

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)355/14-15
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/SE

Panel on Security

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 4 November 2014, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon YIU Si-wing
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Dennis KWOK
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

Members absent : Dr Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon Kenneth LEUNG
Hon KWOK Wai-keung

Public Officers attending : Item V

Mrs Erika HUI LAM Yin-ming, JP
Commissioner for Narcotics

Miss Mandy WONG Man
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (Narcotics) 2

Item VI

Miss Shirley YUNG Pui-man
Deputy Secretary for Security

Miss Bella MUI Bun-ngar
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security B

Mr WOO Ying-ming
Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Services
(Rehabilitation)

Mr CHAN Kin-chung
Senior Superintendent (Rehabilitation)
Correctional Services Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Betty MA
Chief Council Secretary (2) 1

Staff in attendance : Mr Bonny LOO
Assistant Legal Adviser 3

Mr Raymond LAM
Senior Council Secretary (2) 7

Ms Mina CHAN
Council Secretary (2) 1

Ms Kiwi NG
Legislative Assistant (2) 1

Miss Lulu YEUNG
Clerical Assistant (2) 1

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting
(LC Paper No. CB(2)120/14-15)

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2014 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since the last meeting
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)185/14-15(01) and CB(2)209/14-15(01))

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

- (a) letter dated 27 October 2014 from Mr Charles MOK proposing the Panel to discuss the scope of application of section 161 of the Crimes Ordinance concerning access to computer with criminal or dishonest intent; and
- (b) letter dated 29 October 2014 from Dr Kenneth CHAN concerning the use of military sites.

3. Members agreed that the item proposed in the letter dated 27 October 2014 from Mr Charles MOK would be incorporated into the list of outstanding items for discussion. Regarding the letter dated 29 October 2014 from Dr Kenneth CHAN, members noted that the subject of use of military sites was already on the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion.

Action

III. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)189/14-15(01) and (02))

4. Members agreed that the following items proposed by the Administration would be discussed at the next regular meeting on 2 December 2014 at 2:30 pm -

- (a) Results of study of matters raised in the Annual Report 2013 to the Chief Executive by the Commissioner on Interception of Communications and Surveillance; and
- (b) Contingency plan for nuclear incidents near Hong Kong.

IV. Matters arising from the special meeting on 27 October 2014

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)155/14-15(03) and CB(2)179/14-15(01))

5. Members noted that as agreed at the special meeting on 27 October 2014, the motions proposed respectively by Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan and Mr Michael TIEN at the special meeting under the item "Police's handling of public assemblies since 26 September 2014" would be proceeded with at this meeting.

6. Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan moved the following motion -

"佔領行動進行至今已近一個月，造成嚴重影響，市民上班、學生上學、商業營運，以及緊急救援服務都因為佔領行動而面對極大困難；另外，有示威者在旺角暴力衝擊警方防線，有無辜市民更受襲擊，令旺角處於暴亂邊緣，對市民的人身安全構成重大風險；面對各種挑戰和挑釁，警隊都能夠頂着沉重的壓力，以秉公、專業的態度，長時間地執勤，維護本港公共安全和秩序，竭力保障市民安全；就此，本事務委員會向警隊表示感謝，並對在事件中因執勤而受傷的警員表示慰問。

本委員會強調，堅決支持警方嚴正執法，呼籲社會各界人士不應再將前線警員視作發泄對象，以免進一步激化警民對立，損害警方中立正直的形象，並促請政府為前線警員提供更多援助，以便支持警員秉公執法，維護法治，同時，呼籲示威者應立刻結束集會，撤離路面，盡快重建香港社會秩序。"

Action

(Translation)

"That the occupation actions have been going on for almost a month, causing serious impacts on those who have to work, those who have to go to school and the operation of businesses in addition to causing tremendous difficulties to the provision of emergency ambulance services; besides, some protesters violently charged at Police cordon lines in Mong Kok and innocent citizens were assaulted, pushing Mong Kok to the verge of a riot and posing substantial risks to the personal safety of the public; despite facing various challenges and provocations, the Police have been able to withstand the heavy pressure and carry out their duties in an impartial and professional manner round the clock to safeguard public safety, maintain public order of Hong Kong and protect the safety of the public; in this connection, this Panel expresses gratitude to the Police and extends sympathy to police officers who have sustained injuries on duty during the incident.

This Panel emphasises its staunch support for the Police's vigilant enforcement actions, appeals to all sectors of the community to stop regarding frontline police officers as targets of venting their anger to avoid further aggravating confrontations between the Police and civilians and undermining the Police's image of neutrality and uprightness. This Panel also urges the Government to provide more assistance to frontline police officers in support of the Police's impartial law enforcement and preservation of the rule of law. Meanwhile, this Panel calls on the protesters to end the assemblies immediately and withdraw from the roads to enable restoration of social order in Hong Kong as soon as possible."

7. The Chairman put Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan's motion to vote. Mr WONG Yuk-man requested a division.

The following members voted in favour of the motion -

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr Michael TIEN, Mr NG Leung-sing, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan.

(13 members)

Action

The following members voted against the motion -

Ms Emily LAU, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr Charles MOK,
Dr Kenneth CHAN and Mr Fernando CHEUNG.
(five members)

8. The Chairman declared that 13 members voted for and five members voted against the motion. He declared that the motion moved by Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan was carried.

9. Mr Michael TIEN moved the following motion -

"佔領行動已經持續一個月，由本來市民以香港警隊為傲，變成警察與市民矛盾加深，警民衝突越趨頻繁及激烈；據知，當值警務人員承受沉重心理壓力，需要長時間工作之餘，還不斷受到挑釁、指罵；甚至警員的家人也受到牽連，遭受辱罵、收到滋擾及恐嚇訊息，他們的社交網頁及手機號碼等個人資料更被公開；就此，本會促請政府：

- (一) 以確實行動，正視警務人員因佔領行動所額外承受的心理壓力；及
- (二) 制定措施支援前線警員，盡早主動為他們提供心理輔導。"

(Translation)

"That the occupation actions have already lasted for almost a month, during which police-civilian conflicts have deepened and police-civilian confrontations have become more frequent and intense in contrast to the previous situation where the people took pride in the Hong Kong Police Force; it has been learnt that police officers on duty are over-burdened psychologically as they have to work long hours and constantly encounter provocations and rebukes; even their family members are embroiled, subjected to verbal abuse and harassed by threatening messages as well as their personal data such as social webpages and mobile numbers are disclosed; in this connection, this Panel urges the Government to:

- (1) take concrete actions to address squarely the additional psychological pressure borne by police officers due to the occupation actions; and

Action

- (2) formulate measures to support frontline police officers and proactively provide them with psychological counselling as early as possible."

10. The Chairman put Mr Michael TIEN's motion to vote. Mr WONG Yuk-man requested a division.

The following members voted in favour of the motion -

Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr CHAN Kin-por, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Mr Michael TIEN, Mr NG Leung-sing, Mr YIU Si-wing, Mr MA Fung-kwok, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Mr Christopher CHEUNG, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan.

(13 members)

The following members voted against the motion -

Mr James TO, Ms Emily LAU, Mr WONG Yuk-man, Mr Charles MOK, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN and Mr Fernando CHEUNG.
(seven members)

11. The Chairman declared that 13 members voted for and seven members voted against the motion. He declared that the motion moved by Mr Michael TIEN was carried.

V. Proposed extension for three years of a supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade C post in the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)189/14-15(03) and (04))

12. Commissioner for Narcotics ("C for N") briefed members on the Administration's proposal to extend a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") (D2) in the Narcotics Division ("ND") of the Security Bureau for three years from 17 February 2015.

13. Members noted a background brief entitled "Proposed extension for three years of a supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade C Post in the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau" prepared by the Legislative Council ("LegCo") Secretariat.

Action

Whether the supernumerary AOSGC post should be extended

14. Mr WONG Yuk-man said that he was not supportive of the Administration's proposal. He pointed out that the AOSGC post to be extended, which was designated as Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (Narcotics) 2 ("PAS(N)2"), was created on a supernumerary basis on 17 February 2010 and extended for two years from 17 February 2013. Together with the proposed three-year extension, the supernumerary post would last for a period of eight years. Referring to paragraph 10 of the Administration's paper, he said that PAS(N)2 should perform duties related to policy matters instead of providing assistance to drug treatment and rehabilitation centres ("DTRCs") in obtaining licences. Referring to paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Administration's paper, he said that the trial scheme on school drug testing had not been effective and it was inappropriate to assess the hidden drug abuse problem on the basis of the number of drug abusers reported to the Central Registry of Drug Abuse and the drug history of newly reported abusers. He said that the Administration should review the organisation structure of ND. He considered that the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC") should not support the proposed extension of the supernumerary AOSGC post.

15. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan asked whether there would be any impact on the work of ND, if the AOSGC post concerned was not extended. Mr YIU Si-wing considered that the Administration should provide more information on the impact on its anti-drug work, if the post concerned was not extended.

16. C for N said that with the efforts of ND over the past few years in combating drug abuse, the number of drug abusers in 2013 had dropped by 29% from the peak in 2008. During the same period, the reported number of young drug abusers aged under 21 had dropped by over 60%.

17. C for N pointed out that in spite of the downward trend in the number of drug abusers reported to CRDA, there had been a continuous rise in the drug history of newly reported cases. With the prevalence of psychotropic substance abuse in recent years and the generally low motivation of drug abusers to seek treatment until their health conditions had deteriorated to the stage of affecting their normal life, the drug history of newly identified drug abusers had lengthened. The Government adopted a five-pronged strategy in tackling the drug problem, including preventive education and publicity, treatment and rehabilitation, legislation and law enforcement, external cooperation and research. She stressed that there was a need for the supernumerary post to be extended

Action

for enhancement to and re-engineering of treatment and rehabilitation services, formulating policy and programmes relating to drug testing and formulating the Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong for 2015-2017. She hoped that members would support the Administration's proposal.

18. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that one of the main tasks of the supernumerary post to be extended involved formulation of policy and programmes relating to drug testing and preparation for the second stage public consultation on the RESCUE Drug Testing Scheme ("RDT"). He expressed concern that the Action Committee Against Narcotics ("ACAN") had, in addition to the first stage public consultation on RDT which had received divergent responses, commissioned the Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong to conduct an opinion poll which indicated that 91% of the respondents supported RDT. He queried why the Administration had planned to launch a second stage public consultation on RDT, despite opposition from the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Hong Kong Medical Association. He considered that ESC should not support the Administration's proposal, if RDT was to be implemented.

19. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that many frontline social workers were opposed to the implementation of RDT. He also queried why ACAN had, in addition to the first stage public consultation on RDT which had received divergent responses in writing, conducted an opinion poll in which 91% of the respondents supported RDT.

20. C for N responded that the formulation of policy relating to RDT was only one of many tasks performed by PAS(N)2. ACAN had launched public consultation on RDT to facilitate early identification of drug abusers to enable counselling and treatment in a timely manner before prolonged drug abuse induced serious or irreversible harm on their health. Although views on whether RDT should be implemented were divergent in the first stage public consultation, there was general consensus that more would need to be done to facilitate identification of drug abusers for early intervention. There was a strong case for further exploring different possible options and operational details and enable more focused discussion in the second stage public consultation exercise. She said that the Administration was still in the process of laying some ground work for the second stage public consultation, including exploring options available and sorting out the legal issues concerned. C for N stressed that the Administration had no preconceived plan for implementing RDT.

Action

21. Mr YIU Si-wing said that as most of the tasks performed by PAS(N)2 were not time-limited in nature, the Administration should consider converting the post concerned into a permanent one. Dr LAM Tai-fai considered that the Administration's anti-drug work in recent years had been effective and should be continued on a long-term basis. He asked whether the Administration would consider converting the supernumerary post into a permanent one.

22. C for N responded that the Administration had constantly reviewed the workload of ND as well as the duties of the two PASs. Both PASs had in hand tasks to be discharged, with specific timelines, such as taking forward the legislative exercise for establishing a system to implement recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force, formulation of the Three Year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2015-2017), preparation for a second stage public consultation on RDT and overseeing an evaluation research of the Healthy School Programme ("HSP(DT)") scheduled for the 2015-2016 school year. Upon completion of such tasks, there would be room for the Administration to critically examine if the duties of the two PASs could be consolidated, having regard to the latest drug situation.

23. Dr Fernando CHEUNG opposed to the Administration's proposal. He considered that the Administration's anti-drug work was on the wrong track. The trial scheme on school drug testing had not enabled the identification of drug abusers, but had undermined the trust between school social workers and students.

24. C for N responded that the objective of HSP(DT) was not for identifying drug abusing students, but an initiative in preventive education among students to promote a drug-free campus through enhancing their awareness and resolve to refuse drugs. Feedback from school principals, teachers, parents and students of participating schools on HSP(DT) had been generally very positive.

25. Dr Kenneth CHAN said that he did not support the Administration's proposal. He considered that the Administration should not repeatedly extend the supernumerary post. Instead, it should review the organisation structure of ND and separately consider the need for establishing a permanent post, if necessary. He expressed concern about whether PAS(N)2 would be mainly responsible for the second stage public consultation on RDT. C for N responded that the Administration had critically reviewed the organisation structure of ND and the tasks to

Action

be performed by the two PASs of ND when putting forward the current proposal. The launching of a second stage public consultation on RDT was only one of the many tasks to be performed by PAS(N)2. There were many other urgent tasks under PAS(N)2's schedule which would require input and oversight at the directorate level.

26. Dr Elizabeth QUAT said that the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong supported the Administration's anti-drug work and the proposed extension. She considered it inappropriate to discontinue study on RDT merely because of opposing voices.

27. C for N responded that while there were opposing voices to RDT, there were equally supporting voices urging the Administration to continue to explore RDT and draw up feasible options for further deliberation. This would be a complex consensus building process involving stakeholders across different sectors. Experience in formulating the three-year plans on drug treatment and rehabilitation services showed that it was both necessary and useful for ND to engage in extensive dialogue with stakeholders from various sectors, including the medical, social welfare and education sectors as well as anti-drug service providers. Such extensive communication with stakeholders had only been made possible with the creation of the PAS(N)2 post, and had enhanced mutual understanding and fostered closer collaboration between stakeholders and the Administration for the anti-drug cause.

Drug abuse among persons aged 21 to 30

28. Referring to paragraph 14 of the Administration's paper, Mr CHAN Kin-por expressed concern that the percentage of newly reported drug abusers aged 21 to 30 had increased from about 32% in 2009 to 40% in 2013. Noting that this age group mainly comprised students of tertiary institutions and persons at work, he expressed concern about the measures adopted by the Administration to combat the problem.

29. Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered that many of the measures referred to in the Administration's paper should be implemented on a long-term basis. She sought information on the measures to be adopted by the Administration to address the problem of increased percentage of newly reported drug abusers aged between 21 and 30.

Action

30. C for N responded that the Administration would continue to work closely with the anti-drug sector on how to specifically tackle the problem. The Administration had, through the Beat Drugs Fund, supported service providers to develop new measures to assist drug abusers having regard to the characteristics of specific groups of drug abusers. For example, counselling and support services were provided to female drug abusers who were pregnant or faced family problems. Apart from direct service to drug abusers, non-governmental organisations had also been able to provide support services to their family members who could be subject to heavy pressure as a result of the drug abuse problem of their family members, and could play an important role in their rehabilitation. In the meantime, the team led by PAS(N)2 was preparing the Three Year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong for 2015-2017, and gathering views from service providers, social workers, welfare agencies and medical professionals with a view to deepening the drug treatment and rehabilitation services.

Hidden drug abuse

31. Mr CHAN Kin-por expressed concern about the problem of increased hidden drug abuse. He sought information on the Administration's measures to combat the supply of drugs at source and assist parents in identifying signs of hidden drug abuse at home. C for N responded that the Administration had stepped up efforts in publicity and preventive education against drug abuse as well as enhanced the service of the telephone hotline 186 186 for drug abusers and their family members. Continued efforts had been made to combat the supply of drugs. The Police and the Customs and Excise Department had together seized drugs worth over \$2.4 billion in 2011-2013.

32. Dr LAM Tai-fai asked how the Administration would address the problem of the prolonged drug history in newly reported cases. C for N responded that as there had been a change in the trend of drug abuse, there was a need for the introduction of measures to facilitate identification and treatment of drug abusers at an early stage. RDT was one of the ways being explored so as to help identify drug abusers early and offer them assistance in a timely manner.

Issues relating to DTRCs

33. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung considered that the Administration should, instead of allocating resources for the identification of drug abusers, use such resources for combating the supply of drugs, establishing more

Action

DTRCs and strengthening downstream support service. C for N responded that the occupancy rate of DTRCs was currently about 70%. In the first half of 2014, about 90% of persons in need of residential places in DTRCs had been placed within two weeks.

34. Referring to paragraph 18 of the Administration's paper, Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern that the feasibility of over 300 sites for relocation of DTRCs had been examined in the past three years but so far only one suitable site had been identified for relocation.

35. Ms Emily LAU expressed doubt about whether the extension of the supernumerary post concerned could adequately address the drug abuse problems in Hong Kong. She also queried why only one suitable site had been identified for relocation of a DTRC, although the feasibility of over 300 sites had been examined. She sought information on the number of DTRCs in need of relocation.

36. C for N responded that there were currently nine DTRCs in need of relocation. The Administration had all along been proactively providing assistance to DTRCs in the search of sites for re-provisioning. She stressed that ND had also been offering assistance in different ways to the DTRCs in question and dedicated significantly more resources to facilitate the improvement works of DTRCs in recent years. In response to Dr LAM Tai-fai's question on the problems encountered in the relocation of DTRCs, C for N said that the problems encountered included remote location not easily accessible by fire or emergency rescue services, slope safety problems, lack of basic facilities like drinking water and electricity, and insufficient size of the identified sites.

Other issues

37. In response to Dr CHIANG Lai-wan's question regarding the number of patients admitted to substance abuse clinics as referred to in paragraph 13 of the Administration's paper, C for N said that more than 2 200 new patients had been admitted to substance abuse clinics of the Hospital Authority between 2009 and 2013.

38. Members raised no objection in principle to the Administration's submission of its proposal to ESC for consideration.

(As the Chairman had to attend some urgent business, the Deputy Chairman took over the chair at this juncture.)

Action

VI. Latest developments in the provision of rehabilitative services by the Correctional Services Department

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)189/14-15(05) and (06))

39. Deputy Secretary for Security ("DS for S") briefed members on the latest development in the provision of rehabilitative services to persons in custody by the Correctional Services Department ("CSD").

40. Members noted a background brief entitled "Latest developments in the provision of rehabilitative services by the Correctional Services Department" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat.

Vocational training and employment support for persons in custody

41. Ms Emily LAU sought information on the placement rate of rehabilitated persons. She asked whether the Administration had identified areas requiring improvement in the vocational training of persons in custody.

42. Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Services (Rehabilitation) ("ACCS(R)") responded that CSD had been working with various training institutions such as the Employees Retraining Board, Construction Industry Council and Vocational Training Council in the provision of market-oriented vocational training courses to persons in custody. All these courses were accredited courses which would assist rehabilitated persons to seek employment. The relevance of such vocational training courses to market needs was kept under constant review by CSD. In the past five years, about 1 800 persons in custody who had attended vocational training courses in penal institutions could be contacted. 83% of them had managed to secure a job within six months after release. CSD would continue to review their vocational training courses in light of the market situation. Dr Elizabeth QUAT requested the Administration to provide information on the duration for which such rehabilitated persons had remained in employment.

Admin

43. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern whether rehabilitated persons had encountered discrimination when seeking employment. She asked whether assistance was provided by CSD to rehabilitated persons in seeking employment. ACCS(R) responded that assistance was provided to rehabilitated persons under statutory supervision by CSD who encountered difficulties in seeking employment. Furthermore, CSD proactively encouraged employers to register as "Caring Employers" and

Action

offer jobs to rehabilitated persons. More than 300 employers had registered as "Caring Employers" and offered more than 3 000 jobs opportunities to rehabilitated persons over the years.

44. Dr Elizabeth QUAT expressed support for CSD's work in the rehabilitation of persons in custody. She asked whether CSD had worked with merchants' associations to encourage the registration of more employers as "Caring Employers".

45. Dr Kenneth CHAN asked whether all persons in custody were eligible for enrolment in vocational training courses. Noting that as at mid-October 2014, more than 300 employers had registered as "Caring Employers" and around 100 persons in custody had been provided job offers, he asked whether CSD would seek to increase the number of job offers for persons in custody.

46. ACCS(R) responded that persons in custody who were serving a sentence of not less than six months with remaining sentences ranging from three to 24 months were eligible for vocational training in penal institutions, if they could stay and work in Hong Kong legally after their release. CSD proactively encouraged employers to register as "Caring Employers" and there had been substantial progress in the past two years. CSD also organised employment symposiums jointly with the Centre for Criminology of the University of Hong Kong. It had held a video conferencing job fair with two merchants' associations on 26 September 2014 for persons in custody due for discharge.

47. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern that according to a survey conducted by the Society for Community Organization, rehabilitated persons had an average of about \$300 in their pockets at the time of release. The survey revealed that 25% of rehabilitated persons had become street sleepers, 45% had to borrow money from relatives or friends and only 8% had undergone vocational training in penal institutions. Noting that about 1 800 persons in custody had attended vocational training courses in the past five years and 83% of them had managed to secure a job within six months after release, he sought information on the penal population size and the number of persons in custody released in a year.

48. ACCS(R) responded that the current penal population was about 8 500. In 2014-2015, about 2 400 persons in custody were eligible for vocational training and 60% of them took up some 1 400 training places offered to them. The number of training places was provided in light of

Action

Admin

the application situation and the penal population. He said that only persons in custody who were serving a sentence of not less than six months with the remaining sentence ranging from three to 24 months were eligible for vocational training because the duration of some courses was as long as 100 days and the persons in custody with shorter sentences would not be able to complete the relevant vocational training courses. Dr Fernando CHEUNG requested the Administration to provide information on the average number of rehabilitated persons released in a year and how the placement rate of 83% was calculated.

49. Referring to paragraph 5 of the Administration's paper, Mr YIU Si-wing sought information on the popularity of vocational training courses among persons in custody. ACCS(R) responded that CSD had introduced new vocational training courses for persons in custody in 2013 and 2014 in light of the job market situation. The courses offered included bar-bending and fixing skills, timber formwork skills and health care services. It had also introduced the Professional Taxi Driver (Taxi Written Test) Training Course and Travel Agent Assistant Training Course for persons in custody.

50. Dr LAM Tai-fai considered it important to provide persons in custody with vocational training which would assist them to seek employment after release. He expressed concern about the percentage of rehabilitated persons who managed to secure employment in industries relevant to their vocational training. He also expressed concern that most vocational training courses were related to blue collar jobs but not white collar jobs.

51. ACCS(R) said that CSD regularly discussed with training institutions to ensure that vocational training courses offered to persons in custody were market-oriented. In response to Mr YIU Si-wing's question on whether any vocational training course had been cancelled because of unpopularity, he said that no training courses had been so cancelled. In response to Dr Elizabeth QUAT's question on whether persons in custody who had taken vocational training courses provided by CSD were eligible for continuing their studies in higher level courses offered by training institutions, ACCS(R) replied in the affirmative.

52. Referring to paragraph 4 of the Administration's paper, Mr WONG Yuk-man expressed concern that convicted adult persons in custody were engaged in garment-making work, the demand in the market for which was low. He considered that persons in custody should be assigned work that would facilitate them to find a job after release.

Action

53. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan asked whether vocational training was provided to persons in custody who were ethnic minorities. ACCS(R) responded that vocational training was provided to ethnic minorities in CSD's custody who were eligible for staying and working in Hong Kong legally after their release.

Rehabilitated persons with a drug abuse history

54. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan expressed concern that rehabilitated persons who had a drug abuse history had encountered particular difficulties in seeking employment and finding accommodation. She sought information on the percentage of rehabilitated drug abusers who had abused drugs again after release.

55. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern that less than 50% of drug abusers had eventually abstained from drug abuse after release from penal institutions.

56. ACCS(R) said that the successful rehabilitation of drug abusers was dependent upon a number of factors, including the support of family members and the community, self-determination, drug abuse history and the latest trend of drug abuse in the society.

57. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern that rehabilitated persons facing financial and housing problems had a higher chance of committing crime again.

58. Dr Elizabeth QUAT asked whether assistance would be provided to rehabilitated drug abusers who faced financial and housing difficulties after release.

59. ACCS(R) responded that all rehabilitated drug abusers were put under post-release supervision for a one-year period. During the period, assistance would be provided by CSD to those who encountered difficulties in seeking employment. Those who faced difficulties in finding accommodation would be referred to non-governmental organisations, such as the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong ("SRACP"), for follow-up. To his knowledge, SRACP had been providing some form of financial assistance and half-way hostels to rehabilitated persons in need. He informed members that the percentage of rehabilitated drug abusers who had neither abused drugs nor breached the law within one year after release was 46.8% in 2013.

Action

Difficulties encountered by rehabilitated persons in opening bank accounts

60. Mr Christopher CHUNG said that he had received complaints from rehabilitated persons previously convicted of money laundering or fraud involving small sums of money that they had encountered difficulties in opening bank accounts. This had posed difficulties to these rehabilitated persons to seek employment. He considered that the Administration should seek to address the problem with the banking sector. DS for S said that the Administration would try to obtain more information on the situation. The Deputy Chairman said that to his knowledge, banks were not aware of whether a customer who opened a new bank account was a rehabilitated person.

Psychological Gymnasium in the Lo Wu Correctional Institution

61. Noting that CSD had set up a specialised psychological treatment unit named Psychological Gymnasium in Lo Wu Correctional Institution for female adult persons in custody in March 2011, Mr YIU Si-wing sought information on the effectiveness of the treatment provided and whether CSD had plans to extend such treatment to other penal institutions and male persons in custody. ACCS(R) responded that the Psychological Gymnasium had more than 140 participants since its opening in March 2011. CSD observed that the participants showed good responses to the treatment and there had been improvement in their behaviours in the correctional institution after the treatment. CSD was conducting a review on whether such treatment should be extended to other penal institutions and male persons in custody.

Re-integration of rehabilitated persons into the community

62. Mr WONG Yuk-man said that community support and acceptance of rehabilitated persons were key factors to successful re-integration of these persons into the community. He expressed doubts about whether the Rehabilitation Pioneer Project and Green Haven Scheme could achieve such a purpose. ACCS(R) responded that the Rehabilitation Pioneer Project aimed to help students to recognise the serious consequences of committing crime and the importance of abiding by the law through experience-sharing by persons in custody.

Action

Expenditure of CSD on rehabilitative services

Admin 63. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung sought information on the percentage of the overall expenditure of CSD on rehabilitative services. ACCS(R) undertook to provide a written response. He said that an annual expenditure of about \$870 million was incurred under CSD's programme of re-integration in the financial year 2013-2014.

Other issues

64. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that the Administration should encourage contractors of government projects to employ rehabilitated persons by granting additional merit points to contractors who had employed rehabilitated persons. He expressed concern that some rehabilitated persons could not pass the integrity checks conducted by some contractors of government projects. DS for S responded that the Administration's requirement and arrangement for civil servants recruitment were not applicable to employees of government contractors.

Admin 65. Dr CHIANG said that some surveys conducted by other countries revealed that persons imprisoned for minor offences might commit more serious offences after imprisonment. She considered that the Administration should explore whether short-term imprisonment of persons convicted of minor offences could be substituted with other forms of penalty. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan requested the Administration to provide information on the percentage of persons in custody who were admitted to penal institutions for the first time. The Deputy Chairman requested the Administration to provide the requested information.

66. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:33 pm.