for the subject for public inspection. We were also aware that after the first round consultation, there were still a number of groups and members of the public expressing through different ways and channels their opinions and aspirations on the implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive Election in 2017. These aspirations were also truthfully reflected in the report submitted by the Chief Executive to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC).

Besides, during and even after the five-month consultation period, the Government arranged for different parties in the Legislative Council to meet and communicate directly with Central Authorities officials and Central People's Government's officials stationed in Hong Kong, so that different parties and Members of the Legislative Council could convey their opinions to these officials directly and adequately.

The Decision of the NPCSC on Issues Relating to the Selection of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region by Universal Suffrage and on the Method for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2016 (Decision) adopted by the NPCSC on 31 August 2014 also clearly points out that in the course of deliberation, the Tenth Session of the Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress has given full consideration to the relevant views and suggestions of the Hong Kong community.

- (2) As mentioned in part (1) of this reply, the Hong Kong community has had fairly comprehensive and in-depth discussions on the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in the past year, including the five-month first round public consultation, and subsequent discussions in the community. The Decision of the

NPCSC on 31 August 2014 has set out a clear framework on the specific method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, including provisions on the size, composition, nominating procedures, and so on, of the Nominating Committee. The objective for the Government to launch a second round public consultation on the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage is to consult the public, under the Basic Law and the framework of the Decision, on the content of the proposal to amend Annex I to the Basic Law regarding the method for selecting the Chief Executive, which will be submitted to the Legislative Council at a later stage. Overall speaking, as the Chief Secretary would announce later on, we consider that a two-month consultation period is appropriate.

We must reiterate that the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage must be formulated strictly in accordance with the Basic Law and the Decision. Any suggestion that is not in conformity with the Basic Law and the Decision, or insistence that the Decision should be revoked, is impractical and impossible to complete the remaining three steps of the "Five-step Process" of constitutional development, that is, obtaining endorsement from the Legislative Council by a two-thirds majority, consent of the Chief Executive, and approval by the NPCSC. The Chief Secretary for Administration will later make a statement in the Legislative Council, to announce the launch of public consultation on the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. The Government hopes that the community will discuss, in a rational and pragmatic manner and under the Basic Law and the framework of the Decision, specific issues relating to the implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election. On such premises, the Government is willing to exchange views with anybody on how to implement universal suffrage for the Chief Executive Election in 2017.

Regarding the suggestion of arranging for all Members of the Legislative Council to visit Beijing, if this is so wished by a majority of Members, the Government, as always, is prepared to assist in the arrangements.

- (3) Paragraph IV of the Decision adopted by the NPCSC on 31 August 2014 clearly states that (I quote): "if the specific method of universal suffrage for selecting the Chief Executive is not adopted in accordance with legal procedures, the method used for selecting the Chief Executive for the preceding term shall continue to apply." (End of quote) In other words, if certain Legislative Council Members insist on voting down the proposal, the hope of the general public for an early implementation of the universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election through "one person, one vote" will fall through, and the timetable for the implementation of universal suffrage for the Legislative Council will be further delayed. Therefore, after the conclusion of the second round consultation, the Government will submit to the Legislative Council at an appropriate juncture the resolution to amend Annex I to the Basic Law regarding the method for selecting the Chief Executive, and will strive to secure support from Legislative Council Members and the general public.

The Government considers that irrespective of the different views held by different people, all should abide by the law and uphold the rule of law when expressing their views. The Government also reiterates that we are firmly against any act that is unlawful. Law-enforcement agencies will act strictly in accordance with the law to preserve public peace, maintain public order, and protect the livelihood of the general public from being affected.

DR LAM TAI-FAI (in Cantonese): *President, the Secretary's main reply today makes me think of the advice I made on different occasions during the first round consultation, that is, the Government has to make a statement in the most clear-cut, unequivocal manner that civil nomination is against the Basic Law. However, the Secretary has time and again turned a deaf ear to good advice and mentioned only the need for discussion, thus breeding expectations among the public. After the NPCSC had set out the framework with the Decision it made on 31 August, the community saw a big gap between expectations and the outcome. Had a better job been done in respect of expectation management, the situation in relation to Occupy Central would not have spiralled out of control in this way.*

President, I would like to ask the Government or the Secretary if the idea of "blank-vote veto", which is under heated debate recently, is in breach of the Basic Law and 31 August Decision of the NPCSC. Both the Secretary and the Chief Secretary are present now. If they have no knowledge or courage to answer it, I hope they will refer it to LI Fei or WANG Guangya. If the idea of "blank-vote veto" is in breach of the Basic Law or the NPCSC Decision, I hope that they will tell the public so in the most clear-cut, unequivocal manner, such that the latter will stop wasting effort and time to discuss a package that is by no means acceptable to the Central Authorities, Secretary.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): As for any proposal raised the very first day, particularly the one by a very senior academic in law, as Dr LAM mentioned just now, I think a responsible approach is to gain a clear understanding of its specific details and then spend enough time to study it before coming to a conclusion. That would be more appropriate. I note that the proposal, which Prof CHEN raised in the morning, was rejected by many in the community at noon or in the afternoon. I think it is a bit premature to do so. Hence, the proposal is now under careful examination within the SAR Government.

What Dr LAM said just now is absolutely correct. The implementation of any further proposals requires conformity with the Basic Law and relevant Decision of the NPCSC. As regards the way towards the stage of universal suffrage, it is stated in the relevant Decision that "the Chief Executive ... is to be elected through universal suffrage by all registered electors (through 'one person, one vote')". We will examine if other proposals on universal suffrage are in breach of that remark in the Decision or would give rise to any other issues in relation to provisions in the Basic Law. We will not only consider conformity with the Basic Law or the relevant Decision by the NPCSC, but will also review the definition of and arrangements for blank votes in the current electoral legislation governing other existing electoral systems in Hong Kong. If we add some new definition or arrangements to the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, will it constitute a direct conflict with the existing electoral systems and legislation? How should we deal with it? These we need to examine carefully. Overall speaking, President, in my opinion, we as a responsible Government will keep an eye on relevant proposals raised in the community and duly examine each of them during the consultation period.

DR LAM TAI-FAI (in Cantonese): *President, the Secretary has given a very detailed reply, but it actually fails to answer my supplementary question. Let me ask my supplementary question again. Is the idea of "blank-vote veto" in breach of the Basic Law and the 31 August Decision of the NPCSC? I believe the Secretary is second only to the Chief Secretary in Hong Kong when it comes to knowledge of the Basic Law, otherwise how is he qualified to be among the constitutional reform trio? He should know the framework under the 31 August Decision very clearly. He just needs to answer me if it is a breach. This is very clear, and he has no leeway for ambiguity.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr LAM, please stop expressing views. Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): *President, if I can answer the Honourable Member by simple judgment on the surface that the proposal is in breach of the relevant requirements, I believe I would have said so just now. The reply I gave just now is that we will examine the proposal carefully. Before gaining a clear understanding of the details and coming up with any outcome and judgment from our consideration of the Basic Law, the Decision and local legislation, as I mentioned earlier, it is not appropriate for me to give a straightforward answer on this occasion to Dr LAM's supplementary question in this regard.*

MR JAMES TO (in Cantonese): *President, the Public Sentiments Report is one of the key bases for the launch of the second round consultation on constitutional reform. It is stated in the concluding remarks of the Public Sentiments Report that it is the common aspiration of the people of Hong Kong to conduct constitutional reform in strict accordance with the 31 August Decision of the NPCSC. Objectively speaking, since the 31 August Decision was made, at least a significant number of people in Hong Kong took to the streets and even took occupation actions out of grievances against the Decision. Why does the Government — especially the Secretary who took part in the writing of the report — have the courage to cheat the Central Authorities in such a blatant and open manner? Will the Government withdraw the remark of "common aspiration" in the Public Sentiments Report and apologize to the public? Let me ask this once again. Does the Government belong to LEUNG Chun-ying who personally agreed to include this remark in the Public Sentiments Report with a view to cheating the Central Authorities in such a blatant and open manner?*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): President, Dr LAM Tai-fai's main question is about our imminent second round consultation, which constitutes the third step of the "Five-step Process" of constitutional development to be taken. As clearly pointed out in the report we released yesterday and as highlighted repeatedly in the past, the report commonly known as the Public Sentiments Report is not part of the "Five-step" constitutional procedure, a point that I need to state in the first place. Hence, strictly speaking, there is no direct linkage between this and the content of Dr LAM's main question.

However, as Mr TO has brought this up, I also wish to make a point. As clearly stated in Chapter One of the report we released yesterday, since the NPCSC made the 31 August Decision, there have been rather divergent views in the Hong Kong community towards the Decision *per se* as well as how to implement selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017, a reality that we acknowledged at the very beginning of the report. That is why we are facing the problem of whether there will be two thirds of Members supporting the passage of any universal suffrage package for the said election in 2017. Hence, I believe this is the political reality anyone may realize, and we stated at the very beginning of the report released yesterday that there are rather divergent views in the community towards the 31 August Decision as well as its implementation in the next step.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, among the pro-government Members, Dr LAM Tai-fai has today asked a question that is rather insightful and open ...*

(Mr James TO stood up)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHAN, please hold on. Mr James TO, what is your point?

MR JAMES TO (in Cantonese): *What the Secretary has not replied is that given the way he put it, will the authorities withdraw the remark of "the common aspiration of the people of Hong Kong" and tender apologies?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): The Secretary has clearly stated his view on Mr TO's question just now. We should not open a discussion on the same issue.

Mr CHAN, please go on.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, despite my praise of Dr LAM Tai-fai, a remark in the introduction of his question, which reads "the subsequent unfurling of the Occupy Central movement", is wrong. Occupy Central has yet to kick off. What has actually unfurled is the Umbrella Movement. The series of questions raised by Dr LAM Tai-fai is actually meant to lead the Government into doing a better job in the second round consultation with a view to resolving deep-rooted conflicts. Nevertheless, the report released by the Government is like a heap of bull. It misleads the public and the Central Authorities with the type of hypocritical rhetoric styled after LEUNG Chun-ying, so it should be torn up, President.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Albert CHAN, please raise your supplementary question in relation to Dr LAM Tai-fai's main question immediately.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, the crux of the matter now is like the question asked by Dr LAM Tai-fai, but the Secretary simply modelled himself on the type of "human tape-recorder" characterized by Stephen LAM or "Eunuch LAM" by repeating what is stated in past government reports over and over again without introducing any novelty ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHAN, please stop making arguments and ask your supplementary question direct.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, the thrust of Dr LAM Tai-fai's question is that under such a dissonant atmosphere, how the Government is going to tackle the consultation on constitutional reform and make changes to its attitude in order that the views of all parties will converge, with a view to reducing conflicts, reaching a consensus amid conflicts, and resolving the conflicts surrounding constitutional reform as a whole. Will the Secretary put*

down the lackey approach of Stephen LAM or "Eunuch LAM", and answer the key part in Dr LAM Tai-fai's question as a whole with a "human" attitude and in all common sense?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): President, before answering Mr Albert CHAN's supplementary question, I have to point out that as far as I recall, according to the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council, no one is allowed to call the alias or nickname of another Member or public officer during Question Time. Will the President please make a ruling.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *"Eunuch LAM" is pursuing studies in theology. That "an eunuch pursues studies in theology" has become a new classic, President ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Albert CHAN, please sit down.

Secretary, I do not consider the content of Mr Albert CHAN's question just now a breach of the Rules of Procedure, as you claimed. Secretary, please reply.

(Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung stood up)

MR LEUNG KWOK-HUNG (in Cantonese): *Many eunuchs pursue studies in theology as well as geometry.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, this is not the time for you to speak, please sit down. If any Member breaches the Rules of Procedure and does not heed my advice, I will enforce the provision in the Rules of Procedure.

MR KENNETH LEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, point of order. Please clarify if a public officer may raise a point of order according to the Rules of Procedure. I mean public officers, not Members.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Kenneth LEUNG, you should be aware that according to the Rules of Procedure, public officers appointed to attend Council meetings shall enjoy the same rights in this Chamber as Members do.

Secretary, please answer the supplementary question asked by Mr Albert CHAN earlier.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): The President has made a ruling as per my request, which I fully respect.

As regards Mr Albert CHAN's supplementary question, the most important or fundamental nature and objective of our second round consultation have actually been mentioned in my main reply. Our second round consultation is aimed at conducting a concrete consultation on a motion to be submitted to the Legislative Council regarding the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017, and the basis must be premised on the views collected through the first round consultation as well as the relevant Decision by the NPCSC.

Second, of course, over a period of time in the past, the community has responded differently to the 31 August Decision announced by the NPCSC, just as what Members can clearly see these months, so there is no need for me to make any repetition here. From what we experienced or realized through all this, the successful implementation of constitutional development, as in the past, is more often than not sensitive and challenging, and it is difficult to forge a consensus on it. There were one count of failure and one count of success in the past. The key is that all parties involved in examining and endorsing the packages throughout the constitutional process, including the Legislative Council, the Chief Executive and the NPCSC, share a common basis, and our only shared constitutional basis is the Basic Law as well as relevant Decisions and interpretations by the NPCSC.

From what we have experienced or realized over the past few months, if we go beyond this basis, different parties will remain poles apart and it will be difficult for them to reach any consensus. Hence, as for the statement soon to be made the Chief Secretary about the launch of the second round public consultation, our wish, as I put it in the main reply, is that different parties in the

community may seek a consensus on the basis of the current constitutional and legal setup in a tolerant and pragmatic manner, such that the aspiration of the general public to implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election will not fall through.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, he has not answered my supplementary question. I asked if he would look at the matter from a human perspective instead of a lackey's one.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHAN, the Secretary has given a reply.

MS EMILY LAU (in Cantonese): *President, as the Secretary pointed out in the main reply, the authorities have received 124 700 written submissions over the five-month consultation period and included them in the report submitted to Beijing. Among those 120 000 or so submissions, the Decision made by the NPCSC in Beijing on 31 August last year is missing.*

Have the authorities told Beijing that if they disregard public opinions and waste the time of the Chief Secretary, there will be Occupy Central as well as, as Dr LAM Tai-fai put, a governance crisis and a deteriorating relationship between the executive and the legislature? Are they bold enough to inform Beijing of these facts?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): President, as far as I recall, among the 124 700 submissions we received, some of them resemble the 31 August Decision of the NPCSC content-wise.

MS EMILY LAU (in Cantonese): *President, I do not mean resemblance. I asked if any of the 120 000 or so submissions is exactly the same as it, or being even more ridiculous or awful than it?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Ms LAU, the Secretary and the Government have heard your view.

We have spent almost 24 minutes on this question. Oral questions end here.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Providing Services for People with Mental Illness

7. **MR CHEUNG KWOK-CHE** (in Chinese): *President, during the period from 2010 to 2011, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) extended the services of Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness (ICCMWs) to cover all 18 districts in Hong Kong and set up a total of 24 ICCMWs. Also, the SWD undertook to strengthen the manpower of various ICCMWs to cater for future service needs, and identify permanent sites suitable for various ICCMWs for the provision of full-fledged service as soon as possible. On the other hand, appropriate services are provided for people with mental illness through the referral of cases between the Personalized Care Programme (PCP) provided by the Hospital Authority (HA) and various ICCMWs. The authorities have established a referral mechanism and formulated the guidelines on the referral procedures, and are drawing up a Service Manual on Mental Health Case Management (the Service Manual). However, some social workers have relayed to me that the positioning of ICCMWs at present is unclear and the staffing establishment is inflexible, thus affecting service implementation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether it will conduct a comprehensive review of the operation and service effectiveness of ICCMWs in the past four years with a view to improving their services; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (2) *given that the number of people with mental illness has increased continuously in recent years, how the authorities will strengthen the manpower of various ICCMWs to cope with the increasing service demand and alleviate the work pressure on staff members so as to maintain service quality;*

- (3) *how the authorities help find sites meeting the SWD standards for those ICCMWs which have yet to identify permanent sites, and when the authorities expect such work to be completed;*
- (4) *of the referral mechanism between PCP and ICCMWs, as well as the guidelines on the referral procedures; and*
- (5) *of the details of the contents and the publication date of the Service Manual; whether the authorities will undertake to consult the stakeholders (including service providers and users) before the Service Manual is finalized?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Chinese): President, my reply to the questions raised by Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che is as follows:

- (1) Since October 2010, the ICCMWs have been providing one-stop and district-based community support services ranging from prevention to crisis management for discharged mental patients, persons with suspected mental health problems, their families/carers and residents living in the serving districts in Hong Kong. These services include outreaching visits, casework counselling, therapeutic and supportive groups, social and recreational activities, day training and public education programmes and, where necessary, referral of cases to the HA for clinical assessment and psychiatric treatment. ICCMWs need to work jointly with the HA and other service units in service delivery from time to time. In view of this, the SWD has drawn up guidelines for ICCMWs on the collaboration with other service units for reference by ICCMWs and other stakeholders on the principles in the division of work and referral of cases.

As at September 2014, ICCMWs provided services for over 40 000 discharged mental patients and persons with suspected mental health problems. More than 9 900 public education programmes with a total of over 500 000 participants were also organized to enhance public awareness of mental health.

On the other hand, since April 2010, the HA has rolled out the Case Management Programme in different districts of Hong Kong in

phases for patients with severe mental illness. Under the Programme, case managers work closely with community partners, particularly ICCMWs in different districts, in providing intensive, continuous and personalized support to patients with severe mental illness residing in the community. Given that certain experience in the provision of ICCMW services has been accumulated and that the Case Management Programme has been expanded to cover all 18 districts in Hong Kong in 2014-2015, the SWD plans to review the services and development directions of the ICCMWs in collaboration with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating the ICCMWs and relevant stakeholders in 2015.

- (2) The SWD has been monitoring the manpower and service performance of ICCMWs as well as the public demand for ICCMW services. As a matter of fact, the resources allocated by the SWD to ICCMWs increased year by year from \$135 million in 2010 to \$205 million in 2014 (up by more than 50%) to strengthen manpower and supervisory support. Under the Lump Sum Grant subvention system, the NGOs operating ICCMWs have the flexibility to deploy the subvention in arranging suitable staffing according to the service needs of that district, including social workers, psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists and other supporting staff, to ensure service quality and meet service needs of that district. The SWD will continue to keep in view the development of ICCMW in order to meet public demand.
- (3) Currently, among the 24 ICCMWs, 13 are already providing services in permanent accommodation. Suitable sites have been identified/reserved as premises for six other ICCMWs, and fitting-out/building works or district consultation are being/will be carried out. Five ICCMWs, located in Yau Tsim Mong, Tseung Kwan O (South), Tsuen Wan, Eastern District and Northern District respectively have yet to identify suitable permanent accommodation. During the transition period, ICCMWs without permanent accommodation are operating in temporary office or as temporary service points in other suitable premises of their operators through the existing facilities and networks in their respective districts or in commercial premises rented with the SWD's subsidy.

The SWD will continue to identify suitable permanent accommodation for the remaining five ICCMWs through various channels, including keeping in close contact with relevant government departments such as the Lands Department, Planning Department and the Housing Department, in order to reserve premises for ICCMW purpose at the planning stage of new development or redevelopment projects. Besides, the SWD will closely monitor the availability of government property and school premises which will become vacant as a result of service re-engineering, and actively identify vacant public housing units that can be converted or renovated for providing ICCMW services.

- (4) With the implementation of ICCMW services and the Case Management Programme, the SWD and the HA set up in 2010 a three-tier collaboration platform to facilitate cross-sectoral communication at central, district and service delivery levels.

At central level, the SWD headquarters, the HA Head Office and NGOs meet regularly to discuss service strategies and explore models of collaboration.

At district level, the District Social Welfare Officers of the SWD and the HA's cluster heads of psychiatric services of the HA regularly liaise with the service operators (including ICCMWs) in the district and relevant government organizations to jointly co-ordinate community support services with a view to enhancing cross-service and cross-sectoral collaboration at the district level, and co-ordinating and rationalizing efforts in resolving operational problems encountered, thereby facilitating effective delivery of ICCMW services.

At the service delivery level, ICCMW caseworkers maintain close liaison with the HA's case managers, and discuss and co-ordinate on matters such as case referrals and arrangements for rehabilitation services according to the guidelines on collaboration. ICCMWs refer suspected cases to the Community Psychiatric Services of the HA for clinical assessment and psychiatric treatment, while the HA also refers suitable patients to ICCMWs for follow-up action. Besides, cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary case conferences on individual cases are also held by ICCMWs and the HA on a frequent

basis to jointly draw up suitable rehabilitation plans for discharged mental patients and arrange medical treatment and community support services for them.

- (5) To enhance communication and collaboration among stakeholders under the Case Management Programme, and to better respond to patients' needs and social needs, a Task Group, comprising the HA, the SWD and relevant NGOs, has been established to review the current service collaboration and prepare the draft "Service Framework of Personalized Care for Adults with Severe Mental Illness" (service framework). The Task Group expects to complete the first draft of the service framework in early 2015 for stakeholder consultation including relevant service providers and patient groups. The Task Group anticipates that the service framework will be promulgated in 2015-2016.

Sale of Cat and Dog Fur

8. **MR STEVEN HO** (in Chinese): *President, it has been reported that recently a shop sold fur coming from cats and dogs suspected to have been flayed alive on the Mainland, arousing wide concern among concern groups on animal interests. However, such sales activities are not regulated under existing legislation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the number of reports on illegal import of animal products (including cat and dog fur) received by the authorities, the number of inspections conducted by the authorities for the purpose of enforcing the relevant legislation, as well as the respective numbers of cases in which the persons concerned were prosecuted and convicted, in each of the past five years;*
- (2) *whether it knows which countries and regions have enacted legislation to ban the sale of cat and dog fur and related products; if it knows, of the details; and*
- (3) *whether it will consider enacting legislation to ban the sale of cat and dog fur and related products to strengthen the protection of animal interests; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Chinese): President, over the years, the Government has been striving to promote in the community a culture of care for animals with a view to protecting animal welfare. Under the Dogs and Cats Regulations (Cap. 167A), no person shall slaughter any dogs and cats or sell the flesh of dogs and cats for food. Any person who contravenes the regulation shall be liable on conviction to a fine of \$5,000 and to imprisonment for six months. In addition, according to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169), any person who cruelly treats an animal or causes it unnecessary suffering shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$200,000 and to imprisonment for three years.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is not aware of any act of slaughtering dogs or cats for fur production in Hong Kong hitherto. If there is any suspected case of cruelty to animals, the AFCD will follow up and investigate accordingly. Prosecution action will be instigated where appropriate.

In the light of a media report on 23 November 2014 about the sale of the skin of dogs and cats alleged to have been obtained through illegal import, the AFCD has conducted investigations immediately and inspected the shop concerned in Tai Po on the same day. However, no such products were found at the shop during the inspection. According to the responsible person of the shop, he had surrendered those products to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). In reply to the AFCD's enquiry, the SPCA confirmed that nine pieces of suspected dog skins were surrendered by the shop and kept under their custody. The AFCD has warned the responsible person of the shop that it is an offence to import such products into Hong Kong without appropriate permit(s), and the Department would consider taking legal actions where appropriate. In collaboration with the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED), the AFCD will step up surveillance and enforcement actions against illegal import of such products and enhance publicity on the subject.

My reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- (1) Under section 11(1) of the Rabies Regulations (Cap. 421A), no person shall import any animal product (including the skin of dogs and cats) into Hong Kong except under and in accordance with a permit to do so issued by an authorized officer. Any person who contravenes the above provision commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for one year.

The AFCD has put in place a surveillance programme to deal with the illegal import of animals, carcasses or animal products in accordance with the Rabies Regulations, and has all along been working closely with the C&ED in combating illegal import of such products at all boundary control points.

The number of reported cases of illegal import of animal products (including the skin of dogs and cats) received, the number of inspections conducted, and the respective number of cases in which the offenders were prosecuted and convicted by the AFCD under the Rabies Regulation in the period from 2010 to November 2014 are as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014 (as at 30 November)</i>
Reported cases	0	0	0	0	1
Inspections	53	51	76	72	71
Prosecutions	2	1	1	0	0
Convicted cases	2	1	1	0	0

Of the above cases, there is only one (received in 2014) in which the skin of dogs and cats is involved. In this case, two inspections were conducted in the same year and no person was prosecuted or convicted.

- (2) According to our understanding, the import, export and sale of dog and cat fur or skin is prohibited in the United States under the Dog and Cat Protection Act of 2000. In Europe, similar regulations are put in place by the European Union. In the United States, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of US\$10,000 while the penalties set by individual European Union member states may vary from country to country.
- (3) We consider that public education is most important for safeguarding and promoting animal welfare. To this end, the AFCD has established a dedicated team to devise, implement and fortify public education and publicity programmes for promoting care for animals

and responsible pet ownership, and so on. Relevant activities include producing and broadcasting announcements in the public interest through TV and radio channels; advertising on such platforms as public transport, magazines and websites; organizing promotional events in shopping arcades; regularly conducting village and community campaigns; holding talks in schools; as well as conducting annual surveys on pet care. Such efforts will continue. At the moment, the Government has no plan to prohibit through legislation the sale of dog and cat fur or skin and related products. We will keep in view the development of the relevant issues and ensure that our policy is responsive to changes in circumstances.

Asia Television Limited Defaulting on Payments of Employees' Wages

9. **MR ALBERT HO** (in Chinese): *President, it has been reported that Asia Television Limited (ATV) defaulted twice, in September and November last year, on payments of employees' wages for many days. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the respective total numbers of requests for assistance and complaints received by the authorities in the past five years in relation to employers defaulting on payments of employees' wages, and the number of cases in which the employers concerned were prosecuted and the details of such cases;*
- (2) *as it has been reported that the authorities have received requests for assistance from ATV employees in respect of ATV defaulting on payments of their wages, of the details of such cases and the authorities' follow-up actions; and*
- (3) *given that the Chief Executive in Council is considering ATV's application for renewal of the domestic free television programme service licence, whether the relevant considerations will include the incidents of ATV defaulting on payments of employees' wages; if they will not, of the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Chinese): President, the Labour Department (LD) has all along been taking stringent enforcement action against wage default by employers. Regarding the suspected offences of ATV under the Employment Ordinance (EO) for failing to pay employees wages due in September 2014, the LD completed investigation of the cases and obtained legal advice from the Department of Justice (DoJ). On 31 December 2014, the LD laid a total of 34 summonses against ATV and the concerned director respectively for offences of wilfully and without reasonable excuse failing to pay employees wages due; and committing wage offences with the consent, connivance or neglect of the concerned director. As regards the outstanding wage payment for the month of November 2014, the LD is actively investigating the suspected wage offences and maintains close liaison with the DoJ. If there is sufficient evidence, the LD will take out prosecution against ATV and its directors again.

My reply to the question raised by Mr Albert HO is set out below:

- (1) In the past five years, the numbers of claims and complaints related to alleged non-payment of wages handled by the LD are as follows:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of claims	6 052	5 128	5 442	5 126	4 992
Number of complaints	288	427	359	366	358

Note:

Claims and complaints may involve dispute on facts and law points. These claims and complaints may not involve any breach of wage offences.

A breakdown of the numbers of prosecution against employers and convictions and the amount of fines over the same period is set out below:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of summonses	1 854	1 142	713	592	420
Number of convictions	1 481	876	525	443	304
Total Fines (\$)	4,383,200	2,572,750	1,666,600	1,299,326	1,280,100

Of the convicted summonses, seven employers and eight company directors were sentenced to imprisonment owing to wage offences while 13 employers and nine directors were sentenced to community services order.

- (2) The LD attaches great importance to safeguarding the statutory rights of employees. In respect of the wage offences committed by ATV, the LD has conducted prompt follow-up actions and investigation.

Upon receipt of ATV employees' reporting of non-payment of wages for September 2014 in early October 2014, the LD immediately gave ATV due advice and stern warnings both verbally and in writing. The LD also met ATV management to repeatedly urge it both verbally and in writing to resolve the wage payment issue promptly, and reminded it of its liability for wage payment under the EO as well as the criminal consequences for any breaches thereof. In parallel, the LD has initiated investigation of wage offences by conducting inspections to ATV to interview both company representatives and employees, checking the wage and employment records to detect wage offences, and collecting evidence for consideration of taking out prosecution against the employer.

In the past few weeks, the LD spared no efforts within its purview to provide necessary assistance to affected employees, including setting up a hotline for ATV employees to make enquiries and seek appropriate assistance, organizing briefings to explain to employees their statutory rights under relevant legislation, assisting employees to file claims with the Labour Tribunal, and inviting them to act as prosecution witnesses to facilitate investigation of suspected breaches. With the appointment of a new manager of ATV by the High Court, the LD immediately lined up a meeting for the appointed manager and ATV's employee representatives to have direct dialogue.

- (3) According to the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, ATV's current domestic free television programme service licence will expire on 30 November 2015. In connection with ATV's application for renewal of its free TV licence, the Communications

Authority has submitted to the Chief Executive in Council its recommendations under the Broadcasting Ordinance. In processing the said application, the Chief Executive in Council will give regard to all relevant factors, including the licensee's operational capability and financial condition, and so on, before making a decision.

Taking Out Employees' Compensation Insurance Policies by Catering Industry

10. **MR TOMMY CHEUNG** (in Chinese): *President, some owners of catering enterprises have often relayed to me that although the occupational safety performance of the catering industry has improved significantly over the past decade, the costs for taking out employees' compensation insurance (EC insurance) policies (commonly known as "labour insurance policies") for their employees have gone up instead of going down, and there were also a number of cases of catering enterprises being refused coverage by insurance companies. On the other hand, some insurance companies have told owners of catering enterprises that the continuous rise in the premiums of labour insurance policies is mainly attributable to the increase in the number of fraudulent compensation claims for work injuries in recent years, and insurance companies have passed on the costs concerned to catering enterprises so as to make up for the loss. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *given that government officials had said at a panel meeting of this Council held last month that a task force under the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) would liaise with the insurance sector on the premiums of labour insurance policies for the catering industry at an opportune time, whether the authorities know the details and progress of the work in this regard; whether the OSHC will publicize the results of the work; if the OSHC will, of the publication date;*
- (2) *whether the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) has collected data on labour insurance policies; if OCI has, of the annual number of complaints received by OCI from 2012 to 2014 and its breakdown by type, the average premium rates of labour insurance policies of various industries (including the catering*

industry), the number and amounts of claims concerned, and so on; if OCI has not, whether OCI will collect them for reference of the public or enterprises, so as to increase the transparency of the premiums of labour insurance policies;

- (3) whether it knows, apart from the applications made by the 22 high-risk industries specified under the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme (ECIRS) for participating in ECIRS due to difficulties encountered in taking out labour insurance policies, the respective annual numbers of the relevant applications from various other industries (including the catering industry) received by the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau from 2012 to 2014; and among them, of the respective numbers of cases in which insurance companies had eventually underwritten insurance policies for the applicants and cases in which applications were withdrawn by the applicants;*
- (4) whether it has plans to collaborate with the insurance sector, the Police and the Hospital Authority in stepping up efforts in combating acts of making fraudulent compensation claims for work injuries; if it does, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (5) of the respective annual numbers of cases of fraudulent compensation claims for work injuries received by the Police from 2012 to 2014; and among them, of the number of cases involving the catering industry, the number of convictions as well as the respective minimum and maximum penalties imposed on the convicted persons?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Chinese): President, with the Government's encouragement, the Hong Kong Federation of Insurers set up the ECIRS in 2007 to provide last-resort covers to employers encountering difficulties in taking out EC insurance. If employers of any trade, including those of the catering industry, have difficulties in procuring EC insurance, they may contact the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau for assistance.

As regards insurance premiums, a discount and loading mechanism is in place to adjust the rates to be offered according to factors like the past occupational safety and health (OSH) performance and risk preventive measures adopted by employers. This discount and loading mechanism helps encourage employers adopt good OSH measures to reduce risks at work.

My reply to the five parts of the question raised by Mr Tommy CHEUNG is set out below:

- (1) The OSHC launched in June 2013 a pilot scheme for the catering industry, under which free OSH training is provided to employees of the participating restaurants; and accredited consultants are deployed to assist the restaurants in developing good housekeeping plans for assessment. Those restaurants which have passed the assessment will be certified by the OSHC as enterprises with outstanding OSH performance, and granted subsidies for the purchase of personal protective equipment for their staff. The OSHC will monitor the OSH performance of the participating restaurants and their insurance premiums with a view to further enhancing the Scheme.
- (2) The statistics on complaints related to EC insurance received by the Office of the OCI for the past three years are as follows:

<i>Type of Complaints</i>	<i>Number of Complaints</i>		
	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014 (January to November)</i>
Policy renewal issues	2	2	0
Claims issues	5	8	5
Customer service issues	3	8	2
Total	10	18	7

The average EC insurance premium rates⁽¹⁾ and claim amounts of different trades are set out in the two tables below. The level of insurance premium is determined having regard to the risks insured. In setting the levels of premium, insurance companies will take into account the risks insured, which is mainly reflected in the accident

(1) Insurance premium rate means insurance premium as a percentage of the salary of the relevant employees or the value of the relevant construction contract.

rate and quantum of claims. In other words, insurance premium rates reflect the level of risks borne by insurance companies. Currently, the OCI collects and publishes statistics on the EC insurance taken out by ten major trades. "Restaurants and hotels" are grouped under a single category and there is no separate breakdown for the catering industry. According to the OCI's understanding, the insurance premium rates of the catering industry are approximately 1.8% to 3.4%.

<i>Trade</i>		<i>Average insurance premium rate (%)</i>		
		<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014 (January to September)</i>
1	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2.404	2.584	2.458
2	Mining and Quarrying	8.271	8.403	1.254
3	Manufacturing	0.612	0.622	0.592
4	Electricity, Gas and Water	0.158	0.239	0.183
5	Construction	1.162	1.255	1.119
6	i. Wholesale, Retail and Import/Export Trades	0.461	0.498	0.492
	ii. Restaurants and Hotels	1.441	1.733	1.594
7	Transport, Storage and Communication	1.095	1.191	0.991
8	Financing, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	0.250	0.238	0.233
9	Community, Social and Personal Services	0.375	0.427	0.412
10	Others/Non-Classified Occupations	0.368	0.426	0.517

<i>Trade</i>		<i>Claims paid (\$ million)</i>		
		<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014 (January to September)</i>
1	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	6.69	7.40	7.08
2	Mining and Quarrying	0.15	0.12	0.20
3	Manufacturing	120.27	130.22	110.41
4	Electricity, Gas and Water	3.31	13.38	4.67
5	Construction	933.82	1,143.35	1,118.97
6	i. Wholesale, Retail and Import/Export Trades	236.07	288.48	202.09
	ii. Restaurants and Hotels	229.89	282.95	233.94
7	Transport, Storage and Communication	289.84	322.13	239.27
8	Financing, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	245.82	292.66	264.61
9	Community, Social and Personal Services	346.16	394.83	334.31
10	Others/Non-Classified Occupations	26.56	22.42	18.75

The OCI currently does not collect statistics on the number of claims from insurance companies.

- (3) According to the application procedure of ECIRS, upon receiving a completed proposal form and the required documentation from the qualifying employer, the application will be circulated to all member insurance companies under ECIRS for consideration of coverage.

If no offer of insurance is received within two working days, the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau will accept the risk in accordance with the premium and terms prescribed by the Underwriting Committee and provide insurance cover to the employer.

During the period from 2012 to 2014, applications received by the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau not involving the High Risk Groups were mainly related to the catering, trading and wholesale industries. As regards the number of applications from other industries, one to two applications are generally received from each industry per year. The overall figures are as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Number of applications</i> ♦	<i>Number of applications which were offered EC insurance by the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau direct*</i>
2012	Catering	26	16
	Trading	9	5
	Wholesale	6	2
	Others	31	24
	Total	72	47
2013	Catering	17	15
	Trading	8	8
	Wholesale	6	2
	Others	36	26
	Total	67	51

<i>Year</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Number of applications</i> ♦	<i>Number of applications which were offered EC insurance by the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau direct*</i>
2014	Catering	5	5
	Trading	7	7
	Wholesale	3	3
	Others	14	13
	Total	29	28

Notes:

- ♦ During the period from 2012 to 2014, there was only one application withdrawn in 2012 owing to cessation of business.
- * Most of the remaining cases were insured by ECIRS's member insurers, after the applications were circulated to them by the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme Bureau.

- (4) Fraud is a crime. The Police will take appropriate follow-up actions on all crime reports made by any member of the public. These include suspected cases of fraudulent insurance claims such as fraudulent claims for work injury compensation.

Through the concerted efforts of the relevant government bureaux and departments and the industry in improving occupational safety and combating insurance frauds, it is hoped that the number of insurance claims will be reduced, thereby allowing room for insurance premium rates to be adjusted downwards.

- (5) During the period from 2012 to October 2014, the total number of cases involving various kinds of insurance-related fraud received by the Police is as follows:

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Chinese): President,

- (1) According to the information provided by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO), the number of electors who registered for the first time and those who re-registered in 2012-2014 is as follows:

<i>Cycle</i>	<i>Number of electors who registered for the first time (A)</i>	<i>Number of electors who re-registered (B)</i>	<i>Total number of newly registered electors (C)=(A)+(B)</i>
2012	135 099	12 986	148 085
2013	46 982	9 639	56 621
2014	71 102	6 159	77 261

The statistical breakdown of the total number of newly registered electors (that is, column (C)) according to DC delineation, age groups and gender is set out in the Annex. However, the REO does not have further breakdown of the figures as set out in the Annex according to whether the electors were registered for the first time or re-registered.

- (2) In the 2012-2014 cycles, the number of electors for Geographical Constituencies who were no longer eligible for registration and whose registration status was removed is as follows:

<i>Reason of removal and number of electors</i>	<i>Cycle</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
Failure to respond to statutory inquiry procedures		218 199	26 281	13 740
Death		22 324	24 591	26 863
Others (such as voluntary de-registration, loss of Hong Kong permanent resident status)		1 896	527	295
Total		242 419	51 399	40 898

The REO has no breakdown of electors by reasons of de-registration according to DC delineation and age groups.

2012 Final Register: Number of Newly Registered Electors of Geographical Constituencies

Age Range & Sex District Council	18-20		21-25		26-30		31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56-60		61-65		66-70		71 or above		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	Central and Western	508	500	196	225	169	179	189	179	199	261	213	293	212	261	172	192	128	163	97	121	50	45	101	
Wan Chai	252	222	91	98	105	98	92	96	114	140	136	125	103	129	114	98	77	87	70	70	41	30	51	68	2 507
Eastern	1 684	1 633	563	528	421	384	349	366	352	536	321	507	329	497	324	365	264	335	222	255	128	123	170	285	10 941
Southern	705	706	232	243	167	161	119	144	149	250	177	272	186	228	144	175	116	99	88	93	46	62	89	127	4 778
Yau Tsim Mong	663	575	242	280	265	237	224	259	280	312	229	295	206	265	206	230	162	163	170	144	89	63	133	131	5 823
Sham Shui Po	963	980	377	353	310	258	237	239	218	375	220	414	258	396	231	256	179	234	166	201	86	137	238	284	7 610
Kowloon City	930	879	328	315	290	265	238	264	267	374	255	367	254	358	228	243	195	217	163	182	93	107	135	186	7 133
Wong Tai Sin	1 549	1 566	394	452	308	255	157	195	178	407	210	459	234	413	212	270	155	233	132	180	99	133	193	314	8 698
Kwun Tong	2 218	2 001	564	528	401	351	303	377	380	668	409	695	394	628	337	417	242	330	208	329	194	189	299	427	12 889
Tsuen Wan	948	960	353	304	276	243	245	306	291	400	289	416	284	371	245	253	171	161	127	135	67	68	109	129	7 151
Tuen Mun	1 744	1 693	530	526	425	368	324	347	274	505	242	479	320	458	317	338	226	271	237	231	136	133	227	344	10 695
Yuen Long	2 324	2 418	688	706	509	502	389	473	345	777	356	896	445	750	463	443	311	315	211	195	140	94	161	207	14 118
North	1 324	1 317	395	350	301	241	192	238	148	436	194	418	252	339	242	255	200	205	159	145	89	71	168	219	7 898
Tai Po	1 185	1 100	367	319	262	189	136	145	132	224	124	247	153	241	188	197	132	131	85	89	42	36	72	103	5 899
Sai Kung	1 656	1 543	412	419	305	270	249	252	248	408	258	432	280	421	239	256	158	181	127	139	72	68	94	135	8 622
Sha Tin	2 308	2 264	679	637	548	556	391	430	338	622	350	654	389	647	369	445	277	323	232	255	134	122	170	258	13 398
Kwai Tsing	1 727	1 723	671	635	420	359	291	337	299	576	331	650	313	529	337	362	242	291	196	226	169	170	294	411	11 559
Islands	510	468	188	149	100	81	98	107	107	257	149	261	145	204	104	144	95	74	68	79	34	26	53	51	3 552
Total	23 198	22 548	7 270	7 067	5 582	4 997	4 223	4 754	4 319	7 528	4 463	7 880	4 757	7 135	4 472	4 939	3 330	3 813	2 758	3 069	1 709	1 677	2 757	3 840	148 085

2013 Final Register: Number of Newly Registered Electors of Geographical Constituencies

Age Range & Sex District Council	18-20		21-25		26-30		31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56-60		61-65		66-70		71 or above		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	Central and Western	310	218	63	51	54	54	33	66	57	50	52	74	48	52	54	44	26	43	33	27	8	14	24	
Wan Chai	126	134	20	23	30	26	27	31	45	53	33	52	38	38	23	31	21	24	27	30	17	10	18	28	905
Eastern	946	865	122	124	105	109	96	109	119	157	97	166	109	137	82	98	64	68	55	69	34	44	71	95	3 941
Southern	391	419	51	76	46	57	38	47	52	55	44	74	67	53	48	45	34	33	24	27	13	17	25	39	1 775
Yau Tsim Mong	329	333	69	74	61	65	85	87	78	123	84	103	94	87	77	73	55	72	51	54	32	49	61	67	2 263
Sham Shui Po	603	527	127	121	98	88	72	81	86	141	78	103	85	103	80	77	74	84	69	71	45	43	71	101	3 028
Kowloon City	541	549	91	82	78	75	82	98	84	138	89	110	88	116	74	75	54	57	48	54	26	33	64	80	2 786
Wong Tai Sin	1 005	989	110	110	72	73	61	69	60	121	60	121	85	97	61	74	41	56	46	54	34	41	64	105	3 609
Kwun Tong	1 368	1 298	206	179	125	151	109	116	108	210	139	216	114	188	115	144	66	94	84	98	80	78	117	181	5 584
Tsuen Wan	519	496	76	50	73	63	75	84	85	111	72	88	72	74	49	49	39	38	23	36	25	24	43	46	2 310
Tuen Mun	1 053	996	142	123	123	96	97	88	71	128	71	112	80	109	50	72	56	53	48	48	29	33	50	63	3 791
Yuen Long	1 513	1 533	205	181	132	135	104	125	107	191	99	174	123	152	115	110	80	103	75	67	55	41	63	79	5 562
North	728	846	86	84	66	81	54	64	44	106	53	101	54	92	71	51	53	43	34	37	23	16	38	40	2 865
Tai Po	634	675	75	82	71	57	47	46	48	79	36	64	60	61	54	58	40	30	31	20	14	14	19	30	2 345
Sai Kung	1 032	990	110	98	100	91	78	104	107	149	104	154	101	132	87	78	53	52	37	50	26	38	33	45	3 849
Sha Tin	1 398	1 423	162	192	144	162	129	164	113	257	151	209	142	175	106	140	83	88	76	98	42	50	59	84	5 647
Kwai Tsing	935	915	152	127	100	96	65	96	78	163	77	153	69	111	55	76	51	68	43	52	48	49	64	92	3 735
Islands	260	233	48	37	19	21	22	29	22	60	31	49	36	58	33	30	23	23	24	12	12	10	29	18	1 139
Total	13 691	13 439	1 915	1 814	1 497	1 500	1 274	1 504	1 364	2 292	1 370	2 123	1 465	1 835	1 234	1 325	913	1 029	828	904	563	604	913	1 225	56 621

2014 Final Register: Number of Newly Registered Electors of Geographical Constituencies

Age Range & Sex District Council	18-20		21-25		26-30		31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56-60		61-65		66-70		71 or above		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	Central and Western	440	411	55	60	47	51	29	47	48	73	49	81	46	66	38	49	33	51	35	43	23	35	53	
Wan Chai	192	196	16	25	27	21	21	26	23	27	24	35	29	19	13	26	15	12	10	14	9	7	11	25	823
Eastern	1 457	1 429	138	129	111	105	78	111	106	148	87	157	84	122	74	98	58	99	44	95	62	88	105	197	5 182
Southern	618	659	60	60	33	50	37	48	46	84	50	87	61	82	43	56	47	53	22	54	23	39	63	87	2 462
Yau Tsim Mong	623	564	77	95	84	70	68	79	56	103	52	109	55	90	60	70	38	72	59	86	54	55	69	111	2 799
Sham Shui Po	1 026	966	128	120	110	105	64	86	77	166	75	122	86	149	56	109	63	75	67	101	61	57	71	117	4 057
Kowloon City	866	875	117	116	110	95	65	100	71	159	100	181	92	135	101	115	89	135	115	123	92	105	113	151	4 221
Wong Tai Sin	1 371	1 329	122	160	99	89	50	93	47	123	58	143	65	137	49	101	50	77	63	87	54	66	91	157	4 681
Kwun Tong	1 915	1 877	244	230	180	162	89	149	114	322	153	346	155	274	131	199	101	182	130	228	149	181	224	333	8 068
Tsuen Wan	955	844	76	78	71	50	41	66	55	79	49	76	41	49	34	37	24	40	33	36	15	17	28	55	2 849
Tuen Mun	1 631	1 579	156	145	110	99	79	102	89	144	63	166	80	139	75	106	72	81	76	86	57	77	65	78	5 355
Yuen Long	2 332	2 236	213	214	185	136	129	156	111	206	101	221	118	173	122	143	101	114	101	95	59	64	75	86	7 491
North	1 401	1 254	95	114	70	80	53	81	29	128	44	120	40	98	60	58	56	46	33	43	20	24	42	59	4 048
Tai Po	1 193	1 104	80	81	95	58	65	76	43	78	35	83	37	76	43	59	51	44	29	40	25	27	25	64	3 511
Sai Kung	1 416	1 340	99	97	105	118	66	99	59	134	90	135	76	89	56	74	41	48	29	48	35	30	31	32	4 347
Sha Tin	2 577	2 377	204	154	167	153	99	168	87	250	111	248	100	188	98	145	90	116	97	114	54	84	76	136	7 893
Kwai Tsing	1 679	1 624	164	160	126	127	80	116	76	153	84	171	74	121	78	100	66	119	75	132	92	121	126	175	5 839
Islands	470	463	36	30	44	40	21	36	26	65	41	69	42	39	44	33	25	21	24	24	16	12	26	18	1 665
Total	22 162	21 127	2 080	2 068	1 774	1 609	1 134	1 639	1 163	2 442	1 266	2 550	1 281	2 046	1 175	1 578	1 020	1 385	1 042	1 449	900	1 089	1 294	1 988	77 261

Gas Leakage Incidents

12. **DR CHIANG LAI-WAN** (in Chinese): *President, regarding gas leakage incidents, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the number of service calls relating to reports on suspected gas leakage attended by fire personnel and the respective numbers of fire and explosion incidents caused by gas leakage in each of the past five years (set out in the table below);*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of service calls attended</i>		<i>Number of fire incidents caused</i>	<i>Number of explosion incidents caused</i>
	<i>Residential premises</i>	<i>Non-residential premises</i>		
<i>2010</i>				
<i>2011</i>				
<i>2012</i>				
<i>2013</i>				
<i>2014</i>				

- (2) *of the casualties of fire personnel and members of the public caused by gas leakage and the related fires or explosions in each of the past five years (set out in the table below);*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of persons injured</i>		<i>Number of fatalities</i>	
	<i>Fire personnel</i>	<i>Members of the public</i>	<i>Fire personnel</i>	<i>Members of the public</i>
<i>2010</i>				
<i>2011</i>				
<i>2012</i>				
<i>2013</i>				
<i>2014</i>				

- (3) *whether it has any plan to conduct a comprehensive review of the regulatory system of the safety, repair and maintenance of private gas pipeline facilities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*

- (4) *of the measures in place to prevent the occurrence in Hong Kong of serious gas explosion accidents of a scale similar to that occurred in Kaohsiung, Taiwan in August last year, in order to safeguard the lives and properties of members of the public?*

SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (in Chinese): President,

- (1) The number of calls relating to reports on suspected gas leakage attended by fire personnel, and the respective numbers of fire and explosion incidents caused by gas leakage in the past five years provided by the Security Bureau are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of calls attended*</i>	<i>Number of fire incidents</i>	<i>Number of explosions</i>
2010	309	19	0
2011	327	7	0
2012	287	6	0
2013	294	8	0
2014**	267	6	1

Notes:

* Include the number of calls attended to in respect of suspected gas leakage; and fire incidents and explosions caused by gas leakage. The Fire Services Department does not have a breakdown of figures for suspected gas leakage reported at residential or non-residential premises.

** Figures as of 30 November 2014. Figures for December 2014 are not yet available.

- (2) The casualties of fire personnel and members of the public caused by gas leakage and related fire incidents or explosions in the past five years provided by the Security Bureau are set out in Table 2 below:

Table 2

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of persons injured</i>		<i>Number of fatalities</i>	
	<i>Fire personnel</i>	<i>Members of the public</i>	<i>Fire personnel</i>	<i>Members of the public</i>
2010	0	4	0	3
2011	0	5	0	0

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of persons injured</i>		<i>Number of fatalities</i>	
	<i>Fire personnel</i>	<i>Members of the public</i>	<i>Fire personnel</i>	<i>Members of the public</i>
2012	0	4	0	1
2013	0	6	0	4
2014 [#]	9	8	0	1

Note:

Figures as of 30 November 2014. Figures for December 2014 are not yet available. In the gas explosion incident in Shek Kip Mei Estate on 22 November 2014, nine fire personnel were injured, among whom a Principal Fireman passed away on 4 December 2014.

The numbers of incidents and casualties related to gas pipelines in the past five years provided by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) are set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of incidents related to gas pipelines[^]</i>	<i>Number of casualties</i>
2010	39	0
2011	67	0
2012	62	0
2013	36	0
2014	43	0

Note:

[^] Figures do not include incidents related to gas pipelines damaged by third parties.

(3) and (4)

Safety of town gas, liquefied petroleum gas and natural gas is regulated by the Gas Safety Ordinance. Gas supply companies are required to conduct leakage surveys and pressure tests on underground gas pipes regularly having regard to the gas properties and pressure, pipe material and pipe size. In addition, the Gas Safety Ordinance requires gas supply companies to add a special odour to town gas and liquefied petroleum gas for easy detection in

case of leakage. The EMSD carries out regular inspections on gas installations and conducts audits on maintenance works, pipe leakage surveys and pressure tests performed by gas supply companies. The EMSD also holds regular meetings and conducts regular emergency drills with gas supply companies to review and ensure the capability of the relevant staff in responding to gas incidents.

The city underground gas network in Hong Kong distributes town gas. Towngas has adopted electronic monitoring and data acquisition system to monitor the gas supply network. In the event of gas leakage and sudden plunge of pipe pressure as a result of pipe damage, the system will produce warning signals, and, where necessary, the staff at the control room will close the valve of the main gas pipe through a remote control device to avoid further gas leakage. While the current regulatory system has been effective in ensuring the safety and proper maintenance of gas pipeline facilities, the EMSD will continue to review and monitor issues relating to gas safety in collaboration with the gas supply companies, and, where necessary, takes appropriate action.

Preventing Chronically-ill Elderly from Committing Suicide

13. **MISS CHAN YUEN-HAN** (in Chinese): *President, recently, a number of tragedies have occurred in which some of the elderly (that is, people aged 65 or above) committed suicide presumably due to their weariness of life arising from ill health. Some academic research reports have pointed out that in Hong Kong, the suicide rate of the elderly is the highest among all age groups, and that quite a number of the elderly committed suicide because they were afflicted by health problems. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether it has compiled statistics on the number of the chronically-ill elderly in each of the past five years, with a breakdown by type of illness (such as cancers, cardiovascular diseases and other pain-causing illnesses) and the percentages of such numbers in the total;*
- (2) *whether it has compiled statistics on (i) the respective numbers of cases of the elderly killing themselves and attempting suicide in each*

of the past five years, (ii) the respective percentages of such numbers in the relevant totals, and (iii) a breakdown of such numbers by reason for committing suicide; if it has compiled such statistics, of the details; if not, the reasons for that and whether it will compile such statistics in future;

- (3) *whether it introduced any new measure last year to reduce the cases of the elderly committing suicide due to their weariness of life arising from ill health; and*
- (4) *apart from the existing healthcare services for the elderly and Elderly Suicide Prevention Programme (the Programme), whether the authorities will (i) review afresh the need of the chronically-ill elderly for psychological and emotional support services, (ii) enhance the relevant services and (iii) formulate more effective strategies to give proper care for the mental health of the elderly, so as to prevent them from committing suicide due to weariness of life arising from ill health; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Chinese): President, my reply to the questions raised by Miss CHAN Yuen-han is as follows:

- (1) In the past five years, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) conducted two rounds of Thematic Household Survey (THS) with health-related issues as the topic to collect, *inter alia*, information on the health status of Hong Kong residents, during November 2009 to February 2010 and October 2011 to January 2012 respectively. Survey respondents were asked whether they had chronic health conditions as told by practitioners of Western medicine at the time of enumeration and the type of chronic health conditions (where applicable). The following table sets out the number of persons aged 65 and over with reported chronic health conditions with breakdown by type of chronic health conditions during the two THSs:

<i>Survey period</i>	<i>November 2009 to February 2010</i>		<i>October 2011 to January 2012</i>	
<i>Type of chronic health conditions[^]</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%[#]</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%[#]</i>
Hypertension	373 600	61.0	413 800	62.4
Diabetes mellitus	149 100	24.4	180 100	27.2
High cholesterol	97 600	15.9	119 300	18.0
Heart diseases	84 000	13.7	88 500	13.4
Cancer ⁺⁺	25 100	4.1	31 700	4.8
Asthma	16 000	2.6	14 100	2.1
Stroke	28 200	4.6	29 100	4.4
Others [@]	352 700	57.6	355 800	53.7
Overall	612 300		662 600	

Notes:

Percentages in respect of all persons aged 65 and over who had chronic health conditions as told by practitioners of Western medicine.

[^] Multiple answers were allowed.

⁺⁺ Referring to primary cancers but not secondary metastases.

[@] Including musculoskeletal diseases, diseases of the ear/nose/throat (ENT), diseases of eye, and so on.

- (2) Separately, according to the latest information provided by the C&SD, the numbers of total known suicide deaths and those concerning elderly persons aged 65 and above in the past five years are as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Known Suicide Deaths</i>	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Age 65 and above (Percentage of the Total)</i>
2009	985	261 (26.5%)
2010	973	267 (27.4%)
2011	866	245 (28.3%)
2012	911	252 (27.7%)
2013	853	224 (26.3%)

It is difficult to ascertain cases of attempted suicides and persons with suicidal attempts are usually unwilling to provide their information. The Government therefore does not have statistics on cases of attempted suicides.

Suicide is a complicated issue with multi-faceted causes including biological, social and psychological factors that interact with one another. Each case has its uniqueness. Further, the causes of suicide may not be clearly known for every suicide case. The Government therefore does not have statistics on suicide deaths classified by causes.

(3) and (4)

The Government has been taking a multi-pronged approach in tackling the issue of elderly suicide. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been identifying and supporting elderly persons with emotional distress and/or suicidal risks through mainstream, specialized and hotline services.

For mainstream services, the 65 Integrated Family Service Centres, 22 Family Life Education Units and two Integrated Services Centres in the territory provide preventive, supportive and remedial services for elderly persons in need. In addition, social workers in the 55 Medical Social Services Units in hospitals and clinics throughout Hong Kong assess the suicidal risks of their clients during case assessment.

In addition, over 200 subvented elderly centres in the territory provide a range of services, including concern visits, emotional support, referral for appropriate services and counselling to elderly persons, particularly singleton and hidden ones. In this regard, the Government has, from 2014-2015, allocated additional resources to: (i) 41 District Elderly Community Centres and 119 Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs) for employing more social workers to assist in service delivery, for example, counselling and emotional support services; and (ii) 51 social centres for the elderly for raising their standard of services to that of NECs, with a view to strengthening the support provided for elderly persons living in the community,

including those who may be suffering from chronic illness or emotional problem.

On specialized services, the SWD subvents the Suicide Crisis Intervention Centre of the Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong to provide outreaching, crisis intervention, intensive counselling services, and so on, to persons beset with suicidal problems. In addition, the Suicide Prevention Services, a non-governmental organization (NGO), has launched the Outreach Befriending Service for Suicidal Elderly since 2006 with the funding support of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. The project aims at early identification of emotionally distressed and/or suicidal elderly persons through outreach, and arranges for trained volunteers to visit elderly persons to help relieve their emotional distress and facilitate them to seek help from professionals.

In respect of hotline services, a total of six dedicated hotline services are run by the SWD and NGOs to help persons with suicidal tendency or in emotional distress. The hotline services encourage and refer the clients to receive in-depth counselling services that suit their needs.

On the health services front, the Elderly Health Service (EHS) of the Department of Health has all along been actively promoting the mental well-being of the elderly. Its Elderly Health Centres offer a range of psychological service to their members including psychological assessment, counselling, treatment and activities on mental health education.

In addition, the Visiting Health Teams deliver health promotion activities and training to the elderly and their caregivers in the community and residential care homes. Topics include raising awareness and helping the elderly and their caregivers in understanding and effectively managing mental stress, emotional reactions (including depressive mood), suicidal ideation and behaviour associated with chronic illness.

The EHS also promotes the importance of mental health and enhances public awareness of the mental health of the elderly and

their caregivers through the mass media such as television, radio, the Internet and printed media, and so on.

On the other hand, the Psychiatric Department of the Hospital Authority (HA) has been providing comprehensive assessment, treatment and follow-up support services for patients with suicidal risks. Besides, the Programme of the HA provides prompt psychiatric treatment for elderly persons who are suspected to have depression or suicidal tendency. The SWD, welfare organizations or doctors can refer such elderly persons to the Programme for follow-up. The HA has also put in place various measures to prevent in-patient suicide, which include improving the environment of hospitals and conducting suicidal risk assessment for in-patients for early identification of high-risk patients by front-line staff.

Processing Applications for Registration as Specialist Contractors

14. **MISS ALICE MAK** (in Chinese): *President, under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) (BO), the Building Authority (BA) may designate that certain categories of building works are required to be carried out by registered specialist contractors (RSCs). Currently, there are five categories of works designated as specialized works, which include ventilation works. The BA has also appointed the Contractors Registration Committee (Specialist Contractors) (CRC) in accordance with BO to assist him in considering applications for registration as specialist contractors. However, some persons engaged in ventilation works have complained to me about the unprofessional conduct of individual CRC members in processing their applications for registration as well as the unfair procedures and criteria for assessing such applications. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the number of applications for registration as specialist contractors received by the authorities and, among them, the percentage of the number of applications approved, in each of the past five years;*
- (2) *of the average number of working days taken by the authorities for assessing and approving an application for registration as a specialist contractor in the past three years;*

- (3) *of the qualifications of the various CRC members; the specific arrangements for conducting professional interviews by CRC with the applicants and their key personnel, including how the relevant qualifications, experience and knowledge of the personnel concerned are verified, and the arrangements for selecting CRC members to conduct such interviews; whether it has established a mechanism for declaration of interests by CRC members; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (4) *whether CRC has adopted a uniform set of scoring methods and criteria in conducting interviews with the applicants and their key personnel; if CRC has not, how the authorities ensure that CRC members assess the applications concerned in an objective and impartial manner; whether the authorities conducted any review of the mechanism for assessing registration applications in the past five years; if they did, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (5) *whether a mechanism is currently in place for applicants to appeal against CRC's decision for not recommending them for registration as RSCs and to lodge complaints about the failure of CRC members to consider their applications according to the assessment criteria, so as to protect the rights of the applicants?*

SECRETARY FOR DEVELOPMENT (in Chinese): President, the Buildings Department (BD) has formulated a contractors registration system under the Buildings Ordinance (BO). The objective of the system is to ensure that only contractors who are competent in carrying out their work and duties as well as conversant with the relevant statutory requirements and the current building control system are registered and allowed to carry out buildings works and street works.

Certain types of building works must be carried out by RSCs. In this connection, the BD currently maintains different contractors' registers for five categories of specialized works, namely demolition works, foundation works, ground investigation field works, site formation works and ventilation works. Contractors applying for inclusion in the registers and their Authorized Signatories must possess relevant qualifications and experience and are required to pass an assessment or interview conducted by the CRC established under the

BO. The BD has also issued the "Guidance Notes for Applicants on Registration as General Building Contractors/Specialist Contractors", which sets out the application procedures, requirements and scope of interview, and so on, for registration for applicants' reference.

My reply to the five-part question is as follows:

- (1) The numbers of applications for registration as specialist contractors and the percentages of approval in each of the past five years are tabulated below.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Numbers of applications for registration	31	46	43	35	42
Numbers of approved applications	12	15	15	16	6*
Percentages of approved applications	38.7	32.6	34.9	45.7	14.3*

Note:

* Some of the applications received in 2014 are still under processing.

- (2) The BD has no statistics on the time required for assessing and approving an application for registration as a specialist contractor. Nevertheless, with effect from 1 November 2014, the BD has implemented streamlined procedures for processing applications for registration as general building contractors or specialist contractors. Under the said procedures, if all the required documents are complete, the BD will refer an application to the CRC and arrange for assessment or interview within two months from the date of receipt of the application. According to section 8B(7) of the BO, the BD will inform the applicant of his application result within three months after the assessment or interview.
- (3) The CRC responsible for considering applications for inclusion in a register of specialist contractors is set up under section 8(3A) of the BO, which shall consist of:

- (i) the BA's representative;
- (ii) three persons, one of whom is nominated by each of the Architects Registration Board, the Engineers Registration Board and the Surveyors Registration Board from the lists of Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers;
- (iii) three persons nominated by The Hong Kong Construction Association Ltd.; and
- (iv) two persons selected by the BA from among persons nominated by such bodies as the BA may think fit. The BA will determine the appropriate bodies with reference to the nature of works. Taking the CRC responsible for considering applications in respect of ventilation contractors as an example, the representatives concerned are nominated by the Hong Kong E&M Contractors' Association Limited, the Hong Kong Registered Ventilation Contractors Association, and the Engineers Registration Board (Building Services Engineer).

Each CRC serves a term of two years. The Chairman is elected by the members among themselves but he cannot be the BA's representative. Before the commencement of each term, the BD will provide guidelines to all members so that they will understand the functions and composition of the CRC, relevant procedures and matters regarding declaration of interests, and so on.

For the interview, its purpose is to ascertain whether an applicant possesses the qualifications and experience required for carrying out his designated functions and that he has the competence to apply such knowledge in executing and supervising building works and street works. Each CRC member will assess the applicant individually, and then the Chairman will lead the members to cast their votes to arrive at a final decision, and advise the BD on whether the applications should be accepted, deferred or rejected.

Regarding the mechanism for declaration of interests, according to the guidelines issued by the BD to the members, if members are aware of any potential conflict between their own interests and the items to be discussed or the applicants, they must make full disclosure of their interests. If a member's interests relating to other members are possibly in conflict with the interests of the applicants, he must also make full disclosure of his interests as mentioned above. Each time before the CRC starts interviewing, all members must confirm in writing, by completing a standard form, that they do not have a conflict of interests with the applicants.

- (4) In conducting an interview, the CRC will make use of a standard assessment form to assess the applicant on the following aspects:
- (i) the documents submitted by the applicant;
 - (ii) the adequacy of its management structure if the applicant is a corporation;
 - (iii) the appropriate experience, qualifications and competence of the personnel;
 - (iv) the applicant's ability to have access to plant and resources; and
 - (v) the ability of the Authorized Signatory to apply relevant knowledge (including the BO and its Regulations, relevant codes of practice, practice notes, and so on).

In 2010, the Independent Commission Against Corruption conducted a review on the fairness and impartiality of the registration system and the relevant procedures and gave its recommendations to the BD in 2010 and 2012 respectively, including those on amending the interview procedures, the declaration of interest mechanism for members, the standard of integrity expected of members and the procedures of registration application. The BD adopted the recommendations by, *inter alia*, amending accordingly the guidelines for the CRC in 2011. Subsequently, in 2014, the BD conducted another review of and made amendments to the voting

mechanism of the CRC, allowing the Chairman to cast his vote when the votes of members are equal. The amended mechanism will be implemented in the next term (that is, 2015-2016) of the CRC.

- (5) According to section 9A of the BO, a person who is aggrieved by a decision of a CRC may appeal to a Judge of the Court of First Instance. On an appeal the Judge may confirm, reverse or vary the decision of the CRC. The BD would also appropriately follow up the complaint lodged by an applicant against any individual CRC members.

Suspension of Tram Service due to Obstruction of Tramway

15. **MR TONY TSE** (in Chinese): *President, during the period from 28 September last year to the 15th of last month when the illegal road occupation movement was underway, some parts of the tramway in Admiralty and Causeway Bay were obstructed, resulting in partial suspension of tram service which caused inconvenience to members of the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether Hong Kong Tramways Limited (HKT) requested, during the road occupation movement, the authorities to provide assistance in removing the obstacles on the tramway; if HKT did, of the follow-up actions taken by the authorities;*
- (2) *given the stipulation in section 58 of the Tramway Ordinance (Cap. 107) that any person who wilfully and without lawful excuse interferes with or obstructs any part of the tramway commits an offence, whether the authorities will institute prosecutions against those persons who obstructed the tramway; if they will, of the details;*
- (3) *whether it knows the average daily number of trips and patronage of the tram service during the road occupation movement, and how such figures compare with those in the same period of the year before; and*

- (4) *whether it has made reference to the experience gained from handling the road occupation movement and drawn up contingency measures in the event of an obstruction of the tramway; if it has, of the details of such measures; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Chinese): President, during the Occupy Central movement, road traffic on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon was severely affected by extensive road closure and traffic diversion. Owing to the blockage of the tramway by protesters in Central, Admiralty and Causeway Bay, east-west tram service was interrupted and had to be operated in sections. At the worst, tram service between Sheung Wan (Western Market) and Causeway Bay (Victoria Park) and that for the Happy Valley circuit had to be suspended. Following the removal of the obstacles in Causeway Bay by the Police on 15 December 2014, tram service has resumed normal.

My reply to the various parts of Mr Tony TSE's question is as follows:

- (1) and (2)

During the Occupy Central movement, the Government had been calling on the protesters to leave the illegally occupied road sections. Representatives of the Transport Department (TD), the Police, district offices, District Councils concerned and transport trades had contacted the protesters and urged them to leave the occupied road sections. Subsequent to the reopening of Queensway on 14 October 2014, tram service between Kennedy Town and Happy Valley resumed normal. However, service along Yee Wo Street between Percival Street and Causeway Road was still blocked.

The HKT was aware of the sensitivity and complexity of the situation at the time. It requested the Government to deal with the blockage of the tramway at the road section concerned. The Police were very concerned about the protesters' illegal occupation of the tramway and were determined to take resolute enforcement actions. All obstacles at that road section were subsequently cleared on 15 December 2014, with tram service fully resumed on the same day. A total of 17 protesters were arrested that day and the case is still under investigation. The Police are determined to uphold law

and order in Hong Kong and will not tolerate illegal actions. The Police will take appropriate enforcement actions to deal with similar situations in future.

Throughout the Occupy Central movement, the TD's Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre maintained close liaison with the HKT. Service adjustments were made having regard to actual circumstances. They include the provision of free circular tram service between Victoria Park and Paterson Street, and free tram transfer service between the eastern and western areas of Hong Kong Island. These adjustments aim to maintain tram service as far as practicable to minimize inconvenience caused to the passengers. Also, the TD and the HKT publicized the latest service information through the media and other channels at appropriate times.

- (3) According to the HKT's figures, only short-haul tram service (that is, trips from Kennedy Town to Sheung Wan, from Shau Kei Wan to Victoria Park, and from Kennedy Town to Happy Valley since the reopening of the tramway along Queensway) could be maintained during the Occupy Central movement. Tram journeys were therefore shorter than normal, resulting in a higher daily average service frequency of about 33% over the same period in 2013. Patronage, however, suffered a serious drop, with the daily average down by around 30% over the same period in 2013.
- (4) Government departments have had conducted risk assessments and formulated contingency plans for various major incidents and public activities. In respect of traffic and transport arrangements, the TD will liaise closely with the Police and public transport operators through the Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre in accordance with the established mechanism. Subject to actual circumstances, the TD will implement appropriate contingency plans, including traffic diversion and adjustments of public transport services, to minimize the impact on the general public. We will also draw lessons from the experience of handling the road blockage during the Occupy Central movement.

Projects to Construct Parks

16. **DR HELENA WONG** (in Chinese): *President, quite a number of members of the public have relayed to me that while the population of the districts where they reside has been increasing, the recreational facilities there are grossly inadequate, and the delays in finalizing the completion dates of the parks under construction/to be constructed in individual districts have resulted in a shortage of leisure open space for the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the respective names of the park projects to be commenced or completed in the coming three years; in respect of such projects, (i) their respective current categories under the Capital Works Programme (CWP), (ii) the dates on which they were included in such categories, (iii) the respective expected dates on which those works projects which are in Category B or C will be upgraded to Category A, and (iv) the expected commencement and/or completion dates of the construction works, and set out such information separately by the five Legislative Council geographical constituencies;*
- (2) *of the respective average time taken for the various types of infrastructure projects (including construction works for bridges, tunnels, roads and schools as well as drainage works, and so on) to be upgraded to Category A after they were included in Category B; how such figures compare to the corresponding time taken for park projects; if the latter is longer, of the reasons for that;*
- (3) *given that Category C projects may be upgraded to Category B only after resources have been set aside for them by the Government under the annual Resource Allocation Exercise, whether the degree of public support is one of the authorities' considerations in deciding on the allocation of resources to various works projects; whether the authorities will expeditiously allocate resources to those park projects which the public hope can be completed as early as possible, so that the works concerned can commence expeditiously; and*

- (4) *given that parks are places where quite a number of members of the public spend their leisure time and do exercise, whether the authorities will expedite the implementation of the park projects mentioned in part (1), so as to facilitate early enjoyment of the facilities concerned by members of the public; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS (in Chinese): President,

- (1) The Leisure and Cultural Services Department is committed to the planning and development of new recreation and sports facilities, including parks, as well as the enhancement of existing park facilities for public enjoyment. Currently, there are five capital works projects for new parks or redevelopment of parks that are either in the pipeline for submission to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council for funds, or already under construction, namely a district open space in Area 74, Tseung Kwan O; the Kwun Tong promenade (stage 2); redevelopment of Kwun Tong Swimming Pool Complex and Kwun Tong Recreation Ground; redevelopment of Victoria Park Swimming Pool Complex (including reprovisioning and enhancement of park facilities); and an open space at Hing Wah Street West, Sham Shui Po. These projects will be completed and available for public use in the next few years. The categories, anticipated commencement and completion dates of the projects mentioned above are at Annex.

- (2) to (4)

Under the Government CWP, the lead time from establishing the technical feasibility of a project (that is, attainment of Category C status), to the commencement of pre-construction works (that is, attainment of Category B status), and to the submission of the project proposal to the Finance Committee for funding approval (that is, upgrading the project to Category A) varies, depending on factors such as the significance, urgency, scope and complexity of the project, the views of the stakeholders (including those of the relevant District Councils), the sustainability of the CWP as well as the need

for complying with statutory procedures (such as provisions in the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance) and the need for land resumption. Hence, it is difficult to make a direct comparison amongst different types of works projects in terms of lead time. In fact, the time span of upgrading a project from Category B to Category A varies with individual circumstances. The Administration does not have statistical figures in this regard. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department have a high regard for public views and aspirations, once a project's funding is approved, we shall commence the development swiftly to ensure it is completed in time and can be enjoyed by the public early.

Annex

Capital works projects for new parks or redevelopment of parks
that are either in the pipeline for submission
to the FC of the Legislative Council for funds, or already under construction

	<i>Legislative Council Geographical Constituency</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Works Category</i>	<i>Date of Confirmation/ Upgrading of Project Category</i>	<i>Actual/ Anticipated Commencement Date of the Project</i>	<i>Anticipated Date of Completion</i>
1	New Territories East	District open space, sports centre and library in Area 74, Tseung Kwan O	A	The Finance Committee approved the upgrading of the project to Category A in June 2011	September 2011	With the substantial completion of the works, the open space may be available for public use in the first quarter of 2015.
2	Kowloon East	Kwun Tong promenade (stage 2)	A	The Finance Committee approved the upgrading of the project to Category A in July 2012	February 2013	With the substantial completion of the works, the promenade may be available for public use in April 2015.

	<i>Legislative Council Geographical Constituency</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Works Category</i>	<i>Date of Confirmation/ Upgrading of Project Category</i>	<i>Actual/ Anticipated Commencement Date of the Project</i>	<i>Anticipated Date of Completion</i>
3	Kowloon East	Redevelopment of Kwun Tong Swimming Pool Complex and Kwun Tong Recreation Ground	A	The Finance Committee approved the upgrading of the project to Category A in July 2009	November 2009	Upon completion of Phase 1 of the works, the new swimming pool complex was commissioned in April 2013. Phase 2 of the works (demolition of the old swimming pool complex and reprovisioning of Kwun Tong Recreation Ground) is anticipated to be completed in January 2015.
4	Hong Kong Island	Redevelopment of Victoria Park Swimming Pool Complex (including the reprovisioning and enhancement of park facilities)	A	The Finance Committee approved the upgrading of the project to Category A in June 2009	August 2009	Upon completion of Phase 1 of the works, the new swimming pool complex was commissioned in September 2013. Phase 2 works (demolition of the old swimming pool complex and reprovisioning of park facilities) is anticipated to be completed in the third quarter of 2015.

	<i>Legislative Council Geographical Constituency</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Works Category</i>	<i>Date of Confirmation/ Upgrading of Project Category</i>	<i>Actual/ Anticipated Commencement Date of the Project</i>	<i>Anticipated Date of Completion</i>
5	Kowloon West	An open space at Hing Wah Street West, Sham Shui Po	B	We plan to submit funding application to the Legislative Council in this legislative year for upgrading the proposed project to Category A	Subject to funding approval, works for the project is expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2015	Third quarter of 2017

Abuse of Employment Arrangements by Foreign Domestic Helpers

17. **MR JAMES TIEN** (in Chinese): *President, it has been reported that some foreign domestic helpers (FDHs), persuaded by intermediaries for FDHs (intermediaries), deliberately performed badly or displayed poor attitudes with the intent to make their employers terminate the contracts with them prematurely, so that they can change employers and obtain compensations of free passages to return to their places of domicile and one month's wages in lieu of notice, and so on, (commonly known as "job-hopping"). These FDHs also exploited a loophole in the Immigration Ordinance (Cap. 115) by departing for Macao or the Mainland for only a short while and then re-entering Hong Kong to work for new employers. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *given that since June 2013, the Immigration Department (ImmD) has tightened the scrutiny of employment visa applications from those FDHs who change employers repeatedly, of the number of applications suspected of job-hopping uncovered by ImmD each month since then, and among such cases, the respective numbers of those rejected and those not followed up by ImmD, as well as the number of applications withdrawn by applicants (set out in a table);*
- (2) *whether it has assessed if it is maladministration on the part of ImmD for failure to strictly enforce, on the premise of facilitating the*

parties concerned, the requirement that FDHs have to return to their places of domicile before changing employers; if it has conducted such an assessment, of the details; if not, whether it will conduct such an assessment;

- (3) of the number of cases uncovered by the authorities in the past five years in which intermediaries persuaded or assisted FDHs to engage in job-hopping, and how the authorities handled such cases;*
- (4) whether it has assessed if the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (Cap. 362) may be invoked to step up efforts to combat breaches by intermediaries, such as providing prospective employers with inaccurate information on FDHs;*
- (5) whether it has considered introducing a demerit point system for breaches by intermediaries and requiring the practitioners concerned to obtain a licence, so as to step up regulation of the industry; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (6) whether it will consider introducing a probation system for FDHs, under which employers who dismiss their FDHs during the probation period are not required to make payment in lieu of notice, and employers are required to settle intermediary charges in full only upon expiry of the probation period; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (7) given that early last year, over 97% of the FDHs in Hong Kong came from the Philippines and Indonesia, whether the authorities have put in place measures to further facilitate intermediaries to import FDHs from other countries so as to provide employers with more choices and reduce cases of job-hopping?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY (in Chinese): President, in consultation with the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Administration's consolidated reply to the Member's question is set out below:

- (1) Since June 2013, the ImmD has strengthened the assessment of employment visa applications of FDHs who changed employers repeatedly. In assessing the employment visa applications of FDHs, the ImmD will closely scrutinize the case details such as the number and reasons for premature contract termination within 12 months with a view to detecting any abuse of the arrangements for premature contract termination. As at 31 December 2014, the ImmD has received around 155 000 employment visa applications from FDHs, of which 3 903 were suspected of "job-hopping", accounting for 2.5% of all applications. After close scrutiny of these applications, the ImmD refused 268 of them, while 287 applications were withdrawn by the applicant and no further action can be taken on 163 applications.
- (2) Under the prevailing policy, change of employer applications from FDHs in Hong Kong within their two-year contract will normally not be approved except under exceptional circumstances, for example, if the FDH's contract is terminated on grounds of the transfer, migration, death or financial reasons of the ex-employer, or if there is evidence suggesting that the FDH has been abused or exploited. An FDH who wishes to enter into an employment contract with a new employer must first return to his/her country of origin and then submit a new employment visa application to the ImmD. However, in the light of the huge demand for FDHs in Hong Kong, the ImmD often receives requests from employers in urgent need of FDHs to expedite the processing of their FDHs' employment visas. Furthermore, FDHs whose previous contracts have been terminated owing to various reasons also wish to return to Hong Kong and enter into employment with a new employer as soon as possible to make ends meet. As a measure to facilitate the parties concerned, in processing change of employer applications of FDHs, the ImmD adopts a flexible approach in implementing the relevant requirements. In assessing employment visa applications for change of employer after premature contract termination, the ImmD will ensure that the FDH in question has departed Hong Kong before an employment visa is issued. The above are arrangements made after considering the needs of employers and FDHs. The ImmD will review the implementation of the arrangements from time to time.
- (3) The Administration does not maintain the relevant statistics.

- (4) The amended Trade Descriptions Ordinance (Cap. 362) prohibits traders from applying a false trade description to a service supplied or offered to be supplied to a consumer. The definition of "service" under the Ordinance includes the services of placing FDHs provided by local FDH employment agencies to consumers, but does not include contractual rights arising under a contract of employment under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57).

Whether the practice of individual FDH employment agencies is in breach of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance has to be determined according to the facts of the case. The Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) as the enforcement department organizes promotion and publicity programmes from time to time, including conducting seminars to strengthen the trade's understanding of the Ordinance and encourage compliance.

- (5) The Labour Department (LD) regulates the operation of employment agencies through licensing, regular and surprise inspection, complaints investigation and prosecution. If an employer considers that an employment agency fails to deliver service as promised in their service agreement, or suspects that its trade practices have violated the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, he/she can lodge a complaint with the Consumer Council or C&ED and seek assistance as appropriate.

Moreover, LD has stepped up inspections of employment agencies, strengthened liaison with the consulates of major FDH exporting countries for exchange of intelligence on improper employment agencies, and raised employers' awareness of the relevant laws through enhanced publicity and educational efforts. The LD is also planning to issue a Code of Practice for the trade, so as to tighten the monitoring of employment agencies. The Government will review the effectiveness of above strategies and introduce suitable monitoring measures as appropriate.

- (6) The proposal of setting a probation period for FDHs involves complicated issues. While a probation period may shorten the time required by an employer to terminate the employment contract with his/her FDH, the proposal may give rise to situations not favourable to the employer, and may not solve the problem of frequent job-hopping of FDHs. For instance, the FDH maintains the right to

terminate the contract with the employer at any time within the probation period. In such circumstances, while the employer is still responsible for the concerned FDH's return passage to his/her place of domicile, the expenses for hiring a new FDH, including travel expenses, visa fee, and authentication fees, and so on, would not be dispensed with. Therefore, we should proceed with care, and consensus between the employer and FDH groups on any proposed change should be secured before a decision is made.

In fact, a certain extent of flexibility has already been built in the existing Standard Employment Contract to both employers and FDHs by allowing either party to terminate the contract by giving the other party not less than one month's written notice or one month's wages in lieu of notice.

Regarding the proposal for the employer to settle the service charge with the employment agency only after the probation period, as the level of service charge and payment arrangement between the employer and the employment agency is an agreement between a service provider and its customer, these matters should be governed by market principles. To protect their consumer rights, we have all along advised employers to stipulate clearly the relevant terms including service standards, level of charge and refund arrangement, and so on, before using an employment agency's service, and to obtain a service agreement with the employment agency. Such service agreement can serve as a future reference in case there is any dispute, and would also facilitate consumers' seeking of appropriate redress if the employment agency breaches the agreement subsequently.

- (7) The existing entry arrangement for FDHs is applicable to applicants from most countries and regions. Owing to immigration control and security considerations, the current arrangement does not apply to Chinese residents of the Mainland, Macao SAR and Taiwan, as well as nationals of Afghanistan, Cambodia, Cuba, Laos, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nepal and Vietnam.

The Administration will review the visa policies from time to time, including those on importation of FDHs, to ensure they suit Hong Kong's actual circumstances and needs.

Support to Local Cultural and Arts Workers for Participating in Cultural and Arts Activities Outside Hong Kong

18. **MR MA FUNG-KWOK** (in Chinese): *President, cultural and arts events are frequently organized on the Mainland and in foreign places (places outside Hong Kong). An example is the Twelfth National Exhibition of Fine Arts & Exhibition of Nominated Works for Chinese Fine Art Awards, Creative Awards held on the Mainland at the end of last year. Nonetheless, some cultural and arts workers have relayed to me that they do not have adequate channels to learn about information on the cultural and arts activities held in places outside Hong Kong, resulting in their missing the opportunity for participation. They are also of the view that the Government has not provided sufficient support to local cultural and arts workers for participating in cultural and arts activities held in places outside Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *which bureaux provide support for local cultural and arts workers participating in cultural and arts activities held in places outside Hong Kong; of the division of responsibilities and co-ordination among these bureaux on such work; whether the Government will consider designating one bureau to be responsible for such work;*
- (2) *of the authorities' measures to support local cultural and arts workers participating in cultural and arts activities held in places outside Hong Kong; whether the authorities provide resources for such support work each year; if they do, of the details in the past three years (with a breakdown by usage of the resources);*
- (3) *whether it will take the initiative to collect information on the major cultural and arts activities held in places outside Hong Kong, and encourage local cultural and arts workers to participate in such activities; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that, and how the authorities ensure that there are Hong Kong cultural and arts workers participating in such major cultural and arts activities; and*

- (4) *whether it has established communication mechanisms with the relevant organizations in places outside Hong Kong to facilitate timely dissemination of information on the cultural and arts activities held in such places to local cultural and arts workers, so as to enable them to make early preparation for participation; if it has, of the details; if not, whether it will consider establishing such mechanisms?*

SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS (in Chinese): President, the Government attaches great importance to the work of cultural exchanges, which is an important part of the measures for promoting our cultural and arts development. Regarding cultural exchanges with places outside Hong Kong, the relevant government departments and the concerned public institutions have been organizing activities to promote cultural exchanges with places outside Hong Kong over the years. The Government has also been providing resources to assist artists and arts groups to take part in arts and cultural activities held in places outside Hong Kong so as to promote the culture and arts of Hong Kong and our artists in these places.

- (1) At present, the Home Affairs Bureau, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) under the Home Affairs Bureau and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) subvented by the Home Affairs Bureau are the main parties supporting local cultural and arts practitioners and arts groups in their participation in overseas cultural and arts activities. The Home Affairs Bureau is mainly responsible for policy formulation, overall resource allocation (including grant matters of relevant funds), co-ordination of work and promotion of outbound cultural exchanges through the signing of Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation with the Mainland and different places. Both the LCSD and the HKADC are responsible for implementing and carrying out various measures for cultural exchanges with places outside Hong Kong.
- (2) The initiatives launched by the Home Affairs Bureau, the LCSD and the HKADC for supporting local cultural and arts practitioners' participation in cultural and arts activities over the past three years included the following:

- (i) Through the Arts Development Fund (ADF), the Home Affairs Bureau sponsors arts groups and artists to participate in outbound cultural exchange projects. Approved projects range from performing arts, visual arts to multi-disciplinary arts. In the past three years, 141 outbound cultural exchange projects were sponsored under the ADF.
- (ii) The Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme of the Home Affairs Bureau seeks to provide funding support for innovative and impactful proposals that can contribute to the objectives of capacity development, programme/contents development, audience building, and arts education. Among the successful applications, 13 arts groups have participated or will participate in outbound arts and cultural activities in 2012-2016.
- (iii) The Home Affairs Bureau and the LCSD would also regularly co-ordinate or participate in activities/events to promote our culture and the arts in some places outside Hong Kong, such as the "Hong Kong Week" in Taipei which has been held annually since 2012 to promote the artists and arts groups of Hong Kong. Besides, the LCSD co-ordinated local artists to participate in the "Hong Kong and Macao Visual Arts Biennial" organized by the Ministry of Culture in Beijing in 2008, 2012 and 2014. A number of Hong Kong artists' works were featured in these exhibitions to showcase the uniqueness of Hong Kong contemporary art. The participation of Hong Kong artists in the exhibition held in 2010 was co-ordinated by the HKADC.
- (iv) The nine major performing arts groups (MPAGs)⁽¹⁾ receiving subvention from the Home Affairs Bureau may conduct different kinds of cultural exchange activities with their allotted funds for the promotion of Hong Kong's culture and the arts to the international community. In the past three years, the MPAGs participated in a total of 122 cultural

(1) The nine MPAGs are Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, Chung Ying Theatre Company, Zuni Icosahedron, Hong Kong Dance Company, Hong Kong Ballet, and City Contemporary Dance Company.

exchange activities on the Mainland and in overseas countries. On another front, through the "Contestable Funding Pilot Scheme for the Major Performing Arts Groups" launched in 2012, the Home Affairs Bureau has encouraged the MPAGs to come up with new projects and activities that would benefit the long term development of the arts in Hong Kong, which include the engagement in outbound arts exchanges. Examples of such exchange projects include arranging local artists and arts groups to perform in places outside Hong Kong, establishing networks with the overseas counterparts and relevant arts groups to enhance their development opportunities and collaborating with overseas practitioners for exchanges.

- (v) Through organizing and co-ordinating outbound cultural exchanges, the HKADC arranges for local artists and arts organizations to participate in arts exchange activities held in places outside Hong Kong and provide them with opportunities to showcase their artistic creation and performances to audiences in these places. In addition to providing funding, the HKADC also assists in arranging for performance venues, publicity, matching of collaboration partners, co-ordinating with relevant overseas organizations, arranging for extension activities, and so on. Through participation in these exchange activities, the arts organizations and artists of Hong Kong have opportunities to collaborate with overseas cultural and arts organizations, to perform and to extend the audience base in other places. Examples of such activities include "Manhattan Hong Kong Music Festival" (held in New York, USA in 2012 with the participation of a total of seven local artists), "Shenzhen-Hong Kong Creative Arts Festival" (held in Shenzhen in 2012 with the participation of a total of approximately 220 local artists), and so on. Besides, the HKADC has been supporting local artists to participate in the Venice Biennale (Visual Arts) since 2001, and collaborating with the Hong Kong Institute of Architects to participate in the Venice Biennale (Architecture) since 2006.

- (vi) The HKADC also supports artists' participation in cultural exchanges on the Mainland and in overseas countries through various grant schemes and projects. In the past three years, the HKADC supported 81 cultural exchange activities of local arts groups or artists under the "Project Grant Scheme".
- (vii) The LCSD also grasps the opportunities of large scale expositions or activities held on the Mainland or in foreign places to organize or co-ordinate outbound cultural exchange activities for providing local artists and arts groups with opportunities to showcase their works and performances to overseas audiences. For example, at the half-year-long 2010 Shanghai World Expo, the LCSD co-ordinated the participation of over 1 200 local artists and art groups in the performances and exhibitions in Shanghai. Besides, at the International Horticultural Exposition held in 2011 and 2014 in Xian and Qingdao respectively, the LCSD co-ordinated a total of eight local performing arts groups involving 82 artists to participate in the performances of "Hong Kong Week". The LCSD will also collaborate with the Shanghai International Arts Festival in 2015. The LCSD will nominate its Community Cultural Ambassadors, comprising mainly young performing artists, to participate in the "R.A.W.!Land" programme of the Festival for showcasing their works created and performed under the LCSD's Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme.
- (viii) At the invitation of the Liverpool Biennial, the Hong Kong Museum of Art under the LCSD and the HKADC jointly presented an exhibition in the "City States" programme at the 7th Liverpool Biennial held in the United Kingdom from 15 September to 25 November 2012, with the aim of introducing the outstanding works of Hong Kong artists to the international art arena and strengthening ties with various overseas counterparts.
- (ix) The Music Office of the LCSD sends its youth orchestras, bands, or choirs on overseas touring performances and competitions each year to foster artistic exchange and to

provide local young musicians with valuable experience in overseas competitions. Examples in recent years included the participation in the Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival Vienna (July 2012), the Jeju International Wind Ensemble Festival (August 2013) and the Sing'n'joy Vienna 2014 — 29th International Franz Schubert Choir Competition and Festival (June 2014).

Among the above initiatives, the ADF and the Project Grant Scheme of HKADC (that is, sub-paragraphs (i) and (vi) above) alone provided a total grant of about \$20 million in the past three years for the cultural exchange projects of arts groups and artists. As the financial support for artists or arts groups for use in outbound cultural exchanges listed in the rest of the items above are either included in the expenditure of the projects concerned as a whole or subsumed under the total grants for the arts groups concerned, a breakdown of them cannot be provided.

(3) and (4)

Regarding the exchanges with the relevant parties in places outside Hong Kong, we have also been working through the concerned authorities in the Mainland and through the co-operation framework and platform established with overseas regions to exchange information relating to the cultural and arts activities held in different places, and to support local artists in taking part in such activities. For example, through the Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Information Net, an initiative developed under cultural information exchange — one of the areas of co-operation under the Greater Pearl River Delta (GPRD) cultural co-operation mechanism, we have been disseminating updated information on the various cultural activities, cultural exchange projects, performance and exhibitions of the three places of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao throughout the year. Other areas of the co-operation under the GPRD cultural co-operation mechanism have also included promoting artists of the three places to take part in the arts and cultural activities held in different places like arts festivals, and the lining up touring of performances of the three places.

In addition, the LCSD and the HKADC also maintain close working relationships with cultural and arts organizations in the Mainland and different areas of the world for keeping abreast of the key overseas cultural activities and actively seeking opportunities for participating in international exhibitions and arts festivals for local cultural and arts practitioners.

Besides, the Home Affairs Bureau and the LCSD from time to time acquire information on cultural development and activities in places outside Hong Kong through liaison with consulates of other countries in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs) of the SAR Government set up in the Mainland and overseas to facilitate our planning of matters related to outbound cultural exchange activities. We will also invite HKETOs to include the performances of local artists and art groups in their promotion programmes to promote the cultural diversity of Hong Kong and local artists.

Violence Against Healthcare Personnel of Public Hospitals

19. **PROF JOSEPH LEE** (in Chinese): *President, regarding violence against healthcare personnel of public hospitals while on duty, will the Government inform this Council if it knows, in the past five years:*

- (1) *the annual numbers of cases of violence against healthcare personnel received by the Hospital Authority (HA), with a breakdown by type of violence and by the venue where the case occurred;*
- (2) *the annual numbers of healthcare personnel who reported that they had fallen victim to violence, with a breakdown by the hospital to which such personnel belonged and by grade of such personnel ;*
- (3) *the annual numbers of persons prosecuted for allegedly treating healthcare personnel with violence as well as the annual numbers of persons convicted and the penalties imposed on them; and*
- (4) *whether HA reviewed if the existing security measures as well as the relevant training and support provided by public hospitals for healthcare personnel were adequate for preventing violence against them; if HA did, of the outcome; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Chinese): President, the HA has all along attached great importance to the work safety for its staff. It has put in place guidelines and measures to prevent and handle workplace violence. My reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

(1) and (2)

In the past five years from 2009 to 2013, the annual number of cases reported to the Labour Department (LD) involving injuries suffered by HA staff due to workplace violence, with breakdown by grade, department and type of violence, is set out at Tables 1 to 3 respectively. The number of injury cases involving workplace violence at the five public hospitals with the largest number of such cases is at Table 4.

Table 1

Breakdown by grade on the number of cases reported to the LD involving injuries suffered by HA staff due to workplace violence

<i>Grade</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>
Care-related support staff	201	192	148	136	184
Nursing	161	219	219	213	239
Medical	2	7	12	11	11
Allied health	3	3	3	13	5
Other	37	41	32	31	42
Total	404	462	414	404	481

Table 2

Breakdown by department on the number of cases reported to the LD involving injuries suffered by HA staff due to workplace violence

<i>Department</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>
Psychiatry	153	189	150	149	218
Medicine	45	73	72	68	76
Accident and Emergency (A&E)	34	58	79	74	45
Other	172	142	113	113	142
Total	404	462	414	404	481

Table 3

Breakdown by type of violence on the number of cases reported to the LD involving injuries suffered by HA staff due to workplace violence

<i>Type of workplace violence</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>
Physical attack (punching, kicking, spitting and biting)	389	440	390	365	439
Verbal abuse/verbal threat	5	9	9	12	6
Other threatening behaviour	10	13	15	27	36
Total	404	462	414	404	481

Table 4

Number of injury cases involving workplace violence at the five public hospitals with the largest number of such cases

<i>Year</i>	<i>Name of hospital</i>	<i>Number of injury cases</i>
2009	United Christian Hospital	53
	Castle Peak Hospital	42
	Kwai Chung Hospital	42
	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	42
	Tuen Mun Hospital	33
2010	Kwai Chung Hospital	61
	Castle Peak Hospital	60
	United Christian Hospital	49
	Tuen Mun Hospital	33
	Kowloon Hospital	30

<i>Year</i>	<i>Name of hospital</i>	<i>Number of injury cases</i>
2011	Castle Peak Hospital	45
	Queen Elizabeth Hospital	38
	United Christian Hospital	38
	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	37
	Kwai Chung Hospital	36
2012	Kwai Chung Hospital	47
	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	42
	United Christian Hospital	33
	Queen Elizabeth Hospital	31
	Castle Peak Hospital	23
2013	Castle Peak Hospital	63
	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	49
	Kwai Chung Hospital	40
	United Christian Hospital	38
	Queen Elizabeth Hospital	34

- (3) In accordance with bylaws 7(1)(c) and 7(1)(d) of the Hospital Authority Bylaws (Cap. 113A), no person shall, in a hospital, use any language likely to cause offence or annoyance to any person, or behave in an indecent or disorderly manner. Any person who contravenes the above bylaws commits an offence and is liable on first conviction to a fine of \$1,000 and on a second or subsequent conviction to a fine of \$2,000 and to imprisonment for one month. The number of workplace violence cases which have been successfully prosecuted under the Hospital Authority Bylaws in the past five years is set out at Table 5. The penalties for the convicted cases included fines (\$150 to \$2,000) and bind overs (six to 24 months).

Table 5

Number of workplace violence cases which have been successfully prosecuted under the Hospital Authority Bylaws

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of cases successfully prosecuted</i>
2010-2011	13
2011-2012	15
2012-2013	13
2013-2014	17
2014-2015 (as at 24 December 2014)	12

Note:

Depending on individual circumstances, some of the cases were referred to the Police for follow-up and prosecution under other legislations. The HA does not have comprehensive statistics on these cases which were not prosecuted under the Hospital Authority Bylaws.

- (4) For the safety of its staff, the HA has implemented comprehensive occupational safety and health policies as well as management and control measures to prevent and handle workplace violence incidents. These measures include:
- (i) Appointing qualified trainers to provide a three-level training programme (Level 1 on "Prevention and Management on Violence and Aggression"; Level 2 on "Breakaway Techniques" and Level 3 on "Control and Restrain of Violent Patients") for front-line staff on an ongoing basis, with a view to enhancing their awareness, knowledge and self-management techniques on the handling and prevention of workplace violence;
 - (ii) Enhancing the webpage on workplace violence to provide relevant information and communication platform for its staff, and putting in place guidelines for communication and logistics, notification and emergency response mechanism in

case of workplace violence to set out, for its staff, the way to deal with violence incidents;

- (iii) Improving workplace design and facilities, for example, installation of curved mirrors, security monitoring devices and closed-circuit television at junctions of corridors or in hidden locations, and installation of alarm systems at A&E observation wards and triage stations;
- (iv) Conducting case risk assessment for outreach teams covering community nursing services and community psychiatric services;
- (v) Providing patient restraining devices and personal protective equipment in high risk areas, and organizing workplace violence incident exercises for high risk work units;
- (vi) Rendering post-incident support as necessary, for example, activation of critical incident support teams, provision of clinical psychological counselling and arrangement of healthcare/treatment or rehabilitation service;
- (vii) Appointing Workplace Violence Prosecution Liaison Officer and Designated Staff, and providing them with suitable training to strengthen their knowledge, techniques and commitment in the investigation and prosecution of workplace violence incidents, so as to ensure that they can provide appropriate support for the front-line staff in the aftermath of workplace violence incidents. Security service and liaison with the Police are also reinforced to provide immediate assistance during incidents; and
- (viii) For individual or serious cases, the hospitals concerned may report the cases to the Police or initiate prosecution under the Hospital Authority Bylaws.

Various clusters and hospitals have set up occupational safety and health committees to monitor the formulation and implementation of

safety measures and review the effectiveness of such measures. The HA has also established an anti-workplace violence team to review and strengthen the strategies for prevention and control of workplace violence. To further ensure the safety of staff at work, the HA will continue to keep under constant review the effectiveness of these measures and make appropriate improvements where necessary.

Implementation of Qualifications Framework

20. **MR KWOK WAI-KEUNG** (in Chinese): *President, regarding the implementation of the Qualifications Framework (QF), will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the number of employees and its percentage in the labour force of Hong Kong in respect of each of the industries which have established Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs); which industries the ITACs of which are currently drawing up the Specifications of Competency Standards (SCSs);*
- (2) *of the total number of QF-related training courses offered by accredited training providers in the past three years, with a breakdown by industry and by the QF level that could be obtained after completion of the courses, as well as the respective percentages of such courses in the total number of training courses provided; the total number of persons who completed such courses, and the percentage of such number in the total number of persons who enrolled in such courses, with a breakdown by industry and by the QF level obtained; if the authorities do not have the aforesaid statistics, of the reasons for that and whether they will consider compiling such statistics;*
- (3) *of the years in which various industries launched their Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanisms, and the respective numbers of*

practitioners of such industries who have obtained qualifications recognition through such mechanisms so far, as well as (i) a breakdown of such numbers by QF level and (ii) the percentages of such numbers in the total numbers of practitioners in the industries concerned; and

- (4) *of the new measures taken by the authorities in the past three years to encourage more working persons to apply for RPL?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Chinese): President, the Government launched the Qualifications Framework (QF) in 2008 with a view to encouraging lifelong learning and enhancing the competitiveness of the workforce in Hong Kong. The RPL mechanism is established under QF to enable employees of various backgrounds to receive formal recognition of the knowledge, skills and experience already acquired.

My reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

- (1) As at 1 January 2015, we have assisted 20 industries in setting up 19 ITACs under QF, covering about 52% of the working population in Hong Kong. It is noteworthy that starting from 1 January 2015, the Beauty ITAC and Hairdressing ITAC have merged to become the Beauty and Hairdressing ITAC; and the Chinese Catering ITAC has extended its ambit to cover the whole catering industry and is renamed as the Catering ITAC. The numbers of employees of these industries and their percentages in the working population in Hong Kong are set out at Annex A. Of these 20 industries, 17 have drawn up their SCSs. As regards the remaining three industries, the Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals & Plastics) ITAC has finished drafting its SCS and is now making revision to the draft upon completion of consultation with the industry, with the finalized SCS expected to be issued in the second quarter of 2015; the Security Services ITAC is preparing the draft; and the Cross-ITAC for the Human Resource Management Sector will commence drafting its SCS in early 2015.

- (2) As at late December 2012, late December 2013 and late December 2014, there were 7 756, 7 945 and 8 148 QF-recognized qualifications and their associated education and training programmes (including those still within their Registration Validity Period (RVP) and those with their RVP yet to commence) respectively as listed on the Qualifications Register, categorized by Primary Areas of Study/Training. The numbers of qualifications under each Primary Area of Study/Training and at each QF Level, as well as the percentages in the total number of qualifications, are set out at Annex B to Annex D. As these programmes, which include quite many self-financed ones, are provided by more than 200 education and training institutions of various kinds, the Administration does not have information on the number of people who have enrolled in/completed these programmes; nor does it have any plans to keep those statistics.
- (3) Currently, the RPL mechanism is implemented in 10 industries. As at the end of November 2014, over 11 600 employees have been awarded statements of attainment through the mechanism, involving more than 20 600 statements at QF Levels 1 to 4. Details of the number of employees and statements of attainment by industry and QF Level as well as their percentages in the total number of employees in the industries concerned are at Annex E.
- (4) Since the implementation of the QF in 2008, the Government has been striving to assist industries in implementing the RPL mechanism. Over the past three years, we have taken the following measures to encourage and assist practitioners in seeking RPL:
- (i) extending the transitional period for the first three pilot industries that implemented the RPL mechanism, namely, Printing & Publishing, Watch & Clock and Hairdressing, by two years from May 2013 to May 2015 to encourage participation of practitioners. During the transitional period, practitioners may apply for recognition of qualifications at QF

Levels 1 to 3 by producing documentary proofs of their years of relevant working experience, without the need to take any formal assessment tests;

- (ii) introducing individual portfolio as an alternative means of application in June 2013, through which practitioners unable to produce documentary proofs of work experience as required may opt to submit other supporting documents (such as curriculum vitae and entries for competitions, and so on) and subject themselves to assessment test in order to apply for RPL;
- (iii) removing the ceiling on the reimbursement of assessment fees for each applicant under the RPL Support Scheme (the reimbursement amount being capped at \$3,500 for each practitioner previously) upon introduction of the QF Fund on 1 September 2014 so that those who wish to take more RPL assessments may apply for fee reimbursement;
- (iv) organizing a variety of promotional activities, including production of promotional videos and leaflets, organizing the RPL Sharing Session in November 2013, the QF Partnerships Commendation Ceremony in December 2014 in recognition of relevant stakeholders' support and participation in the QF (including the RPL mechanism), and large-scale publicity activities for individual industries such as the QF Hair Show and RPL Kick-off Ceremonies; and
- (v) further enhancing publicity in industries by paying visits to the companies/trade unions/merchants' associations/professional bodies of the stakeholders to encourage more RPL applications from practitioners as well as to promote recognition of RPL qualifications by respective industries.

Annex A

Twenty industries with ITACs established under the QF

<i>Industry/Sector</i>	<i>Number of employees (percentage in the working population Hong Kong)⁽¹⁾</i>
Automotive	17 200 (0.5%)
Banking	96 200 (2.7%)
Beauty	34 400 (1.0%)
Catering	246 700 (6.9%)
Elderly Care Services	26 100 (0.7%)
Electrical & Mechanical Services	67 000 (1.9%)
Hairdressing	16 000 (0.4%)
Human Resource Management Sector	72 000 (2.0%)
Import & Export	491 700 (13.7%)
Information & Communications Technology	78 700 (2.2%)
Insurance	58 900 (1.6%)
Jewellery	34 400 (1.0%)
Logistics	127 400 (3.5%)
Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals & Plastics)	41 200 (1.1%)
Printing & Publishing	28 300 (0.8%)
Property Management	82 700 (2.3%)
Retail	271 900 (7.6%)
Security Services	61 600 (1.7%)
Testing, Inspection & Certification	12 800 (0.4%)
Watch & Clock	19 500 (0.5%)
Total	1 884 700 (52.4%) ⁽²⁾

Notes:

- (1) The figures, compiled according to the Survey of Employment and Vacancies in 2013 by the Census and Statistics Department and the latest Manpower Survey reports by the Vocational Training Council, are adjusted based on the coverage of individual ITACs.
- (2) Figures may not add up to the total due to rounding.

Annex B

Number of qualifications listed on the Qualifications Register (as at 28 December 2012)
(including those still within their RVP and those with their RVP yet to commence)

<i>Primary Areas of Study/Training</i>		<i>Levels of qualifications</i>							<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>		
1	Architecture, Construction and Town Planning	0	2	18	34	30	35	4	123	1.59%
2	Arts, Humanities, Liberal Studies and General Studies	0	12	27	16	47	55	24	181	2.33%
3	Beauty, Hairdressing and Related Studies, Home Economics, Personal Care	256	359	132	24	1	0	0	772	9.95%
4	Biological, Physical and Mathematical Sciences	1	1	9	47	126	64	26	274	3.53%
5	Business & Management, General	28	88	128	148	135	70	19	616	7.94%
6	Business & Management in Specific Industries	181	106	61	57	20	10	0	435	5.61%
7	Business, Global and China	0	0	8	13	14	7	0	42	0.54%
8	Computing and Information Technology	358	48	66	96	46	29	2	645	8.32%
9	Economics, Accountancy, Finance & Investment	6	93	61	86	71	52	7	376	4.85%
10	Education, Teacher Training and Sports Science	3	33	20	50	78	126	10	320	4.13%
11	Engineering and Technology	32	118	92	119	171	109	24	665	8.57%
12	Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Design and Creative Media Art & Industry	22	45	110	176	70	39	5	467	6.02%
13	Languages, Translation and Literature	304	189	74	56	65	60	9	757	9.76%

<i>Primary Areas of Study/Training</i>		<i>Levels of qualifications</i>							<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>		
14	Law and Legal Studies	0	1	5	5	8	38	5	62	0.80%
15	Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	0	0	13	33	29	21	2	98	1.26%
16	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	15	245	82	73	61	148	54	678	8.74%
17	Other Technical Studies and Training	30	83	50	37	0	0	0	200	2.58%
18	Recreation, Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality	104	160	118	70	14	4	1	471	6.07%
19	Security and Disciplinary Forces Studies	0	0	21	5	3	8	0	37	0.48%
20	Social Sciences	0	52	30	85	89	82	23	361	4.65%
21	Transports and Logistics	16	26	53	58	16	7	0	176	2.27%
Total		1 356	1 661	1 178	1 288	1 094	964	215	7 756	100%

Annex C

Number of qualifications listed on the Qualifications Register (as at 30 December 2013)
(including those still within their RVP and those with their RVP yet to commence)

<i>Primary Areas of Study/Training</i>		<i>Levels of qualifications</i>							<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>		
1	Architecture, Construction and Town Planning	0	1	25	34	25	37	4	126	1.59%
2	Arts, Humanities, Liberal Studies and General Studies	0	12	36	17	47	61	24	197	2.48%

		<i>Levels of qualifications</i>							<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>		
<i>Primary Areas of Study/Training</i>										
3	Beauty, Hairdressing and Related Studies, Home Economics, Personal Care	265	382	115	28	1	0	0	791	9.96%
4	Biological, Physical and Mathematical Sciences	1	0	9	46	116	69	26	267	3.36%
5	Business & Management, General	29	95	104	151	131	72	19	601	7.56%
6	Business & Management in Specific Industries	183	130	62	65	20	11	0	471	5.93%
7	Business, Global and China	0	0	6	12	14	9	0	41	0.52%
8	Computing and Information Technology	359	60	57	90	39	28	2	635	7.99%
9	Economics, Accountancy, Finance & Investment	6	90	54	95	78	60	7	390	4.91%
10	Education, Teacher Training and Sports Science	3	30	23	47	67	124	10	304	3.83%
11	Engineering and Technology	32	129	119	140	151	114	23	708	8.91%
12	Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Design and Creative Media Art & Industry	22	43	116	166	80	42	5	474	5.97%
13	Languages, Translation and Literature	310	191	71	52	65	61	9	759	9.55%
14	Law and Legal Studies	0	1	5	4	8	38	5	61	0.77%
15	Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	0	0	10	34	29	21	2	96	1.21%

<i>Levels of qualifications</i>		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
16	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	14	268	85	81	62	163	53	726	9.14%
17	Other Technical Studies and Training	33	86	54	37	0	0	0	210	2.64%
18	Recreation, Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality	110	165	129	95	32	5	1	537	6.76%
19	Security and Disciplinary Forces Studies	0	0	8	5	4	8	0	25	0.31%
20	Social Sciences	1	49	29	79	91	83	23	355	4.47%
21	Transports and Logistics	16	33	49	52	14	7	0	171	2.15%
Total		1 384	1 765	1 166	1 330	1 074	1 013	213	7 945	100%

Annex D

Number of qualifications listed on the Qualifications Register (as at 31 December 2014)
(including those still within their RVP and those with their RVP yet to commence)

<i>Levels of qualifications</i>		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
1	Architecture, Construction and Town Planning	3	7	25	33	22	40	4	134	1.64%
2	Arts, Humanities, Liberal Studies and General Studies	0	4	39	18	44	64	28	197	2.42%
3	Beauty, Hairdressing and Related Studies, Home	253	368	157	45	1	0	0	824	10.11%

Primary Areas of Study/Training	Levels of qualifications	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Total	Percentage in the total number of qualifications
	Economics, Personal Care									
4	Biological, Physical and Mathematical Sciences	1	1	9	48	114	76	28	277	3.40%
5	Business & Management, General	26	97	101	155	115	93	19	606	7.44%
6	Business & Management in Specific Industries	179	121	75	69	19	14	0	477	5.85%
7	Business, Global and China	0	0	6	10	11	5	0	32	0.39%
8	Computing and Information Technology	359	57	58	94	40	30	2	640	7.85%
9	Economics, Accountancy, Finance & Investment	6	83	56	103	77	61	7	393	4.82%
10	Education, Teacher Training and Sports Science	3	32	25	51	59	143	10	323	3.96%
11	Engineering and Technology	32	129	126	150	130	115	24	706	8.66%
12	Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Design and Creative Media Art & Industry	20	41	121	198	76	42	5	503	6.17%
13	Languages, Translation and Literature	315	214	99	62	61	65	10	826	10.14%
14	Law and Legal Studies	0	1	6	8	8	44	5	72	0.88%
15	Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	0	1	11	34	29	22	2	99	1.22%
16	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	13	260	93	89	57	165	55	732	8.98%

<i>Primary Areas of Study/Training</i>	<i>Levels of qualifications</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>Level 7</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage in the total number of qualifications</i>
17	Other Technical Studies and Training	27	82	58	37	0	0	0	204	2.50%
18	Recreation, Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality	111	128	110	108	29	5	1	492	6.04%
19	Security and Disciplinary Forces Studies	0	0	10	7	4	8	0	29	0.36%
20	Social Sciences	1	49	32	81	84	91	25	363	4.46%
21	Transports and Logistics	18	50	65	67	12	7	0	219	2.69%
Total		1 367	1 725	1 282	1 467	992	1 090	225	8 148	100%

Annex E

Number of employees and statements of attainment awarded under the RPL mechanism (as at end November 2014)

<i>Industry (implementation year of RPL mechanism)⁽¹⁾</i>	<i>Number of employees (percentage in the total number of employees in the industry)</i>	<i>Number of statements of attainment</i>				
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Total</i>
Hairdressing (2008)	836 (5.2%)	28	113	3 995	532	4 668
Printing & Publishing (2008)	764 (2.7%)	27	78	923	365	1 393
Watch & Clock (2008)	658 (3.4%)	14	43	457	216	730

<i>Industry (implementation year of RPL mechanism)⁽¹⁾</i>	<i>Number of employees (percentage in the total number of employees in the industry)</i>	<i>Number of statements of attainment</i>				
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Total</i>
Property Management (2011)	6 70 (7.7%)	249	5 191	3 184	725	9 349
Automotive (2011)	601 (3.5%)	41	37	796	175	1 049
Jewellery (2011)	648 (1.9%)	3	20	55	760	838
Logistics (2012)	988 (0.8%)	23	412	471	172	1 078
Beauty (2013)	59 (0.2%)	0	0	140	338	478
Chinese Catering (2014)	684 (0.5%)	48	52	450	494	1 044
Total	11 608 (2.3%)	433	5 946	10 471	3 777	20 627

Note:

- (1) As the RPL mechanism was implemented in the retail industry on 1 December 2014, as at end November 2014, no employee from the industry has yet been awarded a statement of attainment.

Installation of Automatic Water Sprinkler Systems at Railway Stations

21. **DR LAU WONG-FAT** (in Chinese): *President, I raised a question at the Legislative Council meeting of 17 December last year, enquiring which railway stations were not equipped with automatic water sprinkler systems and the reasons concerned, but the authorities did not give a direct reply. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council if it knows:*

- (1) *the current number of railway stations which are not equipped with automatic water sprinkler systems, together with a detailed list of the names of such stations, including stations with both concourses and platforms situated below the ground level as well as those with concourses and/or platforms situated at or above the ground level; and*
- (2) *whether the areas inside the railway stations mentioned in part (1) where shops are located are equipped with automatic water sprinkler systems; if they are not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY (in Chinese): President, as per the Administration's reply to the written question raised by Dr LAU at the 17 December 2014 sitting, currently sprinkler systems are installed in areas with a higher fire risk (for example, shops) in MTR stations, while corresponding fire service installations and equipment are put in place at other areas in each station for passenger and public safety.

As regards the sprinkler systems in MTR stations, in consultation with the relevant bureaux and departments, as well as the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the Administration's reply is as follows:

- (1) When setting up fire service installations and equipment in MTR stations, the MTRCL will, with reference to relevant international standards on railway safety and performance-based design factors, conduct risk assessment for the stations and formulate fire safety strategy for proposing suitable fire service installations and equipment in the stations, which will be submitted for approval by the Safety and Security Coordinating Committee. The application and functions of such equipment must complement the daily operation of the station and the actual needs after assessment.

In case of fire, it is the MTRCL's top priority to evacuate passengers safely and promptly. To ensure a suitable station environment in response to such function, the MTRCL has put in a place a series of fire safety measures in the stations. To reduce fire risk,

non-combustible and flame-retardant materials are used in MTR stations as far as possible to prevent occurrence and spreading of fire. As regards installation of fire service equipment, the most significant principle is to enable the detection of smoke as soon as possible, such that the fire can be controlled at its initial stage or be extinguished at the soonest, and the Fire Services Department (FSD) can be informed promptly.

According to the FSD's records, at present, MTR stations that are equipped with sprinkler systems at the platform, concourse and/or individual exits include Lok Ma Chau Station, Lo Wu Station, Sheung Shui Station, Fanling Station, Tai Wo Station, Tai Po Market Station, University Station, Fo Tan Station, Sha Tin Station, Kowloon Tong Station, Mong Kok East Station, Tsuen Wan West Station, Tuen Mun Station, Austin Station and HKU Station. As regards the other MTR stations, apart from having the sprinkler system in areas such as shops, corresponding fire service installations and equipment such as fire hydrants/hose reel systems, emergency power supply and lighting, fire alarm systems, fire detection systems, fire control centres, and so on, are in place to maintain the required fire safety standards and ensure passenger and public safety.

- (2) Sprinkler system is installed in all shops inside MTR stations.

Handling of Stray Cattle

22. **MR LEUNG CHE-CHEUNG** (in Chinese): *President, according to a paper submitted by the authorities to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene of this Council last month, there were approximately 1 100 heads of stray cattle in Hong Kong in 2013 and, among them, around 57% were "rural/wild" herds and 43% were "town" herds. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of a breakdown of the current number of stray cattle in the districts listed in the table below by whether they belong to (i) the "rural/wild" herds, or (ii) the "town" herds, and whether they are buffalo or brown cattle (set out the breakdown in the table below);*

		<i>Buffalo</i>	<i>Brown cattle</i>
<i>Lantau Island</i>	<i>(i)</i>		
	<i>(ii)</i>		
<i>Ma On Shan/Sai Kung</i>	<i>(i)</i>		
	<i>(ii)</i>		
<i>Northwest New Territories</i>	<i>(i)</i>		
	<i>(ii)</i>		
<i>Central New Territories</i>	<i>(i)</i>		
	<i>(ii)</i>		

- (2) *of the specific places of distribution of stray cattle belonging to the "rural/wild" herds and those belonging to the "town" herds respectively at present, with indication of the locations of such places on a map;*
- (3) *of the number of traffic accidents involving stray cattle in each of the past three years, and the number of resultant deaths of stray cattle;*
- (4) *of the number of stray cattle caught by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by handling method (for example, sale by auction, adoption by farms and euthanasia); and*
- (5) *whether AFCD has plans to have all the stray cattle sterilized under the "Capture-Sterilize-Relocate" programme; whether it has set an annual target and implementation timetable for the sterilization programme; of the number of cattle to be sterilized by AFCD each year based on the current resources and implementation progress of the programme?*

SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND HEALTH (in Chinese): President, my reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- (1) According to a territory-wide population survey on stray cattle conducted in 2013, there were approximately 1 100 heads of stray brown cattle in Hong Kong. They were primarily distributed in four areas, namely Lantau Island, Sai Kung/Ma On Shan, Northeast New Territories and Central New Territories. Around 57% of them were considered as belonging to the "rural/wild" herds and 43% as "town" herds. More than 70% of the cattle observed under the survey were adults, 23% were adolescents and juveniles, and 7% were calves. Males (49%) and females (51%) constituted similar proportions of the cattle population. In addition, there were about 120 heads of buffalo in Hong Kong.

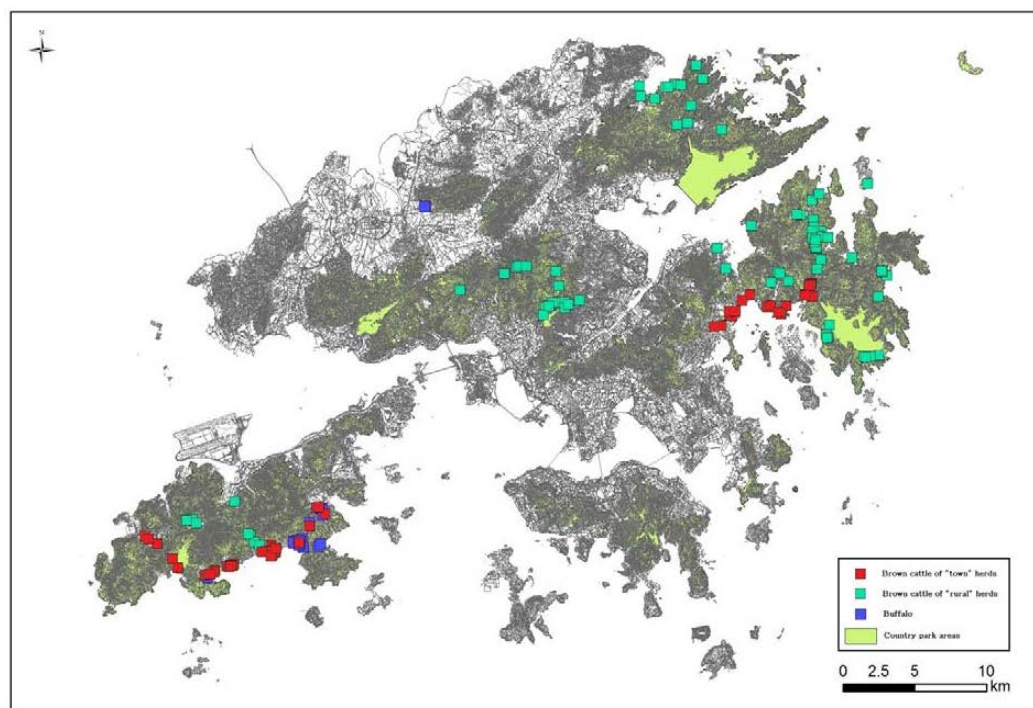
Based on the above statistics, the number of stray cattle belonging to (i) "rural/wild" herds and (ii) "town" herds respectively in 2013 is set out below:

<i>District/Type of bovine</i>	<i>Buffalo⁽¹⁾</i>	<i>Brown cattle</i>	
Lantau Island	75	(i)	125
		(ii)	100
Ma On Shan/Sai Kung	0	(i)	260
		(ii)	190
Northwest New Territories ⁽²⁾	0	(i)	235
		(ii)	0
Central New Territories ⁽²⁾	45	(i)	200
		(ii)	0

Notes:

- (1) We have not classified buffalo into "rural/wild" or "town" herds.
- (2) Stray cattle in the New Territories are mainly found in rural areas in Northeast New Territories and Central New Territories. They all belong to "rural/wild" herds.

- (2) The above statistics show that "rural/wild" herds of cattle were mainly found in Northeast New Territories and Central New Territories, as well as the country parks in Lantau Island and Ma On Shan/Sai Kung areas. The distribution of stray cattle in Hong Kong is as follows:



- (3) The government departments concerned have not separately kept statistics on the number of traffic incidents involving stray cattle in Hong Kong.
- (4) To address public nuisances caused by stray cattle and prevent a further surge in cattle population, the AFCD has established a protocol and adopted a catch and removal strategy. In general, once a removed stray cow/bull is confirmed to be unclaimed by any owner, it may be sold to farmers by auction or rehomed with suitable leisure farms. If the cattle concerned are not suitable for disposal by these means, humane euthanasia may be administered by veterinary officers of the AFCD. For injured cattle, veterinary officers of the AFCD will assess the degree of injury and decide on euthanasia or disposal by the abovementioned way of auction or rehoming as appropriate.

From November 2011 to October 2014, the AFCD captured 531 heads of stray brown cattle and buffalo in the territory. Discounting the number of repeated capture, 409 cattle were caught in total. Among them, 282 were sterilized and relocated, five rehomed with farms or the World Wild Fund, and 122 euthanized.

- (5) In response to calls from society for better management of the stray cattle population in the long term, the AFCD has supplemented the catch and removal strategy with a multi-pronged stray cattle management mechanism which takes into account the different characteristics of individual districts. This includes the Capture-Sterilize-Relocate programme launched in November 2011. Under the programme, the AFCD officers will take proactive action to capture stray cattle, have the cattle sterilized and ear-tagged for identification, and then relocate them to a more remote location in the same district. From November 2011 to October 2014, the AFCD sterilized about 282 brown cattle and buffalo, that is, around 100 cattle each year on average.

Over the past few years, the AFCD has been collecting data about cattle population and distribution through territory-wide surveys on cattle population and regular on-site inspections. The department will continue to monitor the cattle population. In particular, it will keep a close watch over the population and distribution of sterilized and relocated cattle as well as the number of cattle-related complaints for the purpose of formulating long-term sterilization targets or implementation timetable. The AFCD will also take into account the views of different stakeholders when deciding whether and how to adjust the Capture-Sterilize-Relocate programme for tackling nuisances caused by stray cattle to the public, especially local residents and road users.

STATEMENTS

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Statement. The Chief Secretary for Administration will make a statement on the "Consultation Document on the Method for Selecting the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage".

Consultation Document on the Method for Selecting the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, today we have the first meeting of the Legislative Council in 2015.

(A number of Members stood up and held opened yellow umbrellas)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please sit down.

(Holding the yellow umbrellas, such Members left their seats and walked across the Chamber)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please return to their seats and sit down immediately. Members should not walk across the Chamber.

(Such Members who were still holding the yellow umbrellas walked along the aisle of the Chamber and left one after another)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now suspend the meeting.

1.21 pm

Meeting suspended.

1.23 pm

Council then resumed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Chief Secretary for Administration, please continue with your speech.

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, today we have the first meeting of the Legislative Council in 2015. First of all, I would like to wish you all a prosperous new year and hope that it will mark a good start for constitutional development and other Council business, and enable us to work together and use our best endeavours to serve the public in the overall interest and well-being of the Hong Kong community.

Following the end of the 79-day unlawful Occupy Movement in mid-December 2014, social order has generally been restored. After the festive season, it is now time for society to refocus on, and discuss, constitutional development in a rational manner. Today, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) will publish the Consultation Document on the Method for Selecting the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage (Consultation Document) to start a two-month public consultation on the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017. Like the first round public consultation, I seize the very first opportunity to attend the Legislative Council to make the following Statement so as to introduce to the public at large and all Members the details of the Consultation Document.

Constitutional Basis of Universal Suffrage

President, on 4 December 2013, I made a Statement at the Council meeting to kick-start the first round public consultation on constitutional development. At that time, I started with the theme of "Recapitulating History, Respecting Constitutional Order" and stated that when we discuss the method for selecting the Chief Executive, we have to consider the historical background of the establishment of the HKSAR, understand the unique constitutional status of the HKSAR, and comprehend the legal framework which is based on the Basic Law and the relevant Interpretation and Decisions of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC). Following the discussions of and the disputes over constitutional development in the past year or so, as well as the unlawful Occupy Movement which lasted for more than two months, we firmly believe that when we formulate the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, we must uphold the principle of "one country, two systems" and act in strict accordance with the provisions of the Basic Law and the relevant

Interpretation and Decisions of the NPCSC. These are solid constitutional principles.

On 31 August 2014, the NPCSC adopted the Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on Issues Relating to the Selection of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region by Universal Suffrage and on the Method for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2016 (the Decision). According to the Decision, universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election of the HKSAR could be implemented starting from 2017. The Decision sets out a clear framework on the specific method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage and stresses that the Central Authorities are determined to implement the basic policies of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy". It has all along been the position of the Central Authorities to act strictly in accordance with the Basic Law in taking forward, in a gradual and orderly manner, universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017. The Central Authorities have also repeatedly stressed that they hope that the HKSAR Government and various sectors in Hong Kong community would work together and achieve the goal of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election as scheduled according to the provisions of the Basic Law and the Decision.

Public Reactions to the Decision

Since the Decision was adopted by the NPCSC, various sectors of the community have expressed very divergent views. Some groups and persons initiated the unlawful Occupy Movement to exert pressure on the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government; requesting "civic nomination", "revocation of the Decision" and "restart of the public consultation on constitutional development". The Occupy Movement has disrupted social order, affected the economy and livelihood of the people, strained human relationships, and even undermined the rule of law in Hong Kong. At the same time, it disrupted the timetable for the public consultation on constitutional development. Taking into account the situation and atmosphere in society at that time, the Government decided to defer the second round public consultation which was originally scheduled to start in October last year.

President, Hong Kong is a free, open and pluralistic society and the Government highly respects people's freedom of expression. We have also

heard clearly the aspirations for democratic development as expressed by the initiators and supporters of the Occupy Movement. However, as Hong Kong is a place where we uphold the rule of law, cherish social order and respect the rights of others, we should express our views and strive for our goals in a lawful, fair and reasonable manner. If people ignore legal and political realities or even resort to disrupting public peace and undermining other people's rights, the so-called "pursuit of the ideal" or "fight for justice" is just empty talk. We should indeed reflect as to whether these drastic actions can in the end really lead us to achieve the goal of universal suffrage.

Foreword of the Consultation Document

At the beginning of this Consultation Document, the Task Force on Constitutional Development (the Task Force) has included a foreword. The purpose of the foreword is to clearly explain to the public the context in which the second round public consultation was launched; to point out that the Hong Kong society is currently facing a critical situation and extremely difficult political environment after the end of the Occupy Movement; and state frankly the challenge in obtaining the endorsement of the constitutional development package. The foreword is the sincere and heartfelt thoughts on my part, as well as on the part of the Secretary for Justice and the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs.

As stated in the foreword, at present, public opinions regarding constitutional development are becoming polarized. One group of views advocates the implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in the HKSAR in accordance with the law in 2017, so that Hong Kong's constitutional development can take a big step forward, and insists that there should not be an impasse. This group considers that the Decision should be respected, and that we should make the best use of the room within the Decision to achieve maximum consensus when designing the specific method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. Another group of views refuses to accept the Decision, and thereby negate the first two completed steps of the "Five-step Process". They demand, as a prerequisite for further discussion, a restart of the entire process, or the acceptance of "civic nomination" which is inconsistent with the Basic Law, or the abolition of functional constituency elections for the Legislative Council before implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017.

Regardless of which view you hold, we would like to state at the commencement of the consultation, the following three points concerning the HKSAR Government's position and views.

Firstly, as we have repeatedly stressed, constitutional development must be built on the basis of the Basic Law and the Decision, otherwise it would only be futile and impractical, and the aim of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election would only become a "castle in the air".

Secondly, it is the common aspiration of the Central Authorities, the HKSAR Government, and the general public in Hong Kong to implement universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017. The determination and sincerity of the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government to take forward universal suffrage is beyond doubt. Whether or not universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election could be implemented as intended in 2017, however, depends on whether the community accepts to complete the "Five-step Process" within the framework of the Basic Law and the Decision. We appeal to the whole community to take full advantage of the opportunity in the second stage consultation to express clearly the aspiration to implement universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017, as well as to explore possible room and to forge consensus within the framework of the Decision.

Thirdly, the package of proposals for universal suffrage of the Chief Executive election has to be endorsed by a two-thirds majority of all the Members of the Legislative Council. This is a crucial step, and is the most difficult step in the "Five-step Process". I hope and believe that as representatives of the public, Legislative Council Members would ultimately cast their votes in accordance with the overall aspiration of the community irrespective of their political affiliation or their own political stance.

President, implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election is politically the most difficult task since the return of Hong Kong to the Motherland 17 years ago. Not only does it concern Hong Kong's constitutional development, it is also a challenge for the entire Hong Kong as to whether we can restore our community which is divided and full of quarrel, back to a community with political morals and culture which seeks to build common ground whilst respecting differences, and which is rational and inclusive; and at the same time maintains the mutual trust between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR under the principle of "one country, two systems". At this critical juncture, we hope

that the community could display mutual understanding and acceptance in a rational manner, and commence discussion having regard to the overall situation and the need to forge consensus.

In respect of the request of certain groups and persons for "revocation of the Decision" and "restart of the public consultation on constitutional development", I must stress again that this is impractical and impossible, and could not enable implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017. As far as constitutional procedures are concerned, we have already completed the Second Step of the "Five-step Process" for amending the method for selecting the Chief Executive. The next step is for the HKSAR Government to introduce to the Legislative Council a proposal and strive for endorsement by a two-thirds majority of all the Legislative Council Members. Therefore, there is no such "revocation of the Decision" in the constitutional procedures. Moreover, according to the Decision, if the specific method for universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election could not obtain endorsement in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures, the method for selecting the Chief Executive in 2017 shall continue to adopt the method for selecting the Chief Executive in 2012. Hence, there is also no such room for "restart of the public consultation on constitutional development".

Issues of the Second Round Public Consultation

In accordance with the Basic Law and the framework under the Decision, the Consultation Document sets out the following four key issues on the specific method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage to consult the public:

- (1) the composition and formation method of the Nominating Committee (NC);
- (2) the procedures for the NC to nominate Chief Executive candidates;
- (3) voting arrangements for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage; and
- (4) other related issues for the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage.

Composition and Formation Method of the Nominating Committee

According to the Decision, the provisions concerning the number of members, composition and formation method of the NC shall be made in accordance with the number of members, composition and formation method of the Election Committee for the Fourth Chief Executive. The delimitation of the various sectors, the organizations in each sector eligible to return members and the number of such members to be returned by each of these organizations shall be prescribed by the electoral law enacted by the HKSAR, and the committee members shall be elected by corporate bodies in various sectors on their own in accordance with the number of seats allocated and the election method as prescribed by law.

As the Decision already stipulates that the number of members of the NC shall be 1 200, composed of 300 members in each of the four sectors, and maintain the existing method for selecting the members as provided for in Annex I to the Basic Law, depending on whether there is sufficient support, appropriate adjustments to the composition of subsectors under the four sectors of the NC, the number of members of each subsector, and the electorate base of such subsectors may be made during the stage of enacting local legislation.

In considering the aforesaid question, we should also consider whether such adjustments are practicable, whether the NC would remain broadly representative, materialize equal participation of all sectors, be conducive to maintaining the capitalist system, and facilitate subsectors to elect persons who could genuinely represent their subsectors; besides, the wish of each subsector should be respected and widespread support from the relevant subsectors should be obtained, otherwise politically it would be difficult to forge consensus, let alone to obtain the endorsement of the Legislative Council.

Procedures for the Nominating Committee to Nominate Chief Executive Candidates

According to the Decision, the NC shall nominate two to three candidates for the office of Chief Executive in accordance with democratic procedures. Each candidate must have the endorsement of more than half of all the NC members. In designing the nominating procedures, we have to ensure that each

NC member shall have equal right, and that persons meeting the statutory eligibility requirements shall enjoy an equal right to seek nomination by the NC.

In designing the specific nominating procedures, we also have to consider whether to divide the procedures for the NC to nominate Chief Executive candidates into the stage of "members recommendation" and the stage of "committee nomination"; as well as to adopt a threshold which is lower than the current one, and highly transparent nominating procedures, so as to make the nominating procedures more competitive. The operation of the NC should be transparent, and we should consider how to provide an appropriate platform for persons seeking nomination so that they would have equal and adequate opportunities to explain their manifestoes and missions to all the members of the NC or even the public in order to seek their support. These proposed arrangements are intended to advance the competitive atmosphere and active involvement of the public from the universal suffrage stage to the nomination stage of the election.

As for the method of voting for the NC to nominate two to three Chief Executive candidates, since all candidates have to obtain the endorsement of more than half of all the members of the NC, the Consultation Document puts forward the options of "one person, three votes", "one person, two to three votes", "one person, maximum three votes", and "voting on each person seeking nomination" for consideration.

Voting Arrangements for Selecting the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage

When universal suffrage for the selection of the Chief Executive is implemented, all eligible electors of Hong Kong could elect the Chief Executive-elect by "one person, one vote" from the two to three candidates nominated by the NC. We may consider the following voting arrangements, that is:

- (1) the "first-past-the-post" system;
- (2) the two-round voting system; and
- (3) other voting systems, such as the instant runoff system or the supplementary vote system.

Other Related Issues for the Selection of the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage

Regarding the term of office of the NC, we have to consider whether the term of office of the NC shall follow the existing arrangement of the Election Committee, that is, a five-year tenure; or the term of office of the NC shall terminate upon the swearing in of the Chief Executive it has nominated.

As for the re-election arrangements if the Chief Executive-elect returned by universal suffrage were not appointed by the Central People's Government, we suggest that the existing Chief Executive Election Ordinance should include provisions for a re-election in such circumstances.

As regards political affiliation of the Chief Executive, since there is currently no law on political parties in Hong Kong, and different sectors of the community have yet to arrive at a clear consensus on the subject, we suggest maintaining the requirement under the existing legislation that the Chief Executive should not have any political affiliation.

The Way Forward

Various sectors of the community have provided substantive opinions regarding the method of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in the course of the past discussion on constitutional development as well as during the first round public consultation. However, the ultimate proposal of constitutional development would depend on whether relevant suggestions are supported by the public at large, relevant sectors and Legislative Council Members. The Decision has provided the framework and room for us to discuss the detailed arrangements of the universal suffrage of the Chief Executive election. Yet, as regards how much "political space" would there be, I believe that it would require various sectors of the community to create such space with a rational and pragmatic attitude. Having regard to the incidents that have happened not so long ago, we understand that the majority of the public does not support using extreme and illegal means to strive for democracy, and that such approaches will only narrow the "political space". Hong Kong is a society that cherishes the rule of law, and I hope that all of us will cherish this core value of Hong Kong's success and formulate together, in accordance with the law, a constitutional development proposal that is acceptable to Hong Kong society.

We must make the best use of the two-month consultation period to focus our discussions. The Government will collate and summarize the views collected during the consultation period as soon as possible with a view to submitting a resolution on the amendments to the method for selecting the Chief Executive to the Legislative Council in the second quarter of this year.

Seize the Opportunity of Universal Suffrage

President, finally, I would like to make three points, in the hope that various sectors of the community will seize this opportunity to implement universal suffrage.

First, I particularly appeal to all Legislative Council Members, especially those in the pan-democratic camp, though they have already walked out, to actively participate in the discussion and not to boycott or veto the constitutional development proposal. The Legislative Council has a vital constitutional role and responsibility in the constitutional development of Hong Kong. Regardless of their position on constitutional development, people of different political parties and camps look forward to establishing a suitable system of universal suffrage in Hong Kong so that Hong Kong people can, through "one person, one vote", elect a Chief Executive-elect to lead Hong Kong's future development.

All Members in this Chamber have experienced elections and should well understand that in a competitive election, the voice of voters has the most significant impact on the election result. Under the system of universal suffrage, each Chief Executive candidate must face all 7 million people in Hong Kong to explain his or her election platform and policy vision, and strive for public support. At this stage, any person refusing to participate in the consultation, or even vowing to veto any constitutional development proposal formulated in accordance with the Decision, is tantamount to depriving 5 million eligible voters of their opportunity to elect the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. I believe the general public still hopes they can exercise their right to go to polling stations to cast their votes for the candidates they consider qualified to take up the office of the Chief Executive. Hence, I hope Members of the pan-democratic camp will not adopt an uncooperative or even irresponsible attitude and disappoint the public.

Second, the Decision provides the "legal space" for us to further explore the specific method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage at the

local legislation stage. However, as I have mentioned just now, even if certain "legal space" is available, the "political space" must be created by all of us. I urge all Legislative Council Members to think twice and not to destroy completely the limited "political space" remaining before the second round public consultation has yet to commence. Some people suggest adopting a negative and unco-operative attitude, or even taking confrontational acts. This would only aggravate social conflict and internal attrition, and cause harm to the constitutional development and well-being of the whole society. I appeal to all Legislative Council Members, political parties and various sectors of the community to display political courage and wisdom; formulate ideas together and actively participate in the public consultation in the overall interests of Hong Kong; and to put forward specific proposals on the nomination and election procedures in order to make the election more transparent and competitive.

Third, some people worried that if the constitutional development proposal is passed, it would become the "ultimate scheme" which could not be amended anymore. This thinking is wrong. The method of selecting the Chief Executive after 2017 can still continue to progress in accordance with the constitutional procedures of the "Five-step Process". I must emphasize that only after the implementation of the universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017, will we have a solid foundation to further promote the democratic development of Hong Kong and improve the system of universal suffrage. If the constitutional development of Hong Kong comes to an impasse, I am afraid it would be difficult to know whether when we can move forward in the implementation of a system of universal suffrage that complies with the Basic Law and the Decision in the foreseeable future.

Moreover, if the proposal of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017 is vetoed, it will also eliminate the chance of forming the Legislative Council by universal suffrage in 2020. The result is that we may only have the chance to achieve universal suffrage of the Chief Executive election in 2022 at the earliest, and that forming the Legislative Council by universal suffrage will be deferred for years. The democratic development in Hong Kong will suffer delay again. I earnestly urge all of you, for the future of Hong Kong, to take a pragmatic approach and lead Hong Kong to the road to universal suffrage. I strongly believe that universal suffrage will bring fundamental changes to the political ecosystem and culture of governance in Hong Kong.

Conclusion

President, I made a Statement in the Legislative Council to kick-start the first round consultation on constitutional development about a year ago. I said that we had formally stepped onto the straight road of welcoming universal suffrage. The incidents over the past 13 months tell us how tough this road to universal suffrage is and how difficult it is to move on.

After Hong Kong has experienced more than two months of the Occupy Movement and different types of unco-operative and boycott actions, many of my friends feel extremely pessimistic as to whether the proposal of universal suffrage of the Chief Executive election can be passed. Nevertheless, the Task Force and the Government team will continue to hold a firm belief; make every effort to conduct the public consultation; face the community at large with an open mind, listen to the opinions of the public and explain the Government's proposals; and actively strive for the Legislative Council's endorsement of the constitutional development proposal. Even though the road ahead is hard, we will make our best endeavors until the last moment.

President, implementation of universal suffrage of the Chief Executive election in 2017 as scheduled and according to the law will be another important milestone for implementing the principle of "one country, two systems", and will have far-reaching significance and impact on our country and Hong Kong. Now, there is a golden opportunity in front of us: once universal suffrage is implemented, we will not lose it; the electoral system will continue to improve and democratic development will continue to move on. This is a solemn commitment made in the Decision. Universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017 is the aspiration of the community. This is also the right of 5 million eligible voters. Whether the constitutional development of Hong Kong can take this big step forward or suffer a standstill in 2017; whether the Chief Executive will be elected by the 5 million eligible voters or by 1 200 persons — this historic decision rests with every Member in this Chamber.

President, our Honourable Legislative Council Members and members of the public, "2017: Seize the Opportunity".

Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): In accordance with Rule 28(2) of the Rules of Procedure, no debate may arise on the Statement but I will allow Members to raise questions which are relevant to the Statement. Questions raised by Members must be short and succinct, and they should refrain from making comments when raising questions.

MR WONG KWOK-HING (in Cantonese): *President, as stated clearly in paragraph 30 of the Statement of the Chief Secretary, "At this stage, any person refusing to participate in the consultation, or even vowing to veto any constitutional development proposal formulated in accordance with the Decision, is tantamount to depriving 5 million eligible voters of their opportunity to elect the Chief Executive by universal suffrage." The last sentence of this paragraph also stated that: "Hence, I hope Members of the pan-democratic camp will not adopt an unco-operative or even irresponsible attitude and disappoint the public." In this connection, I have this question for the Chief Secretary. The pan-democrat Members who had left just before you made the Statement are indeed the perpetrators of the illegal Occupy action and, under this circumstance, they have declared that they would give up taking part in and would even boycott the consultation that they actually opposed it with concrete actions today. Under such circumstance, how will the Chief Secretary collect views from all Hong Kong people? I believe public opinion is vitally important and, in the last part of your Statement, you have also appealed to all Hong Kong people from different sectors to express their opinions. Therefore, will the Chief Secretary please talk about how she will collect views from the public and whether an opinion poll will be conducted?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, just like the first round public consultation, we will also communicate with the public by various means to collect their views. It is true that the duration of the second round consultation is relatively shorter, that is, two months. However, a lot of substantive opinions on the issue of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage were expressed in the community in the first round consultation held earlier as well as in the past few months. Hence, we believe that in the coming two months, we will pay attention to the views expressed by different sectors of the community through some scheduled forums and, at the same time, taking the initiative to organize some forums with different sectors. Besides, we will certainly collect views from the public through discussions with Legislative Council Members at meetings of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs.

I agree with Mr WONG Kwok-hing that although the pan-democrat Members have now declared that they would veto any proposal on amending the method for selecting the Chief Executive which is made in accordance with the framework of the 31 August Decision, I believe the pan-democrat Members will, as responsible Members and representatives of public opinion, eventually make public opinion an important consideration.

DR LAM TAI-FAI (in Cantonese): *President, in the Statement made by the Chief Secretary just now, I noticed that the Government understands clearly that the 23 Members from the pan-democratic camp, including Mr Frederick FUNG, Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Prof Joseph LEE and Mr Ronny TONG, have clearly declared that they would boycott the second round consultation and categorically stated that they will resolutely veto the constitutional development proposal. As for "Long Hair", Mr Albert CHAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, and so on, I believe we all know that they particularly hate the Government ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr LAM, please refrain from making comments.

DR LAM TAI-FAI (in Cantonese): *What I mean is that while the Government knows that it is incapable of lobbying the pan-democrat Members for support of the constitutional development proposal at this moment, and in the Statement presented by the Chief Secretary just now, she did not mention any specific plan or preparation pinpointing the boycott and non-cooperation movement of the pan-democratic camp. Is it because the Chief Secretary is actually prepared to give up on them and leave the constitutional development proposal to run its own course, or she plans to let the Central Government assist in the lobbying? I noticed that the authorities have not made any preparation or particular tactic and it seems that we are awaiting its doom. We feel concerned that if the constitutional development proposal is vetoed ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr LAM, you have raised your question.

DR LAM TAI-FAI (in Cantonese): ... *the Central Government will therefore be disappointed, and so will the public. So this is my question. Will the Chief Secretary tell us now whether there are any specific preparations and plans to deal with those people who have declared in a high profile that they would not support the constitutional development proposal?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr LAM, please sit down. Let me remind Members once again that according to the Rules of Procedure, questions raised by Members in regard to Statements made by public officers must be short and succinct.

Chief Secretary, please reply.

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, I thank Dr LAM Tai-fai for his question. As mentioned in his question to the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs earlier, he thinks, and I also agree, that this task is extremely challenging. Some people may even consider that the Task Force is carrying out the task despite knowing full well that it is an impossible task. Nonetheless, as I have pointed out in the Statement, the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage is very important to the future development of Hong Kong and therefore we will definitely endeavor until the very last moment.

In regard to the measures which will be adopted by the Government, it is not a task that can only be undertaken by us. As I have appealed in my speech earlier, I hope members of the public can make use of the second round public consultation in the coming two months to clearly convey to Members their aspirations for the early implementation of selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. Therefore, in the next two months, we will not only discuss this issue with Legislative Council Members as a matter of course, but also attach great importance to the views expressed by members of the public on the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage.

Lastly, as I have stated in my speech, every single Member is a representative of public opinion so they should respect public opinion. If the public have conveyed a clear aspiration for implementing universal suffrage for the election of the Chief Executive in 2017, it is necessary for Members, as representatives of public opinion, to take it into serious consideration.

IR DR LO WAI-KWOK (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary for Administration has pointed out clearly in the Statement just now the four key issues of the two-month consultation period. She has also stated right from the outset that we must comply with the framework of the Basic Law and the Decision of the NPCSC. The Chief Secretary also stated in paragraph eight of her Statement that "at present, public opinions regarding constitutional development are becoming polarized" and one of the opposing views is exactly denying the Basic Law and the relevant Decision made by the NPCSC. Under such circumstance, will the two-month consultation period further aggravate the problem of polarization? May I ask the Chief Secretary for Administration what kind of specific solutions actually there are to ensure that the Government can foster a consensus in society within two months instead of further polarizing public opinion?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): I thank Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok for his question. Apart from publishing the Consultation Document, the HKSAR Government has also prepared a flier entitled "2017: Seize the Opportunity" which briefly explains to the public why we have to implement universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017. In short, we think there are five reasons. First of all, it is the fervent hope of Hong Kong people to elect the Chief Executive by universal suffrage and they really want to achieve this goal in 2017. Therefore, the first reason is fulfilling the aspirations of the public.

Second, we can achieve "one person, one vote". As I have stated in the Statement, in comparison with selection of the Chief Executive by the Election Committee which is comprised of 1 200 persons, selection of the Chief Executive by 5 million eligible voters in Hong Kong on the basis of "one person, one vote" is significant progress in democratization. This is an important consideration.

Third, we believe that through selecting the Chief Executive by election or direct election of "one person, one vote", the Chief Executive candidates or the Chief Executive-elect can better follow public opinion closely in administration. It is not only responding to the demand of the public but also an irresistible general trend of society.

Fourth, according to the Decision made by the NPCSC earlier, implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election on the basis of "one person, one vote" is a prerequisite for electing all Legislative Council Members by universal suffrage. Therefore, we can consider electing Legislative Council Members by universal suffrage after implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election.

Lastly, I have also stated clearly in my Statement that the electoral system can be further improved after electing the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017. Therefore, in reply to the question raised by Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, we will not only emphasize over and over again in the coming two months that we have to comply with the law, constitutional requirements and the 31 August Decision of the NPCSC to implement universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election, but also specifically tell the public why implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017 is so very important to the future development of Hong Kong, thereby hoping that those members of the public who belong to one end of the so-called polarized views as mentioned by me earlier, would clearly express that if they do not prefer to mark time, then we must achieve universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election and make a historic step in the democratic development of Hong Kong.

MR LEUNG CHE-CHEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, just now I heard the Chief Secretary mention in the Statement that the second round consultation would be a crucial task. However, it will only last for two months, which means it is extremely challenging as the consultation period is really short.*

I would like to ask a question. It was reported in the press recently that the Government would not take the initiative to canvass opinions in this consultation period, that is to say, it will not take the initiative to visit various districts. If that is the case, I believe it will be rather difficult for the Government to canvass opinions on selection methods which require more detailed discussions. If some organizations or people take the initiative to invite you to visit the districts, will the Chief Secretary's constitutional reform trio actually visit the districts to hear opinions?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): I thank Mr LEUNG for his question. In short, if any organization takes the initiative to

invite us to take part in activities related to the second round public consultation in the two-month consultation period, we will definitely do our best to cope. I was just pointing out that in regard to the methods for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, many discussions had taken place in society while different opinions were also expressed by various sectors in the first round consultation and in the past few months. Besides, the discussions on issues in the second round public consultation can be rather focused. Therefore, we consider the duration of two months relatively appropriate and the consultation activities which can be conducted may not be necessarily as many as that of the first round consultation. I believe Members will still remember that in the five-month consultation period by then, we attended 226 sessions of public consultation.

MR ANDREW LEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary concluded the Statement with "2017: Seize the Opportunity". However, I noticed that society is extremely "polarized". If the proposal is vetoed or if the pan-democrat Members tell the public that it will be better to restart the "Five-step Process", as if it is really easy, may I ask the Chief Secretary or will she please clarify that if we restart the "Five-step Process" or if the proposal is vetoed, for how long will our whole democratic development be delayed?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr LEUNG for the question. As pointed out in my Statement, the so-called "revocation of the Decision", "restart of the public consultation on constitutional development" or restart of the "Five-step Process" of constitutional development is impractical and impossible. It is because the NPCSC clearly stated in the Decision made on 31 August last year that if the amendment proposal submitted by the Government in the "Third step" cannot complete the statutory procedures during this constitutional reform, the method for selecting the Chief Executive in 2017 shall adopt the method for selecting the Chief Executive in 2012. In other words, the Chief Executive will still be elected by the Election Committee which is comprised of 1 200 persons. It also means that before 2017, it is neither feasible nor possible to do any consultation on selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017. Under such circumstance, we can only start afresh the consultation on constitutional reform in 2022 at the earliest to achieve the goal of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. By the same token, if we can only explore the methods for selecting the Chief

Executive by universal suffrage in 2022 at the earliest, we will be lacking the prerequisite for electing all Legislative Council Members by universal suffrage. We must wait until 2022 to, upon successful implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election, bring up the agenda item of electing all Legislative Council Members by universal suffrage for discussion. Therefore, as I have just said, it will further delay achievement of the goal of electing all Legislative Council Members by universal suffrage.

MR JEFFREY LAM (in Cantonese): *We noticed that it is the aspiration of the majority Hong Kong public to select the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017. Even though it is the preference of public opinion, we saw the pan-democrat Members walk out today without even listening to the Statement. They also indicated that they would not take part in the consultation and would vote against the relevant proposal. I believe the public will not approve of such behaviour of "staging a show". The passage of such a proposal, however, must secure the support of a two-thirds majority of Members.*

I would like to ask the Chief Secretary a question. In fact, the public is not well versed in the Basic Law actually. Some Members or outsiders did not explain the actual situation to the public, which can be regarded as misleading them. Will the Government take any proactive measures, such as visiting the District Councils, liaising with other organizations or even visiting the districts to explain the relevant proposal more often, thereby helping them to actually understand the content of such proposal? I believe if all of us can have a focused discussion on the relevant proposal within these two months, it can be achieved and there will be sufficient time as well. If some people only create complications and engage in illegal activities, then we cannot achieve the goal even if we have two years ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LAM, please raise your question.

MR JEFFREY LAM (in Cantonese): *Chief Secretary, are there any measures to enhance the public's understanding of the proposal and allow them to express their support?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I wish to thank Mr LAM for his suggestion. In fact, our publicity work has never ceased ever since we launched the first round consultation on constitutional reform. If Members have paid attention to the publicity campaign, they will note that Secretary for Justice Rimsky YUEN made an appearance in a video explaining Article 45 of the Basic Law and the video is broadcast on television on a continued basis.

Therefore, we will continue with such publicity and explanatory efforts in the future, particularly in April this year, which will mark the 25th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law. In my another capacity, that is, Chairperson of the Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee, I will organize a series of publicity efforts for the Basic Law with other members.

DR PRISCILLA LEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, the public wish for universal suffrage is very clear. But universal suffrage must proceed along the constitutional track. The consultation on constitutional development did not make a good start last year because many people said civil nomination would violate the Basic Law right at the beginning. However, it was relatively late for the authorities concerned to make their position known, causing public opinions to be misled. There is this so-called "middle-of-the-road proposal" in the community which suggests "blank-vote veto" and that if the blank votes are more than 50%, the election has to start anew and even a provisional Chief Executive is required. Yet the Basic Law attaches great importance to stability and provides that the term of the Chief Executive must be five years without making any mention of a provisional Chief Executive ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr LEUNG, please stop making comments and ask your question.

DR PRISCILLA LEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, please let me finish first. Therefore, I very much hope the Government can, in this second round consultation, make their position known concerning the contents of some proposals made in the community that are not compliant with the Basic Law. The Government should turn the tables and take the initiative to make it clear what is allowed and what is not, as there is no time for public understanding to be misled. I hope I can get a clear response from the Government to this: in the*

second round consultation, the discussion will be focused, effective and centred on constitutional and feasible proposals, while making known the Government's position on non-compliant proposals as soon as possible.

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): Dr LEUNG's question is the same as Mr LAM Tai-fai's question on "blank-vote veto" just now as well as the reply given by Secretary Raymond TAM. We share the same views now and I hope Dr LEUNG will understand it too. During the public consultation process, we need to carefully consider and discreetly handle the views voiced in the community, otherwise we will stifle some proposals made by certain members of the community, especially those whom I sometimes refer to as well-intentioned people who put forth some ideas in the hope of breaking the impasse, forging a consensus and narrowing the differences, eventually allowing the Legislative Council to pass the Government's proposal by a two-thirds majority of all Members. Accordingly, our position remains gaining a fuller understanding of the particulars and details of the specific proposals made in the community, especially those raised by parties who believe their proposals are compliant with the Basic Law and the Decision made by the NPCSC on 31 August last year, and then undertake serious consideration and study.

MR CHRISTOPHER CHUNG (in Cantonese): *President, I would like to ask the Chief Secretary a question about paragraph 32 of this document which states that some people worried that if this proposal is passed, it would become an ultimate scheme which could not be amended anymore. And the Chief Secretary explained that after 2017, the method for selecting the Chief Executive can still continue to progress in accordance with the constitutional procedures of the "Five-step Process".*

However, I have this question: What is the direction for progress after 2017? Does this direction or room for progress still have to follow the current requirements of the Basic Law or the NPCSC framework? If it is necessary to follow these requirements or framework, given such direction and room that already exist in this constitutional development package, how will there be room for continuous progress in the future?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, just as Mr CHUNG may remember, this is already the third time we have

kick-started our work pertinent to constitutional development. In other words, constitutional development is an evolving process. I have pointed out in paragraph 32 that we do not need to worry about the proposal passed in 2017 being the ultimate scheme which could not be amended anymore. It is based on Article 45 of the Basic Law which stipulates that the political system of Hong Kong will be developed in the light of the actual situation in Hong Kong and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. For the actual or specific method for selecting the Chief Executive, clause 7 of Annex I of the Basic Law explicitly provides that if there is a need to amend the method after 2007, it has to go through what procedures and with the final approval of the NPCSC.

Moreover, the NPCSC explanation in 2004 has also set out the "Five-step Process". As a result, both Article 45 and Article 7 of Annex I of the Basic Law and the "Five-step Process of Constitutional Development" still allow room for continuous improvement of the arrangements implemented for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in the light of the actual situation in Hong Kong and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress.

MR CHRISTOPHER CHUNG (in Cantonese): *I did not catch the answer. Is it possible to clearly explain what development direction and room there is?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHUNG, in this session, Members are not allowed to ask follow-up questions. Once the Chief Secretary has replied to the question asked by a Member, the next Member will ask his or her question.

MR CHRISTOPHER CHEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary has just said that in the second round consultation they will still seek to reach a consensus in the community and strive to achieve sooner the goal of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage.*

According to the requirements of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law, the Chief Executive shall be selected by election or through consultations held locally. This time the Central Government has given us universal suffrage by "one person, one vote" according to the Basic Law and the NPCSC Decision. May I ask the Chief Secretary what the difference between universal suffrage by "one person, one vote" and election through consultations is?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, I find Mr CHEUNG's question a bit strange. I believe everyone knows that the Chief Executive selected by universal suffrage is one who is directly elected by all eligible voters through "one person, one vote" which is universal and equal ...

MR CHRISTOPHER CHEUNG (in Cantonese): *May I ask the Chief Secretary which of consultations and universal suffrage by "one person, one vote" is more democratic?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): Certainly, in the course of the development of democracy, I believe everyone will be glad to see that more eligible voters can vote to elect the Chief Executive direct. This is also a reason why we said that to implement selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017 is a historical step of progress in the course of democratic development in Hong Kong as well as an opportunity that should not be let slip.

MR CHUNG KWOK-PAN (in Cantonese): *The Chief Secretary mentioned in paragraph 24 of the Statement that the Chief Executive-elect may not be appointed and a re-election is required. If there are such arrangements, or we are asked to discuss this matter — initially we thought all candidates who qualify for entry into the stalls and clear the barriers will be appointed by the Central Authorities — but if it is the case, then some candidates who are able to not only qualify for entry into the stalls but also clear the barriers will not be appointed by the Central Authorities just because of his or her pan-democratic background. Maybe the situation is not as bad as everyone has envisaged, just that now if any pan-democrat is allowed to enter the stalls he or she will absolutely have no chance of clearing the barriers. If there is a chance of clearing the barriers, a pan-democrat might be rejected by the Central Authorities and not be appointed after being elected. If this is the case, President, will there be a constitutional crisis?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): Article 45 of the Basic Law stipulates that the Chief Executive of the HKSAR shall be selected by election or through consultations held locally and be appointed by the Central People's Government. Therefore, we must recognize that the Central People's Government has the substantive power of appointment. In other words,

the Central Authorities have the right of final decision to appoint or not to appoint even the Chief Executive-elect selected by universal suffrage. In this way, in terms of legal arrangements, electoral work or appointment of the Chief Executive, we must make the local laws capable of dealing with such a situation — how to handle the situation of the Central Authorities really not making the appointment.

MR TAM YIU-CHUNG (in Cantonese): *President, voicing kind and earnest persuasion in her Statement with both sense and sensibilities, the Chief Secretary hoped to talk the pan-democrats into supporting the constitutional development package so that the citizens of Hong Kong can select the Chief Executive by "one person, one vote". However, I believe the Chief Secretary also saw just now that the pan-democrats had held up their umbrellas even before her making the Statement — though it is not raining today they still held their umbrella while walking out of the Chamber as a boycott. I wonder if the Chief Secretary would feel disappointed at their behaviour? Is this expected by the Chief Secretary? With such reaction, how will the Chief Secretary expect to gain their support of the constitutional development package in the second round consultation? What views does the Chief Secretary have in this regard?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, as the action taken by the pan-democrats had already been made known in advance, I did not feel surprised. Certainly, as the official in charge, I know it very well that the Government's proposal requires a two-thirds majority, that is, most of the Members' endorsement for its passage and the two thirds must include a certain number of pan-democrat Members. If all the pan-democrats do not support the proposal, it will deal a blow to our work.

Nonetheless, as I mentioned in my Statement, we will make our best endeavours until the last moment. Therefore, the next few months will be critical. Through the interaction and discussion with Members and the messages society sends to all Members, we hope that Members, especially pan-democrat Members, can change their mind and support us in implementing the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017.

MR IP KWOK-HIM (in Cantonese): *President, I am very happy that the Government has kick-started the second round public consultation on constitutional development. I also noted that the Chief Secretary gave special*

emphasis to the Government's position and views in her Statement. The Statement mentioned that constitutional development must be built on the Basic Law and the Decision, otherwise it would only be futile and impractical. It also pointed out that such an aim of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election would only become a "castle in the air".

I would like to ask the Chief Secretary a question specifically about paragraph 26 of the Statement, because just now she said the Decision has provided the framework and room for us to discuss the detailed arrangements of the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. Yet, as regards how much political space there would be, she believes that it would require various sectors of the community to create such space with a rational and pragmatic attitude. May I ask the Chief Secretary what the meaning of the political space to which she referred is? Can the Chief Secretary provide a more detailed explanation?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, we proposed four issues to consult the public in the consultation document of the second round public consultation. Members should have noticed that some issues will be handled at the stage of enacting local legislation. Certain legal space is allowed for the issues to be handled at the stage of enacting local legislation because the NPCSC Decision did not set out explicit requirements for local legislation or issues concerning local legislation. For the NC, on the premise of 1 200 members and each of the four sectors having 300 members, the delimitation of the various sectors, meaning the composition of the subsectors, the number of members allocated to each subsector and whether new subsectors can be formed are issues that all can be explored in terms of law.

However, is there sufficient political space to achieve what I referred to as the political consensus on a series of local legislation issues? This is exactly the question I have pointed out here, that is, whether there is sufficient political space. Therefore, it requires the relevant subsectors or the public to reach a political consensus by all means on issues that can be explored in the legal context before we can handle these related issues at the stage of enactment of legislation.

MR NG LEUNG-SING (in Cantonese): *Some pan-democrat Members readily say they represent 7 million citizens, but I will only say those of us present here do represent a considerable number of or part of the people.*

I wish to ask the Chief Secretary a question about what is said in the last page: "Even though the road ahead is hard, we will make our best endeavours until the last moment." This is a heroic claim. I have seen that the Government has all along shown this commitment to achieve the goal of "one person, one vote" during LEUNG Chun-ying's term as Chief Executive. However, as I have just said, such a commitment cannot go without the courage to face the reality. If the Government is to do better expectation management, it will notice there is pretty little chance to convince those opponents. If they are to be convinced, I believe certain changes have to take place. Regarding such an expectation, I will say no more here.

Yet, the opposition camp has been using the constitutional development to stage full-scale non-cooperation and jeopardizing the business of this Council, the Legislative Council, and even matters and legislation of the executive which require the examination and approval of this Council. Furthermore, the Administration mentioned in the document that if this milestone, meaning the golden opportunity in front of us is destroyed ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Please ask your question concisely.

MR NG LEUNG-SING (in Cantonese): ... *I now am asking a question based on the contents. If they even destroy this golden opportunity, they will again delay a lot of administrative and legislative work — they did so this morning and last night. If such delay continues, these golden opportunities will be wasted by them. May I ask if this can be regarded as impingement on citizens. They are not pan-democrats; they impinge on citizens. Will they become sinners of a thousand centuries in history? I wish to hear the Chief Secretary's views on this.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): In the next few months, I believe Members will have many opportunities to express their views on the second round consultation, so I remind Members not to use this session which is meant for raising short questions to present their personal views. Chief Secretary, please reply.

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): I believe I can only say, if we cannot take this important step of constitutional development to achieve the goal of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017

because of it being vetoed by some Members, a lot of citizens will be disappointed.

MR WONG TING-KWONG (in Cantonese): *President, the Statement made by the Chief Secretary today shows that she is earnest and sincere and those words came from her heart. I noticed that paragraph 15 of the Statement mentioned four issues, namely the composition and forming method of the NC, the procedures for the NC to nominate Chief Executive candidates, voting arrangements for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage and other related issues. I remember that the first round consultation involved reform of the Legislative Council election in addition to the method for selecting the Chief Executive. But in the second round consultation, the method for forming the Legislative Council seems to have been given less mention.*

However, I think the reform of the Legislative Council election to be carried out after the Chief Executive election is indeed related. If some Members can consider the methods for both the Legislative Council election and the Chief Executive election at the same time, maybe they would be interested in the reform of the 2017 Chief Executive election or would consider it, instead of taking such confrontational action today? Will the Secretary consider demonstrating the connection between the Legislative Council election and the Chief Executive election in the second round consultation?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, first of all, we are also aware of the views presented by Mr WONG. Therefore, I also mentioned in the Statement that a group of views wants to abolish the functional constituency elections for the Legislative Council before implementation of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017 as a prerequisite for further discussion. This kind of views was raised in the past but I am afraid it is impractical and impossible because, as regards the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016, the NPCSC has stipulated in the Decision made on 31 August last year that Annex II to the Basic Law which concerns the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016 is not subject to amendment. The reason for this has been clearly explained in the NPCSC Decision, which is the method for forming the Legislative Council having undergone major amendments in 2012 and on the assumption that the Chief Executive will not be selected by universal suffrage in 2016, the Legislative Council election in 2016 will not be making one great leap to elect all Members

by universal suffrage. As a result, the NPCSC Decision explains that regarding the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016, Annex II to the Basic Law will not be amended.

Owing to this reason, just as Mr WONG has observed, I can put it even more clearly that the consultation document of the second round consultation is solely about the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, and has nothing to do with the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016. It is because according to the NPCSC Decision, the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016 will not be amended. We also have no intention to make any major amendment to the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016 in local legislation. Later on, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will consult Members on some technical amendments to the method for forming the Legislative Council in 2016 in the Panel on Constitutional Affairs of the Legislative Council.

MS STARRY LEE (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary mentioned political space in paragraph 26 of the Statement. She said as regards how much political space there would be, it would require various sectors of the community to create such a space with a rational and pragmatic attitude. Having regard to the incidents that have happened not so long ago, the Chief Secretary said they understand that the majority of the public does not support using extreme and illegal means to strive for democracy, and that such approaches will only narrow the political space.*

President, I have strong feelings about this as well. After listening to those remarks made by the Chief Secretary, I also share her observations. In fact, concerning the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in Hong Kong, there are different political spaces at different times. During the first stage of consultation, we had a bigger political space. After the NPCSC had made the 31 August Decision, the space we have now is to proceed in accordance with the Decision.

As the Chief Secretary pointed out in paragraph 26 of the Statement, the political space in Hong Kong is narrowing. And my observation is that it is because some people of Hong Kong, including Members of the Legislative Council who walked out of the Chamber today, do not trust the Central Authorities and even want to bypass the Basic Law. They had already proposed

civil nomination in the first stage of consultation which is an universal suffrage option in open violation of the Basic Law. And they eventually said that civil nomination is indispensable while showing no willingness to communicate. After the 31 August Decision was announced, they had sought democracy through the illegal means of occupation of roads and threatened the Central Authorities. Now they have staged the non-cooperation movement of blind boycott and blind opposition, depriving 5 million citizens of their voting right.

President, may I ask the Chief Secretary what she meant by "narrow the 'political space'"? Will the Secretary please give an elucidation.

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, I believe the narrowing of the political space is surely related to the mutual trust between the SAR and the Central Authorities. If threatening and extreme actions happen frequently in Hong Kong, which are done to pressurize the SAR Government and the Central Authorities on the constitutional reform and constitutional development, it is not conducive to maintaining mutual trust between the Central Authorities and the SAR and will lead to what I referred to as the narrowing of the political space. Here I am quoting Mr TAM who said I was "earnest and sincere"; I hope the Hong Kong community can handle the constitutional development with a rational and tolerant attitude and with respect given to the constitution and the law.

MR CHAN KIN-POR (in Cantonese): *President, rightly as pointed out in paragraph 8 of the Statement, society right now is polarized: a group of views insists that Hong Kong's constitutional development takes a big step forward and that there should not be an impasse whereas another group refuses to accept the 31 August Decision.*

I believe the Government needs to concentrate its efforts on lobbying two groups, one is the citizens who remain uncertain. If eventually the opposition camp do their own poll which indicates 60% to 70% of the public supports the constitutional reform, I believe they will make a volte face for votes or for their own conscience.

The second group is more important, which consists of the forces behind the opposition camp. If these forces also believe it is more important to take a

step forward on constitutional development, instead of marking time, I believe no matter what the reason is for them to think it is important, meaning important to Hong Kong and equally important to China ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHAN, please ask your question.

MR CHAN KIN-POR (in Cantonese): ... *I believe Members of the opposition camp will easily know how to do a graceful turnaround. As for who or what the forces behind the opposition camp are, I am sure it is clear to everyone.*

May I ask the Chief Secretary whether she will target these forces behind the opposition camp to do some hard lobbying?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr CHAN for the question. We will definitely lobby Members of the Legislative Council to support the constitutional development package within our ability and in a lawful, reasonable and sensible manner.

MR CHAN HAN-PAN (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary mentioned in paragraph 12 of the Statement that she hopes and believes that "Legislative Council Members would ultimately cast their votes in accordance with the overall aspiration of the community irrespective of their political affiliation or their own political stance". However, we noticed in the past that many different consultation events were intentionally sabotaged. And the sabotage and damage created an effect that it appeared a lot of citizens opposed the government proposals, muffling the genuine supportive voices and twisting people's wish of support. May I ask the Chief Secretary what ways there are to make the public engage in more rational discussions in the second stage consultation? Or will there be specific arrangements for citizens who genuinely hope to express their views to do so?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): The experience gained in the past few months has told us that the people of Hong Kong are more than willing to express their views when it is deemed genuinely necessary. Hence, it explains why some organizations could collect over

1.8 million signatures in a short period of time to support the rule of law and reopening of roads. I believe, insofar as the constitutional development which is such an important topic is concerned, the people of Hong Kong are prepared to voice their opinions. Of course, the SAR Government and groups concerned about the constitutional development, be they political parties, professional bodies, societies, local organizations and district boards, will collect views of the people in various ways.

MR YIU SI-WING (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary said in paragraph 31 of the Statement that she urges "all Legislative Council Members to think twice and not to destroy completely the limited 'political space' remaining before the second round public consultation has yet to commence".*

The second round consultation has just begun and the pan-democrats have already exited the scene. Does the Chief Secretary feel that the "limited political space" to which she just referred has already been destroyed? If this is the case, what would the Secretary do?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): *President, I hope the pan-democrats' action which I have just seen is a gesture. I hope in the coming days the pan-democrats will still actively take part in the second round public consultation. Later on, we also hope to continue to discuss and study various issues raised in the second round public consultation with pan-democrats as well as other Members in the Panel of Constitutional Affairs chaired by Mr TAM Yiu-chung.*

MR PAUL TSE (in Cantonese): *President, the Chief Secretary said both in the Statement and her replies that they will make their best endeavours until the last moment. I believe it is known to everyone that the opposition camp have already made it public that they will not only boycott the consultation, but even vote against the 31 August Decision and threaten to stage a new wave of Occupy Central or actions to disrupt the community.*

I wish to know the Government's position. About the so-called last moment, is it when this Council has cast a vote against the proposal or when it is not possible to gain the support of two thirds of Members? Or are there other situations? For example, to reduce social division, just like other important motions in the past such as legislation on Article 23 of the Basic Law or other

bills, will the Government take the initiative to withdraw it when necessary to reduce controversy?

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, insofar as the constitutional development is concerned, we have set out the constitutional procedures of the "Five-step Process", with which I believe Mr TSE is very familiar. Now, we are ready to take the third step of the "Five-step Process", that is, the SAR Government will introduce the constitutional development package to the Legislative Council, which will hopefully be endorsed by a two-thirds majority of all Members of the Council. The public consultation exercise being conducted right now is meant to prepare for the third step. We have the constitutional responsibility to complete the third step of the "Five-step Process of Constitutional Development". I do not see under what circumstances we will take the lead to give up introducing the package for endorsement by the Legislative Council by way of a resolution.

MR VINCENT FANG (in Cantonese): *The Chief Secretary said in paragraph 12 of the Statement that as representatives of the public, she hopes Legislative Council Members would ultimately cast their votes in accordance with the overall aspiration of the community of Hong Kong. Under the current circumstances, will the Secretary carry out some overwhelming campaigns to make the public listen to your views so as to strengthen their support and force the pan-democrats to "turn around"? Will you carry out such kind of overwhelming campaigns?*

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr FANG for the question. In the next two months of public consultation, we will of course exhaust all possible means to make the public understand the contents and importance of the second round public consultation on constitutional development. But I dare not say if it is "overwhelming" as Mr FANG suggested. However, we will definitely try to do a good job of this consultation with all Members, political parties and groups that are concerned about the political system and want the system to move forward.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): End of the Statement by the Chief Secretary for Administration and her replies to Members' questions on the Statement.

MOTIONS

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Motion. Proposed resolution under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance to approve the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 5) Notice 2014.

Members who wish to speak on the motion will please press the "Request to speak" button.

I now call upon the Secretary for Labour and Welfare to speak and move the motion.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION UNDER THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, I move that the Government's motion, as printed on the Agenda, be passed.

The resolution is to the effect that the amendment of Schedule 5 to the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) made under Section 87(2) of the DDO be approved by this Council, in order to include the proposed extension of the Government's public transport fare concession scheme for a particular group of persons with disabilities to green minibuses (GMBs) as a further exception under Schedule 5.

To help build a caring and inclusive society by encouraging elderly people and persons with disabilities to participate more in community activities, the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the Scheme) has been implemented on the Mass Transit Railway (MTR), franchised buses and ferries in three phases since June 2012, August 2012 and March 2013 respectively. The Scheme was extended to eligible children with disabilities aged below 12 in May 2014. The Chief Executive announced in the 2014 Policy Address that the Scheme will be extended to GMBs in phases starting from the first quarter of 2015. The Government briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services on 10 November last year on the latest position. Our target is to extend the Scheme to the first batch of GMBs in end-March this year. It is estimated that some 110 operators (around 75% of the total) operating around 380 routes (about 78% of the total) will be included in the first batch of extension.

President, the Scheme enables elderly people and eligible persons with disabilities to travel on most of the routes of the MTR, franchised buses and ferries any time at a concessionary fare of \$2 per trip. The Scheme has been launched for some two years. So far, the daily average number of passenger trips made under the Scheme was around 720 000. Of these, around 630 000 of the passenger trips were taken by elderly people and 90 000 by eligible persons with disabilities.

Eligible persons with disabilities under the Scheme refer to persons aged below 65 with severe disability as defined under the Disability Allowance receiving the allowance and those with 100% disabilities receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance in the same age group.

Since the definition of "disability" under the DDO is very broad, the provision of fare concessions only for a particular group of persons with disabilities may give rise to an argument as to whether this would constitute unlawful disability discrimination under the DDO. In this regard, to avoid any possible legal challenge under the DDO against the proposed Scheme, the Government now proposes such an amendment. Similar legislative amendments were made in June 2012 in view of the implementation of the fare concession scheme on the MTR, franchised buses and ferries.

President, I hope Members will support the motion. Thank you.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare moved the following motion:

"RESOLVED that the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 5) Notice 2014, made by the Chief Executive in Council on 9 December 2014, be approved."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare be passed.

MR WONG KWOK-HING (in Cantonese): President, this motion is proposed today in this Council in relation to the Disability Discrimination Ordinance regarding the extension of the \$2 concessionary fare to green minibuses (GMBs). Although I welcome the further extension of the \$2 concessionary fare to more

modes of transport, I would like to raise several points before the resolution is put to vote in the hope that the Secretary can make a response or follow up the matter seriously.

Firstly, I certainly welcome the extension of the \$2 concessionary fare to GMBs, but it is most regrettable that people with loss of one limb can still not be benefited. In this connection, I have made repeated requests to the Government. When Mr LEUNG Chun-ying ran for the Chief Executive office, I joined the relevant organizations in making a similar request to him, and he acceded to my request then. Now, he has already taken office. Moreover, the Secretary also undertook in implementing this policy to conduct a policy review late last year of the granting of the Disability Allowance (DA) and fare concessions to people with loss of one limb.

Secretary, it is already early January 2015. Why is the review not yet started? Why has the Secretary taken no action despite his pledge on conducting a review late last year? Despite the present extension of the \$2 concessionary fare to GMBs and its good progress, people with loss of one limb can still not see and enjoy the relevant concession. I hope the Secretary can make a response in this connection later on. I also hope that he can let us know when the Government will have the findings of the study on the offer of the concessionary fare for and the applications for the DA by people with loss of one limb.

Secondly, although the \$2 concessionary fare has now been extended to GMBs, we can read from the papers that not all the GMBs are covered. Only 126 of the GMB operators operating 407 routes (83.1%) with 2 626 GMBs (84.0%) having joined the Scheme. Twenty four operators, involving 83 routes, have no plans yet to join the Scheme.

Secretary, I would like you to answer my second question: When will the remaining GMBs, involving 83 routes (10%), implement the \$2 concessionary fare? Is there any timetable for the follow-up work by the Administration? What are the difficulties encountered in the follow-up work that has been achieved? Are these difficulties insurmountable? I hope the Secretary can respond to these "why" questions *seriatim*.

Thirdly, I hope the Government can follow up the matter by providing complementary hardware for the \$2 transport concession. For instance, although the \$2 concessionary fare has been offered by the MTR Corporation

Limited (MTRCL) to severely disabled persons, as pointed out by the Secretary, the beneficiaries must be severely disabled. As we all know, most of the severely disabled persons are wheelchair-bound, but many popular MTR entrances — I am only referring to popular entrances with heavy passenger flow rather than all entrances — lack enough elevators, whereas certain MTR stations are still installed with stair lifts. As a round trip by stair lifts takes a lot of time, several wheelchair-bound people with disabilities will have to wait for a considerably long period of time. Therefore, even if the \$2 concessionary fare is provided, the Government should still follow up the complementary hardware, or else severely disabled persons will only be left out in the cold or have to look for suitable entrances everywhere. This explains why I hope the Secretary can collect the relevant statistics on the entrances with heavy passenger flow, I am not referring to all of the entrances, to see how many MTR stations have not been installed with elevators and how many have been installed with stair lifts only, as well as examining the timetable for improvement of the MTRCL, and so on. I hope the Secretary can follow up these "why" questions.

We are very pleased to note that even franchised bus companies offer transport concessions. However, is the Secretary aware that the number of low-floor buses accounts for only 68% of the total number of franchised buses across the territory? This means that not all the buses are fitted with a low floor. Hence, even though the \$2 transport concession has been provided, people with disabilities will still be left out in the cold if the arriving buses are not fitted with a low floor. Hence, insofar as complementary hardware is concerned, it is worthwhile for the Government to pay attention to and draw up timetables and raise the coverage of the concession to 100% expeditiously.

Fourthly, some popular modes of transport, including red minibuses (RMBs), trams and kaitos approved by the Government, have yet to offer the \$2 concessionary fare. For the time being, the \$2 transport concession has yet to be offered by these three modes of transport. Since the daily patronage of RMBs has already reached 510 000 passenger trips, should the Government not study and examine how to extend the \$2 transport concession to RMBs? Even the daily average patronage of trams has reached 230 000 passenger trips. Although the patronage of kaitos is relatively low, I believe its services are essential in some measure, or else the Government would not have granted them the legitimate franchise. Since the \$2 transport concession has yet to be offered by these three modes of transport, I would like to ask the Secretary the following questions: Has the Government drawn up timetables for the provision of the

concession by these three modes of transport? What difficulties have the Government encountered? What will the Government do to follow up this matter? When will we see the progress and outcome of its follow-up work?

(THE PRESIDENT'S DEPUTY, MR ANDREW LEUNG, took the Chair)

Fifthly, or lastly, I hope the Government can take into account certain modes of transport which are not frequently used by the public but are very popular among tourists, such as Peak Tram, Ngong Ping 360, and so on. For the time being, no concession is offered by these modes of transport. I hope the Secretary can take into account these less popular modes of transport while paying attention to the popular ones mentioned by me just now. Although the former target mainly tourists, I believe there are demands for them by people with disabilities as well as the elderly. So, should the fare concession cover them as well? As such, I hope the Secretary can answer the several "why" questions raised by me just now.

Anyhow, the provision of the \$2 transport concession is still far from comprehensive. However, thanks to the efforts made by the Government, the Legislative Council and people from all walks of life, there has been a breakthrough since June 2012. Besides the continuous improvements made to the \$2 transport concession from its conception to actual implementation and constant improvements, considerable achievement has also been made. I hope the Government can keep up its good work and continue to make efforts to strive for more favourable transport concessions for the elderly and people with disabilities because the concessions can help these people participate in community activities while enabling them to enjoy a rich and colourful life. The significance of the transport concession lies not only in lower fares, but in encouraging the elderly and people with disabilities to return to the community, move forward with society and stop living in solitude. As such, the transport concession means great significance to their mental and physical health and social well-being.

Through this speech on the resolution, I would like to urge the Secretary and the Government again to do even better. Thank you, Deputy President.

DR FERNANDO CHEUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, we certainly support this amendment to implement a further exception to exempt transport concessions currently offered to elderly people or persons with disabilities (PWDs) from the restrictions under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance. This beneficent measure should be implemented expeditiously.

Actually, the transport concessionary measures provided for elderly people or PWDs are the fruit of efforts made by many Members of this Council over the years. I still recall a visit to the Shenzhen railway by Members of this Council under the leadership of Donald TSANG when he was the Chief Executive. The railway, which was constructed and managed by the MTRCL at that time, offered free rides to elderly people and PWDs. When we asked Donald TSANG upon our return to Hong Kong why such concessions were not provided in Hong Kong, he said that only socialist countries would provide such concessionary measures. Of course, we had to forgive his ignorance as such measures were already implemented in the vast majority of advanced capitalist countries a long time ago, benefiting not only elderly people and PWDs but also their escorts.

We are pleased that the concessionary measures are eventually implemented. But regrettably, the enterprises concerned fail to assume their social responsibility because all these concessions are actually funded by public coffers. For instance, the MTRCL has persistently rejected our requests for concessionary fares over the years although it makes more than \$10 billion annually. Eventually, the Government gave in and undertook to subsidize the concessions by public coffers. As a result, corporations making huge profits year after year are not required to pay a single cent. We consider this practice unreasonable. I hope that the Government can consider whether it is reasonable for not requiring these franchised public transport operators to pay back society after making profits year after year?

As regards the amendments introduced this time around to extend the concession to GMBs, Members must note that many elderly people and PWDs cannot travel on GMBs because of their lack of barrier-free facilities. If Members care to think about it, they will understand that GMBs are simply not an option for wheelchair-bound persons, even though our public policy promotes barrier-free transport, which is a very appealing slogan, not to mention that Hong Kong has even been described as a barrier-free city. Right, Hong Kong as an international city should be barrier-free, but these public modes of transport cannot provide barrier-free facilities. Are they really incapable of providing

such facilities? The answer is obviously in the negative. Is it the case that light buses cannot be retrofitted with stair lifts? The answer is definitely in the negative. Rehabuses, which are also light buses, can be retrofitted with stair lifts. And so can private light buses, such as vans. Why does the Government lack the resolve to require all public modes of transport to provide barrier-free facilities?

As these modes of transport lack barrier-free facilities, PWDs have to rely on Rehabuses most of the time. The Deputy President should have noted that the locations of many hospitals are not at all convenient. For instance, the Princess Margaret Hospital, the nearby Queen Mary Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital which is situated in Kowloon are all built on the hills, which are not necessarily accessible by public transport. Even if these hospitals are served by buses, the latter are not necessarily low-floor buses. According to the explanation given by the bus companies, since most of the relevant buses operate on steep roads, it is not suitable for low-floor buses to serve these areas. For instance, most physically challenged children have to visit the Duchess of Kent Children's Hospital for medical consultation, but the area is not served by low-floor buses. Such being the case, how can they visit the hospital? Let me cite another example. Although the Princess Margaret Hospital is now served by GMBs, they are not an option for mobility-handicapped persons. Why does the Government not make an effort on this front? In fact, both light buses and taxis in other countries are barrier-free, which means that wheel chairs can be taken on board. Although this issue has been discussed for years, we have seen no progress at all. For this reason, I hope the SAR Government can give it serious consideration.

Deputy President, it is unacceptable that PWDs encounter difficulties in visiting hospitals for follow-up consultations. In fact, the annual number of telephone bookings for Rehabus services for follow-up consultations — such as three-month advance bookings for visits to hospitals for follow-up consultations — exceeds 10 000. Of the 14 000-odd bookings made the year before, more than 7 000 were related to follow-up consultations. Currently, thousands of PWDs who are required to make advance bookings to visit hospitals for follow-up consultations are denied transport services. If Members can just think about it, they will understand the difficulties encountered by these persons. Therefore, I hope the Secretary can consider this matter seriously. Certainly, he will say that it has nothing to do with his Bureau, and it should be handed to and dealt with by the Transport and Housing Bureau. We have only one

Government. As this issue is related to elderly people and PWDs, I believe the Secretary is also duty-bound to relay the problem and ensure the implementation of the barrier-free transport policy in practical terms, rather than merely engaging in empty talk.

Since this motion is related to the definition of "disability", the concession currently provided is linked with the Disability Allowance (DA). Insofar as the DA is concerned, "disability" is defined as 100% disability, that is, serious disability. I do not wish to argue with the Secretary over this point because a discussion was held years ago in which it was agreed to use this as the starting point. Nevertheless, the definition of "disability" in the context of the DA has all along been open to dispute. One of the argument lies in the fact that only persons "with a 100% loss of earning capacity" are defined as meeting the definition. Furthermore, the relevant definition, which was founded on the Employees' Compensation Ordinance enacted decades ago, is totally detached from the generally accepted definition of "disability". Neither can it keep up with the times. Even The Ombudsman took the initiative to conduct an investigation in 2009 and in its conclusion requested the Government to introduce amendments and conduct a review in this respect, as well as deleting the definition of the so-called "100% loss of earning capacity".

Deputy President, even the Government agreed with the report written by The Ombudsman in 2009, but today, as we freshly move into 2015, the former has yet to make any serious effort in amending this definition. Hence, as pointed out by Mr WONG Kwok-hing just now, people with the loss of one limb are still unable to benefit from the transport concession. Actually, not only these people but also many other persons with visceral disability and mobility-handicapped persons are still not eligible for the DA. In fact, the international community has already adopted the International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health (ICF). For instance, it has been implemented in Taiwan for several years, and other countries have already started using a simpler version. There is also an international trend of giving "disability" a new definition.

As such, I hope that the SAR Government can proceed with the amendment exercise expeditiously and stop procrastinating any further. In addition to facing the problem of population ageing, Hong Kong also has quite a number of elderly people and PWDs. Many people who began recently to experience difficulty in walking will indeed benefit from the Scheme.

Nevertheless, the Government is not only reluctant to do anything despite a long delay, but also unwilling to amend the definition no matter what. Furthermore, it is still engaging in empty talk in implementing the barrier-free transport policy. Actually, both minibuses and taxis are devoid of barrier-free transport facilities.

It is not the case that elderly people and PWDs do not wish to pay. Actually, they do but the Government simply does not give them any choice. As a result, they encounter great difficulties even in meeting their basic needs in every aspect, be it going to work, schooling or follow-up consultations. In my opinion, the Government must conduct a review seriously. I also hope that the Government can turn minibuses into a barrier-free mode of public transport expeditiously while expanding the concessionary fare to GMBs. Thank you, Deputy President.

DR KENNETH CHAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, given its specific and narrow scope, this resolution only seeks to introduce technical amendments to the \$2 transport concession provided by GMBs to eligible persons with disabilities (PWDs). I believe no Member in this Chamber will oppose these amendments because we all know that this concession is the fruit for which many Hong Kong people have been striving over the years.

Therefore, on behalf of the Civic Party, I speak today in the hope of pointing out the hardships faced by the Scheme as a whole and the use of public transport by PWDs, as well as the room for improvement. As pointed out by Dr Fernando CHEUNG in his speech just now, Hong Kong is an affluent international city and it should head towards the visions of building a barrier-free city, providing barrier-free transport, and so on. Certainly, this resolution is heading in this direction, but is this direction, pace and step appropriate? Can we say with pride and confidence that Hong Kong has already attained the visions of building a barrier-free city and providing barrier-free public transportation? The answers are definitely in the negative.

Deputy President, about a decade ago, I joined a colleague from the social work faculty of a university in conducting a study to examine if the chronically ill or Hong Kong people requiring medical care felt 100% that they were "Hong Kong citizens". The findings of the study revealed that many people requiring medical care, elderly people and PWDs did not feel 100% that they were "Hong Kong citizens". By "Hong Kong citizens", it was meant that they had basic

rights and ample opportunities to participate in the wide range of activities organized in this city or the activities they are interested in. Such activities might include meeting their family members, attending follow-up consultations or pursuing studies. All these are our basic human rights.

Able-bodied persons have no problem in participating in these activities. We can go admiring the sea view at the seaside, go sightseeing on the Peak, visit our family members, go to Chinese restaurants or see our children or grandchildren any time, only that we might not have enough time to do so. However, it is not easy for the chronically ill, elderly persons or PWDs to participate in such activities. Hence, a barrier-free city with a barrier-free transport system is actually crucial. If elderly persons or PWDs wishing to go out to visit their family members have to think about it carefully and find it very difficult to do so, how can they really enjoy living in this international metropolis as a part of it?

I certainly heard some Members point out the areas in which efforts had to be made by the Government while expressing support for this resolution. Specifically, I was referring to the so-called eligible PWDs, by which I mean persons with total incapacity. I think it is unfair for persons with loss of one limb or visually impaired persons with eyesight slightly higher than 10% to be considered not eligible. In fact, the Government itself has put in place a system of Registration Cards for People with Disabilities. The Civic Party and many relevant organizations have been calling on it to provide PWDs with the Registration Cards. Can it refrain from behaving in such a mean manner? Can it show genuine love, concern and care for all Hong Kong people? Can it allow all holders of Registration Cards for People with Disabilities to enjoy the concessions? Can it act more fairly? In particular, the current and previous concessions are all funded by public coffers. So, why should the Government demonstrate such a critical or mean attitude? Can it be more generous? Honestly, many people would not have wished to enjoy these concessions if not for reasons of accident, health or old age. Actually, all of us might face such things at any time. Therefore, in the interest of equality, we should consider carefully whether such a strict line should be drawn and such a high threshold be imposed for the provision of the \$2 concession?

As regards the degree of participation of public transport operators, it is regrettable that these concessions have to be funded by public coffers through the budget. Why do these major public transport operators which reap huge profits

not assume their social responsibility as public organizations or public bodies? Since they are granted franchises and various concessionary conditions to expand their enterprises or business, they should be required to meet more requirements regarding the assumption of responsibility towards society and Hong Kong people. Moreover, the Government should step up its efforts on this front and disallow them from muddling through. The Government should be able to do this.

Even if this resolution is passed today so that the budget will subsidize these transport operators with taxpayers' money on an accountable basis in future, I hope the Government can reduce the subsidy progressively to let these operators bear the social responsibility they ought to have assumed long since.

Deputy President, do the public transport facilities in Hong Kong really meet the barrier-free requirements? Hong Kong might apparently be developing barrier-free facilities, but can these facilities really facilitate the persons in need? If a \$2 concessionary fare is offered by GMBs, will we suddenly see more PWDs and people in need, especially PWDs who are 100% eligible, make use of these modes of transport? The answer is definitely in the negative because it is not easy for the aforesaid persons to use these modes of transport. So, the symbolic meaning of such fare concession might be bigger than the actual meaning. Nevertheless, the Government still has to spend such a long time discussing and bargaining before this resolution can be put to vote in the Legislative Council.

There is a need to further improve the barrier-free facilities in a wide range of modes of transport in Hong Kong. For instance, there is still enormous room for improvement in the height difference between the MTR train compartments and platforms and the gap between the platforms and compartments. Certainly, PWDs can request MTR ticket assistants or station staff to assist them in getting on or off the trains. This is also a possible option when no other options are available. Nevertheless, can the MTRCL mitigate the height difference between the train compartments and platforms when maintenance is carried out next time to ameliorate the height difference as well as the wide gap between them?

I wonder if Members note that the directions of different routes are inconsistent and, as a result, the hearing impaired might be unable to tell what the next station is before the train arrives and, hence, make early preparations for disembarkation. Furthermore, the information on the tactile maps at some MTR stations has yet been updated, thus leading to misunderstanding among the

visually impaired. If the Government is sincere in looking after the interests of the public, it should urge the MTRCL and other public transport operators to adopt concrete improvement measures rather than merely making window-dressing efforts.

As regards buses, the hearing impaired still encounter difficulties in distinguishing between buses arriving at the bus stops since the bus stop announcement system is not yet installed outside the buses. Although Members have repeatedly mentioned this issue in this Council, the Government still owes Hong Kong people who call for improvements to these bus facilities. Furthermore, we find the volume of the bus stop announcement system inconsistent, thus making it difficult for the visually impaired. In our opinion, apart from further increasing the ratio of low-floor buses to facilitate wheelchair users, the Government may also consider providing more space for the parking of wheelchairs to enable wheelchair users to enjoy bus services with their family members or friends.

In our opinion, it is incumbent upon the Government to propose this resolution to enable Members to fight for the offer of the \$2 concessionary fare by GMBs to some PWDs. Generally speaking, however, I think that the performance of the Government remains unsatisfactory. Moreover, it has failed to address the needs of PWDs and the needy as well as enhancing their sense of belonging to and participation in this city by enabling them to go wherever they want, meet their friends at any time, and do whatever they wish or ought to do, including attending follow-up consultations, pursuing studies, going to school, and so on. All this is what we owe them. We hereby call on the Government to step up efforts in pushing public transport operators through the terms of franchise agreements in the future to improve the aforesaid measures which we still owe the people of Hong Kong.

I so submit.

MR LEUNG CHE-CHEUNG (in Cantonese): The \$2 public transport fare concession scheme (the Scheme), which was launched in June 2012, has been warmly welcomed by the elderly and people with disabilities (PWDs) over the past two years or so. Of the average 720 000 passenger trips benefitting from the Scheme daily, 630 000 were made by the elderly, and more than 90 000 by eligible PWDs. The Government has now planned to extend the concession to

GMBs to further benefit the socially disadvantaged. This beneficent measure is greatly supported by the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB).

It is an indisputable fact that transport fares are exorbitant in Hong Kong. Before the implementation of the Scheme, many elderly persons and PWDs choose to stay at home and go out less often due to exorbitant travelling expenses, whereas their relatives and friends will visit them only on major festive occasions. As a result, the elderly persons and PWDs have gradually become hidden people in the community, which is not healthy to both society and individuals. Let me cite Tin Shui Wai, the community served by me, as an example. Thanks to the \$2 transport concession, quite a number of elderly persons have now changed their lifestyle by going out by bus regularly to visit their children, grandchildren and friends outside Tin Shui Wai. Doing so can help them not only kill time, but also integrate into society and expand their social circle, so that they can lead a fuller life and become more active persons.

During the preparation of the Scheme, quite a number of transport operators refused to provide the concession with many, many excuses for fear that certain excluded persons might file lawsuits in the wake of the implementation of the Scheme. Eventually, the Scheme was passed against all odds. The fact that we have not seen any relevant lawsuits in the past two years or so does reflect that the general public love and care for the socially disadvantaged, instead of being cold and arrogant as described by other people. Members of the public really feel encouraged and pleased.

In fact, the implementation of the \$2 transport concession has not caused any negative impact on the revenue of public transport operators. Let me cite the MTR, which boasts the most passenger trips, as an example. Compared with the corresponding period in the previous year, its total fare revenue rose by 7.7% in the year when the Scheme was implemented and continued to rise by 4.4% in the following year. To date, a handsome profit is still recorded annually. In 2013, the Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (KMB) recorded a \$200 million, or more than 4%, increase in fare revenue year on year. The KMB has even pointed out in its annual report that the increase in fare revenue was attributed to the rise in patronage driven by the launch of the \$2 transport concession in addition to the fare increase. These data have not only proved that a surplus can be brought out of diminution, but also demonstrated the fact that both transport operators and members of the public can be winners. No wonder

GMB companies operated by small companies and enterprises are not afraid of the cumbersome administrative formalities and instead call on the Government to extend the concession to GMBs expeditiously.

Deputy President, the \$2 transport concession incurs a mere \$600 million in financial expenditure per annum. This piece of legislation under discussion today, if passed, will incur a mere \$200 million in financial expenditure per annum, too. Compared with the Government's annual financial expenditure of tens of billion dollars, this amount of expenditure is just negligible. However, it will set an example for other transport operators and it is most meaningful that it can demonstrate to the public society's concern for the socially disadvantaged. We sincerely hope that the Government can launch the Scheme expeditiously to benefit even more people.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR SIN CHUNG-KAI (in Cantonese): Deputy President, we support the resolution which amends the Disability Discrimination Ordinance, and certainly, the purpose is to extend the "concessionary fare of \$2 per trip" to green minibuses (GMBs). I am commenting on the whole concessionary fare policy rather than the issue of exemption.

Earlier on, Honourable colleagues already mentioned the benefits of concessionary fares, so I will not repeat them here. What is the problem now? As we all know, the tram fare is only \$2.3. Without using public money, it offers a concessionary fare of \$1.1 to the elderly of its own accord. Here is the problem. It offers a fare discount of \$1.2. As quoted by Mr LEUNG Che-cheung earlier on, the Government provides a subsidy of \$600 million to the operators of various modes of transport with public money. Although the tram fare is rather low and in fact, its daily patronage is high, the Government is reluctant to subsidize the elderly and persons with disabilities by offering tram fare concessions for the reason that it has provided other fare concessions to the elderly.

May I ask the Secretary if he can actually make some consideration in this regard? Although the tram fare is inexpensive, now the Government seems to be rewarding the baddies but punishing the goodies. The tram service has offered a concession of its own accord, but the Government is reluctant to

subsidize the elderly. For example, as the tram fare is \$1.1, it may subsidize \$1 so that the elderly can take trams for \$0.1. This is a feasible measure. In fact, the current situation is unfair because the existing bus fare is \$2 for the elderly, while the tram fare is \$1.1. Actually, if a certain concession is offered, more elderly may switch to trams. This concerns the so-called "fair competition" issue.

As a result of the Government's distorted policy, the fare of certain modes of transport originally charging \$6 or \$7 is only \$2 now, and the difference between \$2 and \$1.1 is just \$0.9. On this issue, can the Secretary think about how to extend the scope of subsidization to trams, so that the elderly can enjoy concessionary tram fare?

MR WONG YUK-MAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, in respect of this resolution under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) today, I will again express some of my views because this Council is basically a "Council with disabilities". Just take a look. How many people are present now? Earlier on, the pan-democrats staged a walkout, and then there came a question and answer session that can be likened to a soliloquy, during which Carrie LAM put questions to be answered by herself. It is because questions from the pro-establishment camp were raised on behalf of Mrs Carrie LAM. What is the difference? Facing such a Council, talking is just a waste of breath.

This amendment to the DDO is basically redundant. The Secretary is doing things here that will only waste time and bear no fruit. In order to include buses in the concession scheme, amendments were introduced. When he wished to include the MTR in the concession scheme, he did the same thing again. And when it came to minibuses, he repeated the process. This time around, it just involves green minibuses (GMBs). How about red minibuses (RMBs)? Is it not a waste of breath to discuss these amendments? It proves that the Government treats persons with disabilities (PWDs) the same way as it does the elderly. For such a wealthy Government, if it intends to offer subsidies, it should adopt a more thorough approach. It should provide the benefits in one go rather than doing it in part, wasting our time to discuss the amendments here.

We will certainly pass the Government's proposal because in case it is not passed, PWDs will again accuse the Legislative Council of refusing to give them transport subsidies. In the same vein, if the constitutional reform package is not

endorsed, they will pass the whole buck to the pan-democrats. Why do they mention nothing about how crappy their constitutional reform package is? They will not bother with their own responsibility. Then, they will orchestrate public opinion, alleging that we are the sole culprit for the package failing to pass, thus depriving 5 million people of their voting right. This is the stance you people will take when orchestrating public opinion in the future. Why do you say nothing about how you force others to eat faeces? Now you coat the faeces with sugar, and then force them down someone's throat. I did not intend to come down here today, but I came all the same even though I knew they would stage a walkout. Last time in the first phase, I also came down here because I wished to take the opportunity to reprimand Mrs LAM and the "constitutional reform trio". I am now reviewing the footage, so I remember I called them the "lackeys of the lackey". It is a bogus consultation exercise. When it is submitted to the Panel on Constitutional Affairs ... I call it a downright bogus consultation exercise.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr WONG Yuk-man, please focus your speech on this proposed resolution under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance.

MR WONG YUK-MAN (in Cantonese): In that case, how can I use up the speaking time of 15 minutes ...

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): It is true that you have up to 15 minutes to speak, but what you say must be relevant.

MR WONG YUK-MAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, how is it possible to speak up to 15 minutes on this issue alone?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr WONG Yuk-man, I remind you that what you say must be relevant.

MR WONG YUK-MAN (in Cantonese): This is called making an issue out of the matter, okay? Basically, both this Council and the Government are disabled,

am I right? Am I being relevant? To provide them with some transport subsidies, the "lackeys of the lackey" have introduced amendments again and again. What are the amendments about? Secretary, why do you not do it in one go? You can directly give them hard cash by providing transport subsidies. It is that simple, isn't it? Since it is a subsidy, you may as well come up with an approximate amount flexibly. When you have got an idea of the approximate daily transport expenses of PWDs, you can give them a lump sum. But you are hesitant to do so.

What irritates me the most? I have repeatedly said that the Government is assisting public transport companies in profiteering. Not only are they exempt from any responsibility, they even get paid by taxpayers. Reimbursement on an accountable basis? It is really ridiculous. Secretary, let us speak only common sense. Common sense enables us to determine what is right, and what is wrong. Why do you not provide transport subsidies direct. You are often concerned with petty interests, advancing various excuses like you are afraid that taxpayers' money will be wasted if they do not travel after getting the subsidy. But what is the population of PWDs? Matthew CHEUNG, you should know the relevant figure.

When it comes to the disadvantaged groups or the elderly, I start to get irritated seeing your face. How many years have you been working on it? How many years have you been holding this position? Secretary, just do a count. What good deeds have you done? How much will come out of the public coffers by giving every one of them a transport subsidy of \$500? Do you need to always haggle over every penny? In order to include buses in the concession scheme, amendments were introduced. When you wished to include minibuses in the concession scheme, you again introduced amendments. And when it came to the MTR, you repeated the process. Now the Scheme has yet to cover ferries.

As stated in the paper, the Government will periodically reimburse the public transport operators concerned on an accountable basis the fare revenue forgone in implementing this new initiative. It means that buses and the MTRCL do not make a penny less, and that they do not give favour to PWDs out of good conscience. Many people do not know that it is paid by the public purse, thereby indirectly leading to unfair competition in the transport sector. Certainly, the legislative amendments to be introduced by the Government will reduce such unfair competition. When all modes of transport provide

concessions, the problem will naturally be solved. But we must be patient when the Government works on the legislative amendments.

At times, we see that those wheelchair-bound who may just want to attend follow-up appointments at hospitals in their home district take the MTR or bus in order to save transport cost. Taxi drivers will then say that this has led to a reduction in short-haul taxi trips. This situation will arise, and similarly, some taxis drivers will voice dissatisfaction. Are you discriminating against the taxi trade in so doing? Surely you will not subsidize them by introducing legislative amendments, right? This simply does not hold water.

Moreover, as stated in the paper, it would be unrealistic to provide public transport fare concessions to all PWDs as this would amount to a general fare reduction for almost everyone. I do not know what it means. Even if you have provided them with a subsidy, will they take transport whenever they have the time until the cost exceeds the amount of subsidy that you provide to them? Will PWDs have the time to make some 90 rides a day? This is impossible either.

I have yet to talk about the annual administration fee amounting to several million dollars. You are most adept at this. The income test for the "fruit grant" is to be conducted by a group of people, which involves administration costs; the Old Age Living Allowance is to be processed by a group of people, which again involves administration costs; Comprehensive Social Security Allowance is to be processed by a group of people, which similarly involves administration costs amounting to some \$100 million in total. The sum of money should instead be handed out to the elderly. What you know best is to ensure administrative convenience and to make things convenient. Sometimes, at the public hearings held by the Public Accounts Committee, we see how the Government wasted public money. Meanwhile, we also think of the elderly and the disadvantaged groups, and how harshly the Government treats them. The contrast between them has really infuriated me.

The Director-General of Civil Aviation did whatever he wished, and the Director of Architectural Services also colluded with him in doing evil. In the absence of any approval from the Government Property Agency, he proceeded with an unauthorized construction of a private bathroom in his office. Even though he has set up an air traffic system, it is defect-laden, thus costing a large sum of money. Then, to our surprise, the contractor was not required to make

compense. Rather, it received subsidies. Buddy, reviewing two value for money reports every year will surely make one spit blood. On the other hand, the health service and long-term care for the elderly only involve an annual cost of several hundred million dollars. But every year, 5 700 elderly persons will pass away before they are allocated a government subvented place. Seeing the contrast between them, how can one not feel outrageous?

The Government treats PWDs, the disadvantaged groups, grassroots and people in poverty the same. It wastes money as if dumping it into the sea. "Polluted Dongjiang water is flowing all the way to here", right? The payment for Dongjiang water is made in a lump sum rather than quantity based. Fresh water is wasted every year, resulting in a waste of public money of hundreds of million dollars. When people come here to seek funding to help the disadvantaged and grassroots and to alleviate poverty, the Government will only care about petty interests and haggle over every penny.

When Hong Kong people see such a contrast, how can they not build up grudges? How can poverty alleviation help? Has the disparity between the rich and the poor been alleviated? It still tops developed countries and regions. With the continuous rise in per capita income and property prices, any "curb measure" implemented will just be futile. A Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flat is valued at \$6 million or \$7 million, while the individual income and asset limits are \$20,000 and \$410,000 respectively. How can persons with a monthly income below \$20,000 possibly afford the mortgage for a flat valued at \$6 million or \$7 million? And we are talking about a HOS flat. These officials are indeed "taking faeces at meal"!

Under the existing legislation, only persons with 100% disability are entitled to transport concessions. One of the definitions of "100%" is loss of two of the limbs. Mr WONG Kwok-hing is present here. He often displays props. But it is no use showing them here. He should throw the props at the Secretary instead. He dares not do so, but he often puts on these shows. What good does it do? Mr WONG Kwok-hing, throw the two limbs at the Secretary, and I will call you a man with guts. Even if you have lost an arm or a leg, it will not be regarded as 100% disability.

Since the Government has the intention to implement the so-called "policy benefitting the community" to integrate PWDs into society and alleviate their financial burden, it should stick to its policy by streamlining the procedures and

lowering the threshold by all means. The Government has committed a grave error in thinking that the benefits provided to PWDs amount to an "abundant royal grace". The protection of human rights and construction of minorities' rights should be given equal weight, shouldn't they? This is part and parcel of a just society. The minorities, or what we now call the disadvantaged groups, also have their fundamental rights.

I recommend Members to read an article titled "Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship", which is written by a Canadian political philosopher. I will read out one of the paragraphs to Secretary Matthew CHEUNG, to this effect: "Our life must be guided by values and beliefs true to our heart, so we must have the freedom to draw up and refine our life plan, and pursue it on this basis. This freedom of choice is not about choices made for their own sake. It only serves as a prerequisite for us to identify those plans cherished as valuable and to implement them."

What I mean is that our freedom to use transport only serves as a means. The end is to enable PWDs who are of the same and equal value as we are to lead a good life. What is the belief that guides our choices? It comes from a person's society, culture, customs and norms.

What gives the Government the authority to discuss the amendments to the DDO? It has imposed a number of restrictions, and the amendments all serve to facilitate its administrative work. But the objective effect is leading to further discrimination against PWDs. Therefore, we must give PWDs the freedom of choice.

Referring to the Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report on Disability 2013, the poverty rate of the 500 000 population with disabilities after welfare policy intervention is nearly 30%, meaning that one in every three PWDs is considered poor on average. The overall monthly income of the working poor with disabilities is \$3,600, amounting to 45% of the income of the general working poor. Nevertheless, the Government is still reluctant to introduce measures to enable them to enjoy transport subsidies in one go. Instead, we have to "squeeze him a bit so that he will spit out a bit", just like squeezing a tube of toothpaste. We find it utterly annoying that legislative amendments have to be introduced every time.

Those who take transport can enjoy concessions, while those who do not will not get such benefits. It sounds really fair. Do they take transport often? Buddy, they are PWDs. Will they take the trouble to make a ride just because there are concessions? Are they so mad as to use every mode of transport once, taking vehicles, ferries, the MTR, minibuses and GMBs? These favours are only of petty nature, but they are still subject to restrictions. Secretary Matthew CHEUNG, even if you have done something good, others will see you as a baddie, not to mention the fact that you are supposed to do it as it is your job. The money does not belong to Secretary Matthew CHEUNG. Moreover, for what reasons are public transport operators not required to take up some of the responsibilities? The profits tax rate is just 17%. When we demand a 1% rise, it is like killing them.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any other Member wish to speak?

(No Member indicated a wish to speak)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): If not, I now call upon the Secretary for Labour and Welfare to reply. The debate will come to a close after the Secretary has replied.

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I am very grateful to the six Members for offering a number of useful suggestions just now, most of which being positive comments on the Scheme. In fact, it has also benefited a large number of elderly and persons with disabilities (PWDs). I will give a broad reply as several Members have put forward very similar views.

Let me first respond to the five questions of "why" of Mr WONG Kwok-hing, during which part of my answer is also relevant to other Members' questions. First, he asked if the Scheme would cover persons with loss of one limb. In fact, at an earlier meeting of the Panel on Welfare Services, we have explained this issue. It is a rather complex topic because the definitions of loss of one limb and disability are closely related. What we have to do now is to look at the overall definition of the Disability Allowance (DA) before conducting a comprehensive review. The Labour and Welfare Bureau has also set up an

inter-departmental group. We have all along been making much effort, and we have commissioned the University of Hong Kong to conduct a study to see what is worthwhile for us to learn from overseas experience, and make reference to the Census and Statistics Department's recent survey and data relating to PWDs, and so on. The relevant study is nearing the final stage, and I expect that a report will be submitted to the Commission on Poverty when the work is completed later on in order to give a full account of the situation and advise on the step to be taken next. This is the first point.

Secondly, a Member questioned why the Scheme covering green minibuses (GMBs) this time around has to be implemented in phases but not earlier. In my opening remarks earlier, I have indicated that the first batch involves 110 operators and some 380 routes, amounting to about 78% of the routes. Why are other operators or routes unable to implement the Scheme at the same time? We have also fully explained this issue in the earlier meeting of the relevant panel. In the case of GMBs, there are about 150 different operators. Some of them are large in scale, while others are small operators. As Members may know, the process of launching a scheme must involve discussions from multiple perspectives at the financial, audit and technical levels. As the progress of the operators' preparatory work varies, for those which are relatively mature and able to implement the Scheme earlier, we will encourage them to implement it earlier. In fact, the Transport Department (TD) maintains close contact with these operators, and hosts joint meetings to encourage them to join the Scheme as soon as possible. At this stage, Members are aware that we plan to roll out the first phase at the end of March this year. By then, 78% of the total, amounting to about 380 routes will benefit.

What will happen when it proceeds to the second phase? After the implementation of the first phase, we will race against time and hope to roll out the second phase within two to three months as soon as it matures. We expect that by then, about 10 operators can offer dozens of routes. I hope that in the second phase, the Scheme can cover 80% of the routes in total. As to the other routes, most of them have been covered by services provided by the MTR and franchised buses, so certain arrangements will be made. But we will continue to encourage them because after all, the Scheme is voluntary in nature. The TD has also agreed to require newly licensed GMBs to join the Scheme, while the existing ones can still join on a voluntary basis. We will keep up with our effort, hoping that full coverage can be achieved in the near future.

The third question is about the hardware issue mentioned by Mr WONG Kwok-hing. I agree with him, and in fact, both Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr SIN Chung-kai have also mentioned the importance of hardware. We are talking not just about PWDs. Hong Kong's population is also ageing rapidly. At present, there is one elderly person in every seven people. By 2041, there will be one elderly person in every three people. Hence, 25 years later, we will have more than 2 million elderly persons. In fact, given the importance of barrier-free access, first, we will continue to work on this aspect and maintain close contact with public transport companies in the hope of providing more barrier-free facilities.

As to buses, earlier on, Mr WONG Kwok-hing mentioned that some buses were not fitted with a low-floor section. We have also contacted the bus companies and in fact, progress has been achieved in this regard. First, at present, about 75% of the franchised buses are low-floor buses. But for some roads on Lantau Island with steep gradient and sharp bends, it is rather difficult to retrofit buses with a low-floor section. For this reason, low-floor bus service does not cover that area for the time being. Other bus companies have clear policies under which every time they replace existing buses with new ones, they will only acquire low-floor models. It is expected that the replacement will be fully completed by 2017. That is to say, by 2017, all franchised buses — except those on Lantau Island where real technical difficulties exist, such as roads with steep gradient — will probably be fitted with a low-floor section. This task is expected to be completed by 2017.

The second point concerns the MTRCL. At present, every MTR station has at least one barrier-free access. In what mode is the access provided? It includes various modes, and lifts are the ideal form of facilities. Even if lifts are not installed, wheelchair aids, stair lifts or ramps will be in place. That is to say, certain facilities will be provided in one way or another. But certainly, we will seek the installation of lifts at stations where conditions permit.

Mr WONG Kwok-hing mentioned the situation of red minibuses (RMBs) and trams. Let me first talk about trams. Both Mr SIN Chung-kai and Mr WONG raised the issue of trams. In fact, we have similarly contacted the tramway company. First, it has all along been offering a concessionary fare of \$1.1 to the elderly. We appreciate the existing concession very much. Moreover, when we communicated with it, we mentioned that our policy was to

offer a "concessionary fare of \$2 per trip". We considered it hard to change this "yardstick" for the time being. But we indicated that the tram fare for PWDs is \$2.3 per trip, which is the same as the adult fare. In fact, we are more than happy to offer a certain amount of subsidy so that the fare will become \$2. However, they indicated their wish that the Government could offer a full subsidy to make it free of charge. As it has departed from our "\$2" policy, at this stage, we have difficulties doing this for the time being.

Nevertheless, as I have just said, we will regularly review and enhance the system. Therefore, when we have gained a full picture of the situation as a whole after the scheme has been extended to all GMBs and implemented for about one year, we will again conduct a comprehensive review to see whether there is room to enhance this policy or which aspects require adjustments from the perspectives of finance, transport and welfare. Hence, we will conduct a comprehensive review of all the related issues when there is room to do so.

What about RMBs? It will be even harder to cover RMBs. The existing fares and routes of RMBs are not subject to the regulation of the TD. As we all know, RMBs can increase their fares at any time. Second, we have audit and other different requirements. Given the stringent financial requirements, RMBs stand a slimmer chance of implementing the Scheme.

As to other modes of transport such as the Peak Tram, kaitos, and so on, we think that consideration can be made only in the comprehensive review to be conducted later. As regards kaitos, most of them are actually given permission to carry passengers. At present, with the approval of the TD, the Scheme already covers some kaitos, and we will also implement it expeditiously.

As regards another issue, I wish to respond to the two points raised by Mr WONG Yuk-man. First, according to him, "the Scheme has yet to cover ferries". In fact, as early as in March 2013, the Scheme already covered ferries. For GMBs, now it can be regarded as entering the final stage. We know that difficulties will arise every time we introduce legislative amendments, but we have no choice as we must not risk being challenged in court. For this reason, the Department of Justice considers a proper approach necessary. Last time, we also adopted this approach, so this time around, we have to do the same, albeit reluctantly. I hope Members will understand our position.

Earlier on, Mr WONG questioned why a transport supplement was not provided to PWDs in order to resolve the issue. At present, we have actually provided a transport supplement, and this measure has been in effect for several years. We offer eligible persons with severe disabilities a monthly transport subsidy of \$245 for their travelling by Rehabus or taxi.

Deputy President, I wish to stress again that with the approach adopted by us this time around, we hope to extend the concession to cover GMBs in order to benefit more people. At present, the numbers of passenger trips made by the elderly and PWDs daily are 630 000 and 90 000 respectively. That is to say, the Scheme benefits some 700 000 passenger trips daily. I believe when the Scheme is extended to GMBs, it will definitely benefit more people. It is because we have learnt from the local community that currently when they go out for follow-up medical consultations, for example, at the Princess Margaret Hospital, they mostly rely on GMBs. The elderly and PWDs, especially the grassroots, think that they can benefit greatly from it. Therefore, we hope to implement it as soon as possible by the end of March.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I hope Members will support our resolution.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare be passed. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(No hands raised)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I think the question is agreed by a majority of the Members present. I declare the motion passed.

MEMBERS' MOTIONS

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Debates on motions with no legislative effect. This Council will now continue the debate on the motion on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people".

Does any Member wish to speak?

INCREASING UPWARD MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**Continuation of debate on motion which was moved on 18 December 2014**

MR CHEUNG KWOK-CHE (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the period between the end of each year and the beginning of the next is the time for the local music circles to present report cards. Not only are the award-winning songs a reflection of the preferences of young people nowadays, to some extent, they are also a microcosm of the social milieu.

Deputy President, in the Ultimate Song Chart Awards Presentation 2014 organized by Commercial Radio last week, the "My Favourite Song" award, which was chosen by ballot by the audience on site, was eventually won by the song "Hold up the Umbrellas" with a great number of votes. This reflects the fact that the campaign for genuine universal suffrage has occupied a very important position among the young generation nowadays. One line of the lyric reads, to this effect, "Let the hard rain pour Aspirations will never die". In fact, whenever I hear this, I feel gratified because young people in Hong Kong are telling the Hong Kong public that even after weathering through a tempest lasting more than two months, they have still not given up but will hold onto their convictions and aspirations. I believe that in the future, when this group of young people faces various challenges in their lives and no matter if the problems are related to their studies, careers or starting a family, they would also overcome the difficulties with the same attitude.

(THE PRESIDENT resumed the Chair)

In fact, in Hong Kong society, it is not just young people who need social mobility and for this reason, have certain views and speak up. Since the reunification, the Government has made a series of policy blunders, thus arousing the discontent of various social classes which have demanded, through such modes of expression as rallies or assemblies, that the Government improve its administration and people's livelihood. However, the Governments of past and present terms have all stood still and their policy responses were even feebler than the colonial Government's policy of adopting stopgap measures. As a result, the conflicts in society have intensified further.

The Vice Chairman of Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies, Prof Lau Siu Kai, even pointed out as early as 2011 that society had reached a critical point and that the Government should listen more to public views and review its role. Young people, as a more active group in society, definitely have more views. Naturally, the outbreak of the Umbrella Movement was a foreseeable event. After the reunification, the Basic Law should have given Hong Kong people the ability and opportunity to be masters of their own house, rather than merely following the rut of the system in the colonial era, whereby the sole reliance on the establishment of advisory and statutory bodies can really not effectively reflect the pluralistic views of the public other than suppressing other political voices as a result. Unfortunately, in the face of the changes of the times, what we found in the past few years was that the method of the former colonial Government in taking on board opinions was still adopted and that the tradition of carrying out consultations on policies and formulating plans regularly has been neglected. Consequently, in social policies on such areas as education, housing, the economy and social welfare, either inappropriate measures were adopted or nothing whatsoever has changed, so there has not been any breakthrough. Hong Kong people expected a far-sighted and highly efficient Government but as it turned out, it was merely a dream. Therefore, confronted by such a desperate situation, it is only natural for young people to try to seek breakthroughs and find a way out.

President, a characteristic of young people is that they are idealistic and have the courage to break new grounds by taking actions to bring about social changes. For this reason, the role of young people in society is very important. Their every single move will affect the development of society. If we look at the world, we will find that not many governments appreciate this point. Some governments have the courage to take on board the views of young people but some others only regard the views of young people as challenges to authority and

the existing system and as a result, social problems are aggravated. In Hong Kong, great differences between the pre-reunification Hong Kong Government and the post-reunification Government can be found in the way they heeded or deal with the voices of young people, but I believe there has always been a failure in understanding young people's views fully and accurately.

Take the advisory framework of the existing Government as an example, the posts in the great majority of advisory committees are monopolized by elderly or middle-aged people and hardly any voice of young people can be heard. Based on the information provided by the Government, we know that among the advisory committees and statutory bodies under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Transport and Housing Bureau, the number of members under 30 years of age is zero and in the advisory committees and statutory bodies under the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, Development Bureau, Security Bureau, Environment Bureau, Education Bureau, the Labour and Welfare Bureau or the departments under them, over 99% of the members are 30 years of age or older. The government department that fares better is the Home Affairs Bureau. In the advisory committees and statutory bodies under this Policy Bureau or the departments under its management, members under 30 years of age account for a mere 1.1%. The best department in this regard is the Financial Services Branch, which has about 5% of such members who are 30 years of age or below.

The aforementioned examples all reflect the fact that under the existing government framework, the proportion of young people in it is greatly at odds with the reality that people aged 20 to 29 years account for 13.5% of the population, so may I ask how possibly could the Government avoid the tendency of divorcing itself from reality? How can it fully understand the views and needs of young people? In view of the voices from young people, I believe that apart from resolving various social problems and improving the economy, the Government must, in addition to the traditional pillar industries, foster diversified development to strengthen Hong Kong's economy; moreover, it is also necessary to enhance and promote the mobility of various social classes. In addition, major reforms within and outside the system have to be carried out. For example, reference can be made to the approach adopted by the Joint Committee on Student Finance under the Student Financial Assistance Agency, which allows students to play a direct role in the formulation of government policies at its regular meetings (*The buzzer sounded*) ... Thank you, President.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): President, when it comes to the opportunities for upward mobility for young people, in fact, we have to gain a better understanding of how young people look at various issues. To understand how young people look at various issues, it would actually be highly representative to look at how the group of young people in the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS) and Scholarism, which organized the Umbrella Movement, commented on society and the current situation, and how they look at their own future and through what ways they want to fight for their own future. In fact, if we look at this Public Sentiments Report, we will find that the great majority of government officials are still dozing, or like those three monkeys, covering their ears and eyes and seeing nothing. However, their mouths are still talking nonsense and this Public Sentiments Report fully reflects such an attitude.

If we want to truly understand young people, as is the case with many social issues and public policy issues, as officials, they really have to visit the local communities and get in touch with the masses, as I have told many government officials over chats with them. Be it the Secretary or the President, you all know this full well. You started out by organizing mass movements. In organizing mass movements, you have to go into the masses, understand the masses and gain an understanding of the needs and thinking of the masses, rather than treating the masses as a tool. At present, the Communist Party is treating the masses as a tool. After exploiting the support of the masses and seizing power, it treats the masses as rubbish. LEUNG Chun-ying is also like this. While running in the election, he said he would take a stool, a notepad and some paper to meet the masses in each district to have discussions with them. However, while preparing the Policy Address this year, he no longer visited any local community. The public were spurned and abandoned after being exploited. After such exploitation, they no longer have any political value.

Therefore, concerning the issue of young people, the Government also treats young people as a tool, does it not? The Government has talked about youth policy for a long time. On the needs of young people, many years ago, in particular, in the 1980s, when the British-Hong Kong Government found that young people were very discontented and there were problems — and of course, some riots involving young people also broke out — the Government made great efforts to promote various services, so youth services became a channel or a way for easing the anger of young people.

However, if you look at the youth problem now, I hope that if the Secretary has some time, he can read the *Declaration of the HKFS and the Tertiary Education Sector on the Class Boycott Campaign (full text)*. This declaration clearly reflects some views of young people in Hong Kong — I cannot say all of them but at least, it is a prominent part of them — particularly young people who are high-level intellectuals dissatisfied with the current situation, on the present problems. If you do not understand their views before discussing the so-called "upward mobility", you would practically be talking a load of nonsense. Even now, the senior echelons of the Government still cannot fully grasp the underlying beliefs and causes of the Umbrella Movement. In fact, the Umbrella Movement is closely related to the upward mobility of young people now under discussion. Why did this group of young people forgo their study and even their future prospects and development opportunities to commit themselves to this movement? This is to some extent related to the blockage of upward movement in society.

At the beginning of the declaration on the class boycott campaign published by the HKFS, their very dim view of the future of society is spelt out clearly. The beginning paragraph says to this effect, "The death of a city can always be attributed to the indifference of its people. The departure of an era can always be attributed to the abandonment by the masses. In order to reverse the fate of a place, it has always been necessary to rely on the disobedience of the locals who are making their last stand. Today, finding that our city, Hong Kong, is being crushed by the tyranny of the Chinese side and 720 000 ardent souls have been given a slap on the face, and its prosperity and future are crumbling and disintegrating under the greed of the Chinese Government and plutocrats, may we ask if this is Hong Kong's future, a home for us in the decades to come?" The passage ended with a question mark. If we look at the series of comments in the declaration, one of the appeals reads to this effect, "We definitely will not be resigned to our fate, because we vow to retake control of our future and become masters of our own fate!"

In addition, one of the paragraphs clearly spells out the Hong Kong in the eyes of this group of young people in Hong Kong. Secretary, I really hope that you can read it carefully. You are responsible for youth work and back then, you were also arrested for your enthusiasm. However, now that you have taken up the post of the Secretary, you are betraying the young people and betraying the Hong Kong public. The Home Affairs Bureau is responsible for mass work and the Bureau is a department responsible for controlling the masses in Hong Kong,

so by nature, it is a quasi-intelligence-and-law-enforcement unit. How did this group of young people describe Hong Kong? "Hong Kong will continue to degenerate into an absurd city ranking first in wealth disparity in the world: over one million children, young people, people in their prime of life, women and elderly people lead their daily lives of humiliation below the poverty line; universal retirement protection and standard working hours remain out of sight; the greedy MTR Corporation continues to make fare increases every year without ever reducing them ...". The entire passage directs criticisms at the wealth disparity and social injustices in Hong Kong and how the Government sides with the plutocrats. There is an array of discontents with the Government, the reality, current affairs as well as our times and in the end, they believe they have to retake control of their own future. In view of this, if the Government does not respond to these demands, there will be no end to the struggles and in the end, this Umbrella Movement and this struggle waged by the people may erupt into a real revolution at any time. I believe such a day is not far away.

MS STARRY LEE (in Cantonese): President, under globalization, young people lack opportunities of upward mobility and the unemployment rate among young people is higher than those of other age groups. That young people harbour grievances and become a new anti-government force is also a problem faced by many other developed cities in the world and of course, Hong Kong is not immune to this problem. Young people face difficulties in getting promotions, in acquiring their first home and in becoming upwardly mobile. Given these three difficulties, quite a number of young people mistakenly believe that democracy and universal suffrage are the panacea that can solve a multitude of social problems. However, they cannot see that in many places and countries where democratic elections are in place, there is still a heap of social problems and public grievances are still very intense.

President, before the adjournment on the last occasion, a Member criticized Mr Jeffrey LAM for having got the crux of the matter wrong in proposing this motion. Undeniably, constitutional reform is a topic of great concern to young people. However, young people are equally concerned about the three difficulties: Difficulties in getting promotions, in acquiring their first home and in becoming upwardly mobile. No matter in which direction the electoral system in Hong Kong goes and no matter who becomes the Chief Executive, the issue of young people having difficulties in moving up in society must be dealt with. Therefore, I call on Members not to denigrate the topic under discussion today.

This is indeed quite an important topic and they must not blame this situation of young people encountering the three difficulties on the absence of universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election at present, or describe it as a problem unique to Hong Kong. In fact, the fact that young people encounter the three difficulties can also be found in many cities. In Taiwan, the United Kingdom and other European cities, the problem of upward mobility for young people is also very prominent. Simply put, in all mature economies, irrespective of the design of their electoral system, they all have to explore and face this problem of upward mobility for young people. One would be irresponsible if this is not discussed and examined in earnest.

To properly deal with this situation of young people facing the three difficulties, first, a correct diagnosis must be made before the right cure for the illness can be administered. Recently, the Bauhinia Foundation Research Centre published a study report related to young people which is entitled *Level up! Let our youth reach for the sky*. President, citing scientific data, the report explores the socio-economic changes, as well as the changes in education, employment, business start-up and the business environment in Hong Kong over the past 20 years and how these changes have given rise to the difficulties in upward movement for young people, so it is worthwhile for the Secretary and the Government to read the report carefully.

Earlier on in the debate, many Honourable colleagues said that simply put, the reason for the difficulties in upward movement is that in the past two decades, the opportunities for young people to receive tertiary education has increased significantly but the median income of working young people is lower than that of the entire workforce in Hong Kong. This reflects the fact that having a high level of educational attainment does not mean earning a high income. However, a high level of educational attainment has raised expectations. Coupled with the restructuring of the Hong Kong economy and the emphasis on the service industries, choices in employment are restricted and there are fewer high-pay and high value-added jobs, thus resulting in great disparity in income. Against such a background, the overall mobility in Hong Kong society is lower than before.

President, generally speaking, the incomes of young people are not high and often, the rates of their annual pay rises are only slightly higher than the inflation rate. After various outgoings are deducted, it is difficult for them to keep any savings or enhance their quality of life. Coupled with the fact that some young people incurred an enormous debt while they were studying, this

group of young people find that they cannot catch up with property prices no matter how hard they work, nor can they see any prospect or any way out, so naturally, they feel very dejected.

President, it is true that the parents of some students have not noticed the changes in the socio-economic structure. They keep duplicating the past formula of success in society, convinced that "the worth of study excels all other pursuits". For this reason, in Chinese societies and Hong Kong society, many parents still exert their utmost to enrol their children in tertiary education institutions. Even if their children cannot go to university, they want them to enrol on sub-degree programmes. According to the figures on manpower supply and demand, at present, the supply of manpower at the sub-degree level exceeds the demand. President, in 2012, the excess was 7 900 people and if this situation persists, by 2022, the excess will increase to 12 900 people, that is, a few years later, 12 900 sub-degree graduates will not find any satisfaction in further study or employment. Caught between two stools, people are bound to develop grievances in society.

However, President, we often come into contact with friends in the business sector and the business sector often complains about not being able to find people with suitable skills. Even if they are willing to offer higher pay, no one is willing to join their trades. This precisely reflects the serious mismatch in human resources in society, as well as the fact that no importance was attached to vocational education in the past. It can thus be seen that the Government needs to change the tradition and customs, broaden the thinking of parents and students to make the general public understand that the formula of success is not limited to studying in universities only, rather, one can choose vocational education, learn a skill and in this way, it is also possible for young people to break new grounds. Together, we also have to promote a setting of diversified development among young people and together, we have to change the past concept of attaching importance to professionals and business to the neglect of vocational education and skills training in society.

President, in overseas countries, young people after completing their university education can look for employment having regard to their interest with greater peace of mind, and they are also willing to take up non-skilled jobs. For example, before the adjournment of the meeting on the last occasion, a Member also pointed out that in Scandinavian societies, the wish of some young people was to take up the skilled job of tattooing after graduation. However, in Hong

Kong society, if someone takes up a blue-collar job, he would be considered as having made no achievement in his study and being somewhat inferior. Therefore, we must make efforts together to encourage young people to develop in a diversified manner as well as carrying out vocational planning.

President, lastly, I wish to talk about officials visiting the local communities to understand the discontents and heartfelt voices of young people. I agree absolutely with this point and believe the relevant Policy Bureau must do so immediately. Government officials are like parents, so they must listen to public opinions through various channels. We have to face the discontents of young people in a humble manner and cannot put them down to the generation gap because as parent-like officials, our goal in administration is not to serve our own ends but to create a better society for the next generation, so that the next generation can lead a better life.

President, I so submit.

MR SIN CHUNG-KAI (in Cantonese): President, in the speeches of a number of Honourable colleagues, the upward mobility of young people and the Umbrella Movement were mentioned, and many Honourable colleagues of the pro-establishment camp also said that in many countries practising democracy, quite a number of social problems had arisen, so they questioned if democracy could solve all the problems. Of course, I understand this argument but I also have to point out very clearly that although universal suffrage cannot solve all the problems, without it, no problem can be solved.

At present, a crisis in governance has arisen. Indeed, no matter what policy the LEUNG Chun-ying Administration or the present Government introduces, doubts will always be cast on the underlying reasons, for example, if there is any collusion between business and the Government, if there are other motives, and so on. Therefore, if the core issue of universal suffrage cannot be resolved, future Governments will encounter great difficulties in all aspects of their administration.

The topic today revolves mainly round opportunities of upward mobility for young people and it is also time that a comprehensive review of this issue was conducted. I believe that 50 years ago, the Secretary was also a young man with plenty of enthusiasm. Just now, Mr Albert CHAN also mentioned this point.

After the riots in 1967 and after the British-Hong Kong Government at that time had conducted a series of reviews and set up some committees, youth services were developed and summer programmes were introduced, so as to resolve the issue of upward mobility for young people or the youth problem.

Nowadays, we also face a similar problem which is even more massive. What the Umbrella Movement this time around highlighted was not just the issue of the struggle between democracy and the lack of it. I wish to explore this issue in my capacity as a Member of the so-called pro-democracy camp. In fact, you can see that a group of young people said at the beginning of the Umbrella Movement that the constitutional reform this time around could not repeat the failures of the democratic movement in the past three decades. Right from the beginning, the Movement became an inter-generational struggle in the pro-democracy camp. I hope Members could understand this point. The young generation nowadays is different from their predecessors in the past. The channels through which they receive information are no longer the mainstream mass media in mainstream society. No matter how the Government influences the "CCTVB", the effect is limited. The information that the young generation receives comes from their peers and the Internet. This group of young people — in fact, this is not confined to Hong Kong, rather, similar situations have arisen in various parts of the world — not only demand that the Government respond, they also demand that they have a certain degree of participation and that in the whole policymaking process, their voice can be found in it. This is not just participation in democracy but also participation in policymaking. I hope the Secretary and even the business sector can both understand that in directing their companies and in the process of governance, they have to face the young generation and address their discontents.

Let me cite a remoter example. In the past, when an ordinary company handled internal complaints, it would meet with the young person, put him on a long detour and deal with the complaint slowly, so that it would take more than two months. If we deal with young people in the same way nowadays, the complaint against this company may have already been shared countless times on various Facebook pages and the loss in terms of the so-called business reputation of this company would be heavy. Simply put, we can no longer adopt the old mindset in responding to the demands of young people. Therefore, Secretary, it is time the youth policy was reviewed comprehensively. However, if we want to review the youth policy, the first thing is — I trust the grandchildren of the Secretary have also become young people now — to determine whether or not it

is necessary to understand the new generation anew in a comprehensive manner? In particular, these are young people of the Internet generation, so what are their characteristics? If the Secretary fails to conduct a full study or make a full comparison, I believe the policies formulated in the future will not be the right cures for various ills. If we want to make a comparison, certainly we have to compare and study different generations of Hong Kong people altogether.

In addition, given that young people in Hong Kong and other societies of the advanced Internet generation are influenced by the Internet and their peers in their development, what is equally worthy of study is: What are the characteristics of their various demands in respect of participation in the administration by the Government and in politics, and what influences are they subjected to? Secretary, I think this is a major subject in any examination of the youth policy in the future. This problem cannot be solved simply by studying if they can buy their own properties or if they can acquire their first homes. If we build a couple of youth hostels more but no young people want to move into them after completion, the so-called patriotic youth will then be mobilized to move into them. Despite spending the money, the right cure cannot be administered. I hope that when the Secretary formulates a youth policy, he could listen to more voices that may not be so pleasing to the ear. Only in this way can we get a handle on how to formulate future policies. Otherwise, the conflicts between the Government and the new generation will grow increasingly serious.

In fact, this so-called inter-generational struggle is not just a struggle between democracy and the lack of it. This is not so. Even in respect of the same belief, inter-generational conflicts exist. This kind of inter-generational conflicts is catalysed and intensified by the Internet and the flow of information. I hope that the Secretary or the Government as a whole — not just the Home Affairs Bureau but also the Education Bureau — can look at how they can understand our new generation or the young generation again, with a view to synthesizing their voices into the policymaking process. It is even more important to see how young people can be assimilated, so that they can play a part in the process of policymaking.

Although some ploys may seem to have gone out of date, it does not mean they are useless. I remember that when I was a student, a friend studying in the department of political science made an analysis of the policies in the British-Hong Kong era. The policy of the British-Hong Kong era often stressed "administrative absorption", that is, absorbing the voices of opposition into the

administrative system, so as to eliminate them. Secretary, this principle can also be applied to the consideration of how best to make use of administrative absorption to absorb the voices of discontent into the administrative system, and then iron them out.

MR WONG KWOK-HING (in Cantonese): President, in their speeches on the upward mobility of young people, the pan-democrat Members often made descriptions and representations only from their own political position and political convictions. I think this is biased and lacks credibility.

President, I have just received from the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong the first issue of its magazine, the theme of which is "青年貧窮，何去何從" (Youth Poverty — Where do they go from here). In the first issue of this magazine, a thematic study was conducted to explore the problem of youth poverty, and I think it has quite impartially and objectively reflected the current situation of youth poverty and the aspirations of the young people. For example, in referring to youth unemployment in Hong Kong, the article pointed out that in 2013, the overall unemployment rate was 3.4% but the unemployment rate among young people aged 15 to 19 was 13.5%, which was four times of the overall unemployment rate; and for the age group of 20 to 24, the unemployment rate was 7.3%, which was 2.1 times of the overall unemployment rate. Talking about the problem of youth poverty, the article cited the overall median income of \$12,000 in 2011 but the median income of young people was only \$8,000.

In the magazine there are some descriptions of the current situation of young people and I think it is worthwhile to draw the Government's attention to them. The article pointed out that according to information, the number of associate degree students in 2011-2012 was 86 600, and 70% of them studied self-financed associate degree programmes, paying high tuition fees and eventually bearing debts amounting to \$100,000. Meanwhile, according to the information of the Population Census, the median income of young people graduated from associate degree programmes was only \$6,500, which was far lower than the income of \$7,540 for senior secondary graduates or \$7,000 for junior secondary graduates. I think their descriptions are quite impartial and have accurately reflected the situation.

What are the aspirations and hopes of the young people? The survey pointed out that about 30 000 young people aged 15 to 24 are unemployed and

about 50% of them have received education at the associate degree level or above. All they lack is job opportunities and even in-service training opportunities. They have conducted a questionnaire survey and compiled statistics, and the findings show that 64.7% or a great majority of the respondents called for the creation of job vacancies to provide employment opportunities; 30% called for the provision of more government-subsidized tertiary education places; 19.9% called for the introduction of friendly policies, such as tax concessions, to encourage the business sector to hire young people; and for the other groups that account for smaller percentages of the respondents, I am not going to read them out one by one.

They have made three suggestions. First, they call on the Government and various sectors of the community to provide temporary jobs which can play a transitional role to facilitate the gradual transition of young people from schools to the actual work environment while developing a good work attitude in them and building up their confidence in employment. Second, they hope that the Government will adopt a youth-oriented approach to encourage employment. Instead of purely targeting the imbalance between supply and demand in the labour market, the Government should attract young people to join such industries as elderly care and construction by offering good wages to them and put emphasis on such incentives as the prospects of the industry, promotion ladder, and so on, in creating opportunities for young people. Third, the Government should provide diversified career and training options to give play to the characteristics of young people of being adventurous and creative, thereby enabling them to bring their talents into play in suitable jobs or positions.

I have cited their suggestions in detail because I wish to truly convey the findings of this representative non-profit-making organization on the wishes and aspirations of young people, in order to prevent distortions by people with ulterior motives who said that launching a law-breaking Umbrella Movement or whatsoever or organizing movements to topple the LEUNG Chun-ying Administration is the solution to all the problems. These are all specious arguments, and wrong approaches and political goals. Therefore, I hope that the authorities can make reference to this survey, and I can pass the findings to the Secretary for consideration after this meeting.

President, on the youth issue, we should deeply recount experiences and lessons, and we should conduct studies and identify solutions through inter-departmental efforts and cross-portfolio initiatives. Meanwhile, there

should be involvement not only from the Government, various sectors of the community and various trades and industries, but also from different sides in parallel because while this issue concerns material and mentality, it also involves software and hardware, and also history and the prevailing circumstances, as well as reality and various factors in the future. Therefore, we hope that the authorities can earnestly take this into consideration.

As for what can be done now, I hope Members in the pan-democratic camp and Members in the opposition camp can refrain from filibustering again in the Legislative Council because their filibustering will affect the current livelihood and the future of many families and many young people. For example, due to their repeated filibustering, civil servants and employees of subvented organizations have not yet received their back-pay though they are supposed to be given a pay rise from 1 April last year. If they filibuster again in the future, civil servants and over 100 000 employees in the subvented sector or over 100 000 families and hundreds of thousand people will be affected, including a large number of young people whose quality of living will definitely be undermined.

On the other hand, if they continue to filibuster in the future, the Government's public works projects will not be able to obtain funding. This year, the provision made for public works projects has dropped to only \$3.6 billion. From the original annual provision of about \$70 billion to \$80 billion, the amount has dropped to only several billion dollars now. This will greatly affect the employment prospects of young people, and the trainees trained by the Government and the industries will not be able to land a job. Therefore, I hope that they can open the gate as soon as possible (*The buzzer sounded*) ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr WONG, speaking time is up.

MR CHAN HAN-PAN (in Cantonese): President, the topic under discussion today is the upward mobility of young people, which is a very important issue. However, the last pan-democrat Member here has just left the Chamber, which means that after all the pan-democrat Members had hurled criticisms at others during the debate at the last meeting, their whereabouts are unknown today.

Mr CHAN Hak-kan and I have raised the problems relating to young people for discussion on many occasions in the past. We consider that young people face problems mainly in four areas, namely, education, employment, home ownership and business start-up. However, some Members have attributed the problems of young people to political aspirations as if once the issue of universal suffrage is resolved, all the other problems will be resolved too. Some Members have even used this as an excuse for voicing their other views to create class conflicts. I consider this approach of generalization contemptible. They said that whatever social problem is a political problem; whatever youth problem is a problem relating to universal suffrage. They simply do not do any thinking, and such being the case, they only relate any problem to politics and then consider the matter settled without having to do any thinking at all. Therefore, I think this view and approach are grossly irresponsible.

Today, within my limited speaking time, I would like to talk about employment and business start-up. Let me start with employment. On the surface Hong Kong has plenty of opportunities but our young people actually face the problem of having limited choices of career paths. If they do not choose such pillar industries as finance or retail, they actually do not have many choices. We must make plans for the young people and as time changes, we believe the job types should be professionalized and diversified.

Last month, a group of young people from the Federation of New Territories Youth and I visited the golf course on Kau Sai Chau. Most of these young people, including myself, had never played golf before. On that day, we had the chance to play golf in the driving range. One of the young men who was playing golf for the first time drove the ball beyond 120 yards with almost every swing. Even the coach found this amazing and considered him very talented. But then I thought even if this youth has the talent, on these fairways measuring 200 hectares, will he be able to make the grade in this profession? During the visit we learned that a golf institute is planned to be developed on Kau Sai Chau, which can provide one more way out for the young people in Hong Kong and by then, the local universities may probably offer one more subject, namely, club management or golf course care.

Speaking of golf course care, I immediately thought of an international soccer match held in Hong Kong at the Hong Kong Stadium last year. In the wake of successive heavy downpours, the turf became a sea of mud, thus turning us into an international laughing stock. These professions will precisely provide

one more way out for the young people, and Hong Kong precisely needs these diversified professional job types. Some people may ask me when this good idea will be realized. I did make enquiries about when this institute will open. The person in charge replied that he did not know because the Government had imposed many barriers and the project had not yet been approved. I think this is how the Government has always acted. Whenever there is a good proposal intended to be implemented in Hong Kong, there would be a diversity of barriers and restrictions, and there is nowhere that the proponents can turn to for assistance. Therefore, we hope that the Government will not act like having poor co-ordination of its hands and feet. In order to facilitate development, it should seize every opportunity that may arise to help develop these pathways and assist the young people in exploring more different pathways.

Besides, I wish to talk about business start-up. If we ask the Government what measures it has in place to facilitate young people in starting up businesses, it will say that we have six industries where Hong Kong enjoys clear advantages and among them, the creative industry is definitely most suitable for young people. But when it comes to creativity, the Government will say that we have the Science Park, that construction works are in progress under who knows which phase, and that it is going to develop this and that. It is true that we have the hardware but nothing is going to work without the support of software. Just as Master Chef LEUNG Man-to has said, "How could it be a hot pot meal without a pot?"

After the reunification, the Government has often given people the impression that it has acted overcautiously like a neat freak in politics. It is often afraid of being criticized for colluding with the business and so, it has made every effort to keep a distance from the business sector, even going to the extreme sometimes. Some young business starters operating in the Science Park have told me that the best way to support them would be the Government adopting their research products. However, the Government has not done this in its procurement practices, thus inhibiting their creativity from being brought into full play. They have made a good point, and this has reminded me of the T21 prenatal test which is purely invented by Hong Kong but has not been adopted in Hong Kong, though it has been extensively performed in Taiwan and the United States.

Let me cite another example. I have recently talked to an inventor who, in view of frequent cases of windows falling from height, have made great efforts to

invent a steel wire that can prevent windows from falling down. The wire can be bolted onto the window and the window will never fall down onto the street. However, the Government has only concentrated on its windows inspection scheme which can address only the symptoms but not the crux of the problem and does not even care to take a look at this achievement made by him through painstaking research efforts. Although he owns the patent, it is a pity that his product has not been put to any use.

I think this mentality must be changed if we would like the young people to engage in high technology and high value-added industries. I used to think about pursuing a career in the high-tech industry too, but many veteran members of the industry told me that there was this saying in the trade: "high-tech, losers; low-tech, winners". Nowadays, I think this situation still has not changed. Why does the Government not follow the example of Singapore in providing support to these creative industries?

Having said that, in retrospect, I think it is actually most important for young people to have vision. Hong Kong is a world city which is equally famous as London and New York. This status is attributed to the hard work of the last generation. People in the new generation should seriously strive for improvement and self-esteem. But much to our regret, the recent years have seen the emergence of localist thinking which has confused and misled the young people. Some people hold that priority should be given to the locals. I think priority can be given, but one must have dedicated efforts and made contribution to this place in order to be given priority in access to certain things, and this is only reasonable. But most unfortunately, those people from localist groups have developed into localist hegemonists, promoting the exclusion of foreigners. This makes me feel that the situation will develop to a state where young people in Hong Kong are like pampered fops born with a silver spoon in their mouths. This is not favourable to our next generation. That said, I do believe our future society will understand better and better the development of society as a whole, and I also believe our young people will achieve better development.

MR RONNY TONG (in Cantonese): President, I think people who know me are aware that I am particularly concerned about upward social mobility. President, I am particularly concerned about it because I am a beneficiary of upward social mobility myself. From my past experience, I would say that I can understand more clearly how important upward social mobility is to the young people and also to the poor.

However, President, this area of concern seems to be remote from the SAR Government. It is remote from the SAR Government because the latter has always refused to admit firstly, there is a need to speed up social mobility in Hong Kong and secondly, the fact that social mobility is a problem in society in this era today.

President, I recall very clearly that during Donald TSANG's era about four years ago, at a consultation session on the policy address I said to the then Chief Executive, Donald TSANG, that Hong Kong was facing the downward movement of young people, which means that they were unable to move upward and instead, they were moving downward to the next lower stratum. Donald TSANG and I had quite a heated debate at the time. He said that it was not true. Then I cited the findings of an opinion poll conducted by an authoritative newspaper at the time but he still refused to admit it. He turned around to the other officials who were in attendance, asking them if they thought that there was this problem. I have forgotten whether the Secretary was among those officials in attendance then, but he should not be there, for that was the last-term Government. But the officials present all shook their heads. They did not accept that there was a problem with social mobility in Hong Kong. However, President, this problem is one which we must address squarely, and the information available to us now has indeed proved that this is undeniably a serious problem in Hong Kong.

President, according to an analysis recently made by the department of social work of the University of Hong Kong on in-work poverty in various age groups, the in-work poverty rate in the group of youths aged 15 to 24 in particular has increased from 3.9% in 1981 to 8.2% in 2011, showing an increase of about 5%. Compared to the overall in-work poverty rate of 7.6% in 2011, we can see a most significant and worrying trend of downward movement of young people. On the other hand, we can note from another survey that among 10 regions in Asia, the happiness index of young people in Hong Kong ranked the third last, which was just higher than Malaysia and Macao.

President, these figures show that in respect of employment and upward mobility of young people, we face a very serious problem and this problem does not arise only today or purely from the constitutional reform, but because of negligence by the SAR Government over the years. Therefore, President, in this debate today, it is most imperative that the SAR Government addresses this problem squarely. I also hope that in his speech later on, the Secretary will

openly admit that we face a serious problem in social mobility, especially the mobility of young people, because it is only when the problem is addressed squarely that we will have the resolve to tackle the problem at root and reverse this unacceptable trend.

President, this issue cannot be explained in a few words, but a most obvious point which also warrants our concern is how we can give our young people an education that gives them the ability to move upward. President, I have noticed that last week, there were reports in the press about the Government releasing news about cutting subsidized places for non-local students but meanwhile, the Government did not put across any message that these resources would be channelled to the provision of places for local students. President, perhaps LEUNG Chun-ying wanted to leave this for announcement by himself in the policy address to be delivered next week, but I hope that in respect of subsidized places — Frankly speaking, we have kept repeating this in the policy debate every year but the SAR Government has refused to increase the provision of subsidized places. Having said that, the provision of more subsidized places is only one of the solutions, and we must also pay attention to whether there will be career progression pathways for the young people after they have received education. Nowadays, the development of the Hong Kong economy is limited to the financial services industry, and this is unhealthy.

President, in order to increase the opportunities for upward mobility, we must make the utmost effort to broaden the career pathways for young people, and I hope that the SAR Government will do a lot more in this regard. Thank you, President.

MR JAMES TIEN (in Cantonese): President, the situation mentioned in this motion on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people" has actually been going on in different places at different times. Even in Hong Kong, for instance, we grew up in the 1960s when most young people worked in the manufacturing sector. At that time, there were many factories in Hong Kong, such as garment manufacturing factories, plastic factories, metals workshops, and so on. Back then, we were able to find suitable opportunities or business opportunities in Hong Kong that gave us a role to play.

Then in the 1980s, society provided opportunities in the so-called service industries. At that time, the tourism industry was robust with many tourists coming to Hong Kong. Given that land and wages were expensive, many young

people were engaged in the retail and catering industries or other tourism-related jobs. Certainly, I have noticed that nowadays, whether in Hong Kong or places all over the world, those who can make the best development are no longer people engaging in the traditional real estate industry or people engaging in financial services or IPO or listing business as a number of Members have said, but people who are engaged in technology or online business with which I am not familiar. As we can see in the recent examples of Alibaba or Tencent, companies making significant financial achievements or in other words, companies making a lot of money very quickly in the world are all engaged in business related to information technology. However, I have noticed that their situation is not quite the same as ours in the past when we worked in the manufacturing sector. Many of those engaged in the manufacturing sector in the past could own hundreds of garment manufacturing factories or thousands of toy factories, but with regard to this thing called technology that we are now talking about, not even one in tens of thousand people can become successful, and perhaps only one in a few million people or even one in a few hundred million people can become successful. Even though many young people can have the opportunities, only one or two successful examples can be cited.

Therefore, I think it is quite difficult to handle the discussion on this issue nowadays. Hong Kong is actually already better than many places overseas. For example, the youth unemployment rate is 25% in Greece and 24% in Spain. The overseas economy is in the doldrums, especially in Europe where the unemployment rate among young people is as high as 20%. How do they make a living? We certainly have no idea, and I find it all the more incomprehensible when their happiness index seems to be higher than ours in Hong Kong. Perhaps their happiness index and the aspirations of their young people do not purely depend on whether they are out of job or not, or whether the salaries of their employment or jobs are satisfactory, or whether they think they are lucky. Of course, general speaking, it has been the case over the years that foreigners are more keen to pursue an enjoyable life whereas in Hong Kong, a major problem over the years is that everyone feels that competition is the only concern in Hong Kong. This is the case from kindergarten to primary school and all the way to university as one has to compete with others in order to find a good job and to make a living after graduation. There is nothing but work day in day out, and there is simply no time for rest and enjoyment. The young people have the same feeling too, as they are worried that if they slow down their pace to take some rest, they will not be able to catch up with others once they lag behind and so, they are under even greater pressure.

Therefore, I think it is not at all fair to pass the buck to the Government or the business sector. Members of the labour sector always blame the employers or enterprises for the lack of upward mobility opportunities for young people, questioning why they do not provide more good jobs to facilitate the upward movement of young people. I have also noticed that a decade ago, for instance, many university graduates could make an income of \$10,000. Our graduates today are still making an income of \$10,000 but the prices in Hong Kong nowadays are far more expensive than those a decade ago, and property prices have also surged. When drawing a comparison, young people nowadays certainly feel more discontented with the future of society.

Of course, people always think that young people's inability to buy a property is indicative of a lack of upward mobility opportunities for them, while the pan-democrats have put forward a new point of view about fighting for universal suffrage. But can the fight for universal suffrage make all the young people happy? I have misgivings about this. Universal suffrage is implemented in various places of the world, and this may probably be due to their problems in race or religion, and many of these problems cannot be found in Hong Kong. But in general, our achievements in healthcare, education, housing, and so on surpass many places worldwide where direct elections are implemented. Is the election of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage the solution to all the problems? Is it that when we have truly achieved the genuine universal suffrage as referred to by the pan-democrats, the young people who participated in Occupy Central would be very happy and that their aspirations would all be met? I think this may not necessarily be the case. Universal suffrage is one of the problems, and perhaps they cannot buy their own property or they cannot find a spouse, and so on. All of these are problems too.

On the other hand, on the part of the Government, let me turn to the problem that I have noted recently. I think the Government can do better in governance and communication. Society is governed by the Government; so are the young people. If the Government would like to forge communication with them, I think as most officials are no better than me in the use of technology, it is actually impossible for them to communicate with the next generation. Then how can they communicate with each other, in order to find out about their current aspirations? It may be the case that many of the things that they want can hardly be provided by the Government. For example, if they want their boss to give them a good job, how possibly can the Government do so? If the Government allows them to hold an election, will the Central Authorities object

to it? Even if they are allowed to do these things, will society definitely become very good? What exactly is going to happen? I think it is impossible for the Government to resolve this. Having said that, I think the Government should still hold more discussions with the young people. This involves not only the policy area under the charge of Secretary TSANG Tak-sing, as the duties of almost all the other Directors of Bureaux are related to the living of young people. I think there must be better harmony, and the Government should talk to the young people more by all means and accommodate their wish where possible and if it is impossible to accede to their demands, it may be necessary to analyse the situation to them. However, I think the biggest problem with the Government's governance now is that it has failed to forge communication not only with the pan-democrat Members but also with the young people alike, and we can already see this in the Occupy Central incident. If things go on this way, I think young people in the community will feel all the more discontented. Thank you, President.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): President, incidentally, this motion debate on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people" is held after the conclusion of the Umbrella Movement. By all appearances, there is no relation between the two. The Umbrella Movement is a movement for democracy. But we can see that this Umbrella Movement which is mainly led by young people can have resulted in an occupation for 79 days. These young people slept on the streets, bore the showering of tear gas, police batons, kicks and punches, bullies and threats, and even gave up their future in being arrested by the Police. Many of these leaders from the young people, like those from the Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism, have braved the Police who settle scores with them and high-handed retaliation by the Government. Why did they come out despite all these?

Mr Jeffrey LAM proposed this motion debate. He is a representative of the pro-establishment camp and a Member of the Executive Council. Maybe he has proposed this motion to give a sense of relief and do something to aim at harmony, thinking that this will solve the problems. He is trying to simplify the problems, thinking that it is because the young people cannot get a promotion, buy a home or get a salary rise. Or it may be a case like that described by Mr James TIEN just now, that the young people cannot find a good job or a wife. It looks like that on the surface.

But beneath the surface there are fundamental problems with the system, that is, the political system. We often say that after the reunification, the Government should take a people-oriented approach. The Secretary who was also a public officer before the reunification is now sitting here. He will know that previously we used to hate the colonial government very much. Now it has been 17 years since the reunification and in theory, our days should be much better than before. But has there been such a change?

Basically, those who have powers under this social structure or those who have powers in this Council are still a minority. They are the small number of elites, or some rich people in the business sector, or those political parties supported by the rich. For if not, how can we explain the existence of so many policies which are characterized by blatant distortion, policies which should never have existed at all, for example, the high land price policy and those policies which hinder the development of the young people. As an example, when the young people cannot further their studies, what the Government has done is not to increase the number of subsidized university places. Instead it is doing some kind of post-secondary education that we call "short-piling education" by increasing the number of associate degree places. This is sort of a "great, fake and hollow" response to the needs of society in a perfunctory manner.

The truth is that in society nowadays and in this political system, the young people, like most of the grassroots, do not have any say. Of course, it would be another story if they are lucky enough to be like LEUNG Chun-ying who has turned from a not so well-off person to a rich man who lives on the Peak and joined the Communist Party.

But the ordinary young people or most of them are not so lucky. It may well be that they have to spend their lives at the lowest stratum of society. Twenty years ago, they earned a monthly salary of \$10,000 and now, 20 years down the line, they still make \$10,000 a month. But the cost of living is different now. Recently, there is this report about those Home Ownership Scheme flats, about a flat in Shui Wo Court in Sha Tin. Twenty or thirty years ago, the owner of that flat who was a teacher used 17 months of her salary to buy it. But 20 or 30 years later, someone from the next generation who is also a teacher and who has got a monthly salary of \$30,000 will have to spend 17 years to buy the same flat. So in this way, 17 months have become 17 years and on top of it, the person has to spend all of his income on servicing the mortgage. Of course, this is impossible.

The fact that the Government can allow these distorted policies to appear is due to certain reasons. From the time before the reunification to the time after it, we can only see distortion in society. Most of the policies we find are like those in the discussion on constitutional development today. Specially, with a Nominating Committee composed of 1 200 people who are the same people from the Election Committee, the functional constituencies and the rich and powerful in the past, it is just a game exclusive to them.

But they have the power to decide who is to govern Hong Kong and who is to stand in the election. They know what should be done. However, there are many things that they see but they pretend not to see and things they can hear but they pretend that they do not happen. This explains why we see that throughout these 10 years or so, the people's grievances are growing. Do not think like what Mr Jeffrey LAM said, that once more training and support are given, the young people will have more opportunities of upward mobility and problems in the political system will be ameliorated and there will be no Umbrella Movement. It is only a dream.

This is because if in this distorted system of ours, power does not come from each citizen equally, all those distorted policies and those policies which are not conducive to the upward movement of young people will just continue. All those many problems that we see — actually they do not emerge just today — problems like the lack of university places, rising property prices, the inability of people to start a business, and so on, problems that have been spoken about for 10 to 20 years, will just continue to emerge all the same. Our Government is not situated in a faraway planet like Mars or the Moon, but it refuses to make any changes. It is because the curse of power and the very source from whence it comes will remain unchanged. For 10 to 20 years, the same group of people has been ruling Hong Kong. And if this political system continues, it will remain the same in the next 33 years — if we take the system of Hong Kong to remain unchanged for 50 years as promised.

When we discuss the problem of upward mobility of young people, we can see that the Umbrella Movement offers a great opportunity for reflection because when suppression is dialled up all the more and when this system of distortion is retained, the voice of opposition and resistance will only become stronger than ever and the SAR Government will be unable to govern the place and society will be torn further apart. Do not think that all these problems will vanish after the clearance operations last month. This Government is beyond redemption and

society will be torn apart further more. As for the young people, they will continue to struggle and the Umbrella Movement will certainly stage a comeback. (*The buzzer sounded*) ... I so submit. Thank you, President.

MR CHAN CHI-CHUEN (in Cantonese): President, the motion today is on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people". It also echoes the cover page heading for the 2014 Policy Address of LEUNG Chun-ying last year. It reads "Let youth flourish". On the Chinese term for youth here, the words are "年青的" (nianqing di) (young). We have to point out the error here. Actually, last year the Secretary also admitted that the term should be "nianqing" which should be written as "年輕" but not "年青". Alternatively, the term to be used can be "青年人" (qingnian ren) or "年輕人" (nianqing ren), both meaning young people. I have just heard Dr KWOK Ka-ki say that very clearly. But LEUNG Chun-ying puts it as "年青的" (nianqing di) (young). Although the Secretary knew that he had used the wrong word, maybe he did not want to point out the error because he felt embarrassed to do so, or he had pointed that out only that LEUNG Chun-ying did not heed it.

Coming back to the topic of "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people", the subject is young people who are playing the leading role and the masters. But from what I have heard today, the young people have become a problem, as if there are problems with them and we should think of ways to help them. What policies does the Government have to help these young people who have got problems or who cannot adjust themselves to this society? Members do not ponder over the fact that it is not that the young people have got problems but it is the Government which has got problems and so is the social system and those of us who are adults. Just what are the aspirations of the young people? If Members have taken part in the Umbrella Movement or gone to the umbrella square to talk with the young people, they should have heard a lot of these. But the sites are cleared now. But if you had gone to Causeway Bay and Tsim Sha Tsui on Christmas or New Year's Eve and asked the people there what their wishes were, you would have heard things like "I want genuine universal suffrage". Now we can see that the words found on birthday cakes or people's birthday wish are "I want genuine universal suffrage". Even when Hong Kong people go to Taiwan and take part in the paper lantern activities, we can find that the words about genuine universal suffrage are written on these lanterns as people launch them into the sky.

When the Government or us adults who are parents see that the young people are unhappy, we want to know the reasons and we have to find out the crux of the problem instead of just giving them money, finding them a good job or sending them abroad for schooling. These are not the things we should do. If you ask these young people what wish they made, you will find that they do not want money, a job, a girlfriend or a boyfriend or a flat. All they want is just a fair and healthy social system and that of course, includes also the political system. So when Mr Jeffrey LAM proposes in his motion to provide training and support, it does not appear to be wrong or bad on the surface, but if we think harder, we will know that it is wrong. It is wrong in the major direction. The *Ming Pao Daily News* once conducted a survey on 1 032 students of senior secondary schools and tertiary institutions to find out what they were unhappy with the SAR Government. The findings showed that 47% of the interviewees were most unhappy with the Government's performance in handling political issues, including the disputes over the constitutional system. It is thought that Hong Kong is unable to realize the goals of "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy". It is obvious that people are most unhappy about this aspect.

I have had a look at the document for the second round consultation on constitutional reform which has just been issued today. The words "2017: SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY" are printed on the cover. Let us leave the words aside for the moment and just look at the colours. It is a rainbow but it does not really look like one. It is pale and lacklustre. This in fact shows what the future of Hong Kong is like and the future of Hong Kong hinges on these young people. It is not so far in time to speak about 2017. It does not have any colour and it is a rainbow that does not really look like a rainbow. It is really a warning issued to the Government or us adults. This is a warning to the adults from the young people. As opposed to materialism and grievances against the Government, the younger generation cares more about universal values such as freedom, justice, equality and such like values of a higher order. We may not be able to solve problems related to people's livelihood in this society, but the first and foremost thing we should do is to make things look pleasing to the eye and at least not make things go against one's conscience, namely to plug the loophole of the political system in it being tilted to the minority rich and powerful. In the past, the Government set up committees and advisory bodies and appointed these elites to such committees and bodies. This is called resorting to administrative measures to absorb such elites in a bid to ease conflicts in society. It is thought that such an approach can balance the political interests in various classes and

sectors. But this kind of approach is like an overused credit card that has exceeded its credit limit. About the question of upward mobility, Members may associate it with material benefits, like finding a job, buying a flat or starting a business. However, there is also upward mobility in political terms. Say, whether or not you want to become a voter of the Election Committee or a voter of the Nominating Committee. If you aim higher, you may want to become a member of the Election Committee. Actually, we are fighting to become members of the Election Committee. This is also a kind of upward mobility, that is, changing from being an ordinary member of the public or a member of the bottom stratum of society to a member of the Election Committee. And we hope that there is civil nomination, that is, every person can become a member of the Election Committee. This is the idea.

Members can see that different Members have mentioned many sets of figures, such as saying that the median income of young people is lower than that of the working population of Hong Kong. It is also said that there are signs of deterioration during the past 10 years. People have attained higher academic qualifications but their income has dropped. There is a full-scale decline in the percentage of young people employed in the professions. On the other hand, there are close to 60% of the graduates engaging in the clerical, service and sales trades. I used to think that there is no problem with that. If a child wants to become a tram driver, I would think that it is alright. It is because even the kindergarten teaches the pupils that there is no difference in social status with people's occupation. However, in reality, people will make fun of people who aspire to becoming a street sweeper. Now the following has really happened: there is no increase in the number of career opportunities, industries become monotonous, there is a downward movement of the young people and in fact, this trend of downward mobility is a common trend applicable to all people in Hong Kong.

On the prospects of a city — I fail to see any prospect for the LEUNG Chun-ying Administration — but such prospects should aim at the younger generation and a rosy future should be painted for the young people so that they can be filled with hope for the future. Now we may have a bad time though, we will hope that the next generation will have a good time. This is the reason why people in Hong Kong had fought and striven under such difficult times in the past. Now people fail to see good prospects for themselves or that the next generation will have a good time, so they prefer not to raise any children. The happiness index is declining all the time. We should jump out of the

materialistic side of upward mobility and look at things from a macro perspective before we can hope to solve the problem. (*The buzzer sounded*)

DR ELIZABETH QUAT (in Cantonese): President, first of all, I wish to thank Mr Jeffrey LAM for proposing this motion on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people".

It is very important that young people are given more opportunities to make the best of what they have learnt and give full play to their abilities such that they can strive to climb the social ladder. It is only when young people can give full play to their abilities and get support and encouragement in the course of their upward movement that there is development momentum for society.

President, we should have made use of this opportunity to analyse and discuss the problems, such as on factors hindering the upward movement of young people. We should also make suggestions to the Government and devise solutions and call upon the Government to work in close partnership with all sectors across the community and offer more opportunities to the young people.

An example is that certain young people think that property prices are too high and it is impossible for them to save enough money to buy a flat. In order to solve their housing problem, they have to apply for public housing. And since they do not want to exceed the income ceiling, they try to look for jobs with a lower pay and refuse to get promoted. This is both a waste of their abilities and time. It is thus evident that the housing problem is a factor which obstructs the upward movement of young people. Hence the Government should re-examine the relevant policy and exert more efforts to solve the housing problem of the young people.

In addition, if young people want to move up the social ladder, society must offer them a wide range of career development opportunities. The young people have different skills and aspirations. Some of them want to find a good job with promotion and development prospects. Some of them want to start a business and some want to pursue development in culture and the arts.

If Hong Kong is to provide opportunities to young people, we must promote the diversification of the industries, attract international talents and capitals to come here before we can create better job opportunities. Such are issues we should discuss.

Unfortunately, when pan-democrat Members spoke earlier, they tried to politicize this issue indefinitely and linked the issue with Occupy Central and the disputes over universal suffrage. A number of Members from the pan-democratic camp said, "even when opportunities for upward mobility increase, the young people will still want to take part in the Occupy Central movement"; "the young people of Hong Kong do not go after private gains or personal interests, they do not aim at a cosy life but they want genuine universal suffrage"; and "housing and economic development cannot solve the problems". They even said that "young people will not concede to a cause just for some minor benefits" and "Hong Kong has paid a heavy price for its economic development and it is time to pause and think carefully".

President, I would think that these comments are both dangerous and problematic. They will affect the opportunities of upward mobility for the young people. First of all, what is wrong with young people going after a good job and a comfortable home, upward mobility and a better life? There is no conflict with the pursuit of democracy and justice. We should not brand those young people who work hard and aim high as a group of selfish people and exert unnecessary pressure on them.

The goals of economic development and democratic development are not contradictory. While the people are engaged in pursuit of democracy, they would still need to live and eat. How can we put political issues before people's living and economic development? If Hong Kong economy does not grow, Hong Kong will not make any progress. Gradually Hong Kong will be overtaken by other countries and cities because they will not pause and wait for us. When our capital, talents and opportunities are all snatched away by others, what do we have to provide better opportunities and room for the development of our young people? The most dangerous view advanced is to urge that Hong Kong should be the master of its own fate and that if genuine universal suffrage is to be achieved, people of the previous generation should make sacrifices.

President, Hong Kong is part of China and universal suffrage in Hong Kong must be such that the sovereignty of our nation can be realized and it must be implemented according to the Basic Law and the relevant decisions of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. Hong Kong is not an independent place where autonomy is exercised, so if calls are made for the independence of Hong Kong and the adoption of an approach to universal suffrage which is unlawful, this will never propel our democratic development

and on the contrary, it will only impede the development of democracy here. It is not in line with the spirit of democracy to force other citizens to make sacrifices for unrealistic demands. Hong Kong belongs to each and every person here in the territory. The young people must not assume that people of the previous generation do not need to lead a life and cannot have their own thoughts and force them to make sacrifices for the people of this generation.

I have also heard Mr WU Chi-wai say with agitation that he will "sacrifice himself for the good of the young people". I guess Mr WU was making this comment because of the situation in the Democratic Party. I feel sorry for him. But please do not say that the problem lies in the previous generation and those with vested interests, or that it is those of the previous generation that have obstructed the upward movement of young people and hence they are standing in their way. I must say that what the people of the older generation own today are the result of their toil over the years. The very reason why the younger generation today can have a comfortable life now is the result of the achievement made by people before them.

Please do not mislead the young people into believing that it is the older generation who has done them a disservice or that all problems stem from the Government and that the so-called genuine universal suffrage can solve all social problems.

President, natural selection and the survival of the fittest are the principles to which we should adhere. Even if it is in the world of animals, the parents will train their offspring on the practical ways to survive. If the younger generation is just taught to make complaints, stage demonstrations, hunger strikes and resistance movements, this will never solve the problems, nor prevent people from being eliminated. If one wishes to move up the social ladder, one has to rely on true abilities.

President, I am sure most people in Hong Kong will agree that the upward mobility for young people should be increased and that all sectors across the community should work together with the Government to study and propose practicable ways to this end. I hope that this Council can return to the right track and Members will not use the issue of universal suffrage as the shield for all matters. We cannot just talk about universal suffrage and stop talking about issues related to people's livelihood and the economy.

Most people in Hong Kong would be glad to see the new generation do better than the older generation. I hope we can continue to work hard for our next generation, and I urge the young people of Hong Kong to work hard.

President, I so submit.

MR MA FUNG-KWOK (in Cantonese): President, the young people are masters of the future society and to ensure the steady and sustainable development of society, we should help them move upward, give full play to their abilities, get a job and live happily. Unfortunately, however, many young people in Hong Kong now are most worried about the future and they are the ones with the least confidence.

Many people attribute the grievances of the young people against society to the insufficiency of university places and the heavy debts borne by these young people as a result of the student loans they have taken out and this explains their low income and inability to buy a home. It is even thought that the obstacles encountered in upward movement are also a reason why young people took part in the Occupy Central movement. After the outbreak of the Occupy Central movement, the Government suggested specifically that more efforts should be put into youth work. This led many people to criticize the Government for its lack of foresight and sensitivity. First, I do not agree that the Government has neglected the young people. It is a fact that all along the Government has been doing youth work, only that it is not good enough or it has not addressed the problems. Or maybe the focus placed is wrong. The Chief Executive announced earlier that in the Commission on Poverty, a dedicated committee would be formed to study the issue of promoting upward mobility of the grass-roots young people from the perspectives of education, employment and training. It is true that the grievances of the young people come from many quarters and we must not think that rolling out a couple of measures can solve the problem.

President, when we were young, what we had to face were only issues like Hong Kong's own development and competition at the local level. In those days we had simple demands for work and conditions of living and we were easily satisfied. But now times have changed. What the young people today have to face are a macro environment of globalization and the challenges posed by a post-materialistic society. Compared to many other economies in the world, it is true that Hong Kong is pretty prosperous. But behind the outward appearance of prosperity, there is a uniformity of industries and for the young people, they lack diversity in career paths and there is an impression that there are increasingly

fewer opportunities of upward mobility. They find their room for development very narrow and they are unhappy with the fact that they are like being moulded to pursue a career that is recognized by society like hollow persons. But they want to choose a job that will suit themselves and realize their dreams. Moreover, Hong Kong is an international city and there is an increasing number of people of different nationalities and from various places who choose to come here to work. In other words, they can see a future in Hong Kong, so the young people in Hong Kong have to face competition from all parts of the world. The question lies in whether our education and the related policies have helped the young people equip themselves in the face of fierce competition and even prepare themselves for development outside Hong Kong? Is this uniform economic structure able to offer enough room for the young people to bring their abilities into full play? This is the problem.

Another problem is whether or not the Government and the parents have helped these young people manage their aspirations. There is a recent saying among the young people which is a satirical reflection of their plight. They question whether or not success is due to the hard work of their fathers instead of themselves. It means that the success of the young people often depends on the blessing of their parents. This sounds ridiculous. But it is also pathetic. On the whole, young people these days grow up in an affluent environment. They are taken good care of by their parents from small matters like their daily living to bigger matters in their studies, employment and even in home purchase. The result is that some of these young people have become dependent and it is hard for them to face setbacks and challenges.

President, in the debates held in this Council on the relevant topics, I have heard Honourable colleagues try to associate social problems with the issue of universal suffrage. If one is asked, how can the hegemony of real estate developers be eliminated? The answer is universal suffrage. If young people are to have any future, the answer also lies in universal suffrage. And the focus of many of the amendments we have on this occasion is also on universal suffrage. It seems that universal suffrage is the only solution to all the problems. But the fact is, in many countries where universal suffrage is practised, there are also problems like a high unemployment rate among young people, a stagnant economy and a lack of upward mobility among young people. These are all so similar to those problems we find in Hong Kong. It shows that universal suffrage is not a panacea. Of course, I am not gainsaying the value of universal suffrage. I just hope that Members will not see universal suffrage as a cure for all our social ills and they should not incite complaints among young people, advocate confrontation and trigger their discontent with society.

President, if society is to achieve sustained development, these problems must be solved. In terms of the local economic structure, we should seize the existing advantages and take proactive steps to seek a new positioning. For example, the people of this generation are full of creative ideas and keen on culture and the arts. I have seen many young artists suffer a bad time because the exorbitant rents they have to pay for their studios and they can only operate in very difficult conditions. The Administration should start doing something about the resources in space, that is, developing the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and also the Kai Tak sports zone. Besides, it should aim at devising an industrial policy and reconsider the social functions and economic role played by the arts and sports. It should make co-ordinated efforts in human resources and the relevant policies in order to boost the development of culture, artistic creations and sports. This will make the city more charming and turn the public expenditure on developing the WKCD and the Kai Tak project into public assets so that young people can have more room for development.

On the other hand, the Government should make good use of vacant school premises and factory buildings or insert certain terms in the land sale agreements in order to increase the venues for culture, the arts and sports. This will give more room for development in culture, the arts and sports, hence more job opportunities for the young people. Also, we need to do a good job in managing the aspirations of the young people. We should guide young people and help them form positive thinking and develop correct values. In this way, they will not feel dejected. The young people will then realize that they need to work hard if they want to strike success in this competitive society. Guidance should be given to young people so that they can view the nation positively and broaden their horizons. Then they can seize the opportunities brought about by the development of the country and better equip themselves and hence increase their opportunities of upward mobility.

President, as the focus of the amendments is placed on universal suffrage, I cannot agree that the absence of universal suffrage is the main reason for the inability of young people to move upward. I therefore cannot agree to these amendments.

President, I so submit.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any other Member wish to speak?

MR PAUL TSE (in Cantonese): President, in these past two days I had a chance to organize some activities in the districts. When colleagues in my office made bookings for some trucks, I noticed that they did not call some companies as they used to but they used an App in the cell phone to call a company called GoGoVan. This company is set up by three young men and it was set up only in July. It is said that it is very convenient to make bookings with the company. I am not doing any advertising for the company, though it is something worth doing. The caller can just input the location and the destination and certain information will instantly pop up and a driver will call you and tell you where you can get a truck. And the App is equipped with maps as well.

President, this is something done by young people. These people are not the children or grandchildren of rich people. They are young people who studied in the United States and worked part-time while they studied there. They are very imaginative. When they talked with some drivers, they found that the latter faced certain difficulties and there was exploitation by the middlemen. And after pondering for some time, they created this App.

There are many examples like this. I remember that when we were young, we used to have very difficult times, working part-time while studying. I remember that when I was a student, I went to school for three days a week and worked for four evenings. I had worked almost all kinds of jobs. I think Members will be surprised to hear that if I tell them the jobs I had worked. These include working in a warehouse, a factory, as a waiter, a kitchen helper, making pizzas and even driving a taxi and a bus and working as a bus conductor. These were the jobs I worked. Of course, these may sound interesting now, but at that time life was very difficult and they were very tough jobs.

President, a couple of days ago there were reports about the physique of students and young people in Hong Kong being seemingly poorer than that of other places. I am afraid the young people of Hong Kong are not only weak in their physique but also they may not have any suitable training mentally such as in their will to fight. I am afraid some of the remarks made may not sound pleasing to the ears of the listeners. This applies especially to the recent Occupy movement. Many adults especially those from the political circles keep on saying nice things to the young people. They flatter them and this makes them think that they have the whole world in their hands and that the future of Hong Kong lies in the young people. Of course and to a certain extent, this is not wrong. But at times we have to understand that young people need training and

the experience of failures and setbacks. We should not hesitate to tell them the truth or try to accommodate them in every aspect. This is because by so doing, the young people will not get the training they need.

President, I have said many times that young people of every generation will all have their chances, difficulties and challenges of one kind or another. This is something which cannot be avoided in every era and age. There may be times in which people are not so lucky and they may experience more natural and human disasters. Hence they have a pitiable time. However and generally speaking, the young people of this generation cannot be compared with the previous generation, that is, the generation to which you, President, belong, or the generation of their parents. For us, we grew up in a relatively peaceful place. There can be no denying that in Hong Kong, as a matter of policy and resources, opportunities of education are aplenty. But things are not overwhelmingly favourable on one side and there are still many injustices. Previously, we had to work for one or two years before we could buy a flat. That was much easier than the case now. By the same token, we have two more great opportunities as compared with the past and these opportunities were not available to our generation or the generation to which you, President, belong.

First, at that time Hong Kong could be regarded as another world south of the Shenzhen River and there was nothing north of Shenzhen River, that is, a greater world with immense population, which was an arena for us to show our creativity, abilities and the will to fight. And there is an even more awesome place that does not have any river boundaries — that is, the whole world. In the world of the Internet, your competitors and markets are the whole world. It is like these young people who invented the App for GoGoVan. Despite the fact that the App is now only confined to Hong Kong, with the creativity and fighting spirit, plus the experience gathered from setbacks, soon we may see some outstanding young entrepreneurs in Hong Kong.

Earlier on we have the example of Hong Kong Television Network Limited and a friend we know, that is, Mr Ricky WONG Wai-kay. Mr WONG makes use of his creativity and fighting spirit to open up a brave new world. This is true. In every set of circumstances and in every generation, there are ways to blaze new trails. The only difference lies whether or not we have this will to fight. Of course, government resources also come into the formula and there should be assistance from government policies in one way or another. As I have just said, Hong Kong at this time and age is not bad at all. Having said that, we may have lost our focus in another direction. There is an overemphasis on

scholarly matters and progress in academic studies and there is a lack of opportunities as compared to Hong Kong of the past or those found in other places and countries. Apart from studying in a grammar school, there are also other channels in business or in the apprenticeship schemes. These are channels required in a diversified society.

I am afraid the Government may have to adjust its mindset in this regard. In terms of education policies and resources, it should not just encourage young people to go for a job that is regarded as comfortable or gentleman-like. Students should instead be given more training physically and mentally and they should be equipped with training in intelligence as well as physical prowess. Only in this way can young people in Hong Kong be given real opportunities. It is wrong to give too much pampering and speak nice words or advocate the idea that one will be deprived of the will to fight or opportunities if political problems are not solved.

Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Members present have all spoken. Mr Jeffrey LAM, you may now speak on the amendments.

MR JEFFREY LAM (in Cantonese): President, the motion on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people" proposed by me has really been discussed for two years and Members are very concerned about it. This motion has been discussed from 2014 to 2015.

President, I proposed the original motion in the hope that Members could consider the conditions found in society and adopt a practical approach so that the Government could pay more attention to the aspirations of the young people. We would also hope to give the young people not only the fruits of economic prosperity plus a stable and harmonious social environment, but also policies that can offer them practicable support so that they can have more opportunities of self-actualization and lay a foundation for their future.

Nevertheless, I also expected the simple wording of this motion to be vulnerable to Members adding their ideas to this motion, sometimes to the extent of exaggeration, much like hanging decorations onto a Christmas tree.

President, there are many facets to the aspirations of the young people. We cannot deny that they have political aspirations and they have expectations for the future development of Hong Kong. However, unlike what certain Members have said, young people have more aspirations than political ones.

I have heard many Members from the pan-democratic camp make their speeches. They gave me the impression that they are very good at bragging. They claim the moral high ground and say that the grievances and frustrations of the young people stem from the inequality and injustice of the system. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan even said that what the young people want the most is those of us from the older generation stepping aside. Maybe he has been told to do so many times. But I have never heard them raise any concrete proposals. All they do is to put the blame on the system. But can a change of the system solve the problems which these young people face, even to the extent of getting rid of all the problems in society?

We have to face up to the problems of young people squarely. But more so we have to face up to the fact that Hong Kong is a place under the framework of "one country, two systems". We are an administrative region of the People's Republic of China. This is a political reality that we got to recognize. When Mr LEE Cheuk-yan tells others to step aside, I wonder if they have ever considered stepping aside to give up their positions so that the vacancies can be filled by the young people?

President, as a matter of fact, many young people hope to carve a career in society and make contribution through their hard work and struggle. They need the guidance and assistance of people with experience. They also need stable social conditions. They know that they can convey their demands to the Government in a peaceful and rational way. They also know that success cannot be achieved if they are guided by impulses, coming out to take part in the so-called resistance and cause disturbance to public order. I am sure most citizens will agree that fighting for democracy and justice does not mean that one can do whatever one likes. What people need to do is to stand on solid ground and try to achieve democracy step by step. This will lead to a stable society and progress in politics. People must not do anything to destroy the achievements made by generations of people through hard work.

President, with respect to the amendments proposed by Dr Helena WONG, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, I think they are biased and lopsided. I therefore oppose those amendments.

As to the amendment from Mr KWOK Wai-keung, he mentions that the housing policy of the Government is tilted in favour of the business sector, causing property prices to soar and rendering young people caught in difficulties in terms of employment and housing. In fact, there are many causes for the soaring property prices. The business sector has been making this point all along, and namely we think that if there are enough workers, efficiency can be enhanced and property prices can be stabilized in such measure that they will not soar day by day. Besides, the Government should not do anything to affect prices in the private sector property market. Or else, it is interfering with the operation of free market. For this reason, we do not agree with his amendment.

President, I so submit.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr Jeffrey LAM for this motion and for the six Members who have proposed amendments and also other Members for their speeches. We all care very much about the future of the young people and hope that they can give full play to their abilities and that they can improve their lot, serve society and lead a fruitful life. We will certainly consider the suggestions and views expressed by Members and make reference to them in formulating our policy on education in the future.

Many Members have mentioned the problem of studies among the young people, demanding that improvements be made in education to facilitate the upward movement of the young people. In fact, in order to cope with globalization and the development of knowledge-based economy, the Government launched a new academic structure more than 10 years ago and worked through a broad and diversified curriculum to foster whole-person development and lifelong learning. Under the new academic structure, we have added "applied learning" and "other learning experiences" modules to give students opportunities of learning related to their career development. The contents of applied learning modules emphasize both theory and practice and they are linked to the broad professional and vocational areas. This can give students some knowledge in the professional and trade areas concerned, practical work situations and development trends of such trades. They can also learn about the requirements for the trades concerned as well as prospects of further studies and employment. Hence they can understand better their aspirations so that they can plan ahead for the future and carve a career of their own.

Certain Members suggested increasing the admission opportunities of higher education. As a matter of fact, post-secondary education in Hong Kong in recent years has been developing rapidly. There are now 19 institutions of higher learning which have the right to confer local degrees, offering about 300 degree programmes in total. Also, the local post-secondary institutions are offering about 400 associate degree programmes covering a great variety of academic and professional fields. They can enable students to give play to their abilities while also keeping in close touch with Hong Kong's development needs.

Through public funding and the complementary development of self-financing institutions, the Government provides students with diversified opportunities in further studies. The University Grants Committee (UGC) now subsidizes 15 000 places in first-year bachelor programmes and there are 7 000 self-financed locally accredited bachelor programmes. In the academic year 2013-2014, more than 38% of students in Secondary Six can enrol in a degree programme. In addition, the Chief Executive proposed in last year's Policy Address the following ways to increase subsidized places:

- (1) the intake of senior-year undergraduate places in the UGC-funded institutions will progressively increase by a total of 1 000 places to 5 000 places each year;
- (2) launch for a period of three years tentatively the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors to subsidize up to 1 000 students per cohort to pursue self-financed undergraduate programmes in selected disciplines to meet Hong Kong's manpower needs;
- (3) a Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme will be introduced so that students in need under the scheme for the Admission of Hong Kong Students to Mainland Higher Education Institutions may receive a grant and the Scheme will be reviewed after three cohorts for its effectiveness; and
- (4) the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme will be implemented to support up to 100 outstanding local students in each cohort to pursue studies in renowned universities outside Hong Kong, and the Scheme will be reviewed after three cohorts for its effectiveness.

Apart from degree or associate degree programmes, students can also enrol in Project Yi Jin or vocational training courses, based on their personal preference and ability. Students can also choose to pursue further studies on the Mainland or overseas and enrol in more than 1 000 non-local programmes offered in Hong Kong, as well as distance learning or mixed mode learning programmes offered by The Open University of Hong Kong.

Members also mentioned the need to enhance vocational education and life planning in order to discourage young people making university admission their only goal. We agree very much with this idea. Vocational education can make education and employment articulated and offer more learning opportunities to school leavers and working adults, hence training up talents for the development of Hong Kong. In last year's Policy Address, it was proposed that the Vocational Training Council (VTC) should implement a pilot scheme on vocational education and employment support. The scheme will target electrical and mechanical engineering and retail trades which have a keen demand for manpower. It will integrate systematic apprenticeship training and clear-cut advancement pathways so that students can learn and work at the same time. The Government will also provide recurrent funding of about \$18 million to the VTC for the provision of industrial attachment opportunities to 9 000 students. With respect to the promotion of vocational education, the Government has set up a Task Force on Vocational Education to draw up a strategy for promotion of vocational education. The Government will provide a recurrent grant to schools to strengthen life planning education. We will increase the manpower of the Career Guidance Team and encourage greater participation in the Business-School Partnership Programme. We will help students in their life planning so that they can identify clearly their choices in further studies and employment according to their abilities, interests and aspirations.

In 2008 the Qualifications Framework was launched to encourage lifelong learning. In last July we introduced a policy and principles on credit accumulation and transfer. Now more than 20 industries have set up their own Industry Training Advisory Committee, covering 52% of the working population in Hong Kong. Participants can accumulate credits earned in various learning and training courses and these accumulated credits can be transferred as recognized qualifications. This can reduce duplication in learning and enable participants to achieve a seamless connection in their studies and move up the qualifications ladder. We have set up a Qualifications Framework Fund worth \$1 billion to promote work in this respect.

With globalization of the economy, young people in Hong Kong now face competition from all parts of the world. We have always been perfecting education and providing diversified learning opportunities to the young people, opening up quality learning opportunities and creating more job opportunities so that young people can make the relevant choices according to their interests and development needs. Hence they can give full play to their abilities and seize the opportunities in Hong Kong and abroad. Young people in Hong Kong should set their eyes on the world and proactively take part in internship opportunities on the Mainland and overseas. This will increase their geographical mobility. Over the past few years, students from full-time publicly-funded post-secondary programmes have also taken part in such internships, including those held on the Mainland and overseas. We are liaising with ASEAN countries to open up more such opportunities.

President, helping young people move upwards is the responsibility of each one of us. And in such a process, education plays a key role by enhancing young people's ability in upward movement. However, we would also need robust economic development to provide more such opportunities of upward mobility for the young people. The meaningless political disputes and resistance movements in society these days have already caused adverse impact on our economy and the living of the people. We hope that people from all sectors across the community, including Members of this Council, can take a pragmatic approach to boost the development of Hong Kong and improve people's livelihood, as well as strengthening the confidence of investors in Hong Kong. This can enable our citizens to work and live here with peace of mind and enable a second take-off of Hong Kong economy. This can surely promote the upward mobility of young people. For the young people, they should learn to treasure each opportunity available and they should not act on impulse and do anything which will affect their future and for which they will regret for the rest of their life as this will deprive them of the chance of upward movement.

President, I so submit.

SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): President, this motion debate which straddles two years shows once again the concern and attention paid by society to the young people. I am glad to hear Members make valuable suggestions on the development of young people. I wish to make the following response:

- (1) Many Members talked about the issue of economic development. The present-term Government places great emphasis on the development of the economy and the industries. It is only with continuous economic growth that young people can have more opportunities of development and that the Government and society as a whole can have the resources and ability to promote policies and measures aimed at assisting the young people.

The direction of the industrial policy of the present-term Government is to protect the good business environment of Hong Kong and by expanding and intensifying the edges of the pillar industries (comprising trade and logistics, tourism, finance and business support and professional services), as well as maintaining the competitiveness of Hong Kong while giving play to new edges and supporting the development of new industries. It is hoped that the economic base can be diversified and make more solid, hence meeting the needs of Hong Kong people in starting businesses, making investments and running businesses. This can also provide more choices in employment for the young people so that they can give full play to their abilities.

The Economic Development Commission chaired by the Chief Executive has set up various working groups and made recommendations on the policies and measures conducive to the development of specific industries for consideration and implementation by the Government. For example, the Working Group on Manufacturing Industries, Innovative Technology, and Cultural and Creative Industries has made a number of concrete recommendations. These include giving young talents in design more opportunities of going abroad for industrial attachment, improving the existing Innovation and Technology Fund, encouraging companies to hire talents in research and development, strengthening incubation schemes as well as enhancing the support given to film-making and its post-production.

Mr Jeffrey LAM has suggested setting up a fund for young people to start businesses. Many Members have also put forward ideas from the perspective of economic development. The Government will consider these ideas carefully and specifically in the light of their feasibility.

Mr Christopher CHUNG has suggested that the Government should strengthen the co-operation with Mainland enterprises and government agencies and launch more schemes of industrial attachment on the Mainland so that young people can equip themselves for future employment and starting up businesses. I agree with this suggestion. The Home Affairs Bureau will endeavour to create more conditions for the realization of this suggestion.

- (2) On the issue of inviting young people to join government advisory and statutory bodies so that the Government can take on board the views of the young people, we have set up a Commission on Youth and the idea is to consolidate the efforts from all sectors across the community to help the SAR Government formulate and take forward policies and work on youth development. Members of the Commission on Youth come from various sectors, including young people, social workers and well-experienced persons in charge of youth agencies, scholars, community representatives and the business sector. About half of these members are aged 35 or below at the time when they are appointed.

Actually, apart from the Commission on Youth, we also encourage young people to take part in all government advisory and statutory bodies. We will continue to step up publicity efforts among the young people to encourage them to express their opinions and support the activities hosted by these advisory and statutory bodies. The Government will ensure that these bodies can obtain the expertise and views required to enable these bodies to operate effectively in service of the public. Under the principle of appointment by merit, the Government will be glad to consider young people who are suitable in serving as members of these bodies.

Mr Jeffrey LAM mentioned that the Government should pay attention to the aspirations of the young people and strengthen the dialogue with them. I agree very much with this. All along the Home Affairs Bureau has been working closely with the Commission on Youth and officials from the highest echelons of the Government or chairmen of key advisory bodies are often invited to

participate in exchange sessions with young people. They engage in direct dialogue with them and listen to their views on government policies. The Commission on Youth has held many such exchange sessions and high-level officials from the relevant Policy Bureaux are invited to take part to engage in dialogues with the young people on various topics such as population policy, green levy and the drug testing programme. The Home Affairs Bureau and the Commission on Youth host a youth summit every two years so that young people can discuss social issues of concern to them at the highest level. The next youth summit will be held in the first quarter of this year and a group of young leaders have been recruited to serve as youth ambassadors to take part in organizing this summit.

In future we will continue to enhance the dialogue between the Government and young people. Many Members have pointed out that officials should visit the districts more often to listen to people's views, including those from young people. I am grateful to Members for such advice.

- (3) I believe the wording and expression of Mr KWOK Wai-keung's amendment may not win the approval of most Members. He thinks that the Government should solve the housing problem faced by young people. The Government has already announced the Long Term Housing Strategy and formulated targets for total housing supply for the next 10 years, that is, from 2013-2014 to 2022-2023. In these targets, the number of public housing units will account for 60% of the total. We will continue to increase land supply in the short, medium and long terms to help meet the needs of land for housing. We will continue to take a multi-pronged approach to increase land supply, including better use of land already developed, take active steps to open up new land for development, as well as redeploy land suitable for public housing production. All of these moves are meant to meet the new housing production targets.

The Home Affairs Bureau will continue to implement the Youth Hostel Scheme. The four youth hostel projects mentioned in the Policy Address 2014 are making good progress. Various procedures for these projects are presently underway, including preliminary consultancy study, planning, land and funding

applications. At the same time, there are also philanthropic persons who have indicated a wish to donate land in support of this Scheme. We will continue to work under the policy framework of the Youth Hostel Scheme and keep in close touch with NGOs which have shown an interest in involvement. This will aim at launching more youth hostels so that young people can pay a more affordable rent and save up for future development.

- (4) A number of Members have mentioned the voice of young people yearning for the development of democracy. I will give a brief response to this. It is the common wish of the Central Government, the SAR Government and the general public of Hong Kong to select the Chief Executive by universal suffrage as scheduled so that the 5 million eligible voters can elect the next Chief Executive in 2017 by "one person, one vote". Today the SAR Government has published the Consultation Document on the Method for Selecting the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage. A public consultation exercise lasting two months on the method for selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage will begin. The Chief Secretary for Administration has just read out a Statement to Members entitled "2017: SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY". I hope people from all sectors across the community will seize this opportunity and express their views on the subject enthusiastically. Based on the Basic Law and the Decision made by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on 31 August 2014, we hope that a rational and pragmatic approach can be adopted to accommodate differences and strive for a consensus, formulate a system of universal suffrage which suits Hong Kong and achieve the goal of selecting the Chief Executive by universal suffrage with "one person, one vote".
- (5) On the amendment proposed by Mr IP Kin-yuen, my colleague has responded to it earlier. As for the suggestion on conducting a review of manpower in the Government, in fact the Civil Service Bureau has been reviewing the employment of non-civil service contract staff. On duties related to permanent service needs or those that would be more appropriate for civil servants to discharge, the departments concerned will seek to replace such posts by civil service posts promptly. With the efforts put in by various departments, the number of non-civil service contract staff has

dropped from 16 488 in 2006 to 12 147 in mid-2014, representing a drop of 26%. The Civil Service Bureau will continue to review the situation and if there is justification for any operation need and provided that existing staff cannot be redeployed to undertake such duties and it is not possible to resort to contracting out and such means to provide the services, we will support the use of civil service posts to replace non-civil service contract staff posts.

President, it is an important task and responsibility to promote work in youth development and this depends on the efforts of the community, including the Government, the business sector, NGOs, community organizations, the family, schools and the general public. We will hear the voice of the young people through various channels and we will pay great attention to their aspirations and do a good job of the work on youth development.

With these remarks, President, I urge Members to vote against the amendments by Dr Helena WONG, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Mr LEE Cheuk-yan respectively.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now call upon Mr KWOK Wai-keung to move his amendment to the motion.

MR KWOK WAI-KEUNG (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion be amended.

Mr KWOK Wai-keung moved the following amendment: (Translation)

"To add "the increasingly homogeneous industrial structure of Hong Kong has limited young people's employment options and prospects, and the substantially lopsided housing policy has favoured the business sector and led to the soaring property prices, rendering young people with dual difficulties in employment and housing and making it difficult for them to strive for upward mobility along the social ladder; in this connection," after "That"; to add "and needs" after "aspirations"; and to delete "so as to" after "support," and substitute with "including perfecting the public housing policy of Hong Kong to provide young people with residential space and a ladder for home acquisition, and adjusting prices in the

private housing market to reasonable and healthy levels lest young people be shouldered with heavy financial burden due to home acquisition; moreover, the Government should promote diversified development of industries, create more positions suitable for young people, formulate an integrated manpower training policy, conduct a comprehensive review of the Apprenticeship Ordinance as well as the various training programmes for young people, and formulate a dual-track academic system with equal emphasis on academic and vocational skills training, so as to provide young people with a stable and rewarding professional skills training, development and career ladder, and to".

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the amendment, moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung to Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr KWOK Wai-keung rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr KWOK Wai-keung has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for five minutes.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Frederick FUNG, Prof Joseph LEE, Dr LEUNG Ka-lau, Mr NG Leung-sing, Mr MA Fung-kiwok, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Mr IP Kin-yuen, Mr POON Siu-ping and Mr TANG Ka-piu voted for the amendment.

Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Mr Martin LIAO and Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan voted against the amendment.

Mr Albert HO, Mr James TO, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kiwok, Ms Starry LEE, Dr LAM Tai-fai, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Ir Dr LO Wai-kiwok and Mr Tony TSE abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr Gary FAN and Miss Alice MAK voted for the amendment.

Mr James TIEN voted against the amendment.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Ms Emily LAU, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr Ronny TONG, Ms Cyd HO, Mr CHAN Hak-kan, Mr Alan LEONG, Ms Claudia MO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr SIN Chung-kai, Dr Helena WONG, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 30 were present, nine were in favour of the amendment, six against it and 15 abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 27 were present, six were in favour of the amendment, one against it and 19 abstained. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negated.

MR ANDREW LEUNG (in Cantonese): President, I move that in the event of further divisions being claimed in respect of the motion on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people" or any amendments thereto, this Council do proceed to each of such divisions immediately after the division bell has been rung for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Mr Andrew LEUNG be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any Member wish to speak.

(No Member indicated a wish to speak)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(No hands raised)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I think the question is agreed by a majority respectively of each of the two groups of Members, that is, those returned by functional constituencies and those returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, who are present. I declare the motion passed.

I order that in the event of further divisions being claimed in respect of the motion on "Increasing upward mobility opportunities for young people" or any amendments thereto, this Council do proceed to each of such divisions immediately after the division bell has been rung for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr Helena WONG, please move your amendment.

DR HELENA WONG (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion be amended in order to respond to the aspirations of young people who joined the Umbrella Movement.

Dr Helena WONG moved the following amendment: (Translation)

"To add ", as the Government has persistently neglected young people's voices and their pursuit of democracy and justice," after "That"; and to delete "care about the aspirations of young people" after "urges the Government to" and substitute with "implement genuine universal suffrage, establish a government which is fair, impartial, open and truly accountable to the people for improving governance"."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the amendment, moved by Dr Helena WONG to Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr IP Kwok-him rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr IP Kwok-him has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Albert HO, Mr James TO, Mr Frederick FUNG, Prof Joseph LEE, Dr LEUNG Ka-lau, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr Charles Peter KWOK, Mr Kenneth LEUNG and Mr IP Kin-yuen voted for the amendment.

Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr NG Leung-sing, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr Martin LIAO, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted against the amendment.

Dr LAM Tai-fai and Mr MA Fung-kwok abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Ms Claudia MO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr SIN Chung-kai and Dr Helena WONG voted for the amendment.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr CHAN Hak-kan, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 30 were present, nine were in favour of the amendment, 19 against it and two abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 29 were present, 15 were in favour of the amendment and 13 against it. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr Kenneth CHAN, you may move your amendment.

DR KENNETH CHAN (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion be amended. And, I claim a division.

Dr Kenneth CHAN moved the following amendment: (Translation)

"To add "in Hong Kong, the lopsidedness of the political system towards those with vested interests, the serious disparity between the rich and the

poor, as well as the common phenomenon of the collusion between the Government and the business sector and transfer of benefits have hindered young people's upward mobility; although the Basic Law safeguards the implementation of 'one country, two systems', the 'two systems' has come under incessant challenges from the 'one country' in recent years, and the separation of powers is rocked by the 'co-operation of powers theory', resulting in the erosion of Hong Kong's core values by 'Mainlandization'; besides, following the complete rejection of Hong Kong people's demand for genuine universal suffrage by the decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on 31 August 2014, young people now feel that the unjust political system is the greatest obstacle to social reform and their upward mobility, and they have thus appealed to 'Save Our Own Hong Kong' and engaged in civil disobedience as a means of promoting social reform, leading to the outbreak of the Umbrella Movement; in this connection," after "That"; to delete "care about the aspirations of young people, formulate feasible policies and measures, and enhance the relevant training and support, so as to increase" after "urges the Government to" and substitute with "affirm young people's strong aspirations to 'pursuing justice and returning political power to the people', conduct the Chief Executive Election and the Legislative Council Election under the principles of universality and equality, adopt civil nomination, and abolish the functional constituencies, so as to enable young people to exploit their strengths in a fair, just and open environment, and increase their"; and to delete "for young people" immediately before the full stop and substitute with ", and in turn realizing their personal and social aspirations"."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the amendment, moved by Dr Kenneth CHAN to Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr Kenneth CHAN has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

(Some Members spoke loudly in their seats)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please keep quiet.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Albert HO, Mr James TO, Mr Frederick FUNG, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Kenneth LEUNG and Mr IP Kin-yuen voted for the amendment.

Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Dr LAM Tai-fai, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr NG Leung-sing, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr Martin LIAO, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted against the amendment.

Dr LEUNG Ka-lau abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Ms Claudia MO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr SIN Chung-kai and Dr Helena WONG voted for the amendment.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr CHAN Hak-kan, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 30 were present, eight were in favour of the amendment, 21 against it and one abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 29 were present, 15 were in favour of the amendment and 13 against it. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr IP Kin-yuen, you may move your amendment.

MR IP KIN-YUEN (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion be amended.

Mr IP Kin-yuen moved the following amendment: (Translation)

"To add ", given the strong voices in the society in recent years pointing out that young people face difficulties in mobilizing upward," after "That"; and to add "; specific proposals in respect of education and employment are as follows: (1) to increase the opportunities for admission to higher education, and step up regulation on the quality and recognition of programmes offered by self-financing post-secondary institutions; (2) to alleviate the financial burden of students after graduation lest they be heavily indebted; (3) to strengthen vocational education by adding elements of vocational skills training to senior secondary curriculums or developing vocational senior secondary schools to provide students with a more diversified range of career-oriented programmes for articulation; (4) to review the establishment for permanent teachers and improve

class-teacher ratios, so as to increase opportunities for young teachers to join the profession and avoid a succession gap in education, and to ensure that contract teachers and teaching assistants receive reasonable remunerations; and (5) to review afresh the manpower needs of various government departments, so as to ensure that eligible non-civil service contract employees filling posts with long-term needs can be changed to civil service terms" immediately before the full stop."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the amendment, moved by Mr IP Kin-yuen to Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr IP Kwok-him rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr IP Kwok-him has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Albert HO, Mr James TO, Mr Frederick FUNG, Prof Joseph LEE, Dr LAM Tai-fai, Dr LEUNG Ka-lau, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Mr IP Kin-yuen, Mr Martin LIAO and Mr POON Siu-ping voted for the amendment.

Mr NG Leung-sing and Mr Christopher CHEUNG voted against the amendment.

Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Mr Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Ms Claudia MO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr SIN Chung-kai and Dr Helena WONG voted for the amendment.

Mr Christopher CHUNG voted against the amendment.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr CHAN Hak-kan, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 30 were present, 12 were in favour of the amendment, two against it and 16 abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 29 were present, 15 were in favour of the amendment, one against it and 12 abstained. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, you may move your amendment.

MR LEE CHEUK-YAN (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion be amended. And, I claim a division.

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan moved the following amendment: (Translation)

"To add "young people in Hong Kong have actively participated in the recent Umbrella Movement, and that their commitment to Hong Kong and steadfast pursuit of ideals demonstrated in the Movement have touched many Hong Kong people and also won the acclaim of world opinions; in this connection," after "That"; to delete "care about" after "urges the Government to" and substitute with "give a concrete response to"; to delete "formulate feasible policies and measures, and enhance the relevant training and support, so as to" after "aspirations of young people," and substitute with "expeditiously implement genuine universal suffrage, strive to uphold social justice, actively promote sustainable development, and"; and to add "as well as various sectors of the society, so that all Hong Kong people can achieve self-actualization in a free and equitable environment" immediately before the full stop."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the amendment, moved by Mr LEE Cheuk-yan to Mr Jeffrey LAM's motion, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr LEE Cheuk-yan has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Albert HO, Mr James TO, Mr Frederick FUNG, Prof Joseph LEE, Dr LEUNG Ka-lau, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Kenneth LEUNG and Mr IP Kin-yuen voted for the amendment.

Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Dr LAM Tai-fai, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr NG Leung-sing, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr Martin LIAO, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted against the amendment.

Mr POON Siu-ping abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Ms Claudia MO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr SIN Chung-kai and Dr Helena WONG voted for the amendment.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr CHAN Hak-kan, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 30 were present, nine were in favour of the amendment, 20 against it and one abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 28 were present, 15 were in favour of the amendment and 12 against it. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Members have already been informed that Mr Michael TIEN has withdrawn his amendment. As Mr Jeffrey LAM has already used up his speaking time, I will not call upon him to speak in reply.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Mr Jeffrey LAM be passed. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Dr Kenneth CHAN rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr Kenneth CHAN has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

(Some Members spoke loudly in their seats)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please keep quiet.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr Frederick FUNG, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Dr LAM Tai-fai, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Dr LEUNG Ka-lau, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr IP Kin-yuen, Mr Martin LIAO, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted for the motion.

Mr Albert HO, Mr James TO and Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr CHAN Hak-kan, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted for the motion.

Mr Albert CHAN and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen voted against the motion.

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr Alan LEONG, Ms Claudia MO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr SIN Chung-kai and Dr Helena WONG abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 29 were present, 26 were in favour of the motion and three abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 29 were present, 14 were in favour of the motion, two against it and 12 abstained. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the motion was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Debate on the second motion with no legislative effect. Motion debate on "Expeditiously launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study".

Members who wish to speak in the motion debate will please press the "Request to speak" button.

I now call upon Mr Frankie YICK to speak and move the motion.

EXPEDITIOUSLY LAUNCHING THE FOURTH COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORT STUDY

MR FRANKIE YICK (in Cantonese): President, I move that the motion, as printed on the Agenda, be passed.

For many years, industry and commerce in Hong Kong have managed to thrive on account of the establishment of a well-developed transport network built by the Government, which gives us advanced and efficient external and internal

transport services and networks that facilitate the flow of people and goods. However, with the constant changes in society and in order to tie in with the economic development in our society and the public's demand for transport services, the Government has the responsibility to adjust its transport strategy at regular intervals, so as to make its strategy keep abreast of the times.

Since the First Comprehensive Transport Study conducted in 1976, the Government would conduct a Comprehensive Transport Study in every 10 years or so. It conducted the Second and Third Comprehensive Transport Studies in 1989 and 1998 respectively and these three studies all charted the direction of transport development for Hong Kong. In view of such an interval, the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4) should have been launched several years ago but the Government has not done so despite the passage of a long time. For this reason, I have proposed the motion today in the hope of urging the Government to launch a fresh Comprehensive Transport Study as soon as possible.

Although the Transport Department (TD) conducted the upgrade study of the Third Comprehensive Transport Study Model in 2005, the time span covered by the planning under the study stops at 2016 and in any event, the model adopted was designed and developed more than a decade ago, so it is indeed debatable whether or not the plan can tie in with the actual changes of society in the future. In fact, of the five policy recommendations made under the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3), apart from the more striking initiative of "using railway as the backbone of our passenger transport system", the efforts made in respect of other items, such as the integration of transport and land use planning, better public transport services and facilities, extensive use of advanced technologies in transport management and promoting environmentally-friendly transport measures, are insufficient.

So far, 16 years have passed since CTS-3 was conducted. During this period, significant changes, be it in respect of the population, economic development or transport situation, have occurred. Although the increase in total population since 1998 is less than 6%, rising from 6.8 million people to about 7.2 million people at present, since the implementation of the Individual Visit Scheme related to Hong Kong and Macao by the Mainland in 2003, the number of visitors has increased from some 10 million person trips to some 50 million person trips now.

In respect of economic development, if we simply look at the shipping and logistics industries, in which I am a member, we will find that since the commissioning of the Hong Kong International Airport in 1998, air cargo services have been ever-growing and aviation service has increased from 160 000 flights to 370 000 flights at present, whereas passenger throughput has increased from 27.2 million person trips to 59.9 million person trips; freight volume has increased from 1.63 million tonnes to 4.12 million tonnes; the container throughput handled by the container terminals has also increased from 9.5 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) back then to 17 million TEUs at present. It can thus be seen that over the past 16 years, Hong Kong has actively consolidated its position as a shipping and logistics hub in the region, so the flows of people and goods have increased continually and it is only natural that the demand for internal transport also increased.

However, in contrast, transport services and even the transport infrastructure, cannot tie in with the needs of society and the public. When CTS-3 was conducted 16 years ago, the total public road length was 1 865 km at that time and the number of licensed vehicles stood at some 500 000, that is, there were about 268 vehicles per kilometre of road. In 2013, the total public road length in Hong Kong increased only by some 10%, standing at 2 093 km. However, the number of licensed vehicles had increased by more than 30% and stood at 680 000, that is, there were on average some 320 vehicles on each kilometre of road, so the increase in density was 19.4%. According to the Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong published by the Transport Advisory Committee last month, the average car journey speed in urban areas dropped by about 11% from 25.6 km/h in 2003 to 22.7 km/h at present. Apart from imposing a heavier burden on roads and exacerbating traffic congestion, the rapid growth in the number of vehicles also outstripped the supply of certain types of transport infrastructure, for example, parking facilities. Many owners of commercial vehicles, for example, those of heavy container trucks or articulated vehicles, and even coaches and nanny vans, all told me that parking spaces were hard to come by. Therefore, if the Government cannot check the growth in the number of vehicles, it should study the feasibility of developing more road networks to ease traffic congestion and build additional transport infrastructure, so as to meet the needs arising from the increase in the number of vehicles.

In addition, the Government's policies also resulted in changes to the public transport situation. Using the railway as the transport backbone has made more

members of the public switch to taking trains. Coupled with the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities introduced by the Government in 2013, 720 000 elderly people and eligible persons with disabilities are entitled to a concessionary fare of \$2. However, at present, the Scheme is restricted to railways, franchised buses and ferries only. As a result, elderly people who took minibuses in the past have switched to taking the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) or franchised buses. All these have changed the public's choice when using transport services.

When the Secretary for Transport and Housing replied to my written question on 21 November 2012, he said that after completing the review and update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000, consideration would be given to launching CTS-4. However, he subsequently changed his tone and merely said that the public transport strategy would be reviewed. For Hong Kong, a city with little land but a lot of people, it is understandable to use the railway, which has a large passenger carrying capacity, as the main transport system. Therefore, in the Railway Development Strategy 2014 published by the Government recently, seven railway projects are proposed and there is little controversy in society. It is expected that after the completion of these projects, the market share of railway will increase to 50%. The railway network will reach more than 70% of the population. However, even as the railway is developed into the major transport backbone, we should still care about the development of other modes of public transport.

In the past few years, a number of railway extensions were completed successively and the market share of the MTR in the public transport market has increased continually. As a result, the scope for operating such modes of public transport as public franchised buses, minibuses and taxis is shrinking. Since the commissioning of the West Island Line on the 28th last month, the number of minibus passengers has dropped drastically and the trade is complaining bitterly. Operators are facing heavy losses and the pressure to increase fares is rising. In the new year, the fares of close to 20 green minibus routes will be increased and the applications in relation to some 100 routes are awaiting processing by the TD. For this reason, I support the launch of the Public Transport Strategy Study by the authorities to prescribe clearer roles for various modes of public transport. However, a simple review of the roles of various modes of public transport may not serve to ease the operation difficulties of various modes of public transport. For example, in the case of taxis, even if the supply of and demand for taxi service are reviewed or new types of taxi services introduced, other factors, such

as the increase in the number of vehicles and traffic congestion, will also affect the income of taxi drivers. Therefore, the Government should improve the operation of public transport services from various angles through a comprehensive review of the present overall transport situation, so that these services can develop in a sustained manner.

Even though in the interim, the Government has conducted the Travel Characteristics Survey and the Survey on Goods Vehicle Trip Characteristics, the results of these piecemeal surveys can only be used as supplementary and supporting data. In developing a vision and development strategy for overall transport in the future, comprehensiveness and integrity are still lacking. It is undeniable that compared with many cities in the world, Hong Kong has surpassed them in terms of transport. However, with the rapid development of society, the need for transport generated by economic activities is on the increase. In respect of the quality and quantity of transport services nowadays, regression can indeed be seen: The roads are congested, travel time and waiting time have increased, MTR carriages are crowded, transport fares are constantly on the rise, parking spaces for commercial vehicles, particularly large vehicles, are insufficient, and there are also other problems, for example, in the reduction of roadside pollution and identifying sustainable transport modes. All these problems are interrelated, so they should be studied and planned as one package.

In fact, with the completion of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the Express Rail Link and the third runway of the airport in the future, new challenges will arise in relation to the demand for internal transport services. For example, with the completion of the third runway and the North Commercial District of the airport and even the logistics park at Siu Ho Wan in succession, it is also doubtful if the North Lantau Expressway, which is the only connection to the airport, has sufficient capacity. Therefore, it is also necessary for us to review if the construction of roads can tie in with future development. In order to address the growth in population and the needs of the public for housing, the Government is actively studying the development of new development areas, including Hung Shiu Kiu in Yuen Long, Kwu Tung, Ping Che and Ta Kwu Ling in North East New Territories, the programme on the expansion Tung Chung on North Lantau, Lok Ma Chau, and so on. Although the Government has expanded the railway network in response to the development of new towns, a single railway cannot meet the demand of the public for transport. In fact, if we overly rely on railway, in the event that the MTR Corporation Limited cannot complete its projects as scheduled or any incident happens, and if there is a lack

of other supplementary modes of public transport or if the road network is not expanded in a timely manner, rail lines will be overburdened and new development areas will become "islands", thus affecting the public in their daily commute to work or school and in taking part in economic and social activities. Therefore, it is necessary for the Government to strengthen the existing transport system and road network having regard to the development in the next decade.

On the transport policy, the environmental factor has become an indispensable aspect. In CTS-3, measures to reduce emissions from vehicles are mentioned, including switching the fuel used by taxis and minibuses to liquefied petroleum gas, eliminating old diesel commercial vehicles and establishing pedestrian precincts. However, in encouraging the use of environmentally-friendly vehicles, in particular, zero-emission vehicles, the vigour has been rather insufficient indeed. Even though in recent years, the taxi trade has taken the initiative to use electric taxis on a trial basis, due to insufficient charging facilities, they are still not commonly used. Therefore, I hope that the Government, when conducting CTS-4, can formulate a goal and an implementation proposal to encourage the use of environmentally-friendly vehicles and enhance the relevant infrastructure. At the same time, it should also devote some attention to how environmentally-friendly means of transport can be enhanced and promoted, including expanding and improving pedestrian links and the strategy for promoting bicycle as an environmentally-friendly means of transport.

As an international transport hub, Hong Kong is still lagging behind in the use of intelligent transport systems. Although the TD has developed two mobile applications, "Hong Kong eTransport" and "Hong Kong eRouting", in response to the increasing popularity of mobile phones to provide point-to-point public transport route enquiry service and point-to-point driving route searching service, other intelligent transport systems, for example, provision of real-time information on bus arrival to passengers waiting at bus stops, and even ways to collect and send real-time traffic information to drivers or members of the public through intelligent traffic and transport systems, all still require further development.

Lastly, I wish to stress that when conducting CTS-4, the focus should be placed on the development on the Mainland, in particular, the development in the neighbouring Pearl River Delta (PRD). In the past decade, cross-boundary activities between Hong Kong and the Mainland have become increasingly

intense and the flow of people has doubled from more than 100 million person trips to 200 million person trips. Cross-boundary traffic also increased by almost 20%, from 35 000 vehicle trips to 42 000 vehicle trips daily. With the sustained economic development on the Mainland, it is expected that the GDP of Shenzhen will surpass that of Hong Kong in 2015. In addition, such places as Hengqin in Zhuhai and Nanshan in Zhongshan are all developing apace. After the completion of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge in 2016, the transport system linking the PRD and Hong Kong will be further enhanced and the economic and trade relationships and co-operation between Hong Kong and the PRD will deepen further. The cross-boundary flow of people and goods will surely become more intense and the demand for cross-boundary and local transport will increase by the day. It is indeed necessary for the Government to carry out sound planning to cope with the rapid increase in demand for transport in the future.

President, a sound transport policy can promote the development of a city. For this reason, the Government should conduct CTS-4 as soon as possible to review the existing overall transport policy and situation comprehensively, so as to formulate a clear and forward-looking blueprint for Hong Kong's future transport development, further enhance the whole transport system and promote Hong Kong's development, as well as providing better developed and efficient transport services to the public.

President, I so submit.

Mr Frankie YICK moved the following motion: (Translation)

"That, it has now been over 16 years since the Government conducted the Third Comprehensive Transport Study and during this period, the rapid socio-economic development, the continuous growth in Hong Kong's population and inbound visitors, the development and expansion of new towns, and the increasingly frequent cross-boundary activities, etc. have all led to changes in and continuous increase in the public demand for transport services, but on the premise of using railways as the backbone of the passenger transport system, other public transport services are considered to have retrogressed and are marginalized, resulting not only in an imbalance between the supply of and demand for such services but also the pressure to increase fares, and hence causing continuous increase in the transport expenses of the public; the Government used Hong Kong as

the only base for the past three comprehensive transport studies, with no consideration given to the cross-boundary transportation needs in terms of passenger flow or vehicular flow brought about by the further integration between Hong Kong and China, and the development of transport infrastructure facilities (such as parking facilities) is also unable to cope with the large growth in vehicle numbers; as for the promotion of the environmentally-friendly transport policy (including the pedestrian linkage systems and the policy on the use of bicycles, etc.) and the Intelligent Transport Systems, progress has been slow; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to expeditiously launch the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study to comprehensively review the overall transport policy and the situation at present, and apart from formulating measures to enable various modes of public transport to develop in a sustainable and healthy manner in tandem with the continuous expansion of railways, to also formulate a forward-looking and long-term transport development blueprint, having regard to future town planning, development of industries and land use, etc. with a view to continuously perfecting the transport system as a whole, promoting Hong Kong's economic development and providing the public with better and more efficient transport services."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Mr Frankie YICK be passed.

Seven Members wish to move amendments to this motion. This Council will now proceed to a joint debate on the motion and the seven amendments.

I will call upon Members who move the amendments to speak in the following order: Mr TANG Ka-piu, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr Tony TSE, Ir Dr LO Wai-kiwok, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Kam-lam and Mr Gary FAN; but they may not move amendments at this stage.

MR TANG KA-PIU (in Cantonese): President, in my opinion, it is timely for Mr Frankie YICK to propose this motion in January this year, because the Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) published a study of immense significance on road congestion in Hong Kong on 31 December, the very last day of 2014. As regards road congestion, whether it is from the personal feeling of individual

members of the public or the data provided by franchised bus companies like Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (KMB) which tell us that the total travelling time has increased by nearly 20% in the past five years, I very much hope that the Transport Department and the Transport and Housing Bureau will address squarely the report of such significance released by the TAC and, more importantly, answer the calls made by Mr Frankie YICK and other Honourable colleagues, including me, for the launch of the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4).

In CTS-4, I think that there are several major background factors that warrant consideration. First, I believe Members will soon note that the Government will resume the Eastern Harbour Crossing (EHC) in 2016. How are the tolls of the EHC going to be set by 1 September 2016? These tolls have a direct bearing on traffic diversion among the three tunnels, and fall under the scope of overall transport strategy. The second point is about the policy on diesel vehicles. From the figures released by the Environment Bureau today, in the nine months since the launch of the scheme to phase out diesel vehicles between 1 March and November, 20 000 diesel commercial vehicles vanished, and it has a bearing on road conditions. Thirdly, what are the travel habits of the public since the commissioning of several rail lines? Hence, the most important aspect of this motion lies in the conduct of some necessary discussion on the Comprehensive Transport Study.

Mr Frankie YICK earlier pointed out a lot of differences observed over these 10 years or so. The tiny difference between my proposed amendment and Mr YICK's motion, or what I am particularly concerned, lies in whether the portion in the "rice bowls" of relevant practitioners is getting bigger or smaller. Of course, practitioners in the taxi, minibus and goods vehicle trades have kept recounting their grievances to unions, in particular the Motor Transport Workers General Union. Regardless of how the economy fares, they still find it hard to make a living.

The second difference that I need to particularly highlight is the tolling policies for bridges and tunnels, including the issue of the EHC which I mentioned earlier, as well as two issues in which I have a keen interest, namely the reasons for the high tolls of the Lantau Link and whether the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link should be tolled. If the costs for all bridges and tunnels have to be recovered, why are the Stonecutters Bridge and Ting Kau Bridge not tolled at all? Will the Central-Wan Chai Bypass be tolled? The authorities actually cannot answer these questions, hence a study is necessary.

The third difference is about the incompatibility between the development of existing transport infrastructure and the substantial growth in the number of vehicles, as Mr YICK mentioned earlier. I consider this not an issue of compatibility. Instead, it is a problem in itself, that is, there are just too many vehicles. After learning of my capacity as Deputy Chairman of the Panel on Transport, many friends of mine came forward and asked me, "TANG Ka-piu, tackle the problem on Nathan Road, which is filled up with buses. Are there not more buses running?" I have reviewed some figures in the light of this question. For example, the KMB had a total of 4 371 buses in 2001. Did they acquire more buses since then? The figure in October 2014 was 3 840, which was 500 or so less. Yet, why does it appear that more buses are running on the roads? Of course, the TAC report has shed light on the culprit for us, namely the rapid and substantial growth in the number of private cars, and this is exactly an area that needs to be tackled in CTS-4.

The authorities once stated the intention to promote green transport, and then introduced a duty-free policy for green vehicles, resulting in a disproportionate, unreasonable growth of 40% in the number of private cars in just 10 years' time. However, how many private cars are really zero-emission? From the Transport Department's figures, as of October 2014, only 780 private cars were zero-emission electric vehicles, an insignificant number *vis-à-vis* the current private car tally of 480 000. Therefore, I regard this a failure that warrants a review.

Of course, some Honourable colleagues or stakeholders in the community may query if there is a need to regulate the number of private cars, or how to curb it. This *per se* is a problem involving substantial interests. Nevertheless, I notice a survey on nearly 9 000 people in the TAC report, which indicated that 94% of members of the public and 92% of drivers agreed that franchised buses should be accorded priority in the use of roads. Hence, I think that in tackling traffic congestion on Hong Kong roads in the future, Members should come up with ways to curb the growth in the number of private cars. Second, a consensus has largely been reached that franchised buses should really be accorded priority in the use of roads in order to avoid monopolization by the MTR as well as a decline for buses, minibuses and taxis. When these trades are on the decline, the "rice bowls" of relevant practitioners will be at stake.

For example, in 1998, when the Third Comprehensive Transport Study was conducted, there were 2 123 red minibuses, but it came down to 1 240 in 2013, a

drop of nearly 1 000 in 10 years or so. Like the case of taxis, drivers of red minibuses are self-employed, and so they have to bear risks. If the money earned is so paltry that it is difficult to make ends meet, they may not join the trade at all. Therefore, the drastic drop in the number of red minibuses shows that the transport sector or the operation of a transport business as a sole operator is by no means attractive, and that the portion in the "rice bowl" is getting smaller and smaller. Hence, the Government needs to start pondering the related issues, including the one mentioned by Mr Frankie YICK earlier, that is, despite the community-wide applause won over the commissioning of the West Island Line, what about the red minibus drivers who have served the Western District residents for years? How should they maintain their livelihood? How is the Government going to help them tide over the difficulties?

Furthermore, let me take taxi as an example. Interestingly, the number of taxi has remained at around 18 000 in 10 years or so, but their daily patronage has dropped from 1.3 million passenger trips in 1998 to 1 million passenger trips in 2013, a 23% decline. So, from these figures, it is not difficult for us to note that the pie is getting smaller as a whole. Despite the earlier remark that visitor numbers seem to be rising and the economy is recovering, the pie is getting smaller actually. Therefore, taxi drivers face both reduced revenue and increased costs, the latter being mainly attributed to fuel costs and rentals. As reported in some newspapers, some trade bodies have said that rental hikes are imminent.

Therefore, we very much hope that the SAR Government will look into ways to protect the livelihood of these professional drivers. Otherwise, their number will reduce, and so will the service. It is the Government which has to come up with ways to maintain the diversified and relatively competitive transport system in Hong Kong, and this includes the introduction of a fuel surcharge, an initiative that the taxi trade has been looking forward to and the Government has promised to consider. Despite the recent tumbling in oil prices, I still hope that this initiative will offer an alternative for drivers to be spared the impact on their livelihood caused by any sudden surge in gas prices. The Government had once promised to make a conclusion in November 2014, which was two months ago. I look forward to an account by the Government for this.

As for bridges and tunnels, as I said earlier, the EHC will soon be resumed by the Government, and its BOT model will expire in August 2016. Is it the Government's plan not to map out the way forward until August 2016? Can they

not consult our views and conduct consultations at an earlier time? Because Members are very much concerned about the increasingly high tolls charged by the Eastern and Western Harbour Crossings, as well as the congestion at the Cross Harbour Tunnel. What can be done? Have they thought about the way forward after resuming the EHC? As I said earlier, the current tolling policies for bridges and tunnels are not uniform. As a District Council member for Tung Chung, I once again call on the Government that should Lantau be developed, it is not advisable to build a bridge and a tunnel with such a high toll level to stifle people's livelihood and economic development there. Otherwise, there will only be plans going ahead but bearing no fruit.

Hence, these are the points to be added to Mr YICK's proposal regarding the Comprehensive Transport Study. But in my opinion, being people-oriented is of the utmost importance in the sense that the public choice of modes of transport should be facilitated, and that such modes of transport should be able to support the practitioners themselves. I so submit. Thank you, President.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): I am very grateful to Mr Frankie YICK for proposing this motion. It has been 16 years since the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) was conducted in 1999. The last document on comprehensive transport study published by the SAR Government was the White Paper on transport policy entitled "Moving into the 21st Century" which was based on the recommendations made in the Second Comprehensive Transport Study in the late 1980s. In more than 20 years, the Government has conducted two Comprehensive Transport Studies. But in the last 10 years, there have been significant changes in transport in Hong Kong. The Government has built bridges and roads and constructed railways. Applying the standards of 16 years ago, are such changes the main reason for the serious transport problem currently faced by Hong Kong?

In retrospect, many recommendations made in the study 16 years ago have actually fallen through. Therefore, in my amendment I request the conduct of a review of the effectiveness of CTS-3 and hope to conduct a Fourth Study on this basis. Otherwise, the Fourth, the Fifth or the Sixth Studies will all be futile.

The detailed recommendations are available on the Transport Department webpage. There are a number of policies the Government should have introduced sooner, but in the past 16 years, almost nothing has happened. The

first one is the co-ordination and enhancement of public transport services, or in the Government's words, to set up a network of high standard public transport interchanges. How much has the Government done for this task? Using Tuen Mun Road which the Government frequently mentions as an example, residents in Tuen Mun still suffer from traffic congestion every day. Roads have been built but demolished, and then changed again and again. More than 10 years later, the situation is getting worse and worse. The entire Tuen Mun Road is so long but there is only one bus interchange, and the interchange discounts offered fail to attract many residents.

Second, the last Comprehensive Transport Study mentioned the provision for park-and-ride and kiss-and-ride activities. However, the amount of parking facilities are no match for the rapid growth of private cars. In 2004, the number of private cars in Hong Kong totalled 380 000, but has risen to 510 000 this year. The Government has not tried to reduce the number of private cars in any way. How many car parks have to be built to be enough? On the contrary, the Government has implemented perverse policies to the opposite effect. For example, in some districts which are in desperate need of car parks, such as Tsim Sha Tsui, since the Government needed to convert the Middle Road Car Park, there will be a serious shortage of car parks in the district in a few years' time.

The third one is to investigate the feasibility of various cost-effective intelligent transport system applications. Did the Government do anything? If it did, what has it done?

The fourth one is the so-called planning for pedestrians. It has been more than 10 years — 16 years — how many more pedestrians precincts are there? How many travelators are there? The Government has built some footbridge systems but many of them were repeatedly delayed. Tsuen Wan is a good example. The footbridge network in Tsuen Wan was opened only after many hassles. But still today in the densest places such as Yuen Long Main Road, we can see that most pedestrians are forced to walk beyond the pavements, even next to cars. Has the situation been improved? The oft-quoted Mong Kok Pedestrian Scheme which was proposed by the Government and approved by the residents has been cancelled due to some policy changes by the Government. This is a telling example of the Government putting the cart before the horse.

The Government said 16 years ago that it would plan and provide cycleways in new towns and rural areas where appropriate and possible. Many

cities in the world encourage cycling as a means of transport. The YouBike System in neighbouring Taiwan is a fine example. Since August 2012, the system has 5 000 bicycles. As the first 30 minutes are free, as at June last year, it has been used by 28 million rider times on average, meaning each bicycle has been used 10 to 12 times on average, higher than five to seven times in Paris. Applying the same standard, the people of Hong Kong would be utterly disappointed — even in Tin Shui Wai, Tuen Mun, Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung where the Government said to have cycleways, they are segmented like a worm. Cyclists have to get off and push their bicycles having ridden for not even 100 m. And the roads are bumpy and lined with many traps. And these places basically do not provide any location for bicycle parking while security measures are insufficient, eventually forbidding citizens to use some eco-friendly modes of transport, especially the bicycle which is an important tool to reduce pollution. The Government's practice has disheartened a lot of citizens.

Another aspect is about according priority to railway. The sequela of such a policy is the dominance of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) today. I request in my amendment a review of the policy that gives priority to the development of the railway transport system. Since the rail merger, the MTRCL is free from any competition and has slowly grown into a monster which keeps expanding and building new lines. What we loathe the most and find outrageous is that it has become a property developer who builds houses and mansions to make big bucks yearly. Despite all that, the Government still allows the MTRCL to use this so-called Fare Adjustment Mechanism to raise fares when it has made over \$10 billion and enjoys record-breaking profits every year. The two rail corporations merged in 2007, but since 2010, fares go up every year.

In the last 10 years, the patronage of the MTRCL has risen from 2.29 million passenger trips to 4.39 million passenger trips. The patronage for buses in the same period has dropped from 4.08 million passenger trips to 3.9 million passenger trips. It sounds pretty good when we first hear it, but do not forget that over these 10 years the MTRCL has used hundreds of million dollars of public money, money that people have earned with sweat, to construct new lines for them to achieve such growth. It is indeed using our own money to swindle us. Is the cost-effectiveness of building more new lines so high? We all know the answer fairly well.

The Ma On Shan Line commenced service at the end of 2004 and the Disney Line in 2005, and the East and West Rails were connected in 2009. All

these projects cost over \$10 billion. The Government has now proposed to build seven more new railways, spending over \$110 billion in total. Bear in mind that \$110 billion is an underestimate. Looking at the amounts of additional funding requested at the Legislative Council for projects including the Shatin to Central Link and the Express Rail which carry gross cost overruns, everyone will understand why there is no way to build seven railways with \$110 billion.

The last report also put forth the idea of developing a future passenger transport network with railway forming the backbone and the development of railway would be synchronized with land use. However, the kind of land use we have seen is only tilted to the luxury property market. Ting Wong Road is a good example. The Ting Wing Road project had suffered failed bidding twice. Yet the Government still connived at the MTRCL and did not make use of this site which should be returned to the people for development of public housing, especially Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats.

It is no news that recently over 190 000 citizens have tried to obtain the HOS application forms and over-subscription is expected to hit a record high. Nevertheless, the Government has not fulfilled its responsibility of supervising the MTRCL. This over reliance on railway is making citizens very worried. We have all noticed the incidents on MTR causing suspension of train service in recent years — if it is serious service may stop for hours. On 17 December, not long ago, service of the Tseung Kwan O Line was suspended for five hours, making 430 000 residents suffer. On the surface, the commissioning of the West Island Line seemed to benefit many residents. But the first to bear the brunt was public light buses which business significantly dropped 90%. The public light bus trade is not provided with any support by the Government and so it has to face such consequences.

The travelling expenses in remote areas has always been a cause of criticism by all citizens. For example, it costs \$25.4 one way to take the MTR from Ting Shui Wai to Central and \$21 from Tung Chung to Central. President, transport is a very complicated livelihood issue which is intertwined with the economic development of society, livelihood and many other social policies. However, the Government is completely devoid of vision, failing entirely to conduct a genuine review of the long-term transport development policy. It also does not have the intention nor the strength to formulate a transport policy for

Hong Kong, especially its long-term development, to respond to people's needs, the community's needs and the concept of environmental protection.

I hope the Government will be resolute in (*The buzzer sounded*) ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr KWOK, speaking time is up.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): ... giving people a clear and new railway development plan. Thank you, President.

MR TONY TSE (in Cantonese): President, in early May 2014, I submitted an application for a time slot for a debate, the theme of which is very similar to that of this motion proposed by Mr YICK today as I also proposed that the Government should review and formulate appropriate and comprehensive transport plans and strategies. As I am still waiting for the allocation of a debate slot, I wish to take this opportunity to propose an amendment, in order to add some supplementary proposals to the original motion.

President, my amendment consists mainly of three parts. The first part is mainly a review of the transport strategies formulated by the Government in the past, which are lagging behind in terms of macro development or district planning and support, thus making the public question the Government for being unable to effectively monitor the effectiveness of transport strategies. The second part urges the Government to reposition the roles of various modes of public transport; and in the third part, I hope that the Government can make a breakthrough in its mentality in studying comprehensive transport strategies in a way that it will no longer be confined by the geographical limits of Hong Kong and will not just mind our own business. Rather, it should target the next three decades in formulating a forward-looking, competitive, people-oriented and long-term transport development blueprint, with a view to enhancing the competitiveness of the Hong Kong International Airport and local ports, so as to upgrade Hong Kong's status as a regional transport and logistics hub, and proactively developing the transportation network linking the Pearl River Delta (PRD) in keeping with the comprehensive transport planning of the PRD Region to synergize the complementary advantages of the various regions.

With regard to the first part of my amendment, I mainly wish to point out that the transport strategies formulated by the Government in the past have been lagging behind in terms of macro development or district planning and support, and this has made the public question the Government for being unable to effectively monitor the effectiveness of transport strategies. President, the Government completed "Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy" in 2007 and conducted a Population Census in 2011. In 2013, the consultation document on population policy was published, and the Long Term Housing Strategy was also released last month. These reports and consultation documents have set out a lot of statistics and information on the overall development of Hong Kong, especially the various challenges brought by population development to society.

At present, there is a serious imbalance in housing supply in Hong Kong. The Long Term Housing Strategy agrees to the need to develop a new town roughly of the scale of Sha Tin every 10 years in Hong Kong. In order to develop new towns and new areas, transport and road networks are among the most important infrastructure to be developed. But the transport policies formulated by the Government in the past have failed to provide support for the new developments and the existing transport policies and measures are also unable to meet the needs of future development. President, the Kai Tak Development is a case in point. Moreover, while the consultation document on population policy has explored how the Government should provide an age-friendly environment to encourage active ageing, many transport policies and measures are not entirely age-friendly. For example, it is not easy for the elderly to access information on bus services; many MTR stations, tram stops, roads and footbridges are not designed to be user-friendly for the elderly, and concessionary fares for the elderly are provided not by all modes of public transport. These problems have directly discouraged the elderly from going out to take part in activities, thus rendering them affected to a certain extent in their daily living and social life. It is imperative for the Government to address this problem squarely and take actions early to mitigate the problem of lag in transport strategies.

President, the second part of my amendment proposes that the Government should reposition the roles of various modes of public transport. According to the Annual Transport Digest 2014, between 2004 and 2013, there was a downward trend in the patronage of various modes of public transport. For example, the average daily passenger journeys of ferries was down from 155 000

in 2004 to 136 000 in 2013; the patronage of trams dropped from 232 000 passenger trips in 2004 to 198 000 passenger trips in 2013, whereas that of franchised buses also dropped from 4.08 million passenger trips to less than 3.91 million passenger trips. On the contrary, the ridership of the MTR has increased considerably from 2.3 million passenger trips in 2004 to 4.4 million passenger trips in 2013. A decrease in patronage will have a direct bearing on the livelihood of people engaging in the public transport operation concerned. Therefore, while using railway as the backbone of the passenger transport system in Hong Kong, the Government must ensure room for the sustained viability and development of other modes of public transport and also study and determine afresh their roles and positioning. Apart from providing support to railway which is the backbone of the transport system, can these other modes of public transport be developed into tourism support facilities while providing the public with another choice other than the MTR? I believe the effective utilization of public transport resources can not only broaden the commercial viability of public transport but also stimulate the economic benefits generated by public transport services. I hope that the Government can take this into active consideration.

The third part of my amendment is proposed because I think in the past Comprehensive Transport Studies, the Government was always constrained by the traditional thinking and tended to neglect "cargo transport" in the area of transport. As a matter of fact, the objective of the Third Comprehensive Transport Study was to provide a framework for the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to develop a balanced transport strategy to facilitate the mobility of people and goods of Hong Kong in an environmentally sustainable manner up to 2016. Therefore, the mobility of both people and goods should be covered in the scope of the Comprehensive Transport Study. Although the Government has not attached much importance to studies on freight transport, given the increasingly frequent exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland and continuous increase in passenger and cargo traffic to other countries and regions as well as the rapid development of air and port cargo transport infrastructure in other countries and places, it is necessary for the Government to expand the scope of the study on comprehensive transport strategies to cover transportation between Hong Kong and overseas countries as well as the Mainland, and also target the next three decades in formulating a forward-looking, competitive, people-oriented and long-term transport development blueprint. I hope that the Government will positively respond to these proposals.

President, in June 2012, the Environment Bureau, the Guangdong Province Housing and Urban-Rural Development Department and the Secretariat for Transport and Public Works of the Macao SAR Government jointly announced the Regional Co-operation Plan on Building a Quality Living Area (the Plan). In respect of transport, the Plan proposes to develop in the PRD Region a transportation system using railway as the backbone and to better co-ordinate the development of different modes of transport, enhance the development of integrated transportation hubs and facilitate cross-boundary movement of people and goods within the Greater PRD Region. I agree with the comprehensive regional transport plans and proposals put forward in the Plan, but how will the SAR Government provide support to and implement the relevant projects? Will the Government incorporate the proposals made in the Plan into the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study for consideration? I hope that the Government will give a clear explanation in this respect.

With regard to the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road proposed by President XI Jinping, which strongly promote the export of capital, technologies and production capacity, the Chief Executive said in an interview by the media early last month that Hong Kong can play a share in these proposals and he considered that the MTR Corporation Limited and the Airport Authority have the conditions to study ways to partner up with Mainland enterprises to "go global" together. I think Hong Kong possesses favourable conditions and competitive edges in both software and hardware in air and port cargo transportation, but in order to play an important role in the development of the Maritime Silk Road, long-term comprehensive transport plans and strategies are indispensable. *(The buzzer sounded) ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr TSE, speaking time is up.

MR TONY TSE (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I so submit.

IR DR LO WAI-KWOK (in Cantonese): President, I would like to first thank Mr Frankie YICK for moving the original motion, which allows us to explore such an important issue concerning the economic development and people's livelihood in Hong Kong. To date, the Administration has conducted three Comprehensive Transport Studies. The first one was in 1976 which put forward the construction of the mass transit railway system. The second one was in 1989

which proposed the construction of roads and infrastructure including the North Lantau Expressway, Lantau Link, Airport Railway/Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Line Extension and West Rail. The third time was in 1997 which formed the basis for Hong Kong Moving Ahead: A Transport Strategy for the Future published in 1999. It proposed five policy outlines, namely better integration of transport and land use planning, better use of railway as the backbone of our passenger transport system, better public transport services and facilities, better use of advanced technologies in transport management and better environmental protection. To give the matter its fair deal, over the years the strategies formulated in the three Comprehensive Transport Studies and the transport infrastructure thus built have provided the public with quality public transport services and played an important role in the socio-economic development of Hong Kong, for example, the opening of the airport at Check Lap Kok and the development of new towns in Tung Chung and Tseung Kwan O.

After more than 10 years, the socio-economic conditions in Hong Kong have undergone tremendous changes. For example, the past three Comprehensive Transport Studies all used the city transport in Hong Kong as the only base but there have been huge cross-boundary transportation needs in terms of passenger flow and logistics brought about by increasing exchanges between Hong Kong and China. The Transport Department completed two territory-wide transport surveys, namely the Travel Characteristics Survey and the Goods Vehicle Trips Characteristics Survey, with the aim of enhancing the accuracy of the traffic forecast of Hong Kong up to 2031. The Government reported to the Legislative Council on 25 November last year that it would initiate the Public Transport Strategy Study, which would be a review of the roles and positioning of various public transport services, as well as a topical study of eight topical issues that had been given priority as they are time-sensitive, such as taxi service. The study of all topics are expected to be completed in two years. The Administration has indicated that it has no intention to conduct a Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4) which will deal with a wider scope. I consider that both the traffic surveys and forecast and the related focused study are rather piecemeal and limited while also lacking in holistic thinking and vision, which cannot substitute CTS-4.

President, the planning of transport infrastructure is indeed an integral part of overall urban planning. Otherwise the discussion on this topic may lead us to "not see the forest for the trees". On 9 October 2013, I moved a motion on "Formulating long-term infrastructure planning to promote sustainable development" in this Council, which emphasized the need to formulate long-term

infrastructure planning for Hong Kong in response to factors including the trends of long-term population and economic growth, industrial development, supply of land and housing, as well as a quality and environmental-friendly lifestyle. I believe only on such a basis can a forward-looking long-term transport development blueprint be established. Hong Kong is also in need of a set of complete and comprehensive transport infrastructure development strategies which should at least encompass two aspects: first, the enhancement of the quality of local public transport services, including devising a mass transit network supported by extensive facilities, reviewing the distribution of and arrangement for road use by different means of transport, as well as according clear positions to various modes of public transport so that they can complement each other to achieve fair competition and continuous and healthy development. Second, the strategies should promote regional development and collaboration, including facilitating the soon-to-be-completed Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HK-ZMB), perfecting the cross-boundary connection system, improving the existing land, sea and air passages, implementing ancillary transport facilities beyond the border to meet the growing need for cross-boundary transport, as well as forming a strategic transport network with the East and West parts and periphery of the Pearl River Delta to strengthen the position of Hong Kong as the hub of regional transport and logistics. It is obvious that these issues will inevitably entail a full review of the current comprehensive transport policy. The Government should launch CTS-4 as soon as possible in order to arouse public discussion and seek a consensus.

Some amendments proposed today point out that certain public views question whether priority should be given to the development of the rail transport system in Hong Kong and consider that other public transport services may be marginalized as a result. I beg to differ. Using railway as the backbone of the passenger transport system is the conclusion of the Third Comprehensive Transport Study. It reflects the actual situation of Hong Kong because railway offers social benefits such as high patronage, wide coverage and low emission. The Government published the Railway Development Strategy 2014 in September 2014 which indicated that railways in Hong Kong carry over 4.5 million passenger trips daily, accounting for about 40% in the public transport sector. If the seven railway projects proposed in the Development Strategy are all implemented successively, it is expected that in 2031, about 75% of the local population will be brought into the railway catchment areas and the rail share of local public transport trips will rise to between 45% to 50%. Railway is a

large-scale mass transit system able to not only cope with the heavy flow of passengers but also alleviate road congestion and reduce air pollution caused by vehicles to achieve protection of the environment. However, other means of public transport such as franchised buses, public light buses, taxis and trams still play a strategic role. They can serve the remaining 50% of public transport passengers, especially in areas not readily accessible by railway. And even within the rail catchment areas, with clear positioning they can satisfy the needs of different citizens with quality service and competitive fares, performing their important connecting function.

The Administration released the Long Term Housing Strategy on 16 December last year, which adopted a total housing supply target of 480 000 units for the next 10 years. Certainly, delivering the target requires adequate and timely supply of land and also corresponding ancillary transport infrastructure. Therefore, there is a need for the Administration to undertake comprehensive planning for the supply of land and housing as well as the development of the mass transit network. One of the advantages of a railway system is that it helps to release the development potential of the catchment areas, thus facilitating the implementation of high-density development projects and driving the housing and economic growth of the areas.

President, transport infrastructure planning is no different from other issues of urban planning, which usually involves many stakeholders. The SAR Government must explore a new planning mechanism to conduct a complete review and optimize the existing public consultation mechanism based on the ever-changing socio-political environment in Hong Kong. At the planning stage, the Government should take on board the views of various stakeholders as much as possible to avoid being plagued by disputes like clearance, environmental assessment and cost-effectiveness after the commencement of projects. At the implementation stage, the Administration should learn a lesson from the delays in projects like the XRL and the HK-ZMB to strengthen the co-ordination and monitoring role of relevant departments, while improving related mechanisms to ensure that the relevant infrastructure planning and construction works can be implemented according to priorities and in a stable and orderly manner, so as to provide safe, reliable, efficient and fairly-priced public transport services to the people.

President, I so submit.

MR WU CHI-WAI (in Cantonese): President, it has been more than 10 years since the Third Comprehensive Transport Study was conducted in 1999. Regarding the challenges faced by the transport system of Hong Kong, I will sum them up in the following points. First, there has been excessive growth in the number of private cars. Second, there has been a significant tilt to railway services in the transport policy, thus affecting the operational efficiency of other modes of public transport and intensifying the vicious competition among other modes of transport. Third, there has been a lack of concern about elements that integrate bicycle and pedestrians into the transport system in infrastructure and policies.

For these reasons, the Democratic Party supports launching a Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4) expeditiously in order to provide a basis for a fresh review and formulation of the long-term transport policy of Hong Kong. President, next I will elaborate the issues we consider should be dealt with in CTS-4.

First, it is about the growth in the number of private cars. I have checked the figures. There were 360 000 licensed vehicles in 2006, but by October last year, the number reached 492 500. The average growth of licensed private cars during the 10 years since 2006 is 3% per annum. From 2010 to 2013, the increase surged to 4.8%, and among the number of new licensed vehicles of around 143 500, private cars accounted for 92%.

President, it is very obvious that the increasing number of vehicles will bring about traffic congestion. In the Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong released by the Transport Advisory Committee at the end of last month, it is mentioned that in certain road sessions, the car journey speed is less than 5 km/h, which is slower than walking. It is also mentioned in the Report that the carrying capacity of buses and light buses is high, accounting for about 71% of the total daily road-based passenger boardings and only take up about 5% to 25% of the total traffic flow on major roads. In contrast, private cars which take up a large part of roads only carry 16% of the total daily road-based passenger boardings. The efficiency of private car is extremely low in comparison. Ironically, the major victims of traffic congestion are not owners and passengers of private cars but passengers of franchised buses who have to endure the traffic congestion together.

More than a half year ago, I had an interview with a television station. I mentioned that traffic congestion caused by the excessive number of vehicles was one of the major reasons discouraging passengers from using bus services. In the past, car owners might choose to take buses instead of driving for they considered the relatively cheap bus fares might compensate the forgone comfort. However, today, car owners have to suffer traffic congestion even if they take buses. If so, what is the advantage of taking buses instead of driving? As for other passengers, the problem of lost trips resulted from traffic congestion has made bus services more unpopular. Due to the uncertainty of travelling time caused by traffic congestion, passengers will prefer the railway to buses.

President, as we review the policies in the past, we note that the Government has indeed formulated some policies to address the increase of private cars. In 1994, in response to the Second Comprehensive Transport Study, the Government proposed to accept a growth rate of not exceeding 2% for private cars. The policy implemented at the time also stated clearly that public transport services should be given the priority in road use. Regrettably, in the policy documents issued after the Third Comprehensive Transport Study, the two policies mentioned disappeared unnoticeably.

There is not much room for development of road networks in Hong Kong, particularly those in urban areas. I think that it is necessary for Hong Kong to formulate a set of policy to restrict vehicle growth in the long run through CTS-4. At the same time, the authorities should re-establish the principle of giving priority to public transport in road use.

Second, the Government should re-examine the roles of various modes of public transport. As I mentioned earlier, in the past decade or so, particularly after the merger of the two railway corporations in 2007, the policies of the Government have been tilted seriously to railway. Whenever new railway lines were completed, the Transport Department would first cut the bus services provided parallel to the railway lines. Surely, I have to reiterate that the Democratic Party supports using railway as the major mode of transport, but it does not mean that we agree to allowing railway services to monopolize the entire transport system. As we look at bus services in the past decade or so in retrospect, we will notice that franchised bus services have been under attack on two fronts. As I mentioned earlier, one of the fronts is traffic congestion, and the other is the priority policy tilted to railway services. Due to these problems, the efficiency of bus services is dropping and bus companies have often resorted to route rationalization or cutting bus frequency to maintain profit.

In fact, in the White Paper on transport policy released in 2009, it was mentioned that the policy of the Government was not to minimize the competition between railway and other modes of transport so as to make the operation of railway easier. Why do the policies today show a retrogression of tilting to railways, subjecting bus services to an inferior role? I earnestly hope that through a new round of study, the Government will redefine the positioning of various transport modes, rationalizing the transport system of Hong Kong. Certainly, I know that the relevant study has been included in the Public Transport Strategy Study, yet I hope the phenomena I mentioned earlier will be rationalized in a holistic manner. Particularly about the impact of growth in the number of private cars imposed on public transport services, this must be considered in the study, or else, the study will only be a biased one.

The third point is about the use of bicycles and walking as a means for short-haul commute. President, the Transport and Housing Bureau has proposed the so-called "bicycle-friendly" policy, yet the Government's actions for realizing the policy are merely the building of additional cycling tracks and the claims to promote the use of bicycles in new towns in the New Territories. However, as a cyclist, I must correct this logic once and again, for the concept of equating cycling tracks with "bicycle-friendly" policy is wrong. In fact, we can learn from the "bicycle-friendly" policies implemented in Europe and other countries, where the establishment of cycling tracks is not used as a policy direction. In Hong Kong, the approach to cycling tracks goes so far as to deny the function of bicycles as a regular mode of transport, reducing the function of bicycles to leisure purpose. If bicycles are regarded as a mode of transport, cyclists will naturally ride their bicycles on the road and must comply with all rules and regulations on road traffic. If the Secretary goes to Taiwan, Japan and cities in Europe, he will notice that bicycles are regarded as a regular mode of transport in these places. For this reason, cycling tracks will not be set aside specifically. All cyclists will use the roads with other modes of transport. These cities will only place markings on the road to indicate bicycle give way lines or hard shoulders. Is it impossible for Hong Kong to do so? Are these the "bicycle-friendly" policies we can fully implement after a change in our mindset? Precisely because we lack such a concept in our transport policy, we are only making empty talk about green transport systems. As for the "bicycle-friendly" policy, we spend colossal public funds on the construction of cycling tracks, confusing the two different purposes, short-haul commute and leisure cycling. This is a waste of public funds, and it undermines the function of bicycles being the most efficient mode of transport.

The development of pedestrian walkway systems is a similar case. Apart from the footbridge connecting the pier in Sheung Wan and the Hong Kong Station, do we have other pedestrian walkway systems worth mention? Last year, there was an increase in the number of pedestrian precincts, yet has the increase served the purpose of encouraging walking? I think this is a point worthy of deep thoughts. Recently, people have been talking about the Umbrella Movement. One of the encouraging points of the Movement is that with the closure of Harcourt Road, we discovered how comfortable and relaxing it was to walk from Harcourt Road, Admiralty to Central. If walking is regarded as a mode of transport under the transport system, the overall transport network arrangement of Hong Kong will be put in a completely different perspective. However, has the Government done so? I hope the Government can think about the issues mentioned by me thoroughly. Although I know that the scope of the study on road traffic strategy covers public transport services only, the study will be comprehensive only when consideration is given to the two points I mentioned, including the growth rate of private cars and the use of bicycles and walking as a mode of transport for short-haul commute. The inclusion of this concept into the system is the only way to rationalize the policies on public transport services effectively and to enhance the efficiency of public transport services.

Thank you, President. I so submit.

MR CHAN KAM-LAM (in Cantonese): President, the projections and assessments made by the Government in the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) conducted in 1997 would be different from the urban development of Hong Kong in various degrees. The Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) agrees with Mr Frankie YICK's motion that a comprehensive study and planning should be made on the existing and future transport hardware, software and ancillary facilities.

In 1997, the SAR Government conducted CTS-3. It laid down five major guiding principles, including the use of railway as the backbone of our passenger transport system, better integration of transport and town planning, better public transport services and facilities, better use of advanced technologies in transport management and better environmental protection measures in transport. Although these five principles were extremely definite and clear, we notice that

the authorities have not proposed any highlights in the implementation details, nor have they introduced any new policies. This is particularly so in town planning, where integration with supporting transport services is often lacking. As a result, certain new towns have been made isolated islands and residents have been deprived of smooth transport services.

Back then, in the development of Tseung Kwan O, we noticed a problem in planning. If the population of the district did not reach the required level of 200 000 to 300 000, the construction of the Tseung Kwan O line could not be commenced. Pioneering residents would have to commute solely on buses and light buses until the population reached the required level for the construction of the railway. By then, certain bus and light bus routes which had taken roots over the years would have to be rationalized, so it would be a major surgery in transportation to the residents there in some measure, and this would definitely arouse controversies.

In the development of new railway networks, the Government should not be too rigid and conservative, simply confined to using figures as justifications and the cost-effectiveness of railway operation as the consideration to the neglect of the importance of overall planning as well as the spirit and thinking of being people-oriented. We think that in new town planning and development, comprehensive hardware supporting facilities and a sound transport network must be provided at the same. For only by doing so will new town residents be spared spending long hours on commute and bearing heavy transport expenses, which will thus attract residents from other districts to move into new towns and stimulate the development of the community, preventing new towns from becoming isolated islands. Last summer, the Panel on Transport made a duty visit to Singapore. We noted that in certain new development areas, railway services and supporting services of other modes of transport were provided before the residents moved in. We consider this approach worthy reference for Hong Kong.

President, it is the prevailing trend to develop green transport and rely on railway as the backbone of the passenger transport system. Doubtless this is the direction to go. However, for issues like maintaining the quality and standard of railway services and identifying ways to dovetail with other public transport services to enable them to fulfil their different roles and functions, we have not seen any comprehensive consideration and co-ordination made in the transport policies of the past decade or so.

In the face of the increasing expansion of the railway network, bus services are challenged by the drastic drop in patronage of original routes and the difficulties they faced in operation are understandable. Moreover, due to traffic congestion on the road, frequent lost trips and delay in bus services, serious inconvenience is caused to passengers, resulting in an avalanche of complaints. Competition between bus services and railway services has existed for a long time. Regrettably, the Government only focuses on railway development but gives no assistance to bus operators in the rationalization of bus routes, leaving the problem to deteriorate into conflicts between bus operators and the public.

Since the completion of the last Comprehensive Transport Study, the population in Hong Kong has increased by nearly 1 million. The locations of housing estates taken up by the public have become more scattered, extending to districts faraway from the urban areas which lack transport facilities and are seriously inconvenient. Apart from the option of purchasing private cars, residents can only rely on feeder services provided by estate shuttle buses or light buses. However, the authorities have restricted the development of estate shuttle buses whereas the development of light bus services is not given due attention by the Government. The number of light buses has remained at some 4 500 for a long time. There is a shortage of supply and the licences of light buses have become a target for speculation. The rampant speculation has pushed the price of light bus licences to over \$7 million now, or even over \$8 million at times, which has increased the operating cost of light buses. On the other hand, we observe that due to the difficult business environment of public transport services and the high operating costs, the wages of drivers have been kept at a relatively low level for a long time. Manpower shortage has become a thorny problem in the trade. Yet if operators increase their fares to offer higher wages to drivers, they will meet strong opposition from passengers. They are thus caught in a dilemma. Light bus operators have requested increasing the number of seats to cope with the shortage of light buses and increasing the number of routes, fares and station facilities to improve their business environment, yet the Government has turned a blind eye to these requests. As a result, light buses cannot properly fulfil their role of providing feeder services.

(THE PRESIDENT'S DEPUTY, MR ANDREW LEUNG, took the Chair)

Deputy President, another mode of transport sharing the same fate of light buses is taxis, which has all along been regarded as a business with promising outlook but meagre profit. In the small area of the SAR, there are a total of three types of taxis, the "red taxis", "green taxis" and "blue taxis". The number of taxis has not been increased according to population growth but has been kept at a level of 18 000 for a long time. The Government thinks that by capping the number of taxi licences, the business environment of taxis will be kept stable. Little does it know that whenever a fare adjustment is proposed, not only the public will oppose it, most drivers will also oppose it. For after the increase in fares, there will be a drop in patronage, and the increase in rent will erode the additional income brought by the fare increase. The speculation of taxi licences has pushed up the price to \$6 million to \$7 million, which will only bring joy to businessmen engaging in short-term speculation in the market but not the operators of taxi services. Over the years, the trade has voiced various aspirations, such as lifting the restriction for loading and unloading in prohibited zones and introducing a bad weather surcharge, and there are views about introducing a "taxi ownership scheme for taxi drivers". Regrettably, the Government has not addressed the aspiration of the industry.

Deputy President, recently, we have heard complaints from tourist coaches and school buses. Since operators are subject to major restrictions in business operation under the licensing scheme, they have been urging the authorities to relax those restrictions for a long time but only in vain.

At present, the patronage of all railway lines in the territory exceeds 5 million passenger trips daily on average. During peak hours, the patronage of various railway lines running in urban areas will exceed the maximum capacity. Passengers will have to wait for three to four trains before they can board one. On the issue of enhancing the efficiency of railway services, the authorities should not rely merely on the improvement of railway operation but should also consider the issue from a macroscopic perspective.

Deputy President, in recent years, the drastic increase in the number of private cars has been identified as the culprit for traffic congestion. However, no one is willing to face squarely that inadequate public transport support is the main reason forcing the public to purchase cars to solve their commute problems. Private car owners have to pay licence fees, fuel, parking fees and other expenses every month, which is quite a heavy burden. Therefore, not everyone is willing to purchase and drive their own cars. If public transport services are convenient,

I believe they will be more than happy to take public transport. As for electric cars, which are relatively environmentally-friendly, despite the promotion over the years and the variety of electric car models available on the market, the parking and charging facilities for electric cars are still insufficient today, which is a hindrance to the development of the market for green electric cars. No wonder only a very small number of electric cars are running on the roads. As for the agenda on the use of technologies in traffic management, to give the issue its fair deal, the public are using the navigation system provided by Google more frequent than the Hong Kong eTransport and the Hong Kong eRouting introduced by the Transport Department in 2009.

Lastly, I hope that the Administration will expeditiously commence CTS-4 and make consideration more from the perspective of the public with a view to formulating people-oriented transport policies.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR GARY FAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) was conducted by the Government nearly 17 years ago. Over these 17 years, a substantial growth has been noted in Hong Kong's population as well as passenger and visitor numbers, so the existing transport facilities not only fail to cope with the demand, but also lack sufficient vision. However, the Government has over the years refused to conduct a Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study, so Hong Kong lags behind other cities apparently in terms of transport planning.

In CTS-3, the Government affirmed the transport policy of "priority to railway" to accord priority to the development of railway as the backbone of the passenger transport system and adopt the development approach that took railway stations as the centres of new towns, sowing the seed of hegemony enjoyed by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) today. Nevertheless, the Government's upcoming Public Transport Strategy Study still adheres to the policy of "priority to railway", in which overall planning and forward-looking proposals are absent. This is disappointing indeed.

Deputy President, since the implementation of the policy of "priority to railway" by the Government, the market share of railway among various modes of public transport in Hong Kong has grown from 33% in 1997 to 47% in 2014,

and is projected to break the 50% mark upon completion of several new rail lines in the future. However, in the years since the rail merger in 2007, the quality of MTR services has been deteriorating. Train loading of several lines may well go beyond 90% or reach 100% during peak hours. With compartments being fully loaded, passengers may very often have to wait for four to five trains at interchanges like Admiralty, Kowloon Tong, and so on, before boarding one.

Deputy President, last Friday, there were so many passengers at Central Station of the Tsuen Wan Line that passengers' clothes were allegedly trapped by the doors of two trains, so service was delayed and platforms and compartments were packed. A number of passengers then fell sick and sought help, thus resulting in further delay and bigger crowds waiting for trains, and then more passengers fell sick and sought help. That was like reincarnation with no end at all. Colleagues working in my office in the Legislative Council Complex would prefer staying and working longer on Fridays to taking MTR during the evening rush hours. A railway corporation earning \$10 billion or so a year offers this kind of awful travel experience to the public, yet the Government sticks to "priority to railway". This is obviously an instance of tilting to the MTRCL blindly while turning a blind eye to the very fact of overloading in Hong Kong's rail system.

Deputy President, over the past two years, service delays caused by system failure seem to be commonplace for the MTRCL. According to the MTRCL's information provided to this Council, the MTRCL reported a total of 143 incidents of serious service disruption caused by equipment failure or human factors in 2013 alone, and that translates into almost one count in every two days. Many members of the public even joke that it will be great news if there is no delay in MTR. The series of incidents has exposed how inadequate and substandard the rail system maintenance effort undertaken by the MTRCL's engineering unit is. In all of the five rail projects managed by the MTRCL this year, including the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, Shatin to Central Link, South Island Line, and so on, there were delays and cost overruns. This reflects how incapable the MTRCL's engineering unit is in managing the five projects with an aggregate engineering cost exceeding \$160 billion while undertaking maintenance work for existing lines at the same time. This is how the day-to-day operation of existing lines is adversely affected by the Government's overly radical approach to rail network extension.

Deputy President, under the policy of "priority to railway", the policy of complementing new town development with railway has further contributed to the type of hegemony enjoyed by the MTRCL. The Government has all along granted the MTRCL the rights to develop and manage new housing development projects atop railway stations. In the first half of 2014, the MTRCL earned \$250 million from the agency fees and unit sales arising from property development in relation to West Rail alone; a more staggering case is their property rental and management business, with several of its large-scale shopping malls and offices atop MTR stations generating \$1.7 billion for the MTRCL in the first half of 2014. With more new rail lines coming on stream, including the South Island Line and Kwun Tong Line Extension, the MTRCL may go on making a fortune from the rights to develop properties atop railway stations. Obviously, the Government's policy of "priority to railway" is equivalent to transforming the MTRCL into a property development company, deviating from its core passenger service.

However, despite the MTRCL having multifarious ways to make money and its service quality being on a deteriorating trend, it still manages to increase fares each and every year under the Fare Adjustment Mechanism devised by the Government. Under the Government's policy of "priority to railway", members of the public have no room for selection given their difficulty in identifying a mode of transport that could replace or compete with the MTR. They can all but put up with the MTRCL's profiteering, and this becomes a deadlock in Hong Kong's existing transport policy as a whole.

Deputy President, the Government's policy of "priority to railway" over the years have aggrieved other public transport trades, like minibus and taxi. Every time a new rail line is commissioned, the Government will first proceed to cut down the availability of other public transport services in the district concerned, so people will be compelled to take the MTR. The commissioning of the West Island Line on the 28th of the last month has led to the slashing of eight bus routes one by one by the Transport Department; being the lower hand in the competition, green minibuses may only run on feeder routes to railway stations, whereas red minibuses have seen a 30% business loss since then. Deputy President, whether in this Council or the District Council, the Neo Democrats has time and again proposed ways to help out the minibus trade, including the prospect of increasing the number of seats from 16 to 20 and lifting the restriction of prohibited zones for red minibuses, and so on, but all these are not positively received or accepted by the Government. Hence, the minibus trade has no way

to compete with the MTR through improvement to its service quality, and has to operate routes with a low demand long term. Their room of survival is being squeezed on a continued basis.

Therefore, Deputy President, the Neo Democrats proposes an amendment, which calls for a comprehensive review of the policy of "priority to railway" and re-examination of the MTRCL's positioning by the Government, as well as the MTRCL returning to its core business by shifting its business focus back to rail operation rather than other areas, like property development and project management.

Deputy President, the Neo Democrats' amendment also addresses the part on cross-boundary transportation needs in the original motion. The impact of cross-boundary transportation on the public transport system is interwoven with the Government opening up the window for Mainland visitors under the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) and the one-year multiple-entry IVS endorsements. Nowadays, a huge number of IVS visitors, each carrying a suitcase or two, ride on the MTR, and some smugglers and parallel traders in the Mainland and Hong Kong do their business through the MTR. Their actions have significant implications on the MTRCL's service quality and in a way compromise rail system efficiency. This is not a problem that can be solved merely through a change in transport policy. Instead, the solution has to be one of managing the excessive cross-boundary transportation needs at source.

More importantly, the essence of transport planning should definitely be Hongkongers-oriented with a view to enhancing the quality of life of locals, rather than entertaining the cross-boundary transportation needs that run against their interests and exceed our capacity. Therefore, the Neo Democrats does not agree with Mr Frankie YICK's remark that the Comprehensive Transport Study should not be just Hong Kong-oriented. On the contrary, the Government should consider instead how best to address the burden of cross-boundary transportation triggered by the blind integration between China and Hong Kong, so as to mitigate the negative impact on Hong Kong people in this regard.

Hence, the Neo Democrats urges the Government to conduct CTS-4 expeditiously, review the policy of "priority to railway", make better use of other modes of transport to ensure their room of survival and enrich the range of transportation options for the public; raise some more forward-looking ideas on planning with regard to Hong Kong's transport policy for the coming decade or

two, and also include cycling and walking as elements in the overall transport policy to practically promote the development of a low-carbon transport system.

Deputy President, I so submit.

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I would like to thank Mr Frankie YICK for proposing the motion on the launching of a Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study and the seven Members namely, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr Tony TSE, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Kam-lam and Mr Gary FAN, for proposing their respective amendments. Through the present motion debate, we may have a relatively thorough discussion on the overall strategic arrangement of transport at present and its future development.

In the past, in response to the continuous socio-economic development in Hong Kong and the increasing demand for transport, the Government had conducted three Comprehensive Transport Studies since 1976 to draw up the strategic plans for transport planning and overall development and formulated development plans for transport infrastructure. In the First Comprehensive Transport Study, which was completed in 1976, it was proposed that the MTR system should be constructed. Subsequently, in response to the outcome of the Second Comprehensive Transport Study completed in 1989, the Government took forward a number of road and railway infrastructural projects because of the airport at Chek Lap Kok, Metroplan and various reclamation studies. These projects included the North Lantau Expressway and Lantau Link, Airport Express/Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Extension, and West Rail Line.

After the reunification, the Government completed the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) in 1999. CTS-3 not only laid down the development plan for transport infrastructure but also defined the role and positioning of various public transport services according to their efficiency and functions. At the same time, focused studies on other traffic management issues, such as the control of vehicle growth, cross-boundary transportation, intelligent traffic management and green traffic measures, and so on, were conducted under CTS-3. Back then, the SAR Government formulated the "Hong Kong Moving Ahead: A Transport Strategy for The Future" based on the findings of CTS-3. Those strategies included: (a) better integration of transport and land use planning; (b) better use of railway as the backbone of our passenger transport system; (c) better public transport services and facilities; (d) better use

of advanced technologies in transport management; and (e) better environmental improvement measures. These are major directions that still apply today, and this is particularly so for strategies on railway services. As for strategies on enhancing traffic management, green transport and better use of new technologies, they are established policies of the Government.

At present, over 12 million passenger trips are using public transport every day, accounting for over 90% of the total passenger trips. This percentage can be regarded as the highest in the world. We may look at the percentage in other major cities. In Singapore, the percentage of using public transport is around 65% during peak hours; in Shanghai, it is around 50%, in London and Tokyo, it is around 45% and in New York, it is around 30%. It is evident that the public transport system of Hong Kong is very well developed with high efficiency. One of the reasons is the high accessibility and large capacity of the railway system.

Rail transport can significantly speed up passenger flow, alleviate road traffic congestion and reduce vehicle-induced air pollution, thus it is a highly-efficient and environmentally-friendly mode of transport. A railway network with comprehensive coverage will not only facilitate the daily commute of the public and address the practical livelihood needs of the public, but will also promote the development of the community and new development areas, bringing economic opportunities and benefits and strengthen the ties and integration among communities. For these reasons, the Government affirms the necessity and importance of railway continuing to form the backbone of the passenger transport system.

Five railway projects are currently being implemented in full swing, including the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Hong Kong Section), the West Island Line, the South Island Line (East), the Kwun Tong Line Extension, and the Shatin to Central Link. Among these, the West Island Line opened on 28th last month, with the terminus of the Island Line extended from Sheung Wan Station to Kennedy Town Station via the University of Hong Kong Station, and the Sai Ying Pun Station is expected to be completed and commissioned within this quarter. As for the remaining four projects, they are expected to be completed in succession starting from next year, 2016, till 2020-2021 or so. By then, the total length of the railways in Hong Kong will reach 270 km and the number of stations will increase to 99, covering areas inhabited by over 70% of the population.

Last September, the Government announced the Railway Development Strategy 2014, providing a framework for planning the future expansion of Hong Kong's railway. Having regard to three premises, that is, the transport demand, cost-effectiveness and the development needs of new development areas and other new development projects, we recommend that seven new railway projects will be completed in the planning horizon up to 2031. These projects are the Northern Link and Kwu Tung Station, Tuen Mun South Extension, East Kowloon Line, Hung Shui Kiu Station, South Island Line (West), Tung Chung West Extension and North Island Line. Upon the completion of all the proposed new projects, the total length of the railways in Hong Kong will be increased to more than 300 km in 2031. By then, the railway network will cover areas inhabited by 75% of the population and 85% of job locations.

To use railway as the backbone of our transport system should not be equated with railway hegemony. At present, railways account for 40% of the passenger trips using public transport, whereas franchised buses account for as many as two thirds of the passenger trips, and other modes of public transport like public light buses and taxis account for 1.5% and 8% respectively. It shows that the other transport services also play an important role in public transport.

The Government has made vigorous efforts to maintain the high efficiency and diversity of the public transport system with a view to enhancing the complementarity among the various public transport services, so that the public can enjoy efficient services with choices. The carrying capacity and road space taken up by franchised buses are just second to railways, so they are still a significant component in the public transport system and their function will not be overlooked.

The Government has no plan to consider commencing a Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study. On the contrary, after the completion of the future planning of railways in Hong Kong, we consider it necessary to direct resources and give priority to the Public Transport Strategy Study with a view to enhancing the positioning and roles of various public transport modes. In fact, the completion of this study and the Railway Development Strategy announced some time ago are the major part of the study to be carried out in a comprehensive transport study. At the meeting of the Panel on Transport of the Legislative Council (the Panel) held in last November, we had briefed Members on the scope of the study to be carried out. To be specific, the Public Transport Strategy Study will comprise two parts, namely, the role and positioning review and the topical study.

The role and positioning review will be conducted based on CTS-3. Against the background of using the railway as the backbone of our public transport system and taking into account the further expansion of the railway network, the review will examine in depth the roles and positioning of various public transport services, including franchised buses, public light buses, taxis, non-franchised buses, Light Rail, trams and ferries with a view to bringing their functions into full play — an issue about which a number of Members have expressed concern in their earlier speeches. The review seeks to enhance further the existing strategic arrangements for the public transport services so as to ensure their long-term, balanced, efficient, multi-modal and sustainable development.

As the review will touch on how the availability of multi-modal choices and delicate balance of the operating environment can be maintained, which have not come by easily, we would need to take into account a wide range of factors in the course of the study, and we plan to commission a consultancy to provide assistance.

As for the topical study, it will review eight topical issues that are of greater concern to the public transport trades or have been given priority as they are time-sensitive. These topical issues are: (1) "franchised bus service"; (2) "outcome of the review on taxi fuel surcharge"; (3) "taxi service"; (4) "school service"; (5) "seating capacity of public light buses"; (6) "statutory cap on the number of public light buses"; (7) "role and long-term financial viability of ferries"; and (8) "accessible transport facilities for people with disabilities", which include issues about which Members have expressed concern in their earlier speeches. We will report to the Panel on individual topical issues starting from the first quarter of 2015 according to the order listed.

In the course of conducting the Public Transport Strategy Study, we will consult the legislature, the trades, relevant societies and associations and the public through various channels to collect their views. We will report the progress to the Panel from time to time and attend public hearings to be held by the Panel.

Some Members may consider that the launch of another comprehensive transport study is the only way to give due account to transport infrastructure planning and cross-boundary transport planning simultaneously, yet the Government has all along given consideration to these two aspects in formulating transport strategies.

The Transport Department (TD) and the Highways Department conduct regular reviews of the development of transport infrastructure in Hong Kong and strategic assessments on major highway developments. They will also use transport models and the latest planning data to regularly forecast the territory-wide transport needs and thereby update the need, scope and implementation timetable of various major highway projects. In the past, the Government had used transport models to facilitate its consideration of implementing major highway infrastructure projects, including Route 8 and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor, which have already been completed, and the Central-Wanchai Bypass, the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, the Central Kowloon Route and the Tsueng Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel, which are in progress or planning.

Some time ago, the TD had completed two territory-wide surveys based on the latest population data, and announced the findings of the Travel Characteristics Survey in last February. The TD is now updating the transport model according to the survey findings, which is expected to be completed within this year, to ensure that the planning parameters up to 2036 will be included in the transport forecast. This will enable the TD to make accurate assessments on the territory-wide transport needs and that of major districts, so that transport infrastructure strategies can be formulated promptly and planning and implementation of additional highway infrastructure projects can be carried out.

As for cross-boundary transport, the Government is now taking forward construction projects of various major cross-boundary transport and land border control points in full swing, including the projects of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the Express Rail Link (Hong Kong Section) and the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Cross-boundary Control Point, and so on. Upon the completion of these projects, residents commuting to and from the Pearl River Delta Region will have more choices. Among these is the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the only direct land access connecting Hong Kong, Macao and Pearl River West, which will vigorously stimulate the visitor flow and goods flow among the three places and bring tremendous economic benefits. The Governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have started working together to examine the cross-boundary transport policies and discuss specific cross-boundary transport arrangements with a view to formulating a set of arrangements catering to the needs of residents, visitors and the trades.

Upon completion, the Express Rail Link (Hong Kong Section) will provide high speed railway services between Hong Kong and Guangzhou and connect

Hong Kong to the express rail link of the country. It will enhance Hong Kong's connection with places throughout the country, carry significant strategic value and fulfil a major transport function.

As for the expansion plan of the Hong Kong International Airport of becoming a three-runway system, the Airport Authority is now making vigorous efforts in planning to ensure that Hong Kong will maintain its status and function as the world air transport hub.

A number of Members have expressed concern about the fares of public transport services, particularly on the reasonableness of MTR fares.

The current-term Government follows the Fair Fare principles in fulfilling its gate-keeping role in fare adjustment. On the one hand, it will ensure that the adjustment does not exceed the inflation and the fare is affordable to the public in general. On the other hand, it will assure that operators will make a reasonable return from investments and operation, so that their employees will see income growth and the quality of their services will be maintained.

The MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) carries out the direct-drive fare adjustment mechanism once every five years in accordance with the Operating Agreement signed by the Government and the MTRCL in 2007. The first review, which served two major purposes, was completed in early 2013. The first purpose is to expand the scope of consideration under the mechanism by incorporating the MTRCL's profitability, its service performance and public affordability as factors for consideration. The second purpose is to relieve the fare burden on medium- and long-distance passengers living in remote areas. The new fare adjustment mechanism introduced after the review came into effect in June 2013.

The new mechanism has introduced a number of measures and arrangements to cater for the needs of different types of passengers. These include: (1) retaining the original formula of the direct-drive fare adjustment mechanism which is based on wage and price movements but increasing the predetermined value of the productivity factor, for this will bring about the objective effect of lowering any fare increase rate calculated according to the formula; (2) setting an affordability cap which links with the Median Monthly Household Income; (3) introducing a "Profit Sharing Mechanism" to include the MTRCL's profit from Hong Kong transport operation, Hong Kong station

commercial business, Hong Kong property rental and management businesses, property developments, as well as profit from the MTRCL's overseas ventures; and (4) putting in place a "Service Performance Arrangement", whereby a penalty system will be imposed on the MTRCL for unsatisfactory performance, that is, service disruptions of 31 minutes or above, but situations arising not from incidents caused by the MTRCL will not be counted. These measures have benefited all passengers. The sum collected from the "Profit Sharing Mechanism" and the "Service Performance Arrangement" will be returned to passengers through the "10% Same-Day Second-Trip Discount" promotion. The new mechanism has addressed the reasonable aspirations of the community and allowed the public to share the success of the MTRCL. Finally, I believe that the public is concerned about whether the fare paid is value-for-money, which means they are concerned about the quality and reliability of the services of the MTR.

As for franchised buses, according to the established fare adjustment mechanism, the Government will consider various factors in assessing the fare increase applications of franchised bus operators to strike a balance between the sustainability of bus services and the interest of passengers. These factors include the public acceptability and affordability, performance of bus operators, the financial viability of individual bus operators, and the outcome of the fare adjustment formula based on wage and price movements.

Regarding the carrying capacity of the Light Rail and its long-term development mentioned by Mr CHAN Kam-lam, we will examine the subject in detail under the Public Transport Strategy Study. As for the seating capacity of public light buses, I have provided a written reply to a Member's written question put forth on this subject last month, so I will not dwell on this here.

All planning on transport infrastructure should be kept abreast of the times and reviewed from time to time, so we should not adopt a rigid approach. Take the Railway Development Strategy 2014 as an example. When it comes to the detailed planning of individual railway projects, we will maintain close contact with the relevant departments, adopt the latest planning data and thoroughly examine the alignment and locations of stations, and so on, trying to fully utilize the development potential of the relevant sites. We will also pay attention to changes in the development parameters of different districts and promptly consider whether it is necessary to plan new transport infrastructure.

We also understand that the expansion of the railway network will inevitably affect other public transport services. As such, we consider it necessary to conduct a systematic assessment on the strategic arrangement of other public transport services for the purpose of formulating long-term policies and planning. The Government will listen to the views of the industries and other stakeholders in the process.

Due to housing development and other development projects, the traffic load of various districts will increase. In fact, we do not have to wait for the Comprehensive Transport Study to assess the changes in transport demand in various major districts, and we will surely do so in good time. As I pointed out in my reply to a question concerning traffic demand brought about by the future population growth in New Territories West, in the light of the future new development plans for Northwest and North New Territories as well as Lantau, we will examine the feasibility and desirability of new transport infrastructure (including railways and roads) or upgrading or improvement works to the existing ones to meet the additional transport demand. In this course, we will make reference to the latest planning parameters, look into the actual traffic condition and listen to the views of local residents and experts.

Deputy President, I will respond to the concerns raised by other Members later in my concluding speech. I so submit.

MR WONG KWOK-HING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I rise to speak and thank Mr Frankie YICK for proposing this motion on "Expediently launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study".

After listening to the speech made by the Secretary earlier, I decided to revise my draft speech. First, on the response made by the Secretary, I wish to express my profound regrets. Mr YICK, a remark made by the Secretary just now downright torpedoed your motion. He stated that he did not intend to launch the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4). He made use of a crucial term, that is, to use the Public Transport Strategy Study to replace our demand today.

Deputy President, I regret to hear the Secretary make such a swift response. I really do not understand why the Government cannot consider this proposal.

First, the Government said just now that it can only use the Public Transport Strategy Study. The contents of this are, as the Secretary said, still remaining on using the mass transport system (that is, railway) as the backbone and assigning the other modes of transport to a secondary role. This is called a strategy and it will be perfected on a continued basis. I think it is wrong to remain at this stage.

Second, the Secretary also said that there are eight topics to be studied. I would think that this view is wrong. Will a partial study like this exclude a wholesale study? Will individual studies rule out a full-scale comprehensive study? If we do not have a comprehensive and full-scale picture and a thorough study, how are we going to make the function played by individual modes of transport at the local level tie in with the overall development?

Third, Mr Frankie YICK pointed out that there is really no contradiction between CTS-4 and the Public Transport Strategy Study being undertaken. It is not that once one of them is being undertaken, the other one cannot commence. Why can we not walk on two legs, so to speak? We can undertake the Public Transport Strategy Study while carrying out a full-scale CTS-4 as Mr YICK has proposed. The two are not mutually exclusive, so why can we not walk on two legs instead of just doing one thing at a time? I think there is a big problem with this mindset of the authorities.

Deputy President, I wish to cite an example now to show why a piecemeal and individual study cannot take the place of a comprehensive study. This is about the policy on tunnels and bridges. Deputy President, in the next 10 years, the Government will resume the ownership of four tunnels. If there is no policy on tunnels and bridges and there is no comprehensive study on transport in Hong Kong, how can this task be fulfilled? For example, the Eastern Harbour Crossing, the Government will resume it in 20 months, that is, on 1 August 2016. For the Tate's Cairn Tunnel, it will be 42 months from now, that is, on 1 July 2018. The Western Harbour Crossing will be resumed eight years later, that is, in August 2023. The Tai Lam Tunnel will be resumed 10 years later, that is, on 2025. But there are still no papers from the Government and discussions held on the subject. When the resumption of these tunnels will begin 20 months from now, will the matter considered to be settled if there are only discussions on the issues of whether tolls should be collected and how they should be collected?

I have cited these examples to show the urgency of the problem, the importance of having a study and the relevance to other modes of transport. In the past, increases in tolls for these tunnels greatly affected people's living and other modes of transport, hence there were great resistance and rebound from the people. When the Secretary was making a response earlier, I did not hear him say that a comprehensive study will be conducted. From this we can see the omission of the Government. In the case of a policy on tunnels and bridges, as Mr TANG Ka-piu also mentioned earlier, why are tolls collected for some of them while others are toll-free?

About this policy on tunnels and bridges, will a study be conducted on whether tolls are to be collected? How much will the tolls be in order not to affect people's living while facilitating traffic flow? How should traffic in Hong Kong be streamed so that regional economic benefits can be brought further into full play? Besides, should another, that is, a fourth, cross-harbour tunnel be built? All of these require a holistic strategy that cannot be compartmentalized. If the Government does not study these issues promptly, will it plan to submit the papers eight to 10 months from now and launch a consultation on whether tolls should be collected for these tunnels? This is a one-step-at-a-time approach and it only shows that we do not have a comprehensive concept or strategy.

I wish to cite another example, that is, promotion of the use of electric cars. Although the Government said a few years ago that more efforts would be put into this, we can see that the effect of promoting the use of electric cars is minimal. This is also related to the power supply systems. Now there are only 592 electric cars in Hong Kong. As compared to the year 2007 when these cars were first introduced, there is an increase from 74 cars at that time to 592 cars now and it seems that the number has multiplied many times. In reality, if the number is compared with the hundreds of thousand vehicles in Hong Kong, this is totally disproportionate. But what measures and studies do we see from the Government? What are the plans? There are no matching facilities at all. How can this reduce air pollution in Hong Kong? The issue is therefore closely related to air pollution and the healthy living of the people.

Therefore, Secretary, I wish to point out strongly here once again that in the response you are going to make later on, you should withdraw the remark that the Government does not intend to launch CTS-4.

DR CHIANG LAI-WAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, if the Secretary says that he does not plan to launch the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4), I think that the motion debate may as well come to a close. This is because Members have made a lot of preparations about this CTS-4.

Deputy President, I have a friend from Taiwan and 20 years ago when he came to Hong Kong, he said to me that transport in Hong Kong was so good and apart from some congestion at the cross-harbour tunnel or certain locations during the peak hours, traffic in Hong Kong was not bad at all considering the fact that Hong Kong was a city with a dense population and little land. He said that Hong Kong was different from Taiwan in that there was frequent traffic congestion in Taiwan and also on the Mainland. He doubted if the Chinese people were not as good as foreigners in transport planning because it was still in the British Hong Kong era. Now 20 years down the line, I had a chance to meet him again and he told me that traffic congestion in Hong Kong was serious and traffic congestion was found everywhere. When he left the airport for the downtown area, he found that there was traffic congestion at Tolo Harbour, Tai Po and a few tunnels were jammed. And so was the Lion Rock Tunnel, Waterloo Road and the Cross-Harbour Tunnel and all the way to Central. We notice that the Government has not done anything in comprehensive transport planning after the reunification. Apart from what we all know, that is, the Central-Wanchai Bypass the discussion on which began a long time ago, what has really been done? I therefore thank Mr Frankie YICK for proposing that the Government should launch CTS-4 now.

About this CTS-4, I recall when the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) was undertaken. I am sure Members will know that it was pointed out in CTS-3 that the transport problem was the largest culprit in environmental pollution and of this the bus was the number one killer. However, is the problem related to buses solved now? I do not think so. As we all know, during the occupation movement some time ago, many people said that they did not like the movement. But there was one good thing about it and that is, the air had become better. The number of buses running on the roads had decreased, but traffic was not too bad. Just what had happened? The buses were no longer seen but traffic was not too bad. It shows that the rationalization of bus routes may well be a stopgap measure that cannot solve the problem at root. Therefore, buses cause traffic jams and make the air dirty. How should the problem be solved? I am sure there is a solution to the problem. I have met with people who operate buses and they said that the situation is terrible because the number of buses on some routes is restricted and some of these bus routes do

not have any passenger while on other bus routes, the buses are always packed with passengers. What then is the problem? I think this is an issue which the authorities should find some experts to study. There is no reason why we cannot solve a problem like this. It would be impossible if we are asked to go catch a falling star. But since the number of buses is fixed, what is the traffic flow? A friend of mine from the university told me that the situation about buses is very much like the theory of optical fibres and there are things like channels and circuits. He talked a lot but I did not understand so much because I am not an expert on that. But I believe there must be a solution. And there is only one way and that is, you should take concrete steps and do a good job of it.

I hope very much that the Government can launch CTS-4 as early as possible, and one of the key issues is the harbour crossings. As we know, the three existing cross-harbour tunnels have reached their capacity, so should we think about building a fourth one? If there is a need for it, I think now may be the time. We know that a study may take 10 years and another 10 years are needed for construction. In other words, it may be 20 years from now when the fourth cross-harbour tunnel can be commissioned. That is why a study on it must begin now.

Apart from that, we should also consider certain green connection systems. Now a monorail system is to be built in Kai Tak but it only serves the Kai Tak area. Why can it not be extended to To Kwa Wan? Or should terminals be set up in To Kwa Wan and Hung Hom? I hope the Bureau concerned can consider the idea. It is because according to planning, there will be more than 100 000 people living in the To Kwa Wan district. So there should be MTR or monorail service in the district. I hope the Government can consider this idea.

Also, the West Kowloon waterfront promenade is also important. Many people have said that residents in Kowloon hope that a waterfront promenade can be built to link up Kowloon City and Sham Shui Po. Now there are a number of places where there are disruptions to the continuity of this promenade, they are: the old cross-harbour ferry pier in Kowloon City, the warehouse of the Green Island cement works, the typhoon shelter, and so on. These are disruptions to the continuity of this promenade. If these disruptions are removed, then we will have an attractive promenade. Many members of the public hope that the Government can earnestly implement this project and I hope the Government can consider it when it is to launch CTS-4. Thank you, Deputy President.

MR TAM YIU-CHUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the "Hong Kong Moving Ahead: A transport strategy for the future" published by the Government in 1999 is a proposal covering road and transport infrastructure planning only up to 2016. Over the past decade, the New Territories has seen rapid development and a large number of people have moved into it. Together with the continual increase in the number of cross-boundary visitors, the existing transport system is insufficient to cope with the new demand. For this reason, we believe that it is necessary to launch a new study as soon as possible to prepare for the construction of new transport infrastructure. This can no brook delay.

Take Tuen Mun and Yuen Long as an example. Over the past decade, these two districts in Hong Kong have seen the fastest development and the population therein has surged from 800 000 people to 1.1 million people now. However, the transport infrastructure in these districts is lagging far behind their development. The strategic trunk road built most recently in these districts is the Deep Bay Link commissioned in 2007 and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor connected to it. The total length is just 8.9 km and their function is to promote cross-boundary transport, so they cannot help channel the flow of people in these districts in any significant way.

In Tuen Mun and Yuen Long, no new trunk road has been built in recent years and in the next decade, no new strategic trunk road or district trunk road will be built either. There is also none under planning and design either. Therefore, although the Transport and Housing Bureau has stressed all along that the roads in these districts are sufficient to meet the needs, such a claim contradicts the direct impression of residents. Moreover, on the trunk roads within these districts — Heung Sze Wui Road, Pui To Road and Wong Chu Road in Tuen Mun and Castle Peak Road in Yuen Long — the traffic is very congested all over and pedestrians and vehicles have to compete for space. Despite repeated widenings, many bottleneck locations can still be found on the Tuen Mun Highway and the Yuen Long Highway, which are trunk roads, and they have become the causes of traffic congestion. At present, on Saturdays and Sundays, the traffic in the Tuen Mun and Yuen Long town centres is basically in paralysis and often gridlocked. In the face of such a situation, the Government can no longer expect to solve the traffic congestion problems in these districts by piecemeal remedies. Moreover, it must formulate medium-term and long-term strategies at an early date, build new trunk roads and improve the planning of new development areas to avoid imposing a heavier burden on the traffic in old districts.

On railway construction, although the Government published "Hong Kong Moving Ahead: A transport strategy for the future" in 1999 and subsequently, as the strategic direction, it accorded priority to railway development, the construction of railways in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long has lagged far behind the population growth. Currently, only one railway line and a mere five railway stations can be found in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long but in Sha Tin and Tseung Kwan O, the population and surface area of which are similar, there are already three railway lines and 16 railway stations. Moreover, the new Shatin to Central Link is now under construction. In the Northwest New Territories, there is no large-scale transport system capable of reaching all corners of the territory, so it is inconvenient for its residents to travel elsewhere and the burden of transport expenses is also heavy.

At the same time, since there is a lack of railway network, it is not possible to carry out large-scale economic development projects in these districts. As a result, there are fewer employment opportunities in the area. The average income of residents in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long is lower than that of Hong Kong as a whole. Tuen Mun is an important town in the Northwest New Territories but in terms of railway development, it is located at the periphery, so it is languishing at the end of a railway line. Moreover, when using the West Rail to travel from Tuen Mun to the urban area, it is necessary to first make a detour to Yuen Long before reaching the urban area, so not only is this a loss of time, the railway fare is also higher than the fares for buses. If we want to enhance the transport benefits of railway lines, we must make them reach all corners of the territory. Therefore, in the future, the transport development strategy for the Northwest New Territories should step up the construction of a railway network using Tuen Mun as the focal point and include the construction of the coastal rail link from Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan, so that Tuen Mun can escape from the state of being an isolated island in the railway network and the transport needs of residents living in Tuen Mun, Siu Lam and even Sam Shing can thus be met effectively.

Within the Tuen Mun District, efforts to improve the railway network must also be speeded up. At present, the area around the Tuen Mun Pier is a major residential area in the district and the number of residents is as many as 100 000 people. However, they are still not served by any direct railway service. They believe that the Tuen Mun southern extension should be built at an early date and they are lobbying for the launch of the project in the next two years. The southern extension of the West Rail, apart from being extended to the vicinity of

the Tuen Mun Pier, should also tie in with the future development of Areas 40 and 46 in Tuen Mun, so it should also be extended to the area around Siu Lang Shui Road in one stride.

In 2012, the DAB put forward the planning proposal of "forging a port economic area in Tuen Mun" and called for the optimal use of land by forging the prime sites in Areas 40 and 46 in Tuen Mun into a port economic area with various large-scale commercial facilities and economic and industrial parks, thus turning it into a secondary centre of Tuen Mun and creating 60 000 employment opportunities, with a view to promoting local employment. The Government is now conducting a planning study on this area and the DAB also strongly demands that the construction of a railway station in this area be examined at the same time.

The study on long-term transport strategy should include improving the existing railway services to increase the carrying capacity. For many years, the MTR Corporation Limited has been dragging its feet in committing more resources. For example, the services of the West Rail have reached capacity and during the rush hours, the carriages of the West Rail are just like cans of sardine. However, so far, the West Rail still insists on using ultra short trains of only seven carriages each and the plan to increase the number of carriages to eight will be completed only two years later, that is, at the end of 2016. (*The buzzer sounded*)

MR WONG YUK-MAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the overall transport system in Hong Kong is fraught with problems and a shambles. The railway lines of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), in which the SAR Government has a 76% stake, have reached capacity long ago. Moreover, its fares only rise but never come down; its trains experience failures repeatedly; the project of the Express Rail Link experienced delays but its senior management tried to cover up its mistakes; its staff members manning platforms were incapable of properly dealing with stray dogs that had fallen onto the tracks. The bus routes of the three bus companies are tortuous and overlapped and similarly, their fares only rise but never come down; the company operating the Western Harbour Crossing insists on collecting exorbitant tolls and as a result, the Cross-Harbour Tunnel and the Eastern Harbour Crossing continue to be congested but the SAR Government just stands by in the face of this. The taxi licence premium for urban taxis is as high as \$7 million now and taxi drivers have a hard time making a living.

Moreover, the problems of some taxi drivers offering a 20% discount and refusing to serve people making short trips occur repeatedly, so residents living in Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai, Sheung Shui, Fan Ling and the rural areas have a miserable time in their daily commute. Passengers and members of the sector all have to pay a price for the chaotic transport system in terms of time and money, so it can be said that the whole transport policy is an utter failure.

(THE PRESIDENT resumed the Chair)

In February last year, the MTRCL was exposed to have overestimated its carrying capacity by more than 40% and now, trains on the Tseung Kwan O Line and the East Rail Line are chock-full of passengers and the carrying capacities of the West Rail Line, Kwun Tong Line and Tsuen Wan Line have almost reached 100%. Meanwhile, the computer system of the MTR Operations Control Centre in Tsing Yi, which monitors the operation of 10 MTR lines, uses backward computer technology. However, it seems the SAR Government is showing particular favour to the MTRCL and all along, it has used the railway as the backbone of the transport system. Moreover, as the major shareholder, the Government even condones the low governance standard of the management of the MTRCL. The services of the MTRCL are on the brink of collapse, so this proves that the privatization plan in 2000 was a big mistake. On the one hand, the MTRCL takes part actively in the development of above-station properties; and on the other, it is dragging its feet in improving service quality, so it is indeed not attending to its proper business. Even if the SAR Government refuses to consider turning the MTRCL into a publicly-owned corporation, it should still exert greater pressure on its management and request it to improve its corporate governance. However, from the problem of delays to the Express Rail Link project and the collusion between the MTRCL and the Government to cover up the blunders, Members can see that the SAR Government is still sticking to its wrong course obdurately.

Another much faulted transport policy is the implementation of the Fare Adjustment Mechanism (that allows upward or downward adjustments) in relation to the MTRCL and bus companies. The Executive Council has turned a blind eye to the lousy services of the MTRCL and bus companies, yet it still allowed them to increase their fares drastically despite their huge profits made annually. In 2012, the Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited was

exposed to have used a financial ploy by hiving off its revenues from land sales and the profit-making RoadShow, so as to present a lower estimate of its profits and at the same time, apply for a drastic fare increase of 8.5%. These large companies monopolize the transport industry but do not have to bear any social responsibility. Moreover, they can even deceive the general public, so what actually does the SAR Government take the public to be?

As regards the issue of how to improve the transport system, a consensus in society and in public opinion has been reached. It includes shaking up the MTRCL, bus route rationalization and buying back the Western Harbour Crossing from the CITIC Pacific, and so on, yet the Government always cites excuses to hold these measures off. I am convinced that in the so-called Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study, the Government would still stick to the old rut and leave the public in deep water. Apart from the shortcomings of the transport system *per se*, the greatest failure in Hong Kong is urban planning and this is also the root cause of the problem. In this small city called Hong Kong, 7 million people have to be crammed into residential land accounting for only 6.9% of the land in Hong Kong, so the residential density is the second highest in the world. Coupled with the fact that most of the employment opportunities are concentrated in such commercial areas as Central, Wan Chai and Tsim Sha Tsui, there is hardly any self-sufficient new towns like Sha Tin. A large number of residents living in remote towns have to commute daily to the urban area, thus exerting tremendous pressure on the several major railway lines. The exorbitant residential rents in the urban area are also a complication arising from this problem.

In his original motion, Mr Frankie YICK proposes that consideration be given to the cross-boundary transportation needs in terms of passenger flow or vehicular flow brought about by the further integration between Hong Kong and China. At present, 40 million visitors under the Individual Visit Scheme — six times the resident population in Hong Kong — flock into Hong Kong annually and Hong Kong is so crowded as to be suffocated. If the Government continues to promote integration between Hong Kong and China, attract more people from China to make spendings in Hong Kong or find jobs and live in Hong Kong, our transport system will surely be paralysed and Hong Kong people will surely be overwhelmed.

The policies of the Hong Kong Government must be oriented towards Hong Kong people. Ultimately, the bills for the construction of transport

infrastructure are footed by Hong Kong people. To cure the ills of the transport system in Hong Kong, the pressing task is for the Government to start a thorough reform of its industrial policy and urban planning, develop agriculture and various industries again in some districts in the New Territories, as well as developing new commercial areas to channel spending and the search for employment from the urban area to the New Territories, so as to save the time spent by the public on commute, reduce the fare burden borne by passengers and check the rents in urban areas.

At present, residents of New Territories West are beset by transport problems. In view of this, several Members representing New Territories West also complained about this problem in strong terms in their speeches or the amendments proposed by them. However, concerned only about the transport system, they have neglected such core issues as urban planning and the industrial structure. If Hong Kong maintains its existing industrial structure and urban planning in the future, the Tsuen Wan Line, Tseung Kwan O Line and Island Line of the MTRCL will remain having reached their capacities, the Cross Harbour Tunnel and Eastern Harbour Crossing will remain congested and the dozens of cross-harbour routes from the New Territories will remain heavily utilized. The phenomenon of employment opportunities being concentrated in the urban area is not a healthy one. The Long Term Housing Strategy Steering Committee also pointed out that in the future, the mode of comprehensive development should be adopted for new towns, so that they can be self-sufficient communities. We hope that the consultation paper on agriculture published by the Food and Health Bureau recently would be the harbinger of the reorganization of the industrial structure, town planning and transport system and in fact, the Transport and Housing Bureau should also work in collaboration.

The question today is actually as self-evident as "The Pope is Catholic". However, if the Government does not take the lead in solving the problems resolutely or perform its tasks with full vigour and urgency, in the end, all would be in vain and such is the characteristic of the regime of "689", LEUNG Chun-ying. Today, the Secretary for Transport and Housing is not here and the Under Secretary, Mr YAU Shing-mu, was called in to take on Members. I just do not know what questions he can answer.

I so submit.

MR LEUNG CHE-CHEUNG (in Cantonese): First of all, President, I have to thank Mr Frankie YICK for proposing this motion on "Expediently launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study", which is also an issue of concern to all Hong Kong people.

I strongly disagree with the Under Secretary for Transport and Housing who said in his earlier response to the motion proposed by Mr Frankie YICK that no review would be conducted. Neither do I agree with Mr Gary FAN who blamed the inadequate transport facilities on the excessive number of tourists. However, I agree to certain views expressed by Mr WONG Yuk-man, who considered town planning crucial to resolving transport problems.

Transport is an issue of great concern to everyone, including people commuting between their homes and workplaces or visiting their friends or relatives, inbound tourists, and so on. Moreover, it can reflect the overall management ability and economic strength of Hong Kong as a city. Undeniably, Hong Kong has been widely recognized as having a highly efficient transport system. Based on its overall transport policy and the development strategy of according priority to railways, large-scale infrastructure developments have been launched in Hong Kong in recent years. Railways under construction include the Shatin to Central Link, Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Hong Kong Section), South Island line, West Island line and Kwun Tong Line Extension, whereas railways under planning include the Northern Link, Tuen Mun South Extension, North Island Line and East Kowloon Line. Upon the completion of all these railways, most of Hong Kong will be covered by railways. If a Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Link can be built, the vast majority of places in Hong Kong will be covered by the railway network, too. As pointed out by the Secretary just now, approximately 75% of the territory's population will be served by railways by then.

Currently, railways account for 40% of the overall transport in terms of passenger capacity. Upon the completion of all the railways, the passenger capacity of railways in the overall passenger capacity will definitely exceed 50%. With the continuous expansion of the railway network, other modes of public transport will definitely shrink but, according to the Under Secretary, appropriate measures would be adopted to enable other modes of transport to continue to play the role of complementing the development of railways. Nevertheless, the relevant data showed that doubts were raised over whether franchised buses could continue to play their complementary role. Buses are characterized by their "point-to-point" services, meaning that members of the public could take a short break when travelling long haul on buses. However, buses might experience

serious delays as they are affected by road traffic. In this respect, there is nothing the Government can do. In particular, during the peak hours when people commute between their homes and workplaces, they might have to wait for more than 10 minutes before alighting. What is more, the gravity of traffic jams can make people feel greatly distressed. For this reason, the Government must further review the use of roads, particularly the priority use of roads by buses, or optimize the relevant measures to ensure the continuous provision of complementary services by buses, which is most important. Hence, I think the remark made by the Under Secretary that no review would be conducted has already reflected that he has not given any consideration to the survival or otherwise of other modes of transport.

What is more, the Government should conduct reviews of individual districts or transport service operators in order to cope with the needs of population growth. Just now, a Member pointed out the extremely rapid development of certain districts. President, I wish to point out in particular that, in order to meet housing needs, the Government has been undertaking developments in the New Territories to cope with the population growth. For instance, the population of such districts as the North District, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun and even the Islands District has been growing rapidly, but their transport problems are the most acute. For instance, the population of Yuen Long is expected to rise to 150 000 people in 2023, but the West Rail Line has already reached capacity. Even if the Shatin to Central Link can be commissioned in 2017 and the number of train carriages of the West Rail Line can be increased, the problem of people being unable to get on the trains in the morning might still not be solved. In order to resolve this problem, the complementary bus service, which is also a crucial factor, must be taken into consideration. As such, I think it is important to consider how a proper review can be conducted to enable railway to really give play to its role as the backbone of the public transport system.

Furthermore, the Yuen Long section of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system has long been criticized by members of the public because of its backwardness and the obstruction it poses to pedestrians and traffic lanes of the entire Yuen Long Main Road. Therefore, we hope the Government can, having regard to this situation, review whether or not there is a need to retain the Yuen Long section of the LRT. I hope the Secretary can give in-depth consideration to this.

I so submit.

MR CHAN KIN-POR (in Cantonese): The transport development in Hong Kong has all along been taken forward in the direction of mass carriers. The rail passenger system has gradually achieved quite comprehensive development whereas the other modes of public transport have gradually been reduced to a supplementary or supporting role and as stated in the motion, they have indeed been marginalized and their services are retrogressing. This has given rise to many problems in the overall public transport policy. Therefore, I agree that the transport policies should be reviewed. In tandem with the continuous development of the railway network, it is also necessary to ensure the healthy development of other modes of public transport, so that the public can enjoy more comprehensive and reasonable transport services suiting their needs.

Many Members have raised a diversity of views today. I would like to focus on the development of public light buses (PLBs) which provide support for the railway network. The Government has developed a transport system using railway as the backbone, but to optimize the benefits of the mass transit system, it is actually necessary to rely on PLBs as a means of transport for the public to commute between their housing estates and the railway stations. Particularly in the New Territories or the remote districts, the residents are all the more reliant on the PLB services.

However, following the continuous railway development, PLBs should supposedly have seen very good development in parallel, but this is not the case in reality. As a supplementary mode of public transport providing support for the railway, PLBs have always been popular among the public, but given an increased patronage, the public have to wait in long queues during peak hours and it is very difficult to get on a PLB at intermediate stops, and the situation of lost trips is serious. An increase in their frequency will inevitably lead to further traffic congestions and aggravate roadside air pollution. Meanwhile, it is difficult to recruit sufficient PLB drivers due to the wage factor. All of these have made it difficult for PLBs to increase their frequency substantially.

As a result, while the railway can speedily carry a large number of passengers from their workplace to the MTR stations in the vicinity of their housing estates, the public may need to wait for a long time before boarding a PLB at the MTR station for home. This has reflected that the development of the transport policy is far from healthy. Even though the railway can carry a large number of people efficiently, it is still futile if the feeder services cannot catch up.

With a considerable increase in the carrying capacity of railways, the carrying capacity of various supplementary modes of public transport has also increased, such as the Government's approval for franchised bus operators to introduce 12.8 meters-long buses which are longer in length and have a greater passenger capacity, the issue of more taxi licences in 1994 and 1997, and so on.

I think the Government should also consider upgrading the carrying capacity of PLBs. PLBs are originally designed to have 24 seats, just that the existing legislation has rigidly stipulated the provision of only 16 seats, which has restricted their original carrying capacity from being fully utilized. Therefore, we should consider removing the restriction on the number of seats of PLBs, subject to a cap of 24 seats. I believe this will create a five-win situation for Hong Kong.

First, the public will win. Increasing the number of seats from 16 to 24 will immediately increase the carrying capacity by 50%. This will help resolve the problem of long queues of passengers waiting for PLBs during peak hours and once the waiting time is shortened, the public will be provided with better services. Moreover, an increase in the carrying capacity can greatly relieve the pressure of fare increase to the benefit of the public.

Second, the Government will win. This measure will enable the Government to immediately increase the carrying capacity of PLBs by 50% to address the inadequacy of the carrying capacity of supplementary modes of public transport during peak hours in the most environmentally-friendly way and without having to spend one single cent out of the public coffers.

Third, the PLB drivers will win. As the carrying capacity of each vehicle is increased, the PLB operators can have the resources to increase drivers' wages and provide more benefits and training to them, which will in turn enhance the quality of service and attract more people to join the trade.

Fourth, the trade will win. This measure can address the operational difficulties of the PLB trade and the plights faced by it in sustaining their operation. This can also obviate the need of discontinuing the loss-making routes which would otherwise render the public affected, and alleviate the pressure of fare increase.

Fifth, the environment will win. This measure can release the original carrying capacity of PLBs without having to expand the fleet of PLBs, and immediately increase the carrying capacity by 50% in the most environmentally-friendly way.

Many other organizations and I had put forward this proposal before but the Government of the previous terms had all along neglected it. In view of the rapid changes in society, the Government should adopt a new mindset in administration. It should not be hesitant anymore and should introduce this all-win proposal at once.

I so submit.

MR ALBERT CHAN (in Cantonese): President, this discussion on a Comprehensive Transport Study involves not only a single railway, a single district or an individual problem. The three Comprehensive Transport Studies conducted in the past have brought momentous changes to the Hong Kong. Therefore, the Secretary is being unprofessional and lazy when he refuses to conduct a review. Why does he refuse to conduct a review? For the Secretary does not know how to do it. Another possibility is that the powers that be do not want such a review. They want to manipulate the system with their golden fingers, so that they can take forward whatever development projects they prefer and everything will be decided by the government officials. The implementation of the central waters reclamation project by LEUNG Chun-ying is a case in point.

Let me tell the Secretary and all Hong Kong people the changes brought about by the several Comprehensive Transport Studies in the past. The first study was conducted in the 1970s, the second in the 1980s and the third in the 1990s. It has been 17 years since the last study was conducted, but the Secretary still says it is unnecessary to conduct such a review. It is utterly ridiculous. Secretary, you are twit.

What impact did the Second Comprehensive Transport Study bring? After the second study, the Government formulated the White Paper and announced a series of projects to be undertaken. These included: North Lantau Expressway, Lantau Fixed Crossing, Route 3, Route 7, Central-Wanchai Bypass, Route 16, Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Extension and the West Rail. As for the outcome of the third study, apart from certain changes in planning, the

focus was on a number of green measures, including the switch to LPG vehicles for some taxis and public light buses, the construction of additional footbridge networks, the plan to develop electric vehicles, the adoption of higher vehicle emission standard or the switch to EURO III standard. These measures were implemented by the Government according to the findings of the studies, yet it has been 17 years since the last study was conducted, and it means the decisions were made 17 years ago.

Hong Kong is now in a mess. The Government allows individual government officials to impose their will on all considerations. In contrast, those studies were conducted in a systematic, thoughtful and planned manner. I have pointed out repeatedly in this Chamber that the incumbent Government is in a chaotic condition. LEUNG Chun-ying has been making appointments arbitrarily. He appointed a layman to planning, the "Secretary of subdivided flats", to be responsible for the development of Hong Kong. He appointed a layman to transport, Anthony CHEUNG, an exploiter in politics who sponges off people, to be in charge of transport. The Chief Executive cum surveyor who knows nothing about surveying has messed up the planning of Hong Kong, and transport is definitely being affected.

I seldom agree with the proposals made by Members from the pro-government camp, particularly those from the business and industrial sectors. But today, I implore all Members from the pan-democratic camp and all Members who understand the planning and transport issues of Hong Kong to give full support to this motion to pressurize the Government into responding to the aspiration. For the Government has acted ridiculously, plunging Hong Kong into the current chaotic situation.

We have made this request a number of times already. Before Eva CHENG left, I had pleaded with her desperately to do a good deed before leaving. Since the comprehensive transport planning involved inter-departmental work, she could not do that. I asked her to do me a favour by conducting a railway transport study. Subsequently, she decided to conduct such a study and completed it before her departure. But still, it was inadequate. Although railway strategies had been formulated, there was no overall transport planning and other support, and inadequacies were found in many aspects.

Back then, I opposed the extension of the MTR Island Line to Kennedy Town and the construction of a rail link to the Aberdeen district, for there was no

matching transport support as a whole. Such planning would only favour the expansion of the MTRCL, but for the other "poor relatives" — public light buses, taxis and buses, the authorities had not made any matching arrangement for them. Thus once the Kennedy Town Station and the University of Hong Kong Station were opened, operators of green minibuses and red minibuses started complaining about their plights.

I have criticized the Government repeatedly for lacking comprehensive matching support. Though a railway study has been conducted, it is still inadequate. Why can railway stations be set up in certain districts on Hong Kong Island which has a population of only 50 000 to 80 000? Why are residents of New Territories West treated as second-class citizens? Despite a population of 300 000, there is only one railway station in Tin Shui Wai. Even in other development areas in the New Territories, such as Hung Shui Kiu which has a population of some 200 000, only two railway stations will be provided. Such planning is unreasonable. Why do railway stations have to be built specifically in districts like the University of Hong Kong and Aberdeen where the population is only around 50 000 to 80 000? There are some 200 000 people in Hung Shui Kiu, but why are only two railway stations provided under the new planning?

This is utterly ridiculous. In the final analysis, it is because the Government has not formulated any policy. Why do the authorities not formulate policies to ensure that all districts are given the same status and entitled to equal rights, so that any district with a population of 50 000 to 80 000 will be provided with railway services and the construction cost will be borne by the Government? In the past, the cost of railway construction was borne by the MTRCL, but now, the Government has "turned on the tap to give a free flow of resources", providing all the capital to subsidize the construction of a railway, and then it will give it to the MTRCL for management.

Why do residents in New Territories West have to be treated this way? I hope Mr Frankie YICK and other Members will support conducting the Comprehensive Transport Study. Particularly Members of New Territories West from the pro-government camp, they must speak up and stop acting like quails. Whenever residents of New Territories West are mistreated, we do not see Members of New Territories West from the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) come forward to speak for the residents. The DAB has three Members from New Territories West, yet I have

never seen them offer support or speak up. Lackeys will only take orders from the Communist Party of China, so even if residents of New Territories West are mistreated, they will not utter a word. Why do residents in Hung Shui Kiu have to accept that only two railway stations will be built? There are some 500 000 people in Hung Shui Kiu and Tin Shui Wai, why are they only provided with three railway stations? Why are only two railway stations provided in Tuen Mun which has a population of 600 000? The authorities are talking nonsense.

I would like to thank Mr Frankie YICK who is a Member from the industrial and commercial sectors for putting forth this proposal on the Comprehensive Transport Study. Perhaps it is because The Wharf had been treated badly in the past, for the planning to extend the railway to their doorstep was withdrawn eventually. I think he has had profound experience of the pain of being discriminated against and picked on. Back then, certain powers that be in the Government might have a vendetta against him or have other problems, which caused the railway station planned to be built at his company's doorstep to be cancelled. I remember how miserable it was to The Wharf, but I surely did not help him. However, I will support him this time around, for his proposal is about the interest of all but not individuals.

I hope that the motion today will be passed unanimously to pressurize the Government into responding to the aspiration of the public. If the Government still refuses to accept this, I urge Members from the pro-government camp to join in our non-cooperation movement immediately to officially declare war on the Government. If the authorities turn a blind eye to such a good proposal, it proves that they are only concerned about their interests and seek to gain benefits through their manipulation, so that they may distribute the benefits to their supporters with their golden fingers. I thus hope that the conduct of this study will do justice to Hong Kong and the transport system as a whole.

MR CHARLES PETER MOK (in Cantonese): President, the motion today covers a vast scope, and I would like to thank Mr Frankie YICK for proposing the motion. Due to the time constraint, I will focus on two aspects only. First, it is about intelligent transport and the use of advanced technology, and second, it is about pedestrian precincts and air quality.

Referring to the use of advanced technology in transport management as stated in the Third Comprehensive Transport Report, the intelligent transport

system was mentioned in the Government's proposal, including systems for the monitoring of traffic flow, navigation and the provision of real-time traffic information, and so on. Yet I think no one would have thought of the popularity of the use of 4G smart phones today, with which everyone can have access to a large amount of traffic information on their phone anytime. As for the achievements made by the Government in respect of intelligent transport systems, the development of the computerized intelligent transport system undertaken by the Transport Department (TD) has experienced a number of setbacks. Despite the rapid advancement in technology and the growth in knowledge in technology of the public, the application of the system is less than popular.

In contrast, the development of intelligent transport systems overseas has been elevated to the level of achieving environmental benefits, minimizing the cost of transport and reducing exhaust emission. In respect of the smart cities overseas, such as Barcelona in Spain, intelligent transport systems are used there for identifying locations of vacant parking spaces curbside and providing real-time information to drivers, which help drivers to save time and fuel used on finding parking spaces and alleviating traffic congestion arising from the search for parking spaces.

What is the situation in Hong Kong? With regard to navigation systems, particularly the navigation system for private cars, we have discovered some problems. I went to the United States in the Christmas and New Year holidays just past and found that all the vehicles there were equipped with navigation systems. Yet in Hong Kong, vehicles installed with navigation systems must have the systems removed to obtain permission to run in Hong Kong. Last year, some car owners contacted me to express their queries about the outdated requirements adopted in Hong Kong. I then put a written question to the Government in last October to ask about the installation of visual display units inside vehicles. Under section 37 of the Road Traffic (Construction and Maintenance of Vehicles) Regulations (Cap. 374A), there are a lot of restrictions in this respect — I will not waste my time reading out those requirements, for the Secretary must know them full well. The trade and drivers have pointed out that those requirements cause the use of the new-generation system to be banned in Hong Kong, impeding the development and application of these technologies in Hong Kong.

However, the reply provided by the Government at the time stated that the Government did not have any plan to amend the legislation. The most

ridiculous part in the Government's reply is the response that the new-generation telematics, regardless of whether they are operated in an interactive mode, may be used as long as they satisfy the existing requirements, and thus the legislation will not impede the application of new technologies. How can the authorities give such a response. I cannot but marvel at such a reply.

We bring forth the point that drivers are prevented from using such systems because of the regulations, but the authorities gave a reply stating that the systems can be used if they satisfy the regulations and thus the relevant development will not be impeded. What is the Government talking about? Does it understand what our concern is? We have pointed out that the relevant regulations are outdated, yet the Government said that they will not be outdated as long as the requirements are met. Is this the logic applied by the authorities? How can it adopt such a perfunctory attitude? How can it use road safety concern as the pretext for shirking its responsibilities? Does it imply that the driving skills of Hong Kong drivers are particularly poor and it would be more dangerous if they use such systems? Members should have seen how taxi drivers in Hong Kong manipulate 10 mobile phones in front of them while driving, they are really magnificent. They will not have any accident even if they have to handle the phones and the Police have not arrested them. However, in the formal application for licence for a new vehicle to run in Hong Kong, the driver is required to remove the navigation system. It is ludicrous that the Government dares claim that it supports the development of innovation and technology.

Today, Mr Frankie YICK requests that the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study be conducted but the Secretary has said earlier that the Government will not conduct such a study. The Administration is applying the same logic that government officials need to do nothing and there is no need to conduct any review. In my view, reviews should be conducted constantly but not only on an ad hoc basis with studies being conducted for the second, third, fourth or fifth time. The authorities should be conducting reviews all the time.

President, secondly, I would like to talk about vehicle exhaust, which is in fact a serious problem. After the end of the Umbrella Movement, everything has returned to normal, so to speak, and roads are filled with vehicle exhaust once again. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan also agreed with this point earlier. Recently, particularly after the Umbrella Movement, I have tried to walk to the Legislative Council and noticed that after the end of the Occupy movement, we can smell vehicle exhaust even when we are on the footbridge connecting with the Admiralty Centre.

According to the report on 30 September in the *South China Morning Post*, the Air Quality Health Index of Central and Causeway Bay had dropped to a record low. According to the information of the Environmental Protection Department, between the Sunday night before the kickoff of the Occupy action and the next morning, the level of carbon dioxide had all dropped by half. Certainly, people were supposed to go to work the next day, but vehicles could not run on the roads due to the Occupy action. However, in the report of the *South China Morning Post* on 17 December, it was pointed out that after the occupation, the air pollution level was "back to normal", that is, having risen to the usual level. But this is not the normal level we desire.

The Clean Air Network has conducted a test to compare the indexes recorded during and after the occupation. It is found that the PM 2.5 level in Mong Kok has increased by 42% and that in Causeway Bay has increased by 55%, whereas in Central, it increased by 83.3%. This example proves that the setting up of additional pedestrian precincts is an effective approach which the Government must consider. Yet we can see that the Government has been biased in formulating these policies and studies, including the Public Transport Strategy Study submitted some time ago in November, focused mainly on service improvement to the neglect of the pressing need for low-emission transport planning.

During the Occupy action, the Government made swift arrangements for traffic diversion and showed us that these are a practicable solution to the problem. However, the authorities still refuse to consider setting up more pedestrian precincts as a way to improve air quality. In fact, I think the entire tramway in Central can be designated as a pedestrian precinct.

With these remarks, President, I hope the Government will seriously consider the views expressed by all the Members today.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any other Member wish to speak?

MR ALBERT HO (in Cantonese): President, we support the expeditious launch of the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4) to fulfil the following policy objectives: reorganize the transport network of Hong Kong, review regional transport demands and future development and conduct a fresh review of

the role played by various modes of transport, and so on. I would like to focus on the following topics: Transport development and demand in New Territories West, the future role played by the Light Rail and its direction of development, as well as the operation mode of ferries to the outlying islands.

I now turn to the transport needs of New Territories West. Earlier on the Transport and Housing Bureau has said that it will postpone the proposal to construct a rail link between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun. The Bureau has overlooked the fact that ever since the cessation of the ferry service between Tuen Mun and Central, Tuen Mun Road and the West Rail have become the two major external traffic links. According to a paper submitted by the Transport and Housing Bureau to this Council last February, if the new method of calculation is used, that is, four instead of six persons (standing) per square metre of the train compartment, now the passenger carrying capacity of the West Rail during the peak hours has reached 99%. Second, we notice that during the past five years, many residential developments have been undertaken in Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai Districts. The Development Bureau pointed out last year that if the 14 lots of land in Yuen Long were rezoned, it was expected that 42 000 units could be provided. When these are added to the properties along the railways and the new Home Ownership Scheme flats as planned, the future supply of residential units in the district can reach as many as 63 000. Given the close to full capacity situation of the West Rail, how is the West Rail going to meet the transport demand of residents living in Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai who go to the urban areas to work or commute among these districts? This, when added to the design of roads in Yuen Long, especially in Yuen Long Main Road, is really inadequate to hold more bus routes. We therefore hope that the Government can reconsider building a rail link between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun to meet the future external transport demand of residents living in the New Territories.

Second, the role of the Light Rail and its future development. On the Light Rail, although the Government has refused to admit it, we notice that all along there is really an exclusive zone for the Light Rail in operation. In fact, the development of the Light Rail has hitherto come to a bottleneck. While taking up a lot of road surface, it cannot increase its carrying capacity. In the case of the Yuen Long Main Road in particular, it is because of the Light Rail that traffic in both directions has changed from three lanes to one lane. A similar situation is found in Tuen Mun. The residents often complain about the inadequacy of train service. We therefore think that CTS-4 should be launched

expeditiously and that efforts should be made to examine the role of the Light Rail in the future, and this can even include consideration of whether the Light Rail should be scrapped. Although I do not have a view on the last suggestion, we cannot rule out such a possibility. It is because if this is not done, how can the carrying capacity of the Light Rail be increased? Is there any alternative which is feasible?

Third, on ferries. The ferries are the only mode of transport linking the outlying islands with the outside world or the urban areas. However, owing to the fall in the returns from ferry service, residents living on the outlying islands always have to face the pressure of an increase in ferry fares. Even when the Government decided to subsidize ferry pier maintenance and fuel about 20 years ago, the funding is still not enough and there is always great pressure for a hike in fares. Actually, the ferry fares for Mui Wo and Ping Chau have always been a cause of complaint by residents. Some residents of these outlying islands are even forced to move out to the urban areas because of the transport expenses. Their new homes are certainly no match for their original homes. These are problems we have to face. In the past the Government admitted that it had a responsibility to stabilize ferry fares, and it did make some proposals such as allowing development above the ferry piers. But to date these proposals have proved not as effective as anticipated and the pressure of rising transport costs borne by the residents of outlying islands is not eased. I think the Government should maintain ferry fares at a stable and reasonable level. This is fair to residents of the outlying islands because they have no other choice than taking these ferries. We therefore suggest that the Government should take a more pragmatic approach to study the issue and examine how the problem can be solved in the long run. For many years Honourable colleagues of this Council have been proposing the idea that the Government should consider setting up a non-profit-making company wholly owned by it to operate these ferries. As for the mode of operation, the Government can fund the purchase of ferries as a way of financing. Of course, some middleman can be called in to operate the ferries. But the most important point lies in the investment capital (*The buzzer sounded*) ... and it is only in this way that the problem can be solved.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any other Member wish to speak?

MR LEUNG YIU-CHUNG (in Cantonese): President, in the last few years we have heard residents express their discontent with the transport problem, and their complaints are becoming more and more serious. We often hear people complain about the insufficient number of buses and minibuses, and recently, there are complaints about the inadequate train service of the Light Rail and the MTR. The problem is even more serious in New Territories West.

Last year we joined Under Secretary YAU Shing-mu on an inspection of the situation in the morning in New Territories West. We saw that many students and workers had to wait for four or five trains before they could board one. On top of this, some residents or students had to get up as many as one hour earlier than before to use these modes of transport because they did not want to be late. It was a very serious situation. Even though we have inspected the district with Under Secretary YAU Shing-mu and held discussions on the subject, the situation remains unchanged.

The reason is certainly the failure of the entire transport policy and this applies especially to mass transport, in particular the approach which makes the railway the backbone. This is the most serious problem. Although the Government denies that railways are given priority and it often denies it, in fact and objectively, such a phenomenon does exist. It moreover poses difficulty to the operation of other modes of transport which have to reduce their service and routes. This can be seen clearly in the case of buses.

As Members must be aware, the bus companies kept claiming last year that bus routes had to be rationalized to suit operation. This kind of rationalization does not mean increasing buses and bus routes but cutting bus routes and service. This forces the passengers to switch to railways, causing a great increase in the patronage of railway transport. When this is added to the inability of railway transport to meet demands of a growing population and district development, there are immense grievances among the people.

President, I agree with Mr WONG Yuk-man's point just now that as we discuss the mass transport system today, we should not just look at transport problems alone but we should also discuss other issues like urban planning and population growth in the districts.

For example, the SAR Government has emphasized recently that now Hong Kong faces the problem of housing shortage and the Government has no alternative but to increase housing supply substantially. So whenever land is

found, it is used for housing construction. We call this situation planting needles in small crevices. Blocks of building are constantly being erected. But when buildings are erected, nothing is done to take account of the views expressed by residents in the districts, especially in those districts where the transport problem is most acute. If the population is to increase further, there is no way that problems can be solved. The transport problem will certainly worsen and no solution can be found. Unfortunately, the Government is not paying any attention to this and turns a blind eye to the worsening transport problem. It will just erect buildings like planting needles in small crevices.

Yuen Long is a very good example. It is developing at an amazing pace, and the population grows drastically. Unfortunately, however, the roads and transport facilities cannot cope with the growth in population. Such continual development has led to very serious transport problems in Yuen Long.

Apart from the population growth, planning is also a problem. I can see that very often the residents, especially those in New Territories West, are not going to work or school in their own districts. Many of them have to leave their home districts. In the case of those who go to work, the residents have to go to Tsuen Wan or even Kowloon, Hong Kong Island or even Kwun Tong. When they have to travel to such a faraway place to work, it will increase the pressure on the transport system. We can see from past developments that Tsuen Wan is a satellite town and the residents can go to work or school in the district. This serves to reduce the pressure on transport. But now things have changed. If we are really to conduct a review on transport, we must discuss the issues together with town planning and district development.

President, I wish to say more on the transport problem in Yuen Long. The problem in Yuen Long is mainly caused by the Light Rail. After so many years of development, the Light Rail is no longer suitable for development in the districts concerned. An Honourable colleague mentioned earlier whether we should consider conducting a review to see if the Light Rail should be retained. Actually, the residents have a strong demand in this respect, claiming that if the service of the Light Rail is to maintain, they cannot withstand its occupation of the roads. This is because the Light Rail is really obstructing a lot of traffic. If we were to keep the Light Rail, we must make it run on overhead tracks. If the Light Rail is kept without making it run on overhead tracks, it will only cause even more serious transport problems in mass transport in Yuen Long and New Territories West and these problems can never be solved.

I therefore hope that if the Government is really to launch this review on mass transport, it must focus on and place more emphasis on discussing the development of the Light Rail and see if it can be changed to an overhead operation. For if not, the problems in mass transport in New Territories West can never be solved.

President, I so submit.

DR ELIZABETH QUAT (in Cantonese): President, I thank Mr Frankie YICK for proposing a motion on "Expediently launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study".

I think the Government should launch the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4) as soon as possible. It has been more than 16 years since the last Comprehensive Transport Study was conducted. At that time, the population in Hong Kong was about 6.8 million, and according to the Government's latest statistics as at August last year, the population of Hong Kong already hit 7.2 million, representing a population growth of more than 400 000, and this has naturally caused the transport demand to increase substantially. Although the Government has all along attached great importance to transport issues and hoped to provide greater convenience for the public in transport services as quite a number of major transport projects, such as the West Rail, West Island Line, Tsing Sha Highway and Shatin to Central Link, have been completed or are currently in progress, there is still plenty of room for improvement. Today, I wish to focus on the transport problems in Sai Kung and Sha Tin.

President, Tseung Kwan O is one of the new towns relying on railway as the major means of transport. I support the idea of mass carriers, but I hold that we cannot rely only on railway to the neglect of other supplementary modes of public transport. In Tseung Kwan O, for example, the district is already excessively skewed towards railway, and given inadequate support from other modes of public transport, whenever a service disruption occurred on the MTR, there is no way for the residents to return to Tseung Kwan O. Take the service disruption on the MTR Tseung Kwan O Line that occurred on 16 December 2013 as an example. As the Government had discontinued the operation of bus route No. 692, the only bus running from Tseung Kwan O to the Western District on Hong Kong Island, many residents of Tseung Kwan O had to spend more than

three hours travelling from Hong Kong Island back to Tseung Kwan O on that day. Although service disruptions do not occur every day, when an incident really happened, we would see that the sole reliance on a certain mode of public transport is very dangerous and would cause great inconvenience to the residents.

Besides, the roads and railway in Tseung Kwan O have already reached capacity during peak hours. According to the figures provided by the MTR Corporation Limited to the Legislative Council last year, the carrying capacity of the Tsueng Kwan O Line already reached 100.6%. Traffic congestion at the Tseung Kwan O Tunnel has become the order of the day to the residents and at the Tseung Kwan O MTR Station, passengers have to wait for three to four trains before they can board one to go to work. Although works are being carried out at the Cross Bay Link in southern Tseung Kwan O and the Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel, which are scheduled for commissioning in 2020, there has been an explosive growth in the population of Tseung Kwan O and many new housing estates will be completed in southern Tseung Kwan O, especially around the LOHAS Park MTR Station. Upon the completion of the Cross Bay Link and the Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel, will they have sufficient capacities to relieve the pressure of transport needs in Tseung Kwan O? Will the tunnel reach capacity as soon as it is completed? In this connection, I hope that the Government will be more forward-looking in conducting the Comprehensive Transport Study and listen more to the views of residents. Therefore, we will be greatly disappointed if the Government tells us that it is not going to carry out this study.

President, in respect of Sha Tin, it has long been developed into a mature new town with a population of close to 700 000. Coupled with a population of over 200 000 in Ma On Shan, the transport demand has been very keen. Although the widening of Tai Po Road has already commenced, the external transport links still have a lot to be desired and the traffic problems involved in travelling between Ma On Shan and the urban areas are particularly serious. External transport services in the district are provided mainly by buses and railways. The Government should expeditiously kick-start the construction of the T4 Trunk Road to provide a direct express road link from Ma On Shan to the urban areas or develop a Sha Tin Bypass. At present, residents of Ma On Shan have to wait for a long time before they can board a train on the Ma On Shan Rail Link during morning rush hours. We think that this problem will become increasingly serious, and I am all the more worried that the residents will soon be unable even to squeeze onto the platform.

Besides, the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong has in the past proposed the development of a Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Rail Link with the alignment extending to Sha Tin. There is currently no direct rail link connecting New Territories East (NTE) and New Territories West (NTW) and so, it is relatively difficult for the residents of the two districts to travel between NTE and NTW. I think the development of a railway linking NTE and NTW will not only provide convenience to the public but also help divert road traffic. In tandem with the upgrading works for roads and railways, I think the Government should further promote using bicycle as a means of public transport within districts with more comprehensive development of cycle tracks, such as districts in the New Territories. This can, firstly, bring about more environmental benefits; secondly, alleviate the traffic burden in the districts; and thirdly, promote exchanges and understanding among the communities.

The Sha Tin District Council is planning to introduce the first regional self-service bicycle hiring system in Hong Kong in collaboration with social enterprises. If this system can be launched successfully, I think the experience to be gained from its implementation will provide favourable conditions for the Government to develop the New Territories into a cycling city in the long run. If we look at Europe and the United States or many cities in Mainland China or Taiwan, we will see that they have made certain achievements in the promotion of public bicycle systems. But in order to develop the New Territories into a cycling city, the Government must change its policies. Under the current policies of the Government, bicycles have remained a tool of leisure, not a component of the transport system. Therefore, the Government must change its policies and provide suitable support for using bicycle as a means of transport. For example, the cycle tracks in each district should be connected with one another. Take Tseung Kwan O and Sha Tin as examples. Many of the cycle tracks in these districts are now fragmented, and the residents have found this most inconvenient. If the cycle tracks are not connected with one another, how can we attract more citizens to use bicycles in the future? Moreover, the development of facilities exclusively for bicycles, such as roads and street lamp systems for bicycles, bicycle parking facilities, public bicycle hiring systems, and so on, should also be the directions of government studies in future.

President, I so submit.

MR CHAN CHI-CHUEN (in Cantonese): Of course, we support expeditiously launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study. Just now, I heard Mr Albert CHAN voice some complaints on behalf of the residents in New Territories West, saying that the number of railway stations was disproportionate to the population. If Hong Kong Island is compared with New Territories West, one can say that the Government is definitely biased in favour of Hong Kong Island. However, when compared to New Territories East, Members must not think that New Territories East fares a lot better than New Territories West. Certainly, comparatively speaking, there are more railway stations in New Territories East but when examining the transport system as a whole, apart from the density of railway stations and the number of carriages, the management of railway lines is actually also very important.

Today, one of the paragraphs in Mr Frankie YICK's original motion is relatively speaking more controversial as I found that in the amendments proposed by Members of the pro-democracy camp, some of the words were deleted, that is, the middle part that reads, "... the Government used Hong Kong as the only base for the past three comprehensive transport studies, with no consideration given to the cross-boundary transportation needs in terms of passenger flow or vehicular flow brought about by the further integration between Hong Kong and China, and the development of transport infrastructure facilities ... is also unable to cope with the large growth in vehicle numbers".

Of course, 16 years ago, it did not occur to anyone that the problems related to China and Hong Kong would be so serious. At that time, it did not occur to anyone that there would be the Individual Visit Scheme and that the problem of parallel traders would be so serious. Back then, these did not occur to me either. Therefore, in this session, I wish to focus on talking about the problem of parallel traders at the stations of the East Rail. This problem has caused great nuisances to residents and it cannot be resolved just by increasing the service frequency or the number of carriages. Certainly, we all know that it is no longer possible to make any increase with regard to the railways in New Territories East, that is, it is not possible to increase the service frequency anymore.

However, I wish to take this opportunity to voice some complaints on behalf of the residents. I wish to target the management problem at the Sheung Shui Station of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL). Management is very important because some residents cannot even enter the station. If they cannot

enter the station, no matter how frequent the trains are, it has got nothing to do with them. Some residents complained to me, with tears in their eyes, that at Exit C of Sheung Shui Station, there was originally a scale for those — let us not call them parallel traders — for passengers carrying bulky luggage to weigh their luggage and see if it exceeded the weight limit and whether or not the size was too big. However, there is no such scale at Exit A of the concourse, so many of these so-called parallel traders tried to gain entry through Exit A instead, as a matter of course. There are only three staff members of the MTRCL and at any one time, and they can only deal with three passengers at the most, so the other 30 or 40 passengers would make a dash for the turnstiles at the same time, seizing the opportunity to clear the turnstiles. In fact, the staff members of the MTRCL also have a hard time. A staff member told me that those parallel traders once warned him, claiming that they recognized him and knew where he lived, telling him not to be so strict and that he had to "know what to do". That means although some laws and regulations have been prescribed and some rules have been laid down for the stations, there is not enough manpower to enforce them, or even though there is the manpower, no one dare enforce them. I think the MTRCL or the Government has to address this problem squarely and must not think that the problem of parallel traders cannot be solved or that this is another issue. However, in the transport system, can you ensure that the laws and regulations prescribed by you or the rules laid down by you are enforced?

Secretary, you can choose a day and during the prime time, that is, four o'clock to half past five, together with me, ... parallel traders have a conscience, so they come out *en masse* before the evening rush hours to avoid hindering people in their evening commute and causing too great a conflict. However, a resident told me that although he now bought first-class tickets, the first-class carriage was also occupied by such ultra-large luggage. Why are the conflicts between China and Hong Kong so serious? If you look at the relevant photos, you would be very much agitated. Although there are rules on overweight luggage and it is said that the weight and size of luggage would be measured, why are there still so many goods in carriages, and there are so many parallel traders even in first-class carriages? This is because the MTRCL is incapable of managing or dealing with them.

If the MTRCL cannot deal with them, would the Police render assistance? When dealing with the Occupy action or the "shopping" actions, the Police deployed so much manpower, yet they are incapable of combating parallel traders or controlling the order at MTR stations. This is the reason for the aggravation

of the so-called conflicts or clashes between China and Hong Kong. No matter how the service frequency is increased or how the stations are expanded, it is still impossible to deal with this problem. At least, although you have the laws, they are not enforced. You have laid down the laws and the regulations, but you are incapable of enforcing them, thus giving rise to many problems.

In addition, I also wish to take this opportunity to talk about the environmentally-friendly linkage system in East Kowloon. In fact, this is also a transport issue that I am quite concerned about of late because there is also a great controversy over this in the Panel for Development. We all think that the Government is privately tilted to railway lines — or rather, to the MTRCL. Originally, the Government is bent on having its own way by adopting the monorail but the public and the several Members of the pro-democracy camp all hope that the Government can be more open-minded. Is an at-grade tramway one of the options?

In the past, apart from Hong Kong Island, did the modern tram have any opportunity to develop in Kowloon or Kowloon East? Eventually, the Government promised to examine the several proposals put forward in parallel in the feasibility report, so let us take its words at face value for the time being. I think the Government is actually bent on adopting the monorail. However, at the meetings of the Panel on Development, we have already talked a great deal about the demerits of the monorail and what failures overseas countries have experienced. I wish to take this opportunity to ask the Government not to simply follow conventional thinking when launching a comprehensive transport study, thinking that so long as the job is done, it would be fine. Rather, it should make reference to the experience of other cities. The revitalization of the tram, so that the modern tram can serve residents in various districts of Hong Kong, is also a subject worthy of examination.

I so submit.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any other Member wish to speak?

(No Member indicated a wish to speak)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): If not, Mr Frankie YICK, you can speak on the amendments.

MR FRANKIE YICK (in Cantonese): President, today, seven Members in total have proposed amendments to my motion. Most of their amendments seek to add certain specific proposals to the original motion, which do not conflict with the original motion. However, I would like to respond briefly to certain amendments by several Members.

Mr TANG Ka-piu proposes in his amendment the inclusion of the concern about the income of employees engaging in public transport services. I will not oppose this point. For given the prevailing difficult business environment, the salaries of drivers of certain transport services really lack competitiveness, which is a reason causing difficulty to the trade in recruiting drivers. Hence, the Government should review the overall transport situation to address the operation problems faced by public transport services from various fronts.

At the end of last year, the Government announced the Assessment Report on Hong Kong's Capacity to Receive Tourists. It is stated that there is no indication of inadequate capacity of Hong Kong in this respect. Hence, I have reservations about Dr KWOK Ka-ki's view that our public transport services cannot cope with the additional patronage. As I pointed out earlier, Hong Kong is small and densely populated, thus it is the right direction to develop railway, which has a high carrying capacity, as a major transport system. However, I agree with Dr KWOK's proposal on according special attention to the transport expenses borne by people living in remote districts.

As for Mr CHAN Kam-lam's amendment, I basically agree with it. However, I have reservations about his proposal on developing a monorail, and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen also mentioned this point just now. In fact, I am not the only one who expressed reservation. The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong has also expressed reservations about the development of a monorail in terms of its financial viability, toll and flexibility. But since the amendment only requests that a study be conducted on the proposal, I will support the amendment. As for Mr Gary FAN's amendment, he mentions the hegemony of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), which is rather biased, and he considers that the long-term transport planning should continue to use Hong Kong as the only base. I will say that this is a self-restricting approach

ignoring the fact that development between Hong Kong and the Mainland is interactive, so I can hardly agree with him. However, in conducting the Public Transport Strategy Study, the Government should consider re-arranging other public transport services to undertake the feeder bus services now run by the MTRCL.

Mr Tony TSE and Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok mentioned one important point in their speeches, that is, the three Comprehensive Transport Studies conducted in the past had used Hong Kong as the only base. When I said using Hong Kong as the only base here, I meant that the authorities had only considered issues within Hong Kong but not those relating to cross-boundary transport. I quoted quite a number of examples when I spoke on the motion for the first time, so I will not repeat them now. However, I think that the Government must address this problem squarely, and I hope the authorities will make improvement through the conduct of the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study.

A number of Members have mentioned in their speeches the problems with and the relationship between transport and town planning and expressed many views on this. I will not repeat their views here, for I trust the Secretary have heard them extremely clear. A number of Members have mentioned the conflicts arising from the integration between China and Hong Kong. I think Mr CHAN Chi-chuen has been more specific by stating that he is concerned about parallel traders. The Liberal Party has all along raised concern about this issue. We are concerned whether the Government should introduce measures to restrict parallel trading activities, and we have proposed measures like "one trip per day" to the authorities, hoping this will minimize the impact and conflicts so caused to residents in the Northeast New Territories.

Lastly, I would like to thank the 19 Members for expressing different views on the motion. Basically, we all agree that the Government should conduct the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study as soon as possible. I hope the Government will heed the voice of the legislature and make expeditious arrangements for the formulation of a clear and forward-looking transport development blueprint for Hong Kong, so as to further enhance the entire transport system, promote the development of Hong Kong and provide the public with better and more efficient transport services.

President, I so submit.

SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND HOUSING (in Cantonese): President, I thank the 19 Members for speaking on Hong Kong's comprehensive transport issues, particularly the one related to public transport, as well as other topics. Their speeches can be said to have basically covered all the transport problems currently encountered in Hong Kong, with almost no omission.

I would like to make it clear that the Government will not overlook the changes in the transport environment in society during the past 16 to 17 years. Neither has it stopped introducing new measures. As I pointed out in my opening speech, the Government's decision not to conduct the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-4) does not mean that nothing will be done or the problems encountered in public transport or other areas will not be reviewed in a timely manner. For instance, as we mentioned earlier, the great success or maturity of our railway development has produced impacts on other modes of public transport. The announcement made by the Government last year on the Public Transport Strategy Study to be undertaken is precisely in response to the various concerns raised by Members earlier in the debate.

I would like to point out that the CTS is concerned about comprehensive strategies, or territory-wide and comprehensive problems, rather than problems encountered in certain or individual areas or policy implementation. While comprehensive problems are already covered in CTS-3, the relevant policy agenda is currently being implemented. As for some of the specific problems encountered in the course of implementation, we may deal with them at the specific operation level.

I would like to point out that three CTSs were conducted by the Government in the past. The previous CTS, which was completed in 1999, fully affirmed the major policy of using railway as the backbone of our public transport system while formulating the roles and positions of various public transport services having regard to the efficiency and functions of various modes of public transport. Given so many years of practice and experience, we consider it necessary to conduct a review on this front and hence, a public transport strategy review has been proposed. Apart from positioning various modes of public transport, this review will also conduct various focus studies.

Here I would like to emphasize that Hong Kong itself is densely populated and the land resources available for development are very limited. However, the carrying capacity of various modes of public transport exceeds 10 million

passenger trips daily. Railways can carry a large number of passengers speedily. The numerous railway lines in the urban areas in Hong Kong, for instance, can divert hundreds of thousands of commuters hourly during peak periods. They cannot be replaced by other modes of transport easily. Most of the major cities in other parts of the world, such as Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, London and New York, also rely on railways as mass transit carriers. Hong Kong as a metropolis is small in size but has a dense population. In addition to its limited road space, members of the public are also concerned about the impact of road traffic on air quality. Hence, it is appropriate for Hong Kong to continue to enforce its policy of using railway as the backbone of public transport.

Although railways form the backbone of Hong Kong's public transport network, with its patronage accounting for 40% of the total public transport passenger volume, the service provided by franchised buses still enjoy an edge as a major mode of road transport. Apart from complementing railway services, franchised buses can also serve areas not directly accessible by railways and provide transport services connecting areas outside the railway network as well as cross-district transport services.

To further enhance the franchised bus network and upgrade its operational efficiency, we have adopted a new "Area Approach" since 2013 in promoting bus route rationalization to rationalize excessive bus routes and mitigate road congestion as pointed out by Members earlier. In addition, bus services are being upgraded by franchised bus companies to meet the needs of various commuters through the replacement of existing buses by more environmentally-friendly and barrier-free ones to facilitate the elderly and people with disabilities. All the buses in the territory are expected to be replaced by low-floor buses by 2017 where practicable.

The previous CTSs include mainly the formulation of development plans for transport infrastructure facilities, the role assignment and positioning of various modes of public transport in the light of their efficiency and functions, and the undertaking of focus studies on other transport management issues. As I mentioned just now, the Railway Development Strategy, which has been completed, and the Public Transport Strategy Study, which will be completed shortly, together form the major public transport policy and strategy. This is why we can respond to the various problems currently encountered without the need to wait for the conduct of CTS-4.

As regards road usage, the growth in the number of vehicles, the environmentally-friendly transport measures and regional transportation needs as mentioned by various Members just now, I would like to take this opportunity to explain the efforts made by the Government in these several aspects.

The Government has been closely monitoring the changes in the number of vehicles. In recent years, the number of private cars in Hong Kong has indeed continued to grow, thereby making the limited roads in the territory even more congested. This has not only caused inconvenience to road users, but also affected the economy. In order to ease traffic congestion, the Transport Department (TD) has implemented traffic management measures in various districts, such as designating "no stopping" zones, with a view to ensuring smooth vehicular flow and achieving effective use of limited road surface.

In view of the persistent traffic congestion problem observed, the Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was invited in March last year to conduct a study on road congestion in Hong Kong to explore the various factors behind Hong Kong's overall traffic congestion and recommend some territory-wide short- and medium-term measures that can be implemented within reasonable time, with a view to alleviating traffic congestion. Meanwhile, the TAC was requested to put forward territory-wide long-term proposals for further consideration by the Government. In this connection, a report was already submitted by the TAC to me last month. It is pointed out in the report that it is a matter of great urgency to resolve the traffic congestion problems. Hence, our departments are actively studying the recommendations made by the TAC and consider how best the policy of future use of roads can complement the arrangements of the public transport services overall.

Not only have transport convenience and air quality become crucial factors defining the quality and allure of city life, they are also a great concern to city-dwellers. Therefore, environmentally-friendly transport as a key component of our transport policy has been affirmed in CTS-3, too. Railway is regarded as an important means of implementing environmentally-friendly transport because it is driven by electricity and will not produce roadside emissions and pollution.

Furthermore, the Government has striven to promote environmental improvement measures related to vehicular emissions. A Pilot Green Transport Fund was set up in March 2011 to encourage the transport sector to use green and

low-carbon innovative transport technologies on a trial basis, promote the use of electric vehicles in Hong Kong and expand the charging network. Since 1 March last year, the current-term Government has launched an \$11.4 billion ex-gratia payment scheme to phase out pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles and limit the service life of diesel commercial vehicles registered on or after 1 February 2014 to 15 years. In April last year, a one-off subsidy scheme launched for the replacement of catalytic converters and oxygen sensors of petrol and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) taxis and light buses was concluded. In addition, mobile remote sensing devices have been installed at the roadside since September last year to strengthen the regulation of emissions from LPG and petrol vehicles.

On franchised buses, the Government has striven to encourage the sector to use environmentally-friendly vehicles where practicable. Currently, bus companies are required to use buses aged 18 or below. Since 2010, franchised bus companies have started procuring Euro V buses. Meanwhile, the Government has also subsidized franchised bus companies to retrofit Euro II and III buses with selective catalytic reduction devices, with a view to improving their emission performance. In order to mitigate roadside emissions on busy road sections, the Government encourages franchised bus companies to deploy low-emission buses to run on the trial routes of low emission zones, including the busy road sections in Central, Causeway Bay, Mong Kok, and so on. Under the subsidy scheme administered by the Environment Bureau, franchised bus companies have also made use of hybrid and electric vehicles on a trial basis to test the performance and efficiency of these vehicles in Hong Kong. Therefore, there is no need for us to conduct CTS-4, whereas an environmentally-friendly transport policy is currently being promoted.

Furthermore, we will complement the efforts made by the Environment Bureau in promoting the use of electric vehicles, but the timing and vigour of such will hinge on the maturity of electric vehicle technology in the market. The premise is whether or not electric vehicles can provide stable and reliable public transport services. For the time being, we still need to conduct trial tests in a step-by-step manner and make the proper moves in a timely manner.

I shall now respond to the question raised by Mr WU Chi-wai about bicycles. The Government affirms bicycles as an environmentally-friendly mode of transport for short-distance commute. In addition to launching a bicycle-friendly policy, we will also provide a bicycle-friendly environment in new towns and new development areas, including the establishment of cycling tracks and relevant facilities at suitable locations.

In the meantime, we are implementing a pilot scheme in Tai Po to test a series of improvement measures in order to enhance the safety and convenience of cycling tracks and parking spaces. We are currently evaluating the effectiveness of the various measures. Furthermore, the TD has launched another consultancy study to review in detail the bicycle facilities required to be improved in the nine existing new towns and examine how the outcome of the trial measures implemented under the pilot scheme can be used extensively.

The Government has been installing barrier-free access facilities at footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by the Highways Department where technically feasible. Under the "Universal Accessibility" Programme which was launched in August 2012, we are exerting all efforts to take forward more than 200 projects. Of the 54 public walkways selected by various District Councils for priority to be accorded for implementation, 10 projects have been completed, and most of the remaining retrofitting works are expected to be completed by 2018 one after another. These measures precisely reflect that apart from striving to improve mechanically propelled modes of transport, we will also endeavour to provide a convenient environment for pedestrian transport.

President, I wish to thank Honourable Members again for their speeches and valuable suggestions on how to perfect Hong Kong's transport network. As time is running out, I am unable to respond to their views *seriatim*. The Government will closely monitor the latest socio-economic developments and, having regard to the transport needs and changes in various areas, introduce relevant measures in a timely manner, make complementary efforts in traffic management, and maintain close ties with stakeholders of various public transport services to ensure the quality of public transport services and provide the general public with a speedy, reliable, effective and comfortable transport system with choices.

Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now call upon Mr TANG Ka-piu to move his amendment to the motion.

MR TANG KA-PIU (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Frankie YICK's motion be amended.

Mr TANG Ka-piu moved the following amendment: (Translation)

"To delete "it has now been over 16 years" after "That,"; to delete "and during this period" after "the Third Comprehensive Transport Study"; to add "at the same time, with the Government encouraging the public to fully utilize railway services, the income of employees engaging in other public transport services is seriously affected;" after "the public;"; to delete "cope with the" after "unable to" and substitute with "resolve the problem of"; to add "which includes conducting a review of the tolls of all tunnels and bridges," after "blueprint,"; and to add ", ensuring a more stable income for employees engaging in other public transport services" after "economic development"."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the amendment, moved by Mr TANG Ka-piu to Mr Frankie YICK's motion, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr James TIEN rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr James TIEN has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for five minutes.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

(Mr SIN Chung-kai stood up for no reason)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr SIN Chung-kai, please sit down.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Abraham SHEK, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted for the amendment.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Ms Emily LAU, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr James TIEN, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr SIN Chung-kai, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted for the amendment.

Dr Priscilla LEUNG voted against the amendment.

Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man and Mr Gary FAN abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 20 were present, 20 were in favour of the amendment; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 23 were present, 18 were in favour of the amendment, one against it and three abstained. Since the question was agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was passed.

MR ANDREW LEUNG (in Cantonese): President, I move that in the event of further divisions being claimed in respect of the motion on "Expediently launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study" or any amendments thereto, this Council do proceed to each of such divisions after the division bell has been rung for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Mr Andrew LEUNG be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any Member wish to speak?

(No Member indicated a wish to speak)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(No hands raised)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I think the question is agreed by a majority respectively of each of the two groups of Members, that is, those returned by functional constituencies and those returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, who are present. I declare the motion passed.

I order that in the event of further divisions being claimed in respect of the motion on "Expeditiously launching the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study" or any amendments thereto, this Council do proceed to each of such divisions after the division bell has been rung for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Members have already been informed, as Mr TANG Ka-piu's amendment has been passed, Mr WU Chi-wai and Mr Gary FAN have withdrawn their amendments.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr KWOK Ka-ki, as Mr TANG Ka-piu's amendment has been passed, you may now move your revised amendment.

DR KWOK KA-KI (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu, be further amended by my revised amendment.

Dr KWOK Ka-ki moved the following further amendment to the motion as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu: (Translation)

"To add "; this Council also urges the Government to conduct a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of implementing the recommendations of the Third Comprehensive Transport Study, and immediately conduct a review of the existing operational mode of public transport services (including whether priority should be given to the development of the railway transport system), with a view to promoting an environmentally-friendly transport system and inexpensive public transport services" immediately before the full stop."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That Dr KWOK Ka-ki's amendment to Mr Frankie YICK's motion as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr Frankie YICK rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Frankie YICK has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Prof Joseph LEE, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu and Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan voted for the amendment.

Mr Abraham SHEK, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok and Mr Tony TSE voted against the amendment.

Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO and Mr MA Fung-kwok abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Ms Emily LAU, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Ms Cyd HO, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Miss Alice MAK, Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr SIN Chung-kai voted for the amendment.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 20 were present, eight were in favour of the amendment, seven against it and five abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 24 were present, 15 were in favour of the amendment and eight abstained. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Tony TSE, as Mr TANG Ka-piu's amendment has been passed, you may now move your revised amendment.

MR TONY TSE (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu, be further amended by my revised amendment.

In my revised amendment, apart from introducing some textual amendments, I have deleted the first part of my original amendment, which reads "the transport strategies formulated by the Government in the past are considered lagging behind in terms of macro development or district planning and support, such as both the design and planning of the transport system failing to take into account the needs of pedestrians and drivers, rendering the public to question the

Government for being unable to effectively monitor the effectiveness of transport strategies". In consideration of the integrity of the contents of the motion, coupled with the fact that the contents of this part have, to a certain extent, been covered in the original motion, I have therefore deleted this part.

The second part of my original amendment, that is, the part urging the Government to "reposition the roles of various modes of public transport" and the third part, that is, the part urging the Government to "target the next three decades to formulate a forward-looking, competitive, people-oriented and long-term transport development blueprint ... enhancing the competitiveness of the Hong Kong International Airport and local ports, so as to upgrade Hong Kong's status as a regional transport and logistics hub; proactively developing the transportation network linking the Pearl River Delta in keeping with the comprehensive transport planning of the Pearl River Delta region to synergize the complementary advantages of the various regions" is retained. I hope Members can support my revised amendment.

Thank you, President.

Mr Tony TSE moved the following further amendment to the motion as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu: (Translation)

"To add "; this Council also urges the Government to reposition the roles of various modes of public transport, to also formulate a competitive and people-oriented long-term transport development blueprint targetting the next three decades, with a view to enhancing the competitiveness of the Hong Kong International Airport and local ports, so as to upgrade Hong Kong's status as a regional transport and logistics hub; proactively developing the transportation network linking the Pearl River Delta in keeping with the comprehensive transport planning of the Pearl River Delta region to synergize the complementary advantages of the various regions" immediately before the full stop."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That Mr Tony TSE's amendment to Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr Frankie YICK rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Frankie YICK has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Abraham SHEK, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted for the amendment.

Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che voted against the amendment.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted for the amendment.

Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr SIN Chung-kai voted against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 20 were present, 19 were in favour of the amendment and one against it; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 25 were present, 12 were in favour of the amendment and 12 against it. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, as Mr TANG Ka-piu's amendment has been passed, you may now move your revised amendment.

IR DR LO WAI-KWOK (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu, be further amended by my revised amendment.

I have not retained the amendment to the preamble of the motion in my original amendment, or the content compatible with the revised amendment earlier. Yet, I have retained the proposal that "this Council also urges the Government ... to formulate measures to perfect the mass transit network, and conduct a review of the distribution of and arrangement for road usage ...

ensuring proper and orderly implementation of the related transport infrastructure planning and projects according to their priorities" in the original amendment.

President, due to my professional background in engineering, I have a deeper understanding and stronger feelings about problems in these aspects. In the case of building a new railway, strenuous efforts have to be made from the planning stage, commencement of works to completion and implementation, for the authorities have to conduct conceptual studies, feasibility studies, preliminary studies, detailed studies and public consultation, and so on. As such, I have put forth the present amendment. At the same time, I hope colleagues will support my revised amendment.

Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok moved the following further amendment to the motion as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu: (Translation)

"To add "; this Council also urges the Government to formulate measures to perfect the mass transit network, and conduct a review of the distribution of and arrangement for road usage, with a view to ensuring proper and orderly implementation of the related transport infrastructure planning and projects according to their priorities" immediately before the full stop."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok's amendment to Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr Gary FAN rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Gary FAN has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Abraham SHEK, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted for the amendment.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Ms Emily LAU, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Ms Cyd HO, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Mr SIN Chung-kai, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted for the amendment.

Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen voted against the amendment.

Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Gary FAN, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Dr KWOK Ka-ki abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 20 were present, 20 were in favour of the amendment; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 25 were present, 17 were in favour of the amendment, three against it and four abstained. Since the question was agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr CHAN Kam-lam, as the amendments of Mr TANG Ka-piu and Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok have been passed, you may now move your revised amendment.

MR CHAN KAM-LAM (in Cantonese): President, I move that Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu and Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, be further amended by my revised amendment.

As my amendment has already been set out in the Agenda, I will not repeat it here. Thank you, President.

Mr CHAN Kam-lam moved the following further amendment to the motion as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu and Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok: (Translation)

"To add "; this Council also urges the Government to improve the transport network between old districts and new development areas; formulate regional environmentally-friendly transport measures, such as developing a monorail and encouraging residents in the New Territories to commute by bicycles, etc.; further enhance the transport connectivity between both sides of the Victoria Harbour; formulate a comprehensive plan for transportation support in the Northeast New Territories and North Lantau; construct a Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Link with the alignment extending to Sha Tin and a Siu Sai Wan Extension; enhance the Light Rail system; perfect the external transport of the outlying islands and the ferry policy; turn certain toll roads, such as the Lantau Link, into toll-free roads; and formulate measures to alleviate the burden of transport fares on the public" immediately before the full stop."

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That Mr CHAN Kam-lam's amendment to Mr Frankie YICK's motion, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu and Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, be passed.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr Gary FAN rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Gary FAN has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Abraham SHEK, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted for the amendment.

Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che abstained.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr James TIEN, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted for the amendment.

Mr Alan LEONG, Mr Albert CHAN, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Dr KWOK Ka-ki voted against the amendment.

Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr Gary FAN and Mr SIN Chung-kai abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 20 were present, 19 were in favour of the amendment and one abstained; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 25 were present, 12 were in favour of the amendment, six against it and six abstained. Since the question was not agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the amendment was negatived.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Frankie YICK, you may now reply and you still have one minute four seconds.

MR FRANKIE YICK (in Cantonese): President, first of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the 19 Members who have expressed their views on this motion. I would also like to thank Mr WONG Kwok-hing for coming forward to say a few fair words for me by pointing out that the public officer has ruled out the possibility of conducting a study before listening to the views of all Members. Precisely because I knew he had stated that the authorities would not conduct the

study that I proposed the motion in the legislature, hoping he would listen to the views of all Members.

He has heard today that Members have unanimously expressed their request on the Government to conduct the Fourth Comprehensive Transport Study, for it involves town planning, transport and people's livelihood, as well as problems concerning cross-boundary transportation which I mentioned earlier. Therefore, the authorities should face squarely the problems in various aspects.

I implore Honourable colleagues to support my motion. Thank you.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Mr Frankie YICK, as amended by Mr TANG Ka-piu and Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, be passed. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(Members raised their hands)

Mr Gary FAN rose to claim a division.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Gary FAN has claimed a division. The division bell will ring for one minute.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please proceed to vote.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Will Members please check their votes. If there are no queries, voting shall now stop and the result will be displayed.

Functional Constituencies:

Mr Abraham SHEK, Prof Joseph LEE, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Ms Starry LEE, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Steven HO, Mr Frankie YICK, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Mr POON Siu-ping, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Tony TSE voted for the motion as amended.

Geographical Constituencies:

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, Ms Emily LAU, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Ms Cyd HO, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr Alan LEONG, Mr James TIEN, Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr CHAN Han-pan, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Miss Alice MAK, Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr SIN Chung-kai, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr Christopher CHUNG voted for the motion as amended.

Mr WONG Yuk-man voted against the motion as amended.

Mr Albert CHAN, Mr Gary FAN and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen abstained.

THE PRESIDENT, Mr Jasper TSANG, did not cast any vote.

THE PRESIDENT announced that among the Members returned by functional constituencies, 20 were present, 20 were in favour of the motion as amended; while among the Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections, 25 were present, 20 were in favour of the motion as amended, one against it and three abstained. Since the question was agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, he therefore declared that the motion as amended was passed.

NEXT MEETING

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now adjourn the Council until 11 am on Wednesday 14 January 2015.

Adjourned accordingly at 9.39 pm.

Appendix 1**REQUEST FOR POST-MEETING AMENDMENT**

The Secretary for Transport and Housing requested the following post-meeting amendment in respect of a supplementary question to Question 3

Line 1 to 3, second paragraph, page 32 of the Confirmed version

To amend "... insofar as HOS units are concerned, the owners do not have 100% ownership of their units. As all the HOS units are subsidized housing, the owners are not 100% entitled to the right to live in, occupy or possess their units. Therefore, ..." as "...insofar as HOS units are concerned, given that all HOS units are subsidized housing, therefore, ..." (Translation)

(Please refer to line 2 to 5, last paragraph, page 4306 of this Translated version)

Appendix I

WRITTEN ANSWER

Written answer by the Secretary for the Environment to Prof Joseph LEE's supplementary question to Question 2

As regards the health risk of air pollution at Tung Chung, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) launched the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) on 30 December 2013 to reflect the health risk caused by air pollution. The AQHI was developed by a team of renowned academic experts in public health and air science in Hong Kong taking into account the Air Quality Guidelines for air pollutants, developed by the World Health Organization, as well as the corresponding health risk of air pollutants from local health statistics. The AQHI has also been peer reviewed prior to accepting by the EPD. The AQHI is reported on a scale of 1 to 10 and 10+, and is grouped into five health risk categories: low, moderate, high, very high, and serious. Please refer to Table 1 for different AQHI bands and the corresponding health risk.

According to the air monitoring data of the EPD in 2014, the number of hours with AQHI at "high" or above health risk categories at Tung Chung, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun air quality monitoring stations (AQMSs) accounted for 5% (454 hours), 6% (498 hours) and 6% (519 hours) of the year respectively, which was slightly higher than the average recorded at all general AQMSs (342 hours; 4%). Detailed AQHI statistics in 2014 can be found in Table 2.

Compared to the AQMSs in other districts, AQHI at "high" or above health risk categories were recorded more frequently at Tung Chung, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun AQMSs. The main reason is that these districts are located near the Pearl River Delta (PRD) and are more susceptible to the influence of ozone caused by regional photochemical smog. The level of other air pollutants recorded at these AQMSs were similar to the average level recorded at all general AQMSs. Please refer to Table 3 for details.

Ozone is a regional air pollutant affecting PRD Region which is formed by photochemical activities under unfavourable dispersion of air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds, from pollutant emission sources in the Region. Poor dispersion of air pollutants in the entire

WRITTEN ANSWER — *Continued*

PRD Region coupled with light northerly to northwesterly wind raise the concentration of ozone to a significant level at the area near Tung Chung, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun, leading to higher AQHI levels.

To improve the air quality of Hong Kong, we are committed to reducing the emission of local pollutants. Meanwhile, we are stepping up our collaboration with Guangdong so as to improve the regional air quality in the PRD. The Environment Bureau released A Clean Air Plan for Hong Kong (The Air Plan) in March 2013 which sets out in detail policies and measures on improving air quality covering sea and land transport (including phasing out pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles, strengthening the emission control from petrol and LPG vehicles, retrofitting Euro II and III franchised buses with selective catalytic reduction devices, and enacting legislation to reduce the emissions from local and ocean-going vessels), power plants and non-road mobile machinery, and so on.

Table 1: Health Risk Categories of AQHI and corresponding Health Risk

<i>Health Risk Category</i>	<i>AQHI</i>	<i>Added health risk of emergency hospital admissions due to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases for the general public (%)[#]</i>
Low	1	0-1.88
	2	> 1.88-3.76
	3	> 3.76-5.64
Moderate	4	> 5.64-7.52
	5	> 7.52-9.41
	6	> 9.41-11.29
High	7	> 11.29-12.91
Very High	8	> 12.91-15.07
	9	> 15.07-17.22
	10	> 17.22-19.37
Serious	10+	> 19.37

Note:

For susceptible groups such as children and the elderly, the added health risk is around 1.14 times of that of the general public.

WRITTEN ANSWER — *Continued*

Table 2: Distribution of Hourly AQHI at the Health Risk Categories in 2014 (Number of Hours)

<i>AQMS</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Serious</i>	<i>High or above</i>
Tuen Mun	4 336	3 868	256	246	17	519
Tung Chung	4 658	3 620	209	215	30	454
Yuen Long	4 436	3 781	245	225	28	498
Average of All General AQMSs	4 324	4 060	198	130	14	342

Table 3: The Annual Average Concentrations of Major Air Pollutants in 2014*

<i>AQMS</i>	<i>Pollutant Concentration ($\mu\text{g}/\text{cu m}$)</i>				
	<i>Respirable Suspended Particulates (PM10)</i>	<i>Fine Suspended Particulates (PM2.5)</i>	<i>Nitrogen Dioxide</i>	<i>Ozone</i>	<i>Sulphur Dioxide</i>
Tung Chung	39	24	45	46	13
Yuen Long	50	35	52	41	11
Annual Average of All General AQMSs	43	29	49	46	11

Notes:

* The validation process of the data in 2014 is still in progress.

Owing to site maintenance, the annual averages at Tuen Mun AQMS for 2014 did not meet the minimum data requirement and were not included in Table 3.

Appendix II**WRITTEN ANSWER****Written answer by the Secretary for Transport and Housing to Mr Abraham SHEK's supplementary question to Question 3**

As regards the vacancy rate of public rental housing (PRH) flats, it was mentioned in Report No. 61 of the Director of Audit that as at 31 March 2013, out of the 4 137 lettable vacant flats in PRH, 887 (21%) had fallen vacant for over one year.

The vacancy position has improved a lot since then. As at end December 2014, the number of lettable vacant flats stood at 2 829, representing a vacancy rate of 0.4% against the total lettable PRH stock of 740 985 flats. This was well below the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s Key Performance Indicator of 1.5%.

Among these 2 829 flats, only 182 flats (6.4%) have become vacant for more than one year. Out of these 182 flats, 86 flats were already pooled under the Express Flat Allocation Scheme (EFAS) exercise.⁽¹⁾ The whole EFAS exercise takes some 10 months to complete and flats reserved under the exercise will remain "vacant" until they are selected and accepted by the applicants concerned. The other 38 flats were reserved for government clearance projects while eight flats were situated in the relatively remote Lung Tin Estate in Tai O. The remaining 50 flats were reserved for various rehousing categories and for operations of other government departments.

We have already taken the following measures to speed up the letting of lettable vacant flats:

- (1) half-rent reduction of eight to 12 months will be offered as an incentive to boost up acceptance rates for flats fallen vacant for more than 12 months;

(1) EFAS exercise is launched once a year. The aim is to speed up the allocation of less popular flats to reduce their vacancy rate and to provide an avenue for fast-track access to PRH for PRH applicants.

WRITTEN ANSWER — *Continued*

- (2) less popular flats including prolonged vacant flats, flats with adverse Environmental Indicators, flats of less popular design (Housing for Senior Citizens and Interim Housing converted flats) and flats in estates with high refusal rates will be included in EFAS exercises to speed up letting. For those flats which have been offered to the applicants but are subsequently refused by them and if such flats also meet the EFAS flat pooling criteria, when EFAS flat pooling is in progress, we will cease their re-letting and immediately include them in the pooling list; and
- (3) in view of the unsatisfactory vacancy rate of Tin Lee House, Lung Tin Estate in Tai O, the HA decided in February 2013 to convert Tin Lee House into Housing Ownership Scheme flats for sale. Apart from a unit being retained for the management office and the office of the Owners Corporation, all the remaining 85 units were sold.