

# **立法會**

## ***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(4)1469/17-18  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/PS

### **Panel on Public Service**

**Minutes of meeting held on  
Monday, 21 May 2018, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH (Chairman)  
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP  
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP  
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP  
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan  
Hon CHU Hoi-dick  
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, JP  
Hon HO Kai-ming  
Hon LAM Cheuk-ting  
Hon SHIU Ka-fai  
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

**Members absent** : Hon IP Kin-yuen  
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN

**Public Officers attending** : **Agenda item IV**  
  
Mr Joshua LAW, GBS, JP  
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Thomas CHOW, JP  
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

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

**Agenda item V**

Mr Joshua LAW, GBS, JP  
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Thomas CHOW, JP  
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Eric CHAN  
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 3

**Clerk in attendance** : Mr Anthony CHU  
Chief Council Secretary (4)1

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Wendy JAN  
Senior Council Secretary (4)7

Ms Maggie CHUNG  
Council Secretary (4)1

Mr Terry HON  
Clerical Assistant (4)1

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**Action**

**I. Confirmation of minutes**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1039/17-18 -- Minutes of meeting held  
on 19 March 2018)

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 March 2018 were confirmed.

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**II. Information papers issued since the last regular meeting on 13 April 2018**

(LC CB(4)1002/17-18(01)	Paper	No.-- Administration's response to the submission from the Coalition of Civil Servants on Medical and Dental Benefits for CSEPs
LC CB(4)1003/17-18(01)	Paper	No.-- Letter dated 12 April 2018 from Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho requesting information on acting appointments of Transport Officer grade staff (Chinese version only)
LC CB(4)1003/17-18(02)	Paper	No.-- Administration's response to the letter dated 12 April 2018 from Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho requesting information on acting appointments of Transport Officer grade staff
LC Paper No. CB(4)899/17-18(02)		-- 19 submissions from deputations/individual on the extension of service of civil servants who joined the Government between 1 June 2000 and 31 May 2015
LC Paper Nos. CB(4)994/17-18(01) and (02)		
LC CB(4)1004/17-18(01) to (10)	Paper	Nos.
LC CB(4)1013/17-18(01) to (05)	Paper	Nos.
LC CB(4)1057/17-18(01)	Paper	No.
LC CB(4)1079/17-18(01)	Paper	No.-- Administration's response to the submissions from

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deputations/individual on the extension of service of civil servants who joined the Government between 1 June 2000 and 31 May 2015)

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

3. The Chairman informed members that, in response to the Panel's invitation for submission of written views on allowing civil servants who joined the Government between 1 June 2000 and 31 May 2015 to retire later at 60 (for disciplined services grades) or 65 years old (for civilian grades) ("the new initiative"), a total of 19 submissions had been received. The Secretariat had forwarded the submissions to members for information and the Administration for response (the Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(01) on 15 May 2018). According to the Administration, during the consultation period from 20 February to 30 April 2018, it had received more than 470 submissions, including 19 submissions referred to it by the Panel.

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for the Civil Service ("SCS") informed members that the Administration was studying the views received. As many of the views received urged for early implementation of the new initiative, the Administration would finalize the implementation details as soon as possible and then submit the proposal to the Executive Council for consideration.

*(Post-meeting note: The Chief Executive in Council made a decision on the new initiative and the Legislative Council Brief on the details of the implementation framework was issued to all Members on 19 June 2018.)*

### **III. Date of next meeting and items for discussion**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(02) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(03) -- List of follow-up actions)

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5. Members agreed that the next regular Panel meeting would be held on 15 June 2018 to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration:

- (a) 2018-2019 Civil Service Pay Adjustment; and
- (b) Employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service.

**IV. An overview of the civil service establishment, strength, retirement, resignation, age profile and gender profile**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(04) -- Administration's paper on an overview of the civil service establishment, strength, retirement, resignation, age profile and gender profile

LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(05) -- Paper on the overall establishment, strength, retirement, resignation, age profile and gender profile of the civil service prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

6. At the invitation of the Chairman, SCS briefed members on an overview of the civil service establishment, strength, retirement, resignation, age profile and gender profile, as set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(04)).

Disparity between the establishment and strength of the civil service

7. Noting that the difference between the establishment and strength of the civil service had widened from 5 000 posts in 2002-2003 to around 7 500 posts in 2016-2017, Mr Tony TSE expressed concern on its impact on the workload and efficiency of the civil servants. Mr HO Kai-ming was worried that the manpower shortage might hinder the implementation of new government initiatives/policies and enquired about the measures to be taken to address the situation. Given that

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under-spending in expenditure would arise when there was disparity between the establishment and strength of the civil service, Mr CHU Hoi-dick enquired whether this had partly contributed to the Government's fiscal surplus in the past few years.

8. SCS advised that due to the lead time required for conducting recruitment exercises, it was unavoidable that there was a gap between the establishment and strength of the civil service. The average time for completing recruitment exercises was about six months. Regarding the reasons for under-spending in Bureaux/Departments ("B/Ds"), he explained that there could be different contributing factors. In line with the principle of prudent use of public resources, B/Ds would endeavour to achieve cost-effectiveness in financial management through various measures, such as through process re-engineering.

9. With regard to a long lead time required to complete the recruitment exercises, Mr Tony TSE enquired whether the Administration had encountered any difficulties in recruiting civil servants in general and for individual grades/work types in particular. He also asked whether there was any mechanism in place to help B/Ds identify recruitment problems so that they could seek assistance from the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") where necessary.

10. SCS said that the Administration had laid down internal guidelines for civil service recruitment exercises. If there were a large number of vacancies in a certain rank with many applications received, B/Ds could, with the purpose of expediting the intake of new recruits, conduct year-round recruitment exercises; set up several recruitment boards to conduct interviews concurrently; and strengthen the manpower responsible for conducting recruitment exercises. CSB would monitor the recruitment situation amongst B/Ds, and consider whether grade structure reviews ("GSRs") would be needed for addressing proven and persistent recruitment and retention difficulties of individual grades.

11. At the request of Mr Tony TSE, SCS undertook to provide the number of civil servants as a percentage of the total working population in Hong Kong from 2002-2003 to 2016-2017.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1457/17-18(01) on 31 July 2018.)*

12. Mr SHIU Ka-fai opined that with a view to maintaining the quality and efficiency of public services, the Administration should

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implement measures to address the manpower shortage problem in individual B/Ds, and seek approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council for additional financial and manpower resources if necessary. He pinpointed that as there was a continued rebound in the number of visitors to Hong Kong, it was crucial for the Administration to deploy additional cleaning workers and police officers at tourist hotspots, so as to maintain the environmental hygiene and public order.

13. SCS pointed out that the civil service establishment would expand by 6 700 posts in 2018-2019, representing an increase of 3.7%, while over 1 000 of the 6 700 posts were to be created under the establishment of the Hong Kong Police Force. He believed that B/Ds would deploy staff resources according to operational needs, and he would convey Mr SHIU Ka-fai's views to the Hong Kong Police Force and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department respectively.

## Resignation

14. Concerning that the resignation rate had increased by three times from around 0.2% of the strength of civil servants in 2002-2003 to 0.63% in 2016-2017, and some officers indicated in the exit survey conducted by the Administration that they left the civil service to set up their own business or take up jobs in private sector/publicly funded organizations, Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr HO Kai-ming questioned whether this implied the diminished attractiveness of civil service jobs.

15. SCS said that based on the large number of applications received in the recruitment exercises conducted in these few years generally, the civil service should still be attractive and competitive in the labour market. He said that the resignation rate of civil servants had remained at a low level, despite fluctuations between years.

16. Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr HO Kai-ming were disappointed with SCS's response. They remarked that as civil servants appointed on the New Permanent Terms on or after 1 June 2000 would not be entitled to pension benefits and medical and dental benefits after retirement, the civil service remuneration package had lost its competitive edge when compared to the remuneration package offered by private sector. Mr HO was worried that there might be a direct relation between the replacement of pension schemes by the Civil Service Provident Fund Scheme and the increase in the resignation rate. He therefore urged the Administration to come up with measures to preserve the attractiveness of and retain talents in the civil service, such as providing post-retirement medical benefits for all civil servants.

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17. SCS said that the terms and conditions of employment for civil servants appointed on or after 1 June 2000 were introduced following the civil service reform undertaken in 1999 and were drawn up with reference to private sector's practices. It was the Government's civil service pay policy to ensure that civil service remuneration was regarded as fair by both civil servants and the public. In order to maintain broad comparability between civil service pay and private sector pay, the former was compared with the latter on a regular basis through three types of survey, namely the annual Pay Trend Survey, the triennial Starting Salaries Survey and the six-yearly Pay Level Survey.

18. Mr HO Kai-ming noted from the Administration's paper that over 1 000 civil servants resigned from the civil service in 2016-2017, but only 457 respondents participated in the exit survey. He asked whether the remaining resignees had refused to participate in the exit survey. Having regard to the small number of respondents in the exit survey, Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr HO questioned the representativeness of the findings and asked whether the Administration had looked into the underlying reasons for officers resigning from the civil service.

19. SCS explained that as revealed in the exit survey results, around 60% of the resignees left during probationary period. While officers might resign for various reasons, the Administration considered it understandable that the resignation rate among probationers was comparatively higher than the rest of the civil service, because probationers might be still exploring a suitable career path for themselves and find working in the Government unsuitable for them.

20. Mr HO Kai-ming and Mr KWOK Wai-keung commented that the higher resignation rates in the civil service in the past few years should not be taken lightly. Given that the imminent retirement wave in the civil service would create an impact on the retention and transfer of experience of civil servants, the Administration should formulate measures to attract and retain high-calibre staff.

21. SCS assured members that CSB would continue to monitor the attractiveness of the civil service posts and implement measures according to the situation of individual grades/ranks to retain staff when necessary.



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### Succession planning

22. Dr Elizabeth QUAT said that to her understanding, the Administration would not commence the recruitment and training process until the departure of the retiring civil servants. As a result, some serving officers had to, in addition to coaching new appointees, take up additional workload after the departure of the retiring staff and before the new staff could effectively discharge duties by themselves. In this connection, she asked whether the Administration could conduct succession planning, recruitment exercises and trainings for staff to take up duties at a senior level at an early stage. In addition, she enquired whether an additional allowance could be provided for these serving officers as a compensation for their additional workload. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan echoed that the Administration should record the contributions of these serving officers in their personnel files as recognition.

23. SCS replied that with a view to strengthening peer support and fostering the sense of belonging among civil servants, it was a common arrangement for serving civil servants to offer coaching for or serve as mentors to new appointees. On the suggestion of introducing an additional allowance for that purpose, he said that any relevant proposals from individual B/Ds would be carefully examined and duly considered by CSB. Currently, to facilitate smooth succession in the civil service, B/Ds were requested to make early planning of recruitment and promotion exercises, as appropriate, having regard to the number of and timing in which vacancies were expected to arise. He would also meet with individual Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments regularly to keep in view the manpower and succession situation of B/Ds.

24. Dr Elizabeth QUAT further enquired about the implementation timetable of the new initiative. She said that disciplined services staff welcomed the new initiative, yet they were dissatisfied with the proposed migration of the contribution scale of the Civil Service Provident Fund Scheme. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan also requested the Administration to allow civil servants who joined the Government before 1 June 2000 to extend their service.

25. SCS advised that CSB was studying the views received from the consultation exercise with the staff sides and grade/departmental management about the proposed implementation framework of the new initiative, and CSB would finalize the implementation details as soon as practicable.

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### Promotion prospect of civil servants

26. In reply to Mr KWOK Wai-keung's enquiries about the average time taken for civil servants to get promoted to the next rank and whether any mechanism was in place for outstanding officers to get fast-track promotion, SCS said that while generally speaking, it could take an officer an average of 10 years or more to be promoted to the next higher rank, the situation would vary among different grades/ranks and the circumstances of individual officers. Selection for promotion was based on objective criteria, including the performance and ability of the staff. Young civil servants with potential for advancement would be identified for grooming at an early stage where necessary to facilitate succession at the directorate ranks in individual B/Ds.

### Wastage in the Correctional Services Department

27. Dr Elizabeth QUAT said that some new recruits in the Correctional Services Department ("CSD") would, upon the completion of probationary period, apply for openings in other departments, and the civil service wastage figure might not have captured such in-service appointments. She was concerned about the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Administration to mitigate the serious wastage in CSD. She also reiterated her request for independent GSRs of disciplinary services.

28. SCS replied that CSB was examining whether there were sufficient justifications to conduct a GSR for the disciplined services grades. The Security Bureau was also working together with CSD in reviewing the workload, fringe benefits and working environment of CSD staff.

29. In response to Dr Elizabeth QUAT's concern about insufficient staff facilities in correctional institutions, SCS assured members that action was in hand to follow up on the issue with the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Government Property Agency.

### Employment of Non-Civil Service Contract staff and agency workers

30. Noting from the Administration's paper that as at 31 March 2017, the civil service strength represented about 4.2% of the total workforce in Hong Kong, Mr CHU Hoi-dick asked whether Non-Civil Service Contract ("NCSC") staff, agency workers and employees working under outsourced contractors who provided public services were included in the calculation of the civil service strength. SCS replied in negative.

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31. Mr CHU Hoi-dick opined that although the civil service establishment had been downsized from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007, the Administration had engaged NCSC staff, agency workers and outsourced workers to supplement the civil service workforce, hence the statistics provided by CSB in relation to the civil service strength could not present the actual manpower who provided public services for the Government. As the civil service establishment had increased roughly by 30 000 posts in the past 10 years, he was of the view that it would be useful to know whether posts created belong to low-, middle- or high-salary band. SCS replied that for 2018-2019, while 6 700 posts would be created in the civil service, about 70% of the posts were frontline posts, and only 47 were directorate posts.

32. At the request of Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr CHU Hoi-dick, SCS would try to provide the number of civil servants, full-time NCSC staff and outsourcing manpower employed/engaged by the Administration as a percentage of the Hong Kong working population, and make a comparison of the above figures with nearby cities.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1457/17-18(01) on 31 July 2018.)*

Female participation rate in the civil service

33. Pointing out that the female participation rate in the civil service of many European countries had reached about 50%, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan sought the reasons why the overall proportion of female civil servants in Hong Kong in 2016-2017 was only 37.2%. She also called on the Administration to take into account gender balance when employing civil servants and consider setting a target ratio for female civil servants.

34. SCS advised that appointment to the civil service was based on the principle of open and fair competition. All candidates would be assessed on the basis of their ability, performance and character and having regard to the stipulated entry requirements set according to the job requirements of the grade concerned. Gender was not a consideration in the selection process. The Administration noted that there was a rising trend of female participation rate in the civil service and the trend was more prominent in respect of civilian grades. For instance, around 76.8% of the clerical grades officers were female. It was also

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worth-noting that 50% of the 18 Permanent Secretary posts, the highest level civil service rank, were currently filled by female officers.

**V. An overview of training and development for civil servants**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(06) -- Administration's paper on an overview of training and development for civil servants

LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(07) -- Paper on training and development for civil servants prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

35. At the invitation of the Chairman, SCS briefed members on the overview of the provision of training and development for civil servants by CSB, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)1079/17-18(06)).

Expenditure on training and development

36. Mr Tony TSE enquired about the expenditure on civil service training and development and whether there were designated officers in individual B/Ds responsible for the training affairs of their staff. SCS replied that the total amount spent on training and development by the Administration in 2016-2017 was \$1.2 billion. Out of the \$1.2 billion, about \$140 million was the expenditure of the Civil Service Training and Development Institute ("CSTDI"), including some \$70 million for organizing training programmes by CSTDI. SCS also advised that B/Ds had designated officers responsible for training of their staff and grade management would monitor the training progress of their grade staff. Some major departments, such as the Hong Kong Police Force, had their own training schools to administer and provide special training for their staff.

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### Civil service college

37. Noting that the Administration had identified a site which was generally suitable for the construction of the civil service college, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan enquired about the location of the site. She suggested that the Administration should keep the existing training venue located at the North Point Government Offices for running one day or half-day short training programmes, and construct the civil service college on outlying islands away from the urban areas for running long courses spanning over a few days. She further said that she would discuss the issue with SCS after the meeting.

38. Echoing Dr CHIANG Lai-wan's view that the civil service college should be constructed on outlying islands, Mr HO Kai-ming considered that it would be more effective for civil servants to acquire new knowledge and skills in a relaxing and comfortable environment where they could get away from their daily work.

39. SCS advised that the Administration's plan was to merge the training facilities at North Point Government Offices into the civil service college. Consideration would be given to the provision of accommodation facilities in the college. As such, the Administration was looking for a site in the urban area which could be easily accessible. SCS further advised that the Administration had in the past run two-day or three-day training programmes during weekends at universities or on outlying islands and arranged participants to stay at nearby accommodation facilities. The Administration would continue to organize such training programmes for civil servants after the commissioning of the civil service college.

### National studies and Basic Law training

40. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan was worried that some civil servants might not fully understand the spirit of the Basic Law. She asked whether the Administration had encouraged civil servants to visit the Mainland to enhance their understanding of the Mainland. Consideration could be given to conducting an anonymous questionnaire survey on the civil servants' knowledge of the Mainland, such as their previous visits to the Mainland and the national anthem.

41. SCS replied that the Administration had not gathered the data as mentioned by Dr CHIANG Lai-wan. As regards the Mainland programmes on National Studies, the Administration would arrange civil

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servants from the directorate grade to junior rank officers to attend the programmes in a progressive manner.

42. Noting that the Administration would strengthen the content of the Basic Law training to include the relationship between the Constitution of the People's Republic of China ("the Constitution") and the Basic Law, Mr HO Kai-ming enquired about the scope of the training on the Constitution, and suggested that the Administration should step up training in this area in order to deepen civil servants' understanding of the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law. Mr Martin LIAO concurred with Mr HO's view.

43. Mr CHU Hoi-dick further asked whether the Chief Executive and Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs had attended training programmes on the Basic Law, and whether such training would also provide the participants with a comprehensive understanding of the Constitution, including the protection afforded to the people.

44. SCS explained that CSB invited renowned speakers such as members of the Basic Law Committee to talk on the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law at seminars organized on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2017. While the enhanced Basic Law training was designed for civil servants with a view to developing their understanding of the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law, the Administration also invited renowned experts to give talks on specific topics with the attendance of the Chief Executive and Principal Officials.

45. Noting that CSTDI expected to organize programmes, seminars and workshops for about 68 000 civil servants in 2018, Mr KWOK Wai-keung urged the Administration to arrange more civil servants to participate in these programmes/seminars/workshops, in particular the programmes on National Studies and Basic Law training, so that all levels of civil servants were equipped with updated knowledge of the social and economic developments of the Mainland that might have impact on Hong Kong.

46. SCS advised that subject to resources availability, the Administration would organize more courses on National Studies and the Basic Law, and priority would be given to civil servants who had more direct work contacts with the Mainland to attend such programmes.

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### Training on the use of innovation and technology

47. Mr HO Kai-ming said that the use of big data technologies by B/Ds could be very useful in analyzing the demand for public services, but some directorate civil servants had reservation on adopting the new technologies because of their concerns over personal data privacy protection. He asked how the Administration would address such concerns and help civil servants make use of big data technologies in improving the delivery of public services.

48. SCS noted Mr HO Kai-ming's view and advised that CSB would explore ways to further improve and enhance training on innovation and technology, including big data technologies, for civil servants.

49. Dr Elizabeth QUAT declared that she was an honorary president of Smart City Consortium, a company which had participated in providing training for civil servants on smart city, but she had no direct pecuniary interest in the matter. Whilst welcoming that new topics, including creativity and design thinking, smart city and new technological trends and application would be added to the leadership development programmes in 2018, Dr Elizabeth QUAT sought information on the workplan, the estimated number of participants and how the Administration would encourage more civil servants to attend these programmes. She considered that the Administration should make some of these training programmes mandatory for all civil servants, so that they could learn how to apply advanced technology in their daily office work.

50. Mr Martin LIAO further asked whether training programmes on innovation and technology were only catered for the staff of certain B/Ds and whether the Administration had consulted the trade on the design of the innovation and technology programmes. He also asked how the Administration would evaluate the effectiveness of such programmes.

51. SCS explained that departmental management might nominate their staff members to participate in job-related programmes. In designing the training programmes on the use of innovation and technology, CSB would consult the Innovation and Technology Bureau together with the Innovation and Technology Commission, both of which had a very close connection with the trade. He welcomed members' suggestions in this regard, and CSB would report to the Panel the number of civil servants who attended the training programmes on innovation and technology in due course. SCS also advised that feedback from both participants and departmental management would be collected for course evaluation with a view to further improving the training programmes.

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### Continuous training

52. Mrs Regina IP asked whether continuous and up-to-date training on macroeconomics would be provided for Principal Economists in the Office of the Government Economist of the Financial Secretary's Office so as to improve the accuracy of their economic and fiscal forecasts. She further urged the Administration to encourage more civil servants, in particular the senior civil servants working in the professional departments, to continuously participate in training programmes, including on-line or short courses, at renowned overseas institutions so as to broaden their perspectives and update their knowledge and techniques on the relevant discipline. Mr KWOK Wai-keung added that on-line learning was a flexible and convenient tool to help civil servants acquire updated knowledge and skills.

53. SCS advised that while CSTD offered training that fulfilled the common training needs of civil servants, professional training would be offered by relevant B/Ds to meet job-specific requirements. In response to members' suggestion, SCS said that the Administration would consider the provision of more overseas programmes, including on-line and short courses, for civil servants to broaden their perspectives.

54. Noting that the Administration would extend the Training Sponsorship Scheme to cover all officers at Master Pay Scale Point 49 and below, and raise the sponsorship ceiling from \$6,000 to \$10,000 per applicant each year, Mr Tony TSE sought further details of the Scheme. SCS advised that CSB implemented the Scheme to encourage civil servants to pursue lifelong learning. Civil servants could seek approval for attending job-related courses and then apply for reimbursement of fees after attending the courses in their own spare time. In the past, an average of \$2 million to \$2.5 million was incurred by B/Ds and about 600 applications were approved under the Scheme each year. The Administration had earmarked \$3.5 million for the Scheme in the coming year.

### Leave arrangement for attending training programmes

55. Mr Martin LIAO enquired about the leave arrangements for civil servants attending training programmes. Mr Tony TSE stressed that it was important for the Administration to encourage civil servants to pursue continuous learning and asked about the leave arrangement for civil servants in the professional grades to participate in visits and training programmes organized by the relevant professional associations.



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56. SCS explained that, in general, civil servants would be released from duties during office hours to participate in training programmes organized by CSTDI. As regards the training programmes organized by external organizations, departmental management had the discretion to release their staff from duties during office hours to attend work-related training programmes or examinations.

**VI. Any other business**

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

Council Business Division 4  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
8 August 2018