

立法會

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Questions scheduled for the Legislative Council meeting of 15 April 2015

Questions by:

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註 :

NOTE :

議員將採用這種語言提出質詢

Member will ask the question in this language

Handling of protests against parallel traders

(1) Hon Christopher CHUNG (Written reply)

On the 8th of last month, some people who were against parallel traders staged guerrilla protests in response to calls on the Internet. They took part in protests, for which letters of no objection had not been sought from the Police, first in Sheung Shui, then in Tuen Mun and afterwards switching to Tsim Sha Tsui. The protesters circled passers-by whom they suspected to be mainland visitors and hurled abuses at them, kicked the trolleys of such passers-by resulting in physical confrontations, and even charged into shops and hurled abuses at the customers. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it has been reported that the Police were exhausted in dealing with the guerrilla protests staged by the anti-parallel trader groups on the same day in various districts, of the new measures the Police have in place to tackle this sort of protests and the public order problems caused by such protests; whether it has assessed if the deployment of substantial police manpower to deal with this sort of protests has caused any deterioration of law and order in other districts; if it has assessed, of the outcome;
- (2) given that the behaviours of the protesters against parallel traders have become increasingly radical recently, whether the Police will consider setting up temporary police posts in major shopping areas during holidays to ensure that mainland visitors who are harassed or attacked can expeditiously seek police assistance; and
- (3) as inciting members of the public on the Internet to take part in unlawful protests against parallel traders is becoming increasingly popular and open, of the existing legislation based on which the Police may prohibit such act?

The Small and Medium Enterprises Financing Guarantee Scheme

(2) Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan (Written reply)

The Small and Medium Enterprises Financing Guarantee Scheme (“SFGS”) implemented by the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (“HKMC”) aims to help small and medium-sized enterprises (“SMEs”) obtain loans from participating lenders such as banks for meeting their business needs. According to the Government’s reply to a question raised by me at the Legislative Council meeting of 25 February this year, the numbers of applications received and cases of loans approved in respect of the special concessionary measures (“SCM”) under SFGS in the second half of 2014 dropped by about 30% compared with the figures of the same period in 2013. Moreover, from April 2013 to January this year, HKMC received 196 net default claims (i.e. claims other than those in which the outstanding amounts had been fully repaid or those withdrawn by the lending institutions) relating to SCM, totalling about \$420 million. Among these claims, only 11 cases (i.e. 5.6%) in respect of which the processing was completed and payment was made, while 185 cases were still outstanding. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council if it knows:

- (1) in respect of the aforesaid 11 cases, the average time (the number of days counting from the day of receipt of the claim to the day of payment for the claim, and the same applies below) taken by HKMC for completing the processing of each case, and the details of these cases;
- (2) the respective approval percentages of the net default claims under SFGS and SCM in each of the past three years; the average time taken by HKMC to process each of such claims, and how such time taken compares with the target time that “under normal circumstances, HKMC would respond to a lending institution within 10 working days upon receipt of its default claim indicating whether the claim concerned is approved or not or the additional information/documents the lending institution would need to provide” as stated in the aforesaid reply; why HKMC had not yet completed the processing of the aforesaid 185 net default claims, the respective numbers and details of those claims which have been received for six months to one year and those for more than one year, and the expected time for completion of the processing of such claims; and
- (3) whether HKMC has assessed if the low proportion, of those cases in respect of which the processing was completed and payment was made among the net default claims under SFGS, reflects an unduly long time taken by HKMC to process default claims, and if this has affected lending institutions’ willingness in participating in SFGS, which indirectly affects the number of applications for SFGS; whether the authorities will review and enhance SFGS so that it will be more effective in helping SMEs obtain loans?

Tender exercises for capital works projects

(3) Hon Abraham SHEK (Written reply)

According to government information, as at the end of March last year, the outstanding financial commitment of capital works was about \$340 billion. In addition, the Budget of this year estimated that the total financial commitment of the Capital Works Reserve Fund would reach \$306.7 billion by the end of March this year, among which capital works projects would account for \$296.1 billion. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) in each of the past five financial years, of (i) the number of capital works projects the tender exercises for which were conducted, (ii) the number of contracts awarded for those projects, (iii) the total value of those contracts, and (iv) the reasons for contracts not being awarded for some of the projects (set out in a table); and
- (2) regarding the capital works projects the funding approvals for which have been granted by the Finance Committee of this Council but tender exercises have not yet been conducted at present, of (i) their names, (ii) the amounts of approved funding and (iii) the anticipated commencement dates of tendering (set out in a table)?

Hong Kong's capacity to receive visitors

(4) Hon Jeffrey LAM (Written reply)

The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau completed the Assessment Report on Hong Kong's Capacity to Receive Tourists ("the Report") in December 2013. The assessment areas covered by the Report included the handling capacity of the control points in Hong Kong as well as the tourist receiving capacity of tourism attractions, hotels, public transport, etc. The Report projected that the visitor arrivals to Hong Kong would exceed 70 million in 2017, and this projected number was taken as the basis for assessment of Hong Kong's capacity to receive tourists. The Report also pointed out that the Government would continue to enhance the overall receiving capacity of the tourism industry in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the measures that the Government will launch in the coming two years to enhance the handling capacity of various control points, and the anticipated effect of such measures;
- (2) of the measures that the Government will launch in the coming two years to alleviate the following problems: a shortage of supply of hotel rooms, traffic congestion at tourist and shopping hotspots, as well as insufficient coach parking spaces in such locations;
- (3) given that notwithstanding the Report's projection that the visitor arrivals to Hong Kong would exceed 70 million in 2017, some members of the tourism industry have pointed out that the recent protests against parallel traders have already tarnished Hong Kong's image as a hospitable city, whether the Government has revised such figure; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) whether it has estimated the manpower demand in the tourism industry in the coming two years; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) whether the Government will launch measures in the coming two years to enhance the tourist receiving capacity of the Northwest New Territories to a level sufficient to meet the demand; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Spalling of bitumen protective inner coatings of fresh water pipes

(5) Hon Gary FAN (Written reply)

It has been reported that since July last year, some households in the housing estates along Sha Tin Wai (including Shatin Park Stages 1 to 3, Fung Shing Court, Greenfield Court, Garden Rivera and Greenwood Garden) have, one after another, found black particles in fresh water. Following laboratory tests, the Water Supplies Department (“WSD”) preliminarily confirmed that the particles were bitumen, which was suspected to be spalled fragments of anti-corrosive bitumen protective inner coatings of old-style fresh water pipes due to pipe ageing. WSD undertook to locate the problematic sections of the water pipes and install strainers to solve the problem. However, WSD has not given an account of the investigation results so far. Some households are worried that prolonged consumption of fresh water containing bitumen particles will affect their health or even cause cancers. Regarding the spalling of bitumen protective inner coatings of fresh water pipes, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether WSD has located the sections of water pipes involved in the above incident; if it has, of their exact locations and age, and the reasons and remedies for the spalling of bitumen protective inner coatings; whether WSD has prepared an investigation report on the incident; if it has not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether WSD has formulated plans to comprehensively inspect all fresh water pipes in Shatin district for spalling of bitumen protective inner coatings in the light of the above incident; if it has, of the respective numbers of water pipes which have and have not been inspected; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the number of complaints about fresh water containing foreign objects received by WSD in each month of 2014, and the number of cases in which the foreign objects concerned were confirmed to be bitumen (with a breakdown by District Council district); and
- (4) whether WSD has plans to inspect all fresh water pipes in Hong Kong for spalling of bitumen protective inner coatings, and whether it has formulated measures to prevent the recurrence of incidents of bitumen particles found in fresh water?

Green Form Home Ownership Pilot Scheme

(6) Hon Paul TSE (Written reply)

The Government announced in January this year that it would launch the Green Form Home Ownership Pilot Scheme (“GFHOPS”). It has been reported that under the scheme, sitting public rental housing (“PRH”) tenants and PRH applicants who have passed the detailed vetting and are due for flat allocation (“Green Form applicants”) may apply for the purchase of newly built PRH flats offered at half of the market price, and that the Anderson Road public housing development (“the Anderson Road development”) and So Uk Estate redevelopment will be the first two pilot projects. In the past two months, quite a number of members of the public enquired with me about the details of GFHOPS. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) when PRH flats under the first phase of GFHOPS will be available for sale, and when Green Form applicants may purchase the newly built PRH flats;
- (2) of the respective numbers of PRH flats to be provided for purchase by Green Form applicants under the Anderson Road development and the So Uk Estate redevelopment projects;
- (3) of the resale restrictions that the authorities will impose on the PRH flats to be sold under GFHOPS in order to avoid fueling speculations in the property market; and
- (4) in view of the continuously surging prices of small residential flats, whether the authorities have assessed if the flats to be sold at half of the market price under GFHOPS will turn out to be purchased only by well-off PRH tenants who are paying 1.5 times rent, double rent or market rent (“well-off tenants”) because such flats are not affordable to Green Form applicants in general, and the scheme will, in effect, subsidize well-off tenants to replace their residential properties by public money?

Information technology support services
in bureaux and government departments

(7) Hon Charles Peter MOK (Written reply)

As indicated in government papers, with the devolution of information technology (“IT”) support from the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (“OGCIO”) to client government departments, various departments are required to take charge of their own IT support services. Some bureaux and government departments (“B/Ds”) have set up Information Technology Management Units (“ITMUs”), which are responsible for assisting the B/Ds concerned in the planning, management and co-ordination of IT services, formulation of IT policies, development of IT systems, repair and maintenance of IT systems as well as provision of technical and systems operation support, etc. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following information on the ITMUs under various B/Ds, and set out the information by B/D in tabulated form:
 - (i) the number of IT professional staff,
 - (ii) the organization chart, as well as the numbers of civil servants and non-civil service contract staff,
 - (iii) the scope of work,
 - (iv) the number of staff members and their main duties, broken down by rank, whether their posts are permanent ones and the means of recruitment (including internal promotion, internal transfer and open recruitment), and the number of directorate officers among them,
 - (v) the payroll expenses and numbers of posts in each of the past three years, and
 - (vi) the major IT projects currently undertaken by them, as well as the details of and staff deployment for these projects;
- (2) of the following information on the heads of the ITMUs under various B/Ds, and set out the information by B/D in tabulated form:
 - (i) the ranks and whether they belong to one-rank grades,
 - (ii) the means of recruitment (including internal promotion, internal transfer or transfer from OGCIO and open recruitment),
 - (iii) the nature of employment contracts (whether they are civil service agreements or non-civil service contracts),
 - (iv) the IT-related qualifications possessed, and
 - (v) whether their posts are permanent ones;
- (3) of the criteria adopted by various B/Ds for determining the establishment of their ITMUs; whether any mechanism is in place for reviewing the demand for IT application in various B/Ds, as well as the organizational structure, staff establishment and work effectiveness of their ITMUs, and

for allocating additional resources and manpower to them when necessary; if so, of the details; and

- (4) whether it has any plans to provide additional resources (such as manpower) for individual B/Ds in the coming three years to cope with the IT projects to be implemented shortly; if so, of the details?

Assisting farmers affected by resumption
of agricultural lands to relocate their farms

(8) Hon Steven HO (Written reply)

In order to increase the supply of housing land, the Government is conducting a number of land planning and engineering studies as well as land use reviews (“studies/reviews”), among which are the Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area Planning and Engineering Study, Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South, and Land Use Review for Kam Tin South and Pat Heung. Regarding assisting farmers affected by resumption of agricultural lands to relocate their farms, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) among the areas covered by the aforesaid three studies/reviews, of the respective areas of agricultural lands the uses of which the authorities have planned to change, and the respective numbers of vegetable, flower and livestock farmers involved in each of the three studies/reviews, whose farms will have to be relocated due to resumption of agricultural lands;
- (2) of the Government’s existing mechanism to assist farmers affected by resumption of agricultural lands in relocating their farms ;
- (3) as I have learnt that quite a number of farmers affected by resumption of agricultural lands have encountered difficulties in identifying sites for relocating their farms, of the Government’s means to help them overcome such difficulties; in order not to affect the livelihood of farmers, whether the Government will consider implementing the proposal of “identifying sites for relocation prior to removal”; and
- (4) given that relocating livestock farms involves demolition and relocation of a number of major facilities, of the Government’s means to assist livestock farmers in resolving the problems concerned?

Nurturing talents for the architectural, surveying,
town planning and landscape professions

(9) Hon Tony TSE (Written reply)

The 2015 Policy Address has pointed out that adequate and quality manpower resources are the key to Hong Kong's sustainable socio-economic development, so Hong Kong needs to develop and nurture a population that will continuously support and drive Hong Kong's socio-economic development as Asia's world city. Some practitioners from the architectural, surveying, town planning and landscape professions have relayed to me that the Government has failed to allocate adequate educational resources to these professions, resulting in the numbers of places and contents of training programmes failing to meet the demands of these professions. Regarding the nurturing of talents for such professions, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the numbers of programmes related to the aforesaid professions offered by various tertiary institutions and the student intakes and numbers of graduates of the sub-degree, undergraduate and master's degree programmes among them in each of the past five years (with a breakdown by tertiary institution and profession); the numbers of teaching and non-teaching staff employed by various tertiary institutions on a full-time and part-time basis for the purpose of offering these programmes (with a breakdown by tertiary institution and profession);
- (2) whether it knows if the various tertiary institutions have plans to increase the numbers of places in the programmes related to the aforesaid professions; whether the various tertiary institutions have consulted the industries to ensure that the programme contents suit the needs;
- (3) of the respective numbers of civil service job vacancies belonging to the aforesaid professions in each of the past five years;
- (4) whether it knows the numbers of Hong Kong residents who returned to work in the aforesaid professions after graduating from overseas universities in each of the past five years; and
- (5) as the 2015 Policy Address has mentioned that in a bid to attract talents from outside Hong Kong, the Government will study the feasibility of drawing up a talent list to attract, in a more effective and focused manner, high-quality talents to support Hong Kong's development as a diversified and high value-added economy, whether the authorities will include the aforesaid professions in the talent list?

Declaration of interests by Members of the Executive Council

(10) Hon SIN Chung-kai (Written reply)

It has been reported that the Chief Executive (“CE”) facilitated the making of a donation of nearly HK\$400 million by a local businessman to an overseas medical institute in early February this year. The institute, for which CE’s son is working, has revealed its intention to establish a research institution in Hong Kong. Moreover, according to a press release issued by the Government on 16 February this year, CE made a declaration that his son was going to undertake research at that medical institute during internal discussion on relevant issues within the Government. In connection with the declaration of interests by Members of the Executive Council (“ExCo”), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) when the declaration mentioned in the aforesaid press release was made, and whether the ExCo Secretariat has received such declaration; if the ExCo Secretariat has not, of the reasons for that;
- (2) whether an ExCo Member is required, under the system of declaration of interests by ExCo Members, to declare interests in relation to his/her facilitation of the making of donations by Hong Kong residents or organizations to institutions which employ his/her immediate family members; if he/she is not required to do so, of the reasons for that; and
- (3) whether it will review the scope of “exclusionary interests” (i.e. interests which are so “direct and significant” that they require exclusion of an ExCo Member from the deliberations of ExCo) which an ExCo Member is required to declare, and expand the scope to cover interests of the immediate family members of ExCo Members; if it will, when it will conduct the review; if not, of the reasons for that?

Provision of Integrated Home Care Services for the elderly

(11) Hon Albert CHAN (Written reply)

In recent years, I have received quite a number of complaints from elderly people that the operators of Integrated Home Care Services (“IHCS”) have cut back on meal delivery services, and certain operators have even refused to provide such services to some elderly people on the grounds that they are “not old enough and still healthy”. Some elderly people have also complained that the unduly long waiting time for IHCS renders them unable to solve their household problems, particularly household cleaning. Regarding the provision of IHCS for the elderly, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective expenditures on IHCS (Ordinary Cases) (“ordinary case services”) and IHCS (Frail Cases) (“frail case services”) in each year since the overall enhancement of IHCS in 2003;
- (2) of the respective numbers of applications for ordinary case and frail case services and, among such applications, the respective numbers of approved and rejected cases in each year since the overall enhancement of IHCS in 2003; of the reasons for some of the applications being rejected; and
- (3) whether it has assessed the failure of operators to provide appropriate IHCS for the elderly runs counter to the concepts of “ageing in place” and “continuum of care”; if it has assessed, of the outcome and whether the authorities will take measures to ensure that the service operators improve their services; if it has not assessed, the reasons for that?

Marriage and divorce trends in Hong Kong and
their impacts on various social aspects

(12) Hon Alice MAK (Written reply)

According to the information compiled by the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong recorded an annual average of over 50 000 marriages from 2010 to 2013, while divorces increased from 18 000-odd cases in 2010 to 22 000-odd cases in 2013. Besides, remarriages likewise increased from 16 000-odd cases in 2010 to 19 000-odd cases in 2013. Regarding the marriage and divorce trends in Hong Kong and their impacts on various social aspects, including housing, people's daily lives and employment, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the crude marriage rate (i.e. the number of marriages registered in a calendar year per 1 000 mid-year population of that year) and the crude divorce rate (i.e. the number of divorce decrees granted in a calendar year per 1 000 mid-year population of that year) in Hong Kong last year; the average age of the people who were granted divorce decrees in each of the past five years;
- (2) of the number of remarriages last year; among the remarriages in each of the past five years, the number of those in which either or both parties remarried for the second or more times;
- (3) of the number and percentage of cross-boundary marriages in each of the past five years; among such marriages, the respective percentages of those in which the bridegroom or the bride was not a Hong Kong permanent resident;
- (4) of the number of requests received by the authorities in each of the past five years from public housing tenants for splitting tenancies due to divorces and the number of approved cases among them; the average processing time for such kind of cases of splitting tenancies;
- (5) targeting at the continuous increase in the numbers of divorces and remarriages in recent years, of the support and counseling services provided to divorcees and remarried persons as well as their families by organizations such as the Social Welfare Department and the Family Planning Association, whether it has assessed the effectiveness of such services achieved last year; if so, of the outcome; and
- (6) whether the authorities have studied the impacts of the continuous rising trends of divorces and remarriages in recent years on the demographic structure, family formation, as well as the demand for housing, employment assistance and various social services in Hong Kong; if they have not, whether the authorities would study the relevant topics?

The working hours of the employees in Hong Kong
and overtime work performed by them

(13) Hon KWOK Wai-keung (Written reply)

Regarding the working hours of the employees in Hong Kong and overtime work performed by them, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the average weekly working hours of the employees in Hong Kong at present, with a breakdown by industry, job type and wage level;
- (2) of the average weekly hours of overtime work performed by the employees in Hong Kong at present, with a breakdown by industry, job type, wage level and form of compensation;
- (3) of the respective numbers of employees, as estimated by the Government, who will be affected by the enactment of legislation prescribing the standard working hours (“SWH”) at 40, 42, 44, 46 or 48 hours per week, as well as the industries and job types in which such employees are engaged and their wage levels; and
- (4) whether the authorities will formulate, before enacting legislation on SWH, new measures to reduce uncompensated overtime work performed by employees; whether they will conduct relevant researches to look further into the causes for overtime work and its impacts on employees’ daily lives; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Working dogs in government departments

(14) Dr Hon Helena WONG (Written reply)

Will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the current number of government departments which have set up teams comprising working dogs, and a breakdown of the number of working dogs by department and breed;
- (2) whether there are guidelines on the hours of work, hours of rest and meal arrangements for working dogs as well as the area of and the facilities in their rest stations; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether working dogs are provided with medical services; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (4) whether the various government departments have guidelines on the retirement ages of working dogs; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (5) of the respective numbers of working dogs in the past five years which were adopted and euthanized after retirement, and the reasons for euthanizing some of the dogs; and
- (6) as it has been reported that a number of incidents of suspected suicides of Malinois police dogs have occurred, of the number of in-service Malinois police dogs which died of unnatural causes in the past five years; and whether the Police have examined the causes of their deaths; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Supply of and demand for domestic helpers

(15) Hon CHAN Kin-por (Written reply)

According to a government paper, as at end-January 2014, there were about 323 400 foreign domestic helpers (“FDHs”) in Hong Kong. Among them, the numbers of Philippine and Indonesian FDHs were about 166 200 and 149 700 respectively, accounting for over 95% of FDHs in total. It has been reported that in the light of the continuously rising demand for domestic labour as a result of the improving economies, the Philippine and Indonesian Governments will stop the export of domestic helpers (“DHs”) by 2017 and within five years respectively. In connection with the supply of and demand for DHs in Hong Kong, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has studied the short-term or long-term impacts, of the cessation of export of DHs from the Philippines and Indonesia to Hong Kong, on Hong Kong in areas such as the economy, labour and family; whether the authorities have projected the demand of Hong Kong households for FDHs in the next decade, and whether the supply of FDHs can meet the demand;
- (2) of the measures that the authorities will implement in the coming year to encourage local employers to employ FDHs from other countries in order to reduce the dependence of Hong Kong on Philippine and Indonesian DHs; whether the authorities will allocate more resources to provide economic incentives (such as providing subsidies for intermediaries to train FDHs) to encourage intermediaries to enhance the training for FDHs of other nationalities so as to enhance their capabilities at work, thereby increasing the confidence of local employers in employing them; and
- (3) whether the authorities have assessed the effectiveness of the measures currently adopted to encourage employers to employ local domestic helpers (“LDHs”); if they have, of the assessment results; whether they have assessed if Hong Kong has been over-dependent on FDHs in recent years; if the assessment result is in the affirmative, whether the authorities will consider enhancing the relevant measures (such as allocating more resources to enhance LDHs’ capabilities at work) and making more active efforts to encourage local grass-roots workers (especially female new arrivals) to join the domestic helper industry so as to increase the manpower supply?

Voluntary residential drug treatment and rehabilitation services

(16) Prof Hon Joseph LEE (Written reply)

At present, there are a number of models of drug treatment and rehabilitation services in Hong Kong, including the voluntary residential drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes run by non-governmental organizations. There are currently 39 residential drug treatment and rehabilitation centres and halfway houses (“drug treatment institutions”) under these programmes, of which 19 are subvented by the Government. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective amounts of subvention received by the aforesaid 19 drug treatment institutions from the Government, and the respective percentages of these amounts in their total income, in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by institution;
- (2) of the current number of residential places provided by each of the 39 drug treatment institutions and, among these places, the respective numbers of those for men and for women and their occupancy rates;
- (3) whether it knows the current number of people on the waiting lists for places in the hostels run by the drug treatment institutions and for how long they have to wait on average, with a breakdown by gender; whether the authorities have considered helping these institutions increase the number of residential places or enhance their services so as to shorten the waiting time and facilitate drug addicts to receive drug treatment expeditiously; if they have, of the details, if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) of the channels through which the authorities cooperate with those non-government subvented drug treatment institutions so that the latter’s services can dovetail with the anti-drug policy of the Government; whether the authorities have approached these institutions to look into the difficulties faced by them (such as raising funds and identifying sites for building hostels); if they have, of the details, and whether they have considered assisting these institutions to resolve the difficulties; if they have not looked into the difficulties, the reasons for that?

Combating illegal carriage of passengers for hire or reward
through the use of mobile applications

(17) Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan (Written reply)

It has been reported that as the practice of calling taxis through the use of mobile applications (“Apps”) has become prevalent in recent years, quite a number of owners of van-type light goods vehicles and private cars without hire car permits have been attracted to engage in the business of carrying passengers for hire or reward (“illegal car hire service”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the total numbers of persons prosecuted and convicted for operating illegal car hire service in the past three years, and the penalties imposed on them;
- (2) whether the authorities will step up the enforcement efforts to curb the operation of illegal car hire service through the use of Apps; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether the authorities have assessed if the existing legislation is effective in combating the operation of illegal car hire service through the use of Apps; if they have, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether the authorities will step up publicity to make members of the public understand that the operation of such car hire service is illegal and the risks they have to bear for travelling on such vehicles; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Impact of the revisions to the Quota and Points System for
public rental housing on non-elderly one-person applicants

(18) Hon WONG Kwok-hing (Written reply)

The Housing Authority (“HA”) has implemented the refined Quota and Points System (“new QPS”) for public rental housing (“PRH”) since 1 February this year. Some non-elderly one-person applicants aged below 45 have relayed to me that they have been waiting for PRH units for many years and could have been allocated a PRH unit within one to two years, but their waiting time has been prolonged as a result of non-elderly one-person applicants aged 45 or above being awarded a one-off bonus of 60 points under the new QPS, and this is unfair to them. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of non-elderly one-person applicants who could have been allocated a PRH unit within 12, 18 and 24 months from 1 February this year before the implementation of the new QPS and, among them, the respective numbers of applicants whose waiting time has been prolonged due to the implementation of the new QPS, their age distribution, as well as the biggest and smallest increase in their waiting time;
- (2) whether HA has explained to the affected applicants how the new QPS impacts on their waiting time, and whether HA has established a redress channel in this regard, so that it can consider exercising discretion to give priority allocation of PRH units to applicants with pressing housing needs; and
- (3) whether HA will increase this year’s PRH allocation quota for non-elderly one-person applicants to bring the waiting time of applicants who could have been allocated a PRH unit within 24 months to the same level as that of applicants aged 45 or above after the implementation of the new QPS, so as to reduce the conflicts among applicants and minimize the adverse impact of the new QPS; if HA will not, how HA ensures that the new QPS is fair and reasonable?

Expansion of the Hong Kong International Airport into a three-runway system

(19) Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki (Written reply)

On 17 March this year, the Chief Executive in Council affirmed the need to expand the Hong Kong International Airport into a three-runway system (“3RS”), with a construction cost around \$141.5 billion in money-of-the-day prices. As for the financial arrangement, the Airport Authority Hong Kong (“AAHK”) has proposed that a “joint contribution” principle be adopted to meet the expenditures on 3RS, making use of internal sources of fund, external borrowing and levying charges from users (“the financing arrangement”) to finance the project. As such, the relevant expenditures do not require the vetting and approval of the Finance Committee of this Council. Regarding the management of the Pearl River Delta (“PRD”) airspace, the Secretary for Transport and Housing has advised that the Civil Aviation Administration of China, the Civil Aviation Department of Hong Kong and the Civil Aviation Authority of Macao jointly drew up the “PRD Region Air Traffic Management Planning and Implementation Plan” (“the Plan”) in 2007, with a view to implementing a number of optimization measures in phases before 2020. It has been reported that the Plan has proposed to remove the airspace constraints of PRD and set up “the Southern PRD Terminal Area”, with the airspace to be managed jointly by the relevant departments of the Guangdong province and Hong Kong. Some concern groups are of the view that such an arrangement is tantamount to the introduction of a “co-location arrangement in the air”, and it may contravene the requirements under Article 130 of the Basic Law that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be responsible on its own for matters of routine business and technical management of civil aviation. These concern groups also query the economic benefits that will be brought about by 3RS as well as AAHK’s practice of not publishing its internal rate of return (“IRR”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that Article 73 of the Basic Law stipulates that one of the powers and functions exercised by this Council is to approve taxation and public expenditure, whether the Government has sought legal advice on the compliance or otherwise of the financing arrangement with that Article; if it has, of the details; if not, whether the Government has assessed the legal risks that may be brought about by the financing arrangement;
- (2) whether it knows the details of AAHK’s external borrowing plan for 3RS; whether the Government has conducted an independent financial risk assessment on the plan; if it has, of the details; whether the Government has assessed the impacts on the debts to be borne by AAHK in the event of cost overrun of the 3RS project or returns failing to meet the expected targets in future; whether the Government has assessed the possible financial and legal consequences should AAHK fail to repay the debts; if it has, of the details, and whether the Government will help AAHK repay all or part of the debts;

- (3) whether the relevant departments of Hong Kong, the Mainland and Macao have convened meetings to discuss the optimization measures in the Plan; if they have, of the dates, venues and attendance lists of such meetings, and the details of the various optimization measures that are planned to be implemented; whether the Government has plans to discuss with the mainland authorities the re-delineation of the airspace boundaries of Hong Kong and the Mainland; if it has such plans, of the details and the implementation timetable;
- (4) whether it has studied if the setting up of the Southern PRD Terminal Area complies with the requirements under Article 130 of the Basic Law; if it has, of the details; if not, whether the Government has assessed the legal consequences of removing the airspace constraints of PRD; and
- (5) whether it knows the reasons for AAHK not publishing the IRR of 3RS; whether AAHK has provided such information to the Government; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; whether the Government has assessed the economic impacts on 3RS to be brought about by the situation that the problems of the airspace of PRD have not been solved; if it has, of the details?

Supply and prices of powdered formula for infants and young children

(20) Hon Mrs Regina IP (Written reply)

Since March 2013, the Government has been enforcing the requirement that each person aged 16 or above may only carry, on his/her departure from Hong Kong within a 24-hour period, powdered formula for infants and young children under the age of 36 months (“powdered formula”) of a total net weight no more than 1.8 kilograms (commonly known as “restriction on powdered formula”). In order to understand the supply and prices of powdered formula, the Consumer Council conducted a survey throughout the 18 districts in Hong Kong during the pre-Chinese New Year period (i.e. the period between 26 January and 11 February) this year. The survey results reveal that the overall shortage situation of powdered formula improved during the aforesaid period as compared to that in the same period last year, but the shortage rates in some districts were still on the high side. For instance, the shortage rates of several major brands of powdered formula in Po Lam, Tseung Kwan O, and Sham Shui Po were still over 20%, while those of individual brands of powdered formula in Tai Po and Sham Shui Po were even higher than 40%. Regarding price differences among drug stores, the price differentials of individual brands among drug stores in different districts also exceeded 26%. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of prosecution and conviction cases involving violations of the restriction on powdered formula since its implementation (with a breakdown by quarter and control point); if such figures cannot be provided, of the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it has formulated specific measures to resolve the lingering problem of serious shortage of powdered formula in individual districts; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) regarding the problem that there are still marked differences in the prices of individual brands of powdered formula among drug stores in different districts, whether the Government has formulated specific measures to mitigate the problem; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Releasing the findings of public opinion surveys

(21) Hon Frederick FUNG (Written reply)

At the Question and Answer Session of this Council on 26 March this year, the Chief Executive (“CE”) remarked that according to the findings of a public opinion survey, people who were willing to accept the Decision made by the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress on 31 August last year on issues such as the selection of CE of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region by universal suffrage (“NPCSC’s Decision”) outnumbered those who were unwilling to do so. Prior to this, CE also remarked on 28 February this year (and the authorities subsequently supplemented on 18 March in reply to my question) that according to the findings of a public opinion survey conducted by a professional agency commissioned by the Government, more than half of Hong Kong people were agreeable to the selection of CE by universal suffrage in 2017 to be implemented in accordance with NPCSC’s Decision. On the other hand, the Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey (“CCPOS”) of The Chinese University of Hong Kong has been conducting tracking surveys on constitutional reform issues since September last year, and the findings of the five surveys already conducted as at last month showed that on the question of whether this Council should approve the package of selecting CE by universal suffrage in 2017 to be proposed by the Government in accordance with NPCSC’s Decision (“the proposed package”), those respondents who considered that this Council should reject the package outnumbered those who considered that this Council should approve it. For example, according to the latest survey findings released on the 15th of last month, 46.9% of the respondents considered that this Council should reject the proposed package, while 40.2% considered that this Council should approve it. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the details of the public opinion survey referred to by CE in the aforesaid Question and Answer Session; whether the survey is for Government’s internal reference only and its details are generally not made public;
- (2) whether the authorities had provided CE with the findings of the aforesaid surveys conducted by CCPOS before CE made public the findings of the public opinion survey mentioned in (1); if the authorities had not done so, whether the authorities will review (i) if CE’s repeated remarks on public opinions were too reckless, or would make people think that he was politically motivated to do so, (ii) if it was necessary for government officials to have a more comprehensive grasp of the findings of the public opinion surveys conducted in the community before making remarks of a similar nature, and (iii) if government officials should avoid making one-sided generalizations when releasing findings of public opinion surveys; and
- (3) whether it has assessed if CE’s past references on several occasions to the findings of certain public opinion surveys without disclosing the

sources of such information will give people an impression that the SAR Government and CE are untruthful, disrespectful to public opinions or even manipulative of public opinions; if it has assessed, of the results; if not, the reasons for that?

Payment of sickness allowance

(22) Hon Emily LAU (Written reply)

Under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57), an employee who has been employed by his employer under a continuous contract for a period of one month or more immediately preceding a sickness day shall be paid by his employer sickness allowance in accordance with such Ordinance, but an employee who takes less than four consecutive days as sickness days shall not be entitled to be paid sickness allowance in respect thereof. The rate of sickness allowance is set at 80% of the employee's average daily wages. In this connection, will the Executive Authorities inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of complaints they received in each of the past three years in relation to sickness days and sickness allowance, as well as the details of such complaints;
- (2) whether they know the current number of employers who do not pay sickness allowance to those employees who have taken less than four consecutive days as sickness days, and the rate of the allowance they pay to eligible employees barely meets the minimum statutory requirement; whether they received in the past three years complaints from employees that the aforesaid requirements were outdated and mean; and
- (3) given that the authorities have not amended the Employment Ordinance to adjust the rate of sickness allowance since 1996, whether they will amend the Ordinance with a view to raising the rate of sickness allowance to a level equivalent to 100% of the average daily wages of the employee concerned, as well as repeal the provision under which employees taking less than four consecutive days as sickness days shall not be entitled to such allowance; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?