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### **Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2017-18**

**The Ombudsman  
Session No. : 10  
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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**OMB001**

**(Question Serial No. 3362)**

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Connie Y H Lau)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

Question:

Regarding the outsourcing of services by your Office, please inform this Committee:

1. In the past 3 years, the total number of outsourced staff working for your Office; and the percentage of outsourced staff in relation to the total number of staff assigned the same type of duties in your Office;
2. In the past 3 years, the total employee expenses of your Office; the total amounts of fees payable to outsourced service contractors; and the percentage of fees payable to outsourced service contractors in relation to the total employee expenses of your Office; and
3. In the past 3 years, the nature of services outsourced by your Office and the effective periods of those service contracts.

Meanwhile, the Government amended the guidelines on tender procedures for outsourcing of services last year. It is stipulated that where the procuring departments adopt a marking scheme to assess tenders for outsourced service contracts that rely heavily on deployment of non-skilled workers, they should include an assessment on the wage rates and working hours for the non-skilled workers as proposed by the tenderers. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

4. With the guidelines coming into effect, what is the number of outsourced service contracts currently awarded by your Office that rely heavily on deployment of non-skilled workers;
5. With the guidelines coming into effect, what are the departments which have adjusted, in the light of the new guidelines, their assessment criteria on the wage rates and working hours in outsourced service contracts that rely heavily on deployment of non-skilled workers; what is the adjustment situation in your Office; and if no relevant information is available, why not;

6. With the guidelines coming into effect, whether there have been any increases in average wage rates in outsourced service contracts that rely heavily on deployment of non-skilled workers. If the answer is yes, what is the number of contracts with wage increases; and if no relevant information is available, why not;
7. What are the measures adopted by your Office to assess the effectiveness of the new tender guidelines;
8. When assessing tenders for outsourced service contracts, whether your Office uses the existing two-envelope (technical and price information) approach; and if not, what is the number of contracts not awarded under the two-envelope (technical and price information) approach in the past 3 years;
9. On the basis of inspections by your Office each year, what is the number of cases in which Government outsourced service contractors were found to have violated their service contracts, the Employment Ordinance and the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, and the number of complaints received from outsourced staff;
10. Details of the follow-up actions on those violations and complaints; and
11. The number of cases in which such violations or complaints were found substantiated and the contractors concerned were penalised, with details of those cases.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (Member Question No. 120)

Reply:

The Office of The Ombudsman, established under The Ombudsman Ordinance (Cap 397), is responsible for investigating any inadequacies in administrative actions by Government departments and public organisations and recommending remedial and improvement measures, with an aim to enhance the quality and standard of public administration.

Since its establishment in 1989, this Office has never outsourced our duties to service contractors.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**OMB002**

**(Question Serial No. 3384)**

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Connie Y H Lau)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

Question:

Does your Office provide sign language interpretation services? If yes, please provide the number of staff and the employee expenses involved. If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (Member Question No. 180)

Reply:

This Office does not provide any sign language interpretation services for the time being, because we have not yet encountered any situation requiring such services in the past. Where necessary, this Office will engage the services provided by sign language interpretation agencies.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**OMB003**

**(Question Serial No. 3686)**

Head: (114) Office of the Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Connie Y H Lau)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

Question:

1. Please provide the average time required by the Office of The Ombudsman to process a complaint case in the past five years.
2. For the year 2017-2018, what is the estimated average time required by the Office to process a complaint case?
3. Will the Office review and reform its complaint handling procedures in 2017-18 to speed up the processing time? If yes, what are the details and estimated expenditure?
4. Will the Office consider recruiting more accredited mediators to strengthen its capacity in handling complaint cases? If yes, what are the details and estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Tanya (Member Question No. 515)

Reply:

1. This Office has in place performance pledges for the time required to process complaint cases. Our processing time for complaint cases in the past five years are given in the tables below:

- (1) For complaint cases outside jurisdiction or under restriction:

Year	Response Time		
	Within 10 working days (Target: >70%)	Within 11-15 working days (Target: <30%)	More than 15 working days
2011-12	89.2%	9.3%	1.5%
2012-13	89.5%	8.7%	1.8%
2013-14	88.9%	9.7%	1.4%
2014-15	90.9%	8.6%	0.5%
2015-16	98.2%	1.7%	0.0%

- (2) For other complaint cases:

Year	Response Time		
	Less than 3 months (Target: >60%)	Within 3-6 months (Target: <40%)	More than 6 months
2011-12	79.3%	19.8%	0.9%
2012-13	86.3%	12.8%	0.9%
2013-14	81.7%	17.2%	1.1%
2014-15	86.3%	13.1%	0.6%
2015-16	84.7%	14.8%	0.5%

2. In 2017-18, this Office will continue to endeavour to complete processing different categories of cases within our pledged targets:

Category of Complaint Cases	Standard Response Time	Maximum Response Time
(1) Cases outside jurisdiction or under restriction	Within 10 working days (Target: not less than 70%)	Within 11-15 working days (Target: not more than 30%)
(2) Other cases	Less than 3 months (Target: not less than 60%)	Within 3-6 months (Target: not more than 40%)

3. This Office makes a constant effort to review and improve its complaint handling procedures. In 2017-18, this Office will continue to promote the use of mediation to handle cases involving no or minor maladministration for reaching a speedier and more direct resolution. Resources thus saved can then be redeployed to direct investigations and full investigation of more complex complaint cases.

4. This Office attaches great importance to developing the ability of our investigation officers to resolve disputes and organises from time to time related workshops and training sessions. This Office has in place a sponsorship scheme to encourage our investigation officers to attend more advanced mediation training courses and attain accreditation as mediators.

This Office has no need to recruit more accredited mediators for the time being.

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