

# **立法會**

## ***Legislative Council***

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### **Panel on Security**

#### **Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 4 November 2014**

#### **Latest developments in the provision of rehabilitative services by the Correctional Services Department**

### **Purpose**

This paper gives an account of past discussions by the Panel on Security ("the Panel") on the provision of rehabilitative services for persons under the custody of the Correctional Services Department ("CSD").

### **Background**

2. According to the Administration, it is the mission of CSD to provide a safe and humane environment for the detention of persons in custody and to facilitate their smooth reintegration into society through the provision of suitable rehabilitative services. CSD established in January 1998 a new Rehabilitation Division for better coordination of rehabilitative policies and programme development. The rehabilitative services provided by CSD include pre-sentence assessment services, person in custody's welfare and counselling services, psychological services, vocational training, supervision services, pre-release preparation services and community involvement.

### **Deliberations of the Panel**

#### Vocational training for adult offenders

3. Concern was raised about the adequacy and quality of vocational training provided to adult offenders. There was a view that the

Administration should make its best endeavour to ensure that the training courses or programmes provided by CSD could help improve offenders' vocational skills and enhance their chance of securing gainful employment after release. Information was also sought on the feedback of rehabilitated offenders on training courses currently available in penal institutions.

4. According to the Administration, pre-release vocational training courses provided by CSD were targeted at adult local persons in custody who were due to be released in three to 24 months, with the aim of improving their vocational skills so as to help them find jobs and reintegrate into the society as soon as possible after their release from penal institutions. All participating persons in custody were requested to complete an evaluation form upon completion of vocational training. The evaluation results showed that more than 95% of the participants considered the training programmes useful in facilitating their rehabilitation, as the courses were graded either as "very satisfactory" or "satisfactory". In providing accredited and market-oriented vocational training for offenders, CSD regularly reviewed the content of the training programmes having regard to the manpower projection in Hong Kong and the employment statistics of discharged offenders.

5. Some members were concerned that only a small number of adult persons in custody were provided with a chance to receive full-time or part-time market-oriented vocational training in penal institutions. They considered that CSD should strengthen its provision of pre-release vocational training for rehabilitated offenders to enhance their employability after discharge and facilitate their reintegration into the society. There was a suggestion that the Administration should make it a compulsory requirement for persons in custody to attend vocational training courses.

6. According to the Administration, the attending of vocational training courses could not be made a compulsory requirement for adult persons in custody. Given that there were workshops in the correctional institutions for adult persons in custody to engage in work, pre-release vocational training was provided for adult local persons in custody with remaining sentences from three to 24 months for enrollment on a voluntary basis. The purpose of vocational training was to prepare them to meet market needs at the time of release. CSD had plans to introduce new or enhanced market-oriented vocational training courses in such trades as food and beverage services, printing, desktop publishing, and fashion and clothing design for adult offenders. The Administration further advised that CSD had secured the support of a number of non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") and agencies in providing part-time vocational training for adult

persons in custody, and rehabilitated persons could continue to seek assistance from the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong ("SRACP") and other NGOs after release, if necessary. It was hoped that these services could enhance offenders' employability after discharge and facilitate their smooth reintegration into the society.

7. Information was sought on whether construction-related training courses would be provided to persons in custody, in preparation for them to enter the construction industry after release. According to the Administration, the Construction Industry Council had formed a regular companionship with CSD and would provide CSD with advice on the provision of relevant market-oriented vocational training courses annually.

#### Computer training for offenders

8. Some members were concerned about the provision of computer training and facilities for offenders. According to the Administration, CSD strived to promote computer literacy of persons in custody through the provision of computer facilities and computer training courses. Young offenders, i.e. those under the age of 21, received half-day compulsory education which included computer study as a core subject. Depending on whether they had enrolled in public examination on computer-related subjects, young offenders received computer training for around four to six hours per week on average. Computer training for adult persons in custody was mainly offered in the form of interest classes with volunteers serving as instructors and persons under custody joining on a voluntary basis after work.

#### Rehabilitative services for offenders with disabilities

9. Some members also expressed concern about the provision of rehabilitative services for offenders with disabilities. Information was sought on the number of offenders with disabilities, the nature and degree of their disabilities, and the existing rehabilitative services provided for them.

10. According to the Administration, persons in custody with disabilities were provided with rehabilitative services as with other persons in custody. Nonetheless, these persons were provided with adequate facilities that were necessary for their care and treatment. The facilities included modified toilet and bathing facilities, crutches, wheelchairs and light weight roll-in chair cot. Such facilities were provided in all major correctional institutions. In addition, special services or facilities, such as physiotherapy and mechanical aids, were provided to persons in custody on a need basis. Medical officers, clinical psychologists and

rehabilitation officers of CSD were deployed as appropriate in providing rehabilitative services to persons in custody with disabilities. In addition, to better attend to the special needs of persons in custody with disabilities, special training was arranged for CSD officers. For instance, sign language courses were made available to officers providing services to deaf persons in custody. NGOs were invited to visit persons in custody with disabilities, and to render assistance to them in making discharge arrangements, such as in respect of accommodation and employment.

#### Gender-specific rehabilitation for female persons in custody

11. Members noted that in order to address problems specific to female offenders and to meet their treatment needs, CSD had set up a specialized psychological treatment unit for female adult persons in custody named Psychological Gymnasium in Lo Wu Correctional Institution in March 2011. Its services included the provision of in-depth psychological assessment for female persons in custody with moderate to high re-offending risk and with rehabilitative needs, who would be provided with a range of gender-specific systematic treatment programmes, with a view to helping them develop positive thinking and proper skills for managing emotions and interpersonal relationships.

#### Employment Support

12. Members noted that CSD collaborated with various employers and business organizations to help enhance the employability of rehabilitated persons. Since 2004, CSD had set up a network of Caring Employers to provide employment opportunities for rehabilitated persons. As at end-January 2012, a total of 249 organizations/companies/persons had registered as Caring Employers of CSD and offered 898 jobs to rehabilitated persons. CSD staff would provide job referrals and vocational guidance for rehabilitated persons having regard to their interest and expertise.

13. Members were advised that from 2011 onwards, CSD had been cooperating with SRACP in providing persons in custody with information on job vacancies. After coordinating information on job vacancies provided by Caring Employers, SRACP would pass the information to CSD on a regular basis for display in penal institutions. Interested persons in custody could send application forms to SRACP directly.

**Relevant papers**

14. A list of relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
29 October 2014

## Appendix

### **Relevant papers on latest developments in the provision of rehabilitative services by the Correctional Services Department**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Panel on Security	6.1.2000 (Item IV)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
	8.7.2003 (Item VI)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
	3.7.2007 (Item III)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
	8.7.2008 (Item IV)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
	5.5.2009 (Item VII)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
	13.3.2012 (Item VI)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>

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