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**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining
the Estimates of Expenditure 2014-15**

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Session No. : 16

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0141)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (5) Subvention: Shine Skills Centres

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. As mentioned in Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0002, the placement rate of graduates for the academic year 2012-13 was 87% (provisional figure) with average monthly salary of about \$5,000. These figures were apparently very good but it was mainly attributable to the fact that the Centres had provided trainees with placement services. I would rather like to know how the Administration will enable the graduates with sustainable employment as many persons with disabilities who are working on contract terms may not be employed upon completion of their contracts. How will the Centres follow up on their cases, say, conducting tracking reviews three to five years after completion of programmes, so as to reflect the real situations of these trainees?
2. How will the Administration utilise the manpower resources of persons with disabilities to address the shortage of labour so that the Centres can focus their training on jobs which are short of labour supply? How can the employers of the industries concerned be encouraged to employ persons with disabilities?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

1. The Shine Skills Centres (the Centres) of Vocational Training Council (VTC) provide continuous support for graduates after their first employment through a six-month intensive job-follow-up service to help graduates better settle in the workplace and retain their jobs, and will continue to provide support thereafter on a need basis. Graduates of the Centres who have employment difficulties after graduation will obtain career support services offered by the vocational counsellors and social workers of the Centres.
2. The three Centres provide a range of market-driven vocational training courses and services for persons with disabilities aged 15 or above to enhance their employment prospects and facilitate their integration into society. These include training courses in commerce and retailing services, information technology, catering and hotel housekeeping services, personal and beauty care services, packaging, bakery and pastry, and event management services, etc.

The Centres regularly review and assess the effectiveness of their training programmes and develop new ones in consultation with the industries and VTC's Committee on Vocational Training for People with Disabilities which comprises representatives from relevant Government departments and various sectors of the community. To give due recognition and encourage employers to employ more persons with disabilities, the Centres organise and present the "Enlightened Employers Awards" every year to employers who have offered job opportunities to graduates.

In tandem, the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department (LD) provides job seekers with disabilities with personalised employment services, including, among others, the latest information on the labour market, vocational guidance and assessment to help them find jobs in the open employment market that best suit their abilities.

LD also administers the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme (WOPS) which encourages employers to provide more openings and employment support to persons with disabilities through the provision of an allowance. An eligible employer who employs a person with disabilities with employment difficulties, and provides him/her with training, support and a mentor in the first two months of employment, may be granted a maximum allowance of \$5,500 per month during the period. Afterwards, the employer may continue to receive an allowance being offered under WOPS, which is equivalent to two-thirds of the monthly salary of the employee (subject to a ceiling of \$4,000 per month) for a maximum period of six months. LD has also been reaching out to employers through seminars, workshops and visits to establishments to promote employment of persons with disabilities.

The Social Welfare Department, through the Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities, provides employers of persons with disabilities with a one-off subsidy up to \$20,000 in respect of each employee with disabilities for procurement of assistive devices and/or workplace modifications.

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) provides dedicated training courses for persons with disabilities to enhance their employability. In 2014-15, ERB will offer 52 such dedicated courses covering 14 industries and 1 700 training places have been earmarked for these courses with an estimated expenditure of about \$21 million. In addition, ERB organises recruitment workshops and provides referral services for employers who are interested in recruiting persons with disabilities; and provides placement follow-up services to persons with disabilities upon completion of dedicated placement-tied courses.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)02

(Question Serial No. S0142)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0004, the Administration has earmarked \$639 million for implementation of the Universal Accessibility Programme. In this connection, please advise on the following:

1. Does the Administration have any statistics on the persons with disabilities in each of the 18 districts in terms of number, age and types of disease? If so, please set out the details by district; if not, what are the reasons?
2. In the latter case, will the Administration require the Census and Statistics Department to include the survey mentioned above in the current exercise for updating the data on persons with disabilities?
3. The Administration has earmarked \$639 million for implementation of the Universal Accessibility Programme, which means that each of the 18 districts will be allocated \$35 million in average while resources for those districts with more persons with disabilities will be diluted. How did the Administration decide that each district implement three projects? How were the criteria for and amounts of funding set? How could the Administration ensure if three facilities were adequate for persons with disabilities in each district?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

- (1) and (2) Based on the findings of the Survey on Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases conducted by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) during 2006-07, the statistics of persons with disabilities by area of residence and selected type of disability are set out below –

Area of residence ¹ No. of persons ('000)	Hong Kong Island ²	Kowloon East ³	Kowloon West ⁴	New Territories East ⁵	New Territories West ⁶	Total
Restriction in body movement	37.6	51.3	19.7	31.2	48.0	187.8
Seeing difficulty	27.7	34.3	10.6	19.0	31.0	122.6
Hearing difficulty	20.6	26.1	8.7	15.8	21.0	92.2
Speech difficulty	5.6	8.0	1.5	5.7	7.6	28.4
Mental illness/mood disorder	18.0	19.9	8.7	13.7	26.3	86.6
Autism	1.0	0.9	0.3	0.6	0.9	3.8
Specific Learning Difficulties	1.5	2.1	1.1	2.3	2.8	9.9
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	1.0	1.3	0.5	1.0	1.7	5.5
All persons with disabilities (excluding persons with intellectual disability ⁷) ⁸	76.1	91.7	35.9	64.6	93.0	361.3

C&SD is now conducting a new round of survey on persons with disabilities. The findings will be announced in the last quarter of 2014.

- (3) The Government has been installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways (i.e. public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways), where technically feasible (i.e. the "Original Programme"). The "Original Programme" is to provide lifts or standard ramps to existing public walkways which are not equipped with standard barrier-free access facilities and there are no proper at-grade crossing facilities available within about 100 meters. Currently there are 158 feasible items under the "Original Programme" and the number of projects under each district varies. As at end-February 2014, retrofitting works of two of the items had been completed. Of the remaining 156 items, 62 items were under construction and 94 items were under design. The works of these items will be completed by phases from 2014 to 2018.

¹ The data are segregated by five areas of residence instead of 18 districts, in view that the latter would have a much larger sampling error and thus largely reduce the accuracy of the data.

² Hong Kong Island includes Central and Western, Wan Chai, Eastern and Southern District Council districts.

³ Kowloon East includes Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin and Kowloon City District Council districts.

⁴ Kowloon West includes Yau Tsim Mong and Sham Shui Po District Council districts.

⁵ New Territories East includes Sha Tin, Sai Kung, Tai Po and North District Council districts.

⁶ New Territories West includes Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Islands District Council districts.

⁷ The survey also collected information on persons with intellectual disabilities residing in institutions and households. However, there was strong indication of under-estimation in respect of the number of persons with intellectual disabilities residing in households as derived from the survey findings. Hence, the analysis of survey findings pertaining to the persons with intellectual disabilities has been separated from that of persons with other types of disability in the report.

⁸ A person might have more than one selected type of disability and hence the overall number of persons with disabilities is smaller than the sum of the number of persons with individual types of disability.

In August 2012, the Government launched the new policy on “Universal Accessibility” aiming at further enhancing the barrier-free facilities for existing public walkways. The new policy received overwhelming responses from the public and lift installations at about 250 public walkways were proposed (i.e. the “Expanded Programme”). The Government consulted the 18 District Councils in the first half of 2013 on the priority for implementing these suggestions for retrofitting of lifts. Technical feasibility studies for the three priority projects identified by each District Council have largely been completed and the Government is consulting various District Councils on the study findings. After consultation with the District Councils, the Government will proceed with the detailed design for the items confirmed to be technically feasible and supported by the district; and commence construction works progressively from 2015 onwards for completion by 2017 and 2018.

The estimated expenditure for the implementation of the Universal Accessibility Programme (including both the Original Programme and the Expanded Programme) in 2014-15 is \$639 million. The proposed funding will cover costs for construction works, technical feasibility studies, investigations and design.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-LWB(WW)03****(Question Serial No.S0134)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question (Member Question No.103):

The Government is prepared to inject \$50 million to elderly academies. What units will be funded? Please set out the names and amounts of funding for the grantees.

	Elderly Academies		
	Primary School	Secondary School	Tertiary Institution
No. of Grantees			
Names of Grantees			
Amounts of Funding for Each Grantee			

Asked by: Hon. FAN Kwok-wai, Gary

Reply:

With the approval of the Finance Committee on 21 February 2014, an additional \$50 million has been injected in March 2014 into the Elder Academy Development Foundation to strengthen the support for the Elder Academy (EA) Scheme. In 2014-15, 70 on-going projects, including EAs set up in primary and secondary schools and tertiary institutions, and activities of the New Territories West EAs Cluster, will continue to be implemented, involving a funding expenditure of around \$4.2 million. In addition, funding will be allocated to new projects mainly in response to applications to be received. Further breakdown of the funding under the new injection is not available at this stage.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-LWB(WW)04****(Question Serial No.S0135)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question (Member Question No.104):

As mentioned in the 2014 Policy Address, the Government will purchase residential care places from an elderly home run by a Hong Kong non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Shenzhen, and is also discussing similar arrangements with another elderly home in Zhaoqing run by a NGO. In this connection, please inform us of the number of places and details.

Location	Year	No. of Places
Shenzhen	2014-15	
	2015-16	
Zhaoqing	2014-15	
	2015-16	

Asked by: Hon. FAN Kwok-wai, Gary

Reply:

The Administration will launch a pilot scheme to purchase places from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Shenzhen Society for Rehabilitation Yee Hong Heights, an elderly home in Shenzhen operated by the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation (a Hong Kong non-governmental organisation (NGO)), to provide an option for elderly persons who are on the Central Waiting List for subsidised residential care places to choose to live therein. Similar arrangements are being discussed with the Hong Kong Jockey Club Helping Hand Zhaoqing Home for the Elderly which is run by the Helping Hand, another Hong Kong NGO.

The Social Welfare Department will start inviting eligible elderly persons to consider joining the pilot scheme in the second quarter of 2014 and start arranging placements starting from the third quarter of 2014. The number of places to be purchased will depend on the number of intake of eligible elderly persons which is dictated by the wish and choice of the elderly persons concerned.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No.S0149)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Women's Interests

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. As indicated in the Annex to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0044 that more than 30 advisory and statutory bodies have not female non-official members appointed, what are the reasons for it? Is it due to the lack of suitable talents or too specialised regimes? How will the Administration improve the situation? For it is considered too gender-oriented when not even a female member is included.
2. It is also mentioned in the Reply that the Administration will continue to invite women's associations and professional organisations to nominate female members for inclusion into the Central Personality Index held by the Home Affairs Bureau. What is the current male-to-female ratio of the Index? How will the Administration attract women to public services given the already high pressure posed by their working and family status?

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

- (1) The Administration makes appointments to Government advisory and statutory bodies (ASBs) on the basis of the merit of individuals concerned, taking into account a candidate's ability, expertise, experience, integrity and commitment to public service and with due regard to the functions and nature of business of ASBs concerned, as well as the statutory provisions of statutory bodies. The two main reasons for ASBs failing to achieve the benchmark of appointing at least 30% of female members (30% gender benchmark) are summarised as follows -
 - (a) the majority of practitioners in the respective sectors or professions are male; and
 - (b) the candidates are mainly nominated or recommended by the relevant professional bodies or institutions.

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has issued guidelines to Bureaux / Departments reminding the appointing authorities of ASBs of the importance of the 30% gender benchmark. HAB has also requested Bureaux / Departments to draw the attention of all relevant organisations which are involved in candidate nominations to the Government's effort in enhancing women's participation in ASBs.

- (2) As advised by HAB, as at the end of March 2014, there were about 34 000 curricula vitae (CVs) in the Central Personality Index. Among them, about 8 400 CVs (about 24.7%) were provided by female members of the public and 25 600 CVs (about 75.3%) were provided by male members of the public. Proactive effort will continue to be made to attract capable women to participate in community and public service. Women's associations and professional organisations are invited to nominate female members for inclusion into the Central Personality Index. Bureaux / Departments will be reminded from time to time to vigorously consider widening their networks with a view to identifying suitable female members to join the ASBs under their respective purviews.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)06

(Question Serial No. S0172)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to LWB(WW)0013, 64 Government bureaux, departments and public organisations as well as 108 private organisations and non-governmental organisations have participated in the Talent-Wise Employment Charter Scheme, each of which is required to “devise a host of sustainable measures commensurate with its modes of operation having regard to the organisation’s nature and business needs”, including “publishing on the number of employee with disabilities and on indicators”. Would the Administration advise on how many participating organisations have pledged to implement these two initiatives? If such information is yet available, could the Labour and Welfare Bureau undertake to provide both information when it reviews the implementation progress of the measures pledged by participating organisations by mid-2014?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) has been actively promoting the Talent-Wise Employment Charter and Inclusive organisations Recognition Scheme (the Scheme) both to the public and private sectors. Participating organisations are expected to review the effectiveness of its measures in promoting employment of persons with disabilities, report progress to LWB on an annual basis and introduce additional measures as and when appropriate. LWB will request the participating organisations to report the implementation progress of their pledged measures by mid-2014. Information on the measures taken by the participating organisations, including the number of employees with disabilities and other indicators relevant to the employment of persons with disabilities, will be uploaded onto the internet for public reference by the end of 2014.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)07

(Question Serial No. S0163)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to (4) in Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0051, the Transport Department (TD) has been receiving suggestions on the extension of the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the Scheme) to green minibuses (GMBs) from various channels including the District Councils. In other words, no consultation has been conducted specifically for the extension to GMBs. As the Scheme will be extended to GMBs in phases, will the Administration seek the views of the community, say, the District Councils on the routes worthy of according priority for the Scheme in terms of the number of elderly passengers or uphill-goers, etc.? Otherwise, local residents may be discontent with the phasing arrangements. Will the Administration conduct consultation in this specific area?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

There are currently over 150 GMB operators, involving more than 480 routes and 3 000 vehicles. Many of these operators are small in business scale with different financial positions and accounting arrangements. The extension of the Scheme to GMBs is subject to the resolution of various technical, operational, accounting and auditing issues. To make an early start, the extension will be conducted in phases, starting from the first quarter of 2015. The detailed phasing arrangements are being discussed between TD and individual GMB operators, and the suggestions made by the District Councils will be taken into account in the process.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0164)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question (Member Question No.):

1. As pointed out in LWB(WW)0052, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) does not keep statistics on the number of elderly persons on the Central Waiting List for subsidised residential care places who are residing on the Mainland. What is the reason for the Administration for not having such statistics? Generally speaking, elderly persons who choose to reside at the residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) on the Mainland must be those who have been living on the Mainland and waiting for subsidised residential care places after having passed the central assessment. If so, why doesn't the Administration have relevant information? Does it reflect the fact that the Administration does not have sufficient information as regards our elderly residents on the Mainland?
2. According to the Reply, the Shenzhen Society for Rehabilitation Yee Hong Heights will provide transportation services for its elderly residents to attend medical follow-up treatment at the North District Hospital when such needs arise. How about the arrangement for the RCHE in Zhaoqing? Has the Administration assessed the demand for the medical services in North District Hospital as well as the long journeys faced by the elderly residents (who for example may take most of the day for medical follow-up treatment)? Will the Administration consider making use of the hospitals run by Hong Kong people on the Mainland to provide medical support to them in the long run?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

1. At present, elderly persons with proven needs for long-term care services as assessed under SWD's Standardised Care Needs Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services may apply for subsidised community care services and/or residential care services (RCS). In assessing the long-term care needs of elderly persons for RCS, SWD does not require the applicants to state whether they are living on the Mainland. As such, SWD has not compiled records of the number of applications for subsidised RCS by elderly persons who are residing on the Mainland.
2. The Administration has decided to implement a pilot scheme whereby eligible elderly persons waitlisting for subsidised RCS may choose to live in the Hong Kong Jockey Club Shenzhen Society for Rehabilitation Yee Hong Heights. The Administration is also discussing similar arrangements with the Hong Kong Jockey Club Helping Hand Zhaoqing Home for the Elderly. The Administration will include relevant costs to cover medical support for the elderly participants. This will cover in-house medical consultation services and transportation services to attend medical follow-up treatment at hospitals. A review of the pilot scheme will be conducted in two years' time, after its implementation.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No.S0151)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Women's Interests

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Will the gender-related training be provided to the following sector, and in what details?

Police officers: in particular the frontline constables who deal with cases of domestic violence and sexual violence.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Pik-wan, Helena

Reply:

In order to enhance police officers' professionalism in dealing with domestic and sexual violence cases, the Hong Kong Police Force provides police officers with regular and ad-hoc training on the handling of relevant cases, covering legislation, investigation procedures and techniques, communications with victims, professional and gender sensitivity, etc. Related regular courses include "Foundation Training Course for Probationary Inspector and Recruit Police Constable", "Criminal Investigation Course (Standard & Advanced)", "Promotion and Development Courses" and "Child Protection Special Investigation", while ad-hoc training sessions include "Seminar on Handling of DV case", "Sensitivity Training (Briefing Sessions on Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance)" and "Force-wide DV Training Day Package". In addition, a training video entitled "Handling of Domestic Abusive Crime" has been produced to promote professional sensitivity on the handling of domestic and sexual violence cases.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No.S0152)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Women's Interests

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question (Member Question No.119):

Have politically-accountable officials at the level of Secretary of Department/Director of Bureau received any gender awareness training?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Pik-wan, Helena

Reply:

An ongoing effort has been made to enhance understanding of Government officials at all levels in gender mainstreaming (GM). A web portal on GM is made available to all Government officers. In addition, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare issued two memos to all directors of bureaux and heads of departments in February 2010 and November 2012 respectively to introduce and reinforce the concept of GM and solicit support in applying the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist to different policies and programmes as appropriate. A GM roving exhibition was arranged in 2013-14 in eight major Government Offices to introduce to all Government officers the concept and application of GM.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No.S0153)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Women's Interests

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie Tam)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In which department(s) will the Checklist be implemented this year?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Pik-wan, Helena

Reply:

In 2014-15, the Labour and Welfare Bureau will continue to encourage and liaise with all bureaux and departments in applying the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist to their work as appropriate.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0139)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (2) Social Security
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

1. According to (b) of the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0068, there were over half of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients in private housing with actual rent exceeding the maximum rent allowance (MRA) for the five years from 2009-10 to 2013-14. Does it mean that there is a structural problem that the Government needs to address, without merely resorting to the Community Care Fund (CCF)? How can these CSSA households in private housing be spared from using their standard rates or other allowances to supplement their rent costs?
2. In addition, according to (d) of the Reply, for CSSA recipients in institutions, the number of CSSA cases with actual rent exceeding MRA is decreasing. In fact, the running costs of institutions and therefore their charges are increasing continuously. Hence, the number of cases with inadequate rent allowance should be increasing instead of decreasing. Is the Administration aware of the situation and the reasons behind, such as whether the number of CSSA meals in institutions is increasing?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

1. Under the CSSA Scheme, rent allowance is payable to eligible households to meet accommodation expenses. The amount of the allowance is the actual rent paid, or the prescribed MRA in accordance with the number of eligible members in the household, whichever is the less. MRA is adjusted annually in accordance with the movement of the Consumer Price Index (A) rent index for private housing, and was increased by 7.8% and 6.5% in February 2013 and February 2014 respectively. The Administration will continue to closely monitor the situation and adjust MRA according to the existing mechanism.
2. The decreasing number of CSSA cases in institutions and other types of housing with actual rent exceeding MRA from 2009-10 to 2013-14 indicates that the adjustments in MRA in recent years have relieved the financial burden on CSSA recipients residing in these types of housing.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0140)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to (3) of the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0067, it is stated by the Administration that currently, there is no formal data matching mechanism between the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and relevant organisations in places outside Hong Kong, that SWD will obtain information from relevant organisations only on need basis depending on individual case circumstances, and that SWD does not keep information on the number of such cases. However, many people in the community have alleged that people who abuse the system may have assets overseas, such as saving deposits or properties on the Mainland. Moreover, given that there is convenient access, it is easy to transfer assets between the Mainland and Hong Kong. To the public, it is important that the Administration would strengthen the control and regulation. Why is there no mechanism in place?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

While there is currently no regular data matching mechanism between SWD and relevant organisations in places outside Hong Kong, SWD will obtain information from relevant organisations where necessary depending on individual case circumstances, and refer suspected fraud cases (for example, those involving unreported assets in places outside Hong Kong) to the Police for follow-up action as appropriate.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0145)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (7) Young People

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Further to the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0073, please list the number of places and utilisation rate of the After School Care Programme (ASCP) in each of the 18 districts. In addition, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has earmarked an annual expenditure of \$15 million for the Fee Waiving Subsidy Scheme (FWSS) under ASCP. Please list the number of full fee waiving quotas and expenditure for the FWSS under ASCP in each of the 18 districts.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The number and utilisation rate of ASCP places in each of the 18 districts (as at end- December 2013) are set out in Table 1 of the Annex. The number of fee waiving quotas (as at end-December 2013) and the expenditure under FWSS in 2013-14 in each of the 18 districts are set out in Table 2 of the Annex.

Table 1 - Number and Utilisation Rate of ASCP Places by District

District	No. of Places (as at end-Dec 2013)	Utilisation Rate (as at end-Dec 2013)
Central & Western	103	90%
Southern	306	93%
Islands	229	83%
Eastern	477	92%
Wan Chai	180	83%
Kowloon City	175	99%
Yau Tsim Mong	196	82%
Sham Shui Po	239	85%
Kwun Tong	371	82%
Wong Tai Sin	463	88%
Sai Kung	115	95%
Sha Tin	608	96%
Tai Po	171	92%
North	398	60%
Yuen Long	410	94%
Tsuen Wan	159	88%
Kwai Tsing	522	89%
Tuen Mun	485	89%
Total	5 607	88%

Table 2 - Number of Fee Waiving Quota and Expenditure by District

District	No. of Fee Waiving Quotas (as at end-Dec 2013)	Expenditure on FWSS in 2013-14 (\$)
Central & Western	27	220,500
Southern	91.5	816,750
Islands	42	364,500
Eastern	173.5	1,539,000
Wan Chai	29	273,750
Kowloon City	45	366,750
Yau Tsim Mong	64.5	576,000
Sham Shui Po	104	936,000
Kwun Tong	100.5	882,750
Wong Tai Sin	109.5	990,000
Sai Kung	38.5	380,250
Sha Tin	133.5	1,199,250
Tai Po	41.5	344,250
North	62	553,500
Yuen Long	161.5	1,446,750
Tsuen Wan	34	285,750
Kwai Tsing	178	1,521,000
Tuen Mun	171	1,592,250
Total	1 606.5	14,289,000

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-LWB(WW)15****(Question Serial No. S0133)**

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the 2014-15 Budget (paragraph 121) that recurrent expenditure on elderly services has increased more than 40 per cent from \$3.8 billion to \$5.4 billion. Please list in detail the services to which the additional \$1.6 billion has been allocated.

Area of funding	Recurrent expenditure on elderly services												
Amount of funding	HK\$1,600,000,000												
Type of units benefited	Community care services					Residential care services						Others	
	Integrated home care services	Enhanced home and community care services	Day care centres for the elderly	District elderly community centres	Neighbourhood elderly centres	Homes for the aged	Care-and-attention homes	Enhanced Bought Place Scheme	Nursing homes	Nursing Home Place Purchase Scheme	New contract residential care homes for the elderly		
Amount of funding													
Percentage increase compared with 2013													
Percentage to the overall funding													

Asked by: Hon. FAN Kwok-wai, Gary

Reply:

The recurrent expenditure on elderly services has increased by more than 40 per cent from around \$3.8 billion to around \$5.4 billion over the past five years (from 2009-10 to 2013-14). Based on the readily available breakdown figures for 2012-13 (Actual) and 2013-14 (Revised Estimate) for different types of community care and support services and residential care services for the elderly, the requested information is set out as follows –

	Community Care and Support Services					Residential Care Services					Others	Total
	IHCS	EHCCS	DEs	DECCs	NECs/SEs	C&A	EBPS	NHs	NHPPS	CHs		
Recurrent expenditure 2013-14 (Revised Estimate) (\$ million)	517	235	219	296	304	2,161	667	277	26	241	469	5,412
Percentage increase compared with 2012-13 (Actual)	3.4%	15.0%	5.3%	2.8%	2.6%	12.0%	7.8%	4.5%	5.8%	21.1%	2.8%	8.5%
As % of total 2013-14 recurrent expenditure	9.6%	4.3%	4.0%	5.5%	5.6%	39.9%	12.3%	5.1%	0.5%	4.5%	8.7%	100%

Legend

IHCS – Integrated Home Care Services

EHCCS – Enhanced Home and Community Care Services

DEs – Day Care Centres for the Elderly

DECCs – District Elderly Community Centres

NECs – Neighbourhood Elderly Centres

SEs – Social Centres for the Elderly

C&A – Care-and-Attention Homes (including Homes for the Aged, Conversion Homes providing a continuum of care)

EBPS – places purchased under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme

NHs – Nursing Homes

NHPPS – places purchased under the Nursing Home Place Purchase Scheme

CHs – Contract Homes

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. SV013)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services
(7) Young People

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Pursuant to the replies LWB(WW)0103, LWB(WW)0137 and LWB(WW)0113, the Administration is requested to provide information on the –

- (a) establishment of each of the integrated community centres for mental wellness (ICCMWs), including the number of case managers, community nurses and psychologists in each centre;
- (b) average caseload of a case manager, average service time spent on a mental patient;
- (c) waiting time for follow-up consultations for psychiatric treatment services; and
- (d) reasons (with breakdown by type and number of cases) for seeking psychiatric treatment

Asked by: Hon. HO Chun-yan, Albert

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The notional staffing is for budgetary purpose only. As set out in the Review Report on the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System in 2008, the Lump Sum Grant Independent Review Committee agreed that it would not be helpful for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to stipulate a notional staffing establishment for input control purposes.

Under the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System, non-governmental organisations operating ICCMWs have flexibility to deploy the subventions in arranging suitable staffing to ensure service quality, to meet service needs and to achieve the service output standards and outcome requirements as stipulated in the Funding and Service Agreements.

- (b) to (d) During the period from the commencement of ICCMW service in October 2010 to December 2013, ICCMWs provided casework services for around 27 100 ex-mentally ill persons and persons with suspected mental health problems. As the manpower and caseload of individual ICCMWs may vary according to the team size and the service needs in catchment areas, SWD has no information on the number of staff involved in handling cases and the average caseload per worker. SWD does not have information on the average service time spent on a mental patient either.

During the same period, ICCMWs have referred around 900 cases to the Hospital Authority for psychiatric services. SWD does not have a breakdown of these cases nor information on the waiting time for psychiatric services.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-LWB(WW)17****(Question Serial No. S0154)**

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the reply LWB(WW)0159, would the Administration please provide the actual staffing of nurses per shift on average for residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) with different care levels?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The Administration does not capture the average number of nurses per shift in RCHEs. The minimum requirements for nurse or health worker in different types of RCHE as set out in Schedule 1 to the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Regulation (Cap. 459A) are as follows –

Type of Staff	Type of RCHE		
	Care-and-attention Home	Aged Home	Self-care Hostel
Health worker	Unless a nurse is present, 1 health worker for every 30 residents or part thereof, between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.	Unless a nurse is present, 1 health worker for every 60 residents or part thereof	No health worker required
Nurse	Unless a health worker is present, 1 nurse for every 60 residents or part thereof, between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.	Unless a health worker is present, 1 nurse	No nurse required

[Note] As an additional requirement for a care-and-attention home or an aged home, any 2 persons being a home manager, an ancillary worker, a care worker, a health worker or a nurse shall be on duty between 6 p.m. and 7 a.m.

RCHEs which provide nursing home places and registered under the Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Homes Registration Ordinance (Cap. 165) enforced by the Department of Health (DH) will need to meet the staffing standard as required by DH.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0155)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (3) Services for Elders
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the reply LWB(WW)0158, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will continue to monitor and upgrade the service quality of private residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) through various measures including surprise visits, investigations into complaints, issue of advisory/warning letters, etc. Would the Administration please provide the respective figures regarding the above actions taken last year? How many prosecutions were made and how many of them were successful? What are the penalties upon successful prosecution?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

In 2013-14 (up to end-January 2014), SWD conducted 4 464 surprise inspections, investigated 225 complaints, and issued 2 708 advisory letters and 295 warning letters. Nine prosecution actions were taken and led to convictions. The penalties of the convictions ranged from a fine of \$1,800 to \$12,000.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0156)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the reply LWB(WW)0157, it is stated by the Administration that the current trainees of the Enrolled Nurse (EN) Training Programme for the Welfare Sector are required to undertake to work in the welfare sector for two consecutive years upon graduation. As such, would the Administration please provide the average number of years the trainees have worked in the welfare sector after the two-year undertaking period? Please also list in table form the number of trainees with working years of one to three years, three to five years and over five years respectively. Has the Administration considered such measures as enhancing the salary and remuneration package to help retain talents in the welfare sector?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The Social Welfare Department does not capture information on the number of graduates of the EN Training Programme for the Welfare Sector who continue to work in the welfare sector after fulfilling their undertaking to work for the welfare sector for two consecutive years upon graduation.

From 2014-15 onwards, the Administration will increase the annual recurrent funding for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to recruit and retain paramedical staff (including nurses) more effectively or to hire paramedical services. Under the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System, NGOs have the flexibility to deploy the subvention in arranging suitable staffing to ensure service quality and meet service needs, and to determine relevant salary and remuneration packages.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0165)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (3) Services for Elders
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Local residential care places for the elderly are in short supply at present, and elderly persons have to wait for a long time before they are admitted to residential care homes for the elderly. Encouraging elderly persons to age in place is also a policy objective of the Administration.

To encourage elderly persons to age in place, will the Administration consider giving them more subsidies (e.g. about \$50,000 per year), either for providing sufficient financial incentives for carers of the elderly persons to quit their jobs and focus on elderly care, or for allowing elderly persons to hire foreign domestic helpers to take care of their daily needs?

Asked by: Hon. MA Fung-kwok

Reply:

To support elderly persons to age in the community, the Administration has been providing a range of subsidised community care services (CCS) and carer support services to assist elderly persons to age in the community. Subsidised CCS includes day care places and home care places. Since March 2011, three service teams under the Pilot Scheme for Home Care Services for Frail Elders (Frail Elders Pilot Scheme) have been providing a new package of home care services for elderly persons waiting for subsidised nursing home places so as to better serve their special needs and help relieve the pressure of their carers. The Administration will integrate the major service content of the Frail Elders Pilot Scheme with the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS) and implement strengthened integrated home-based care services to further enhance the support and care for frail elderly persons living at home. 1 500 new places of EHCCS will also be provided in phases over a period of six months starting from March 2015.

In addition, the first phase of the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher for the Elderly (the Pilot Scheme) was rolled out in September 2013 in selected districts. The Pilot Scheme adopts the "money-following-the-user" approach whereby the Administration provides subsidy directly to service users (instead of service providers) in the form of service vouchers. Eligible elderly persons (as voucher holders) may choose the service providers, the types of service and the service packages that suit their needs. As at end-February 2014, there were 929 voucher holders participating in the Pilot Scheme.

Moreover, there are other support services to empower carers of elderly persons (generally referred to as "carers" below) and help relieve their stress. Such services include the provision of information, training, counselling services, assistance in forming carers' mutual-support groups, establishment of resource centres, and demonstration and loan of rehabilitation equipment, etc.

The Commission on Poverty, at its meeting held on 24 March 2014, agreed to the Government's proposal to conduct a two-year pilot scheme funded by the Community Care Fund to provide low-income eligible carers with a monthly living allowance. The pilot scheme will benefit altogether 2 000 carers during the two-year

pilot period. An evaluation will be conducted during the pilot period to assess the effectiveness and implications, as well as to review the parameters of the pilot scheme.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0146)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. According to the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0181, the utilisation rate of aided standalone child care centres (CCCs) persistently reaches 100% while only 32 new places will be provided in the coming year. Without replying whether these 32 new places are sufficient to meet service demand, the Administration has nevertheless shown in the Annex that the utilisation rate in 10 districts has reached 100%. How could the service demand in these 10 districts be met by only providing 32 additional places in the coming year? How would it be handled in the case of service demand in a district exceeding 100%? With insufficient home-based child carers (HCCs), how could assistance be provided to the parents concerned?
2. Regarding the utilisation of mutual help child care centres (MHCCCs), would the Administration re-engineer their services as soon as possible for more resources to be allocated to the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (NSCCP) so that more HCCs could be hired and additional places could be provided?

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. Both aided standalone CCCs under the administration of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and kindergarten-cum-child care centres (KG-cum-CCCs) under the administration of the Education Bureau provide CCC service for children aged below 3. In addition to the 690 places provided in aided standalone CCCs, there are about 25 600 CCC places provided in KG-cum-CCCs in the 2013/14 school year, which has increased by 2 000 places when compared with the provision in the 2012/13 school year. The overall utilisation rate for the CCC service in KG-cum-CCCs is 77%. Although the utilisation rate for aided standalone CCCs is 100% in the 2013/14 school year, the overall provision of CCC places including those in KG-cum-CCCs can meet the service demand. SWD will continue to keep in view the demand for CCC service.

For the home-based child care service (HCCS) under the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (NSCCP), since the launch of NSCCP till end-2013, SWD has not received any report of children having to wait for NSCCP service.

2. SWD has been working actively with service operators of existing MHCCCs to re-engineer their service into other welfare services since 2011-12. While MHCCCs meeting the minimum utilisation rate have been continuing the service provision, two MHCCCs were re-engineered into other welfare services to address local service need and one was closed in the past three years. Two more MHCCCs are planned to be re-engineered into other welfare services in 2014-15. SWD will continue to monitor closely the re-engineering of MHCCC service to address service needs at district level and to do so at

no expense of existing service users.

For HCCS under NSCCP, the Administration will enhance the service in 2014-15 by extending the age limit of children receiving the service from aged under six to aged under nine, increasing funding to operators to enhance social work support for the service, and providing at least an additional 234 HCCS places. Additional full-year recurrent funding of \$4.8 million has been earmarked for the purpose.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)22

(Question Serial No. S0147)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (2) Social Security
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the reply LWB(WW)0180 that the additional 138 posts are all civil service posts. Among them, about 120 posts will be deployed for handling various new initiatives under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance and Social Security Allowance Schemes. How many non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff are there in the Department at present? When considering how the posts should be filled, will priority be given to re-appointing the NCSC staff? If no, how will the Department help these experienced contract staff to continue their service in the Department?

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

The number of full-time ^[Note] NCSC staff employed by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) was 121 as at 31 December 2013. These staff mainly provide general / clerical and executive support as well as project management services.

It is the Government's policy to select the most suitable persons to fill civil service vacancies through an open, fair and competitive process. As the circumstances and nature of the employment of NCSC staff are different from those of civil servants and the entry requirements as well as selection process for NCSC positions may differ from those of civil service posts, it is not appropriate to accord priority to employing NCSC staff as civil servants. Serving NCSC staff are welcome to apply for civil service posts through open and fair recruitment process if they are interested in such posts. Although there is no direct appointment of NCSC staff to civil service posts, the relevant working experience is one of the factors considered in the recruitment of civil servants. NCSC staff who meet the basic entry requirements of civil service ranks should generally enjoy a competitive edge over other applicants because of their work experience in the Government.

[Note] "Full-time" employment refers to "continuous contract" as defined under the Employment Ordinance. According to the Employment Ordinance, an employee who works continuously for the same employer for four weeks or more, with at least 18 hours in each week, is regarded as working under a continuous contract.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0148)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. As can be seen from the Annex of Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0179, the number of home-based child carers (HCCs) is comparatively low in some districts. For instance, in Tsuen Wan, only 43 HCCs are available to cater for a population of around half a million and only \$20 is offered to HCCs as allowance/supplement. How can more people be attracted to join as HCCs to alleviate the burden of working mothers? Will the Administration consider recruiting more HCCs in communities with large demand but few HCCs?
2. The service fee and the supplement are different in different districts. The supplement for HCCs ranges from \$18 to \$24. Does the unappealing reward explain the reason for relatively few people joining as HCCs? Given the Administration's efforts in encouraging community care to ease the pressure on centre-based care service, is it necessary for more resources to be provided and more promotional efforts to be made, such as raising the allowance payment to a more reasonable level which is comparable to the minimum wage?

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. Operators of the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (NSCCP) are required each to provide at least 26 home-based child care service (HCCS) places and 14 centre-based care group (CCG) places. On top of the minimum requirement set by the Social Welfare Department (SWD), service operators may exercise flexibility to increase the number of HCCS places through recruiting more HCCs to meet actual service demand. As the number of HCCs may vary according to service demand in each district, higher funding allocation is provided for the service operators in 10 districts having exercised flexibility to increase the number of HCCS places to meet actual district demand during the year. Since the launch of NSCCP till end-2013, SWD has not received any report of children having to wait for NSCCP service.
2. NSCCP is a mutual help, but not employment project. It aims to promote community participation and mutual help in the neighbourhood while at the same time providing flexible child care support for needy families. The HCCs of NSCCP are providing service as volunteers in the spirit of care for others and receive an incentive payment in return. SWD has been collaborating with the service providers to publicise NSCCP through various media and channels. The publicity and promotion work will continue upon the enhancement of NSCCP in 2014-15.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0150)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding Annex 2 of Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0181 listing the utilisation rates of the aided standalone child care centres (CCCs), kindergarten-cum-child care centres (KG-cum-CCCs) and mutual help child care centres (MHCCCs), please advise the following –

1. The location and number of MHCCCs in each of the 18 districts;
2. The Administration points out that some of the MHCCCs are being re-engineered into other welfare services to meet district needs. What are the details regarding such CCCs having been re-engineered or being planned to be re-engineered into other welfare services?
3. Are there any initiatives for the Administration to raise the utilisation rate of KG-cum-CCCs?
4. In the coming year, only 32 additional places will be provided in aided standalone CCCs which have long been used to full capacity, while 2 000 additional places will be provided in KG-cum-CCCs with a utilisation rate of only 77%. What are the reasons? Does the Administration imply that the aided standalone CCCs and the KG-cum-CCCs can better serve to supplement each other?

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. The location and number of MHCCCs in each of the 11 administrative districts of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) in 2013-14 are set out in the Annex.
2. With the development of Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project which adopts the same concept of mutual support at neighbourhood level as MHCCCs and covers the same target group, a low utilisation rate of the MHCCC service has been observed. From 2011-12 to 2013-14, two MHCCCs were re-engineered into a resource centre for persons with disabilities and a centre providing employment assistance service for social security recipients respectively, and one was closed. In 2014-15, two MHCCCs are planned to be re-engineered into a centre for pre-school rehabilitation service and a centre for children and family service respectively.

3. & 4. Both aided standalone CCCs under the administration of SWD and KG-cum-CCCs under the administration of the Education Bureau provide CCC service for children aged below three. In addition to the 690 places provided in aided standalone CCCs, there are about 25 600 CCC places provided in KG-cum-CCCs in the 2013/14 school year which represents an increase of 2 000 places when compared with the provision in the 2012/13 school year. The overall utilisation rate for KG-cum-CCCs is 77%. Parents have the flexibility to choose CCC places according to their preferences.

In the 2014/15 school year, while SWD has planned to increase 32 additional CCC places in aided standalone CCCs, the not-yet-utilised provision in KG-cum-CCCs may serve to supplement the fully utilised places in aided standalone CCCs. SWD will continue to monitor the demand for CCC service.

**Location and Number of Mutual Help Child Care Centres
(2013-14)**

SWD District	Location	Number of MHCCCs
Central/ Western/ Southern & Islands	1/F, Western District Community Centre, 36A Western Street, Hong Kong	5
	No. 1, G/F, Tung Ma House, Fu Tung Estate, Tung Chung, Lantau Island	
	Units 27-28, G/F, C2 Block, Lei Chak House, Ap Lei Chau Estate, Hong Kong	
	Unit 4, G/F, Pik Fai House, Shek Pai Wan Estate, Aberdeen, Hong Kong	
	Units 2, G/F., Tung Sing House, Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau, Hong Kong	
Eastern/ Wan Chai	Nil	-
Kowloon City/ Yau Tsim Mong	M/F, GIC Building, Olympian City (Phase 1), 11 Hoi Fai Road, Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon	1
Kwun Tong	Room J, Third Floor, 71 Shui Wo Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon	4
	Shop No. L10-L12, Low Block, Tsui Nam House, Tsui Ping (North) Estate, Kwun Tong, Kowloon	
	G/F., Wing C, Ping Chun House, Ping Tin Estate, Lam Tin, Kowloon	
	Portion of Unit 211A, Kwong Tin Shopping Centre, Kwong Tin Estate, Lam Tin, Kowloon	
Sha Tin	Nil	-
Sham Shui Po	No. 14, Wing B, G/F, Fu Wong House, Fu Cheong Estate, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon	3
	Unit 4, G/F, Hoi Wo House, Hoi Lai Estate, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon	
	Unit 2A, Wing B, G/F, Lai Tak House, Lai On Estate, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon	
Tai Po/ North	Unit 337-338, Choi Yuk House, Choi Yuen Estate, Sheung Shui, New Territories	1
Tsuen Wan/ Kwai Tsing	Unit No. 229-230, Shek Ho House, Shek Wai Kok Estate, Tsuen Wan, New Territories	4
	No. 1-3, G/F, Kwai Yan House, Kwai Fong Estate, Kwai Chung, New Territories	
	Portion of Units 122-126, G/F, On Tao House, Cheung On Estate, Tsing Yi, New Territories	
	Unit 13, G/F., Pak Kwai House, Kwai Chung Estate, Kwai Chung, New Territories.	
Tuen Mun	Unit 21-22, G/F, Wu Tsui House, Wu King Estate, Tuen Mun, New Territories	1
Wong Tai Sin/ Sai Kung	No. 2, Wing C, G/F, Lok On House, Tsz Lok Estate, Tsz Wan Shan, Kowloon	1
Yuen Long	Unit 103, 1/F., Shek Ping House, Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long, New Territories	3
	No.3, G/F, Wing B, Tsz Yan House, Tin Tsz Estate, Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long, New Territories	
	Portion of 1/F, Ancillary Facilities Block, Tin Yuet Estate, Tin Shui Wai, New Territories	
Total :		23

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. SV014)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (2) Social Security
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Pursuant to the reply LWB(WW)0180, the Administration is requested to provide information on the number of non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff in the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and how the number of NCSC posts has been reduced in recent years, and whether they would be given preference in the recruitment exercises to fill the 138 civil servant posts to be created under this Programme in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon. MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Reply:

The number of full-time^[Note] NCSC staff employed by the SWD was 121 as at 31 December 2013. These staff mainly provide general / clerical and executive support as well as project management services. As compared with the position as at 31 December 2012, the number of NCSC staff engaged has been reduced by 42% due to changes in service or operational needs.

It is the Government's policy to select the most suitable persons to fill civil service vacancies through an open, fair and competitive process. As the circumstances and nature of the employment of NCSC staff are different from those of civil servants and the entry requirements as well as selection process for NCSC positions may differ from those of civil service posts, it is not appropriate to accord priority to employing NCSC staff as civil servants. Serving NCSC staff are welcome to apply for civil service posts through open and fair recruitment process if they are interested in such posts. Since relevant working experience is one of the factors considered in the recruitment of civil servants, NCSC staff who meet the basic entry requirements of civil service ranks should generally enjoy a competitive edge over other applicants because of their work experience in the Government.

[Note] "Full-time" employment refers to "continuous contract" as defined under the Employment Ordinance. According to the Employment Ordinance, an employee who works continuously for the same employer for four weeks or more, with at least 18 hours in each week, is regarded as working under a continuous contract.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)26

(Question Serial No. S0160)

- Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
- Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
- Programme:
- (1) Family and Child Welfare
 - (2) Social Security
 - (3) Services for Elders
 - (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services
 - (5) Services for Offenders
 - (6) Community Development
 - (7) Young People
- Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
- Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Will the Government inform this Council of:

- a. Whether there is budget set for interpretation and translation services used in the operation of Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) and, if yes, the amount set for each of these centres in each of the years from 2009 to 2014;
- b. Details of the interpretation service used by IFSCs in each of the years from 2009 to 2013:

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of requests for interpretation service by the service users of the IFSCs					
Number of requests for interpretation service by the staff of the IFSCs					
Telephone interpretation service					
Number of occasions of telephone interpretation service provided by Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (CHEER) upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs					
Number of occasions of telephone interpretation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs					
Number of occasions of telephone interpretation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs					
Number of occasions of telephone interpretation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs					

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of occasions of telephone interpretation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which or type of service providers (relatives of service users, embassies, etc.))					
Number of occasions of telephone interpretation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which service providers)					
On-site interpretation service					
Number of occasions of on-site interpretation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs and expenditure of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) on such services					
Number of occasions of on-site interpretation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-site interpretation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which or type of service providers (relatives of service users, embassies, etc)) and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-site interpretation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which or type of service providers (relatives of service users, embassies, etc.)) and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-site interpretation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which service providers) and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-site interpretation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which service providers) and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
On-sight interpretation service					
Number of occasions of on-sight interpretation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-sight interpretation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-sight interpretation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs and expenditure of the SWD on such services					

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of occasions of on-sight interpretation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-sight interpretation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which or type of service providers (relatives of service users, embassies, etc.)) and expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of on-sight interpretation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which service providers) and expenditure of the SWD on such services					

c. Details of the translation service used by IFSCs in each of the years from 2009 to 2013;

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of requests for translation service by the service users of the IFSCs					
Number of requests for translation service by the staff of the IFSCs					
Number of occasions of translation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs and the expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of translation service provided by CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs and the expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of translation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs and the expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of translation service provided by the HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs and the expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of translation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the service users</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which or type of service providers (relatives of service users, embassies, etc.)) and the expenditure of the SWD on such services					
Number of occasions of translation service provided by service providers other than CHEER upon the request of <i>the staff</i> of the IFSCs (please specify which service providers) and the expenditure of the SWD on such services					

Asked by: Hon. MO, Claudia

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- a. The Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (CHEER), operated by the Hong Kong Christian Service and funded by the Home Affairs Department, provides interpretation and translation services between English and seven ethnic minority (EM) languages including Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Tagalog, Thai and Urdu. CHEER provides Telephone Interpretation Service which is an over-the-phone interpretation service free of charge whereby public service providers including IFSCs or EM service users may access CHEER interpreters directly through a conference call. CHEER also provides written translation of documents from English to the seven prescribed EM languages. The fees charged are absorbed by the provisions of individual IFSCs, and therefore no separate budget needs to be set for the use of the interpretation and translation services by IFSCs.
- b. & c. SWD does not keep the information sought.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0167)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0259, it is stated by the Administration that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) subvents the International Social Service Hong Kong Branch (ISS-HK) to operate Cross-boundary and Inter-country Casework service to help people facing individual and family problems arising from geographical separation. Does the service cover cases involving cross-boundary students? If yes, how many cases were served in the past three years? If no, would the Government consider providing funding for this service to be added?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The Cross-boundary and Inter-country Casework Service operated by ISS-HK also handles cases of cross-boundary students. The Social Welfare Department does not have readily available statistics on the number of such cases handled in the past three years.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0168)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the reply LWB(WW)0224, it is stated by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) that since 2010, Local Liaison Groups at district level have been in place to examine and review the existing policy and referral handling mechanism. During the past four years, a number of enhancement and streamlining measures have been devised and implemented. Under such circumstances, why is the average processing time of "Compassionate Rehousing (CR)" and "Conditional Tenancy" (CT) cases still standing at 39 days? What are the difficulties involved and how have they been handled? Would the Administration consider providing some basic principles for the applicants' reference?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

In processing the CR and CT applications, the caseworkers concerned will prudently ascertain the needs and eligibility of the applicants through office interviews, home visits as well as income and asset tests. On individual case merits, the caseworkers will also seek professional assessment from medical officers and/or clinical psychologists, and invite the applicants to provide supplementary information or documentary proof. In 2012-13, the average processing time (i.e. 39 days) of the applications by SWD was able to meet the pledged time frame (i.e. 42 days).

The application procedures and eligibility criteria of CR and CT are easily accessible by prospective applicants through service leaflets and the SWD homepage.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)29

(Question Serial No. S0169)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the reply LWB(WW)0220, while the Administration does not have information on the total number of eateries, community canteens, merchants, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and district groups that are providing in-kind food assistance for the needy in the territory, it obviously supports the “suspended” culture practised by these canteens, merchants and some 30 food outlets in Hong Kong. In view of this, would the Administration make known to the public some lists so that the needy can know where to go for the food, while charitable persons can also go to buy meal coupons or “suspended” meals? With so many “HK Our Home” events and activities organised, would the Administration also play a leading role in promoting this “suspended” culture and the spirit of mutual-help?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

While the Administration welcomes the “suspended” culture which helps build up a caring and mutual-help community, it is only prudent for the Administration not to be involved in the promotion and sale of meal coupons which are by nature commercial activities. Instead, the Social Welfare Department is ready to provide relevant information (e.g. the potential target groups in the locality) for “suspended” meal operators if and when needed.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0170)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (184) Traffic accident victims assistance scheme
Programme: (2) Social Security
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

According to the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0219, it is stated by the Administration that the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA) Scheme was established under the Traffic Accident Victims (Assistance Fund) Ordinance (the Ordinance), Cap. 229 of the Laws of Hong Kong, and the Ordinance does not cover the operation of and accidents involving railways (excluding the Light Rail) and sea traffic. As such, should the Administration review the Ordinance which was enacted in 1979, instead of dismissing the idea by saying that it has no plan to extend the TAVA Scheme to cover railways (other than the Light Rail) and marine accidents? Would the Administration consider reviewing the Ordinance? If not, what are the reasons? Also, how does the Administration protect the interests of victims of railways and marine accidents or their surviving dependants? Why are they not entitled to the same treatment as those involved in road traffic accidents?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The TAVA Scheme targets at victims of road traffic accident or their surviving dependants in cases of death. The Scheme does not cover railways (other than the Light Rail) as railways (other than the Light Rail) are not connected with roads and, therefore, are not affected by other road-based transport. The public is also prohibited from accessing railway tracks.

Besides, the major sources of income of the TAVA Fund consist of levies on the licensing fees of motor vehicles, trade licences, light rail vehicles, tramcars, trailers drawn by tramcars, government vehicles, and on driving licence fees including learner's driving licences, temporary driving licences and permits to drive government vehicles. With the major sources of income coming from road-based transport, the TAVA Scheme hence only provides assistance for victims of road traffic accidents or their surviving dependants in cases of death.

There are currently a number of charitable funds providing direct and prompt assistance to needy individuals and families in special and urgent circumstances, including assistance for those involved in railway and marine accidents meeting the criteria for grants from the funds. The Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme is also in place as a last resort to provide financial assistance to bring the income of needy individuals and families up to a prescribed level to meet their basic needs.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0171)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the reply LWB(WW)0212 that the Administration will integrate the major service content of the Pilot Scheme for Home Care Services for Frail Elders (Pilot Scheme) with the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS) and implement strengthened integrated home-based care services. What are the details? Please list the total number of EHCCS/integrated home-based care service places by constituency over the territory upon the implementation of the initiative.

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The service content of both the new and existing EHCCS places will be strengthened through the integration of the major service content of the Pilot Scheme into EHCCS, such as on-site carer training, so as to further enhance the support and care for frail elderly persons living at home. The service contracts of the 1 500 additional home care places will commence in phases over a period of six months starting from 1 March 2015. Since the provision of these places is still at the planning stage, the information on their geographical distribution is not yet available.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)32

(Question Serial No. S0137)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0256, the total number of male victims accounted for nearly 20% among the newly reported spouse/cohabitant battering cases in both 2012 and 2013. However, family support services provided to male victims are insufficient. Moreover, it poses greater challenges for male victims to receive counselling and treatment as compared to female. As such, what future studies and plans targeting at the family and emotional problems facing by men will the Administration put in place? Would social workers, hotlines and services specially dedicated to the handling of male problems be considered? What will be the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

Except for the Refuge Centres for Women which provide services exclusively for women, all other support and specialised services for victims of domestic violence are provided to all those in need, irrespective of their gender. The Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre provides services for male victims of domestic violence who are in need of short-term accommodation service.

As recommended by the "Review on the Implementation of the Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) Service Mode" completed in 2010, the IFSC service mode should continue to be adopted for publicly-funded family services in Hong Kong. The existing practice of IFSCs in identifying special target groups in the communities they serve and providing them with appropriate services would continue to be encouraged and supported. The Social Welfare Department and non-governmental organisations operating subvented family services will continue to provide services for individuals irrespective of their gender as well as families in need.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0138)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (2) Social Security
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. According to the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0257, it is stated by the Government that "Disability Allowance (DA) and Registration Card for People with Disabilities (RC) are two different schemes with different purposes". However, being all persons with disabilities who should be equally entitled to some benefits, why are there two schemes for the same group of people? Why has the Administration not resolved this confusing problem for so long?
2. It is also stated in (3) of the Reply that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) does not keep information on the numbers of applications and renewals for DA being turned down. However, many applications for renewing DA are being turned down even after making appeals. The physical and social needs of persons with disabilities are being disregarded, and this is a core problem of DA. By saying that no information is kept, is the Government pretending that the problem does not exist? Can such information be kept later on?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. DA is designed to provide a monthly allowance on a non-means-tested basis to Hong Kong (HK) residents who are severely disabled to meet their special needs arising from disability. On the other hand, a RC may be issued to a person with permanent or temporary disabilities which affect his/her life activities and participation in economic and social activities. The purpose of RC is to enable the cardholder to produce, when necessary, as a documentary proof of his/her disability status to facilitate the provision of prompt and appropriate assistance to him/her. Cardholders may include persons suffering from mild disability such as persons with mild hearing impairment, mild intellectual disability and mild low vision, etc. RC is not associated with provision of any social welfare. The objective, target service users and eligibility threshold of RC are different from those of DA.
2. When applying for renewing DA, applicants have to be certified by doctors of the Department of Health or the Hospital Authority (or, under very exceptional circumstances, by a registered medical practitioner of a private hospital) to be severely disabled as defined under DA. If DA applicants disagree with the decisions made by SWD, they may lodge an appeal with the Social Security Appeal Board, which is an independent body comprising non-officials appointed by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare under the delegated authority of the Chief Executive.

DA is designed to provide a monthly allowance on a non-means-tested basis to HK residents who are severely disabled to meet their special needs arising from disability with no regard to the applicants' social and financial position. Persons with disabilities who cannot support themselves financially may apply for the means-tested Comprehensive Social Security Assistance to meet their basic needs.

Cases of applications and renewals for DA being turned down are closed upon informing the applicants of the results. While SWD has information on the number of closed DA cases, further breakdown by reasons of closing is not available.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0162)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the reply LWB(WW)0258 that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) had publicised the Guangdong (GD) Scheme through various means. However, some of them are not accessible to elderly persons, such as press release and webpage. The publicity in the Mainland is also obviously insufficient as it only includes issuing press release to GD mainstream media, placing publicity materials at different locations in GD, and setting up a link of the webpage for the GD Scheme in the homepage of the Department of Civil Affairs of GD Province and Hong Kong (HK) and Macao Affairs Office of GD Province. Will the Administration enhance the publicity in the Mainland, such as publicising the GD Scheme on television and radio in the Mainland?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

SWD has issued press releases to GD mainstream media, including Guangdong Television and Radio Guangdong, through the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in GD, which is considered to be a cost-effective way to disseminate the relevant information to the target elderly persons residing in GD. Up to end-March 2014, SWD has received over 27 000 telephone enquiries and 13 000 enquires in person relating to the GD Scheme. SWD has also received over 18 000 applications. The publicity is considered to have successfully reached the target elderly persons.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0166)

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (5) Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities and Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Mrs. Ingrid YEUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is pointed out in the reply to Question No. LWB(WW)0284 that most of the Kaito ferry services are operated in a highly flexible manner to meet ad hoc or recreational demand and their service frequency, fare and timetable are not regulated by the Administration. Actually, we are referring to those Kaito ferry services with regular sailings, of which the schedules and routes are approved by the Transport Department. Why does the Administration not consider covering these regulated Kaito ferry services under the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the Scheme)?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

In order to facilitate convenient access to service information by passengers, the Transport Department publishes on its website the fares and timetable of those Kaito ferry services which are provided to the Department by operators concerned. However, Kaito ferry services are operated in a highly flexible manner to meet ad hoc or recreational demand and their service frequency, fare and timetable are not regulated by the Administration. The operators are free to adjust their service frequency, fare and timetable according to operational considerations. As the Administration reimburses revenue forgone to relevant public transport operators on an accountable basis, it is not appropriate to extend the Scheme to cover Kaito ferry services.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0143)

Head: (710) Capital Works Reserve Fund : Computerisation
Subhead (No. & title): (A012ZG) Replacement of the Computerised Social Security System
Programme: (-) Not Specified
Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms. Carol YIP)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to the reply in LWB(WW)0289, replacement of the Computerised Social Security System (CSSS) has been delayed for more than two years and is yet to be completed (it was originally estimated to be completed by 2012, which later became end-March 2014, and yet it is still not completed). Has the Administration assessed the impact of the repeated delays on service provision and on the responsible staff? What is the most updated rollout date of the system as estimated by the Administration?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The delay in the production rollout of the new system will not have significant impact on either the delivery of current social security service or the present work of frontline staff. The new system is a replacement of the existing CSSS, taking over the full range of functions currently provided in CSSS. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is actively exploring the feasibility of upgrading the existing CSSS in order to maintain its stability and sustainability as an interim measure before the rollout of the new system. Besides, to maintain the efficiency of daily operation, SWD has completed replacing old monitors and desktop printers with new ones in all social security field units in early March 2014. SWD will continue to explore different options to expedite the delivery of the new system.