

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(2)252/18-19  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/MP

**Panel on Manpower**

**Minutes of policy briefing-cum-meeting  
held on Tuesday, 16 October 2018, at 4:30 pm  
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)  
Hon HO Kai-ming (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP  
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP  
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP  
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan  
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin  
Hon CHU Hoi-dick  
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, JP  
Hon SHIU Ka-fai  
Hon SHIU Ka-chun  
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP  
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho  
Hon AU Nok-hin  
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH
- Members attending** : Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS  
Hon IP Kin-yuen  
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding

**Members absent** : Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN  
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP

**Public Officers attending** : Item III

Dr LAW Chi-kwong, GBS, JP  
Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms CHANG King-yiu, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr Caspar TSUI Ying-wai, JP  
Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr Carlson CHAN Ka-shun, JP  
Commissioner for Labour

Miss Mabel LI Po-yi, JP  
Deputy Commissioner for Labour  
(Labour Administration)

Mr Jeff LEUNG Wing-yan, JP  
Deputy Commissioner for Labour  
(Occupational Safety and Health)

Item IV

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Secretary for Education

Mr Rex CHANG, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Education (1)

Ms Elaine MAK  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Further Education)  
Education Bureau

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

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Rita LAI  
Senior Council Secretary (2) 1  
  
Ms Kiwi NG  
Legislative Assistant (2) 1

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**I. Information paper issued since the last meeting**

Members noted that no information paper had been issued since the last meeting.

**II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion**  
(Appendices V and VI to LC Paper No. CB(2)2/18-19)

2. The Chairman informed members that he and the Deputy Chairman had discussed the Panel's work plan for the 2018-2019 session with the Administration in that morning and gave a brief account of the work plan. Members noted that the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion would be updated accordingly.

Regular meeting in November 2018

3. Members agreed to discuss the Administration's proposal on "Abolition of using employers' mandatory contributions under the Mandatory Provident Fund System to offset severance payment and long service payment" at the next regular meeting on 20 November 2018. Members further agreed that deputations would be invited to give views on the item and the meeting would be advanced to start at 2:30 pm.

Item proposed for discussion at a future meeting

4. Referring to item 7 of the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan proposed that the Panel should discuss manpower requirement projection in the 2018-2019 session so as to facilitate the younger generation's career planning.

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**III. Briefing by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare on the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address**

(LC Paper No. CB(2)28/18-19(01), The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address and The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Agenda)

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("SLW") briefed members on the major new and on-going initiatives pertaining to the labour and manpower portfolio undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau and Labour Department ("LD"), as set out in the Chief Executive ("CE")'s 2018 Policy Address and Policy Agenda.

*(Post-meeting note: The speaking note of SLW tabled at the meeting was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)101/18-19 on 18 October 2018.)*

Abolishing the "offsetting" arrangement under the Mandatory Provident Fund System

6. Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr AU Nok-hin were concerned about the substantial increase in the Government's financial commitment of subsidizing employers under the abolition of the "offsetting" arrangement under the Mandatory Provident Fund ("MPF") System as set out in the CE's 2018 Policy Address (i.e. from \$17.2 billion under the "preliminary idea" to \$29.3 billion).

7. SLW advised that the increase in the Government's financial commitment under the enhanced arrangements for abolishing the "offsetting" aimed to help enterprises adapt to the policy change, particularly the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises which constituted over 80% of the total establishments in Hong Kong. It would help employers meet their severance payment ("SP")/long service payment ("LSP") liabilities and in turn provide better employment protection for employees. The Government also undertook to make up for the shortfall where in certain extreme circumstances individual employees might receive a smaller amount of aggregate benefits (SP/LSP entitlement together with the accrued benefits of the employers' mandatory contributions to their MPF accounts) than what they would otherwise receive under the current "offsetting" regime so as to address the labour groups' concern that no employees would be worse off after the abolition of the "offsetting".

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8. While welcoming the Administration's proposal of abolishing the "offsetting" arrangement, Mr POON Siu-ping noted with concern that the legislative timetable for the abolition proposal had deferred from 2020 as previously advised by the Administration to 2022 as set out in the CE's 2018 Policy Address. Expressing grave concern that a significant amount of the employers' contribution to MPF had been withdrawn for offsetting SP/LSP each year, Mr LUK Chung-hung called on the Administration to introduce the relevant bill within the Sixth Legislative Council ("LegCo").

9. SLW advised that the implementation of the abolition proposal would necessitate highly complicated and controversial amendments of different pieces of legislation, as well as formulation of meticulous implementation arrangements for taking forward the proposal, including requiring employers to each set up a designated savings account to meet the employer's statutory SP and LSP obligations towards the employees. While the Government would embark on another major engagement process to explain the enhanced Government subsidy scheme, it would endeavour to work out the detailed mechanism, rules and requirements, and complete the drafting of the amendment bill for introduction into LegCo in two years. That said, it would take another two years upon passage of the bill to procure and establish the new systems for full operation and enforcement of the new subsidy scheme which was an integral part to enable abolition of the "offsetting" arrangement. To allow sufficient time for LegCo to consider the comprehensive legislative amendments, the Government considered it prudent to introduce the bill at the beginning of the new LegCo term, with a view to securing its passage by the current-term Government i.e. before mid 2022, so that the abolition of "offsetting" arrangement would commence in two years afterwards. SLW further appealed to members to support the staffing proposal to create one permanent post of Chief Labour Officer (D1) in LD to take up the comprehensive preparatory work which would include, inter alia, working out the drafting instructions and assisting in the drafting of the amendment bill, and working out other detailed rules and operational requirements in relation to the abolition of the "offsetting" arrangement.

10. Mr AU Lok-hin was concerned that abolition of the "offsetting" arrangement might give rise to moral hazards involving behavioural change of employers, for instance, the proliferation of false self-employment and fragmented employment. Mr AU asked how the Government would address such situation.

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11. SLW responded that employers could not evade their responsibilities under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) ("EO") and the Employees' Compensation Ordinance (Cap. 282) by way of false self-employment contracts. The Administration would review the abolition of the "offsetting" arrangement five years after its implementation.

Improving employment benefits

*Statutory paternity leave*

12. While expressing support for early passage of the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2018 ("the Bill") to implement the proposal to increase the statutory paternity leave ("PL") from the existing three days to five days, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung sought clarification about the media reports regarding the Administration's intention of withdrawing the Bill if any amendment to the Bill, say, further extending the duration of statutory PL to seven days, was passed by LegCo.

13. SLW responded that the proposed increase of statutory PL from three days to five days was a hard-earned consensus between the labour and business sectors as represented by the Labour Advisory Board ("LAB") which the Government should uphold and respect. He stressed that the current legislative proposal was considered the Government's only acceptable option.

14. Referring members to his proposed amendment to the Bill to the effect that the Administration should review the number of PL days at least once every year after the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance, the Deputy Chairman said that he was unconvinced of the Administration's views that the proposed amendment would have a charging effect given that LD had from time to time conducted different reviews of employees' rights and benefits.

15. SLW pointed out that the abovementioned proposed amendment would impose a new statutory obligation on the Government to review the number of PL days every year irrespective of whether such a review was necessary. It was envisaged that additional cost would be incurred to conduct such regular reviews which would include, among other things, organization of focus group discussions and public consultation forums among the employer groups and labour unions. Additional staff cost for overseeing, conducting and supporting these regular reviews would also be required.

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*Extension of statutory maternity leave*

16. Mr POON Siu-ping welcomed the Administration's proposal to extend the statutory maternity leave ("ML") under EO from the current 10 weeks to 14 weeks in response to the strong call of the labour sector over the years. While raising no objection to Administration's provision of subsidy to employers to fund the cost of the extra ML pay, Mr POON considered that the Government should not seek to improve employees' rights and benefits merely by way of providing subsidy to employers. Mr Jeremy TAM said that the Civic Party welcomed the proposals to extend the statutory ML and amend the definition of miscarriage under EO. He, however, expressed concern about the rationale for the Government's proposal to fund the cost of the extra ML pay and whether the proposal was financially sustainable. Mr POON and Mr TAM sought information on the cost impact assessment of the proposed extension of statutory ML.

17. Dr Elizabeth QUAT was in support of the Administration's proposal to extend statutory ML and to provide subsidy to employers to meet the extra ML pay as well as the proposal to amend the definition of miscarriage under EO so that an employee who suffered a miscarriage at or after 24 weeks of pregnancy could be entitled to ML. Dr QUAT, however, noted with concern that the rate of the additional statutory ML pay would be subject to a cap of \$36,822 which was equivalent to four-fifths of the wages of an employee with a monthly wage of \$50,000 in four weeks. This would be unfair to the higher-paid female employees. Noting that employees with a monthly wage of \$50,000 or below accounted for about 95% of employees in Hong Kong, Dr QUAT and the Deputy Chairman asked about the estimated number of female employees whose monthly wages were above \$50,000 and would be eligible for statutory ML and the additional financial commitment if their extra ML pay was to be borne by the Government as well. The Deputy Chairman further expressed the view that the Administration should introduce facilitating measures to encourage child birth.

18. SLW advised that the Government did not seek to solicit the support of employers for the proposed extension of statutory ML by providing subsidy to them. The proposal to fund the cost of the extra ML pay was not a transitional arrangement, but a long-term commitment by the Government to enhance protection of the employment and health of female employees after giving birth. He added that according to the

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research findings of the International Labour Organization, there was adverse impact on women's employment opportunities if the cost of ML pay was to be fully borne by individual employers. It was also noted that the period of ML was in general shorter in places where individual employers needed to bear the full cost of ML pay and the statutory minimum wage rate might sometimes apply. It was noteworthy that the ML pay in most of the countries/places was fully or partially financed by social insurance system with contributions from both employers and employees. As the maternity benefits in Hong Kong had been solely borne by employers over the past decades, the Government considered it appropriate to assume the social responsibility and finance the cost of the extra four-week statutory ML. It was estimated that the Government's annual recurrent expenditure for the extended four-week ML pay would be around some \$479 million.

19. SLW further advised that to uphold the principle of prudent use of public money, the reimbursable amount to employers of the extra ML pay should be set at a reasonable level. It was worth noting that there was in general a cap for the amount of ML pay for eligible employees in most places, irrespective of whether it was fully or partially financed by a social insurance system with contributions from both employers and employees. If there was no upper limit for the ML pay, employers would be much concerned about their legal responsibility. Moreover, a substantial portion of Government subsidy would be used to fund the extra ML pay for the higher-paid female employees, which was not proportionate to the number of eligible employees in this group. He added that the Administration did not have information on hand on the expenditure if there was no cap on the Government's funding support on the ML pay for the extended statutory ML period.

20. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed concern about the difficulties in obtaining consensus from LAB over the proposal to extend statutory ML. Pointing out that government female employees would be entitled to 14 weeks of ML with immediate effect, Mr LEUNG was concerned about the implementation timetable for the proposal to extend statutory ML to non-government employees.

21. SLW explained that the extension of the ML period to 14 weeks for female government employees did not entail legislative amendments following the announcement in the CE's 2018 Policy Address. As a matter of fact, a number of enterprises had been providing their female employees with ML of more than 10 weeks. The Administration would



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appeal to enterprises/employers to offer their employees with ML benefits more favourable than the statutory requirements of EO. However, the implementation of the proposal to extend the ML period would necessitate complex legislative amendments, including the detailed arrangements for the reimbursement of the additional statutory ML pay to employers. As regards the implementation timetable, the Administration would proceed with the drafting of the legislative amendments with a view to introducing a bill into LegCo in 2019 and completing the necessary legislative process within the Sixth LegCo. In tandem, the Administration would proceed with the preparatory work for the reimbursement arrangements, which was expected to be completed in 18 months.

22. Dr Elizabeth QUAT and the Chairman requested the Administration to provide information on the Government expenditure for funding the cost of the extra four-week ML pay by different wage levels of eligible employees, including those whose monthly wages were above \$50,000, when it reverted to the Panel on the details of the proposal.

Enhancing the protection of non-skilled employees engaged by government service contractors

23. While welcoming the proposed improvement measures in respect of government service contracts (excluding construction service contracts) that relied heavily on the deployment of non-skilled employees, Mr Andrew WAN, Mr SHIU Ka-chun and Mr LUK Chung-hung held the view that there was still room for improvement. Mr WAN considered the overall weighting for "wage level" as an assessment criterion in the marking schemes for tender assessment still too low, and the relative weighting should be further increased in future. Mr SHIU expressed concern that the proposed increase in the weighting for "wage level" in the marking schemes would not have much noticeable impact on the actual wage level of non-skilled employees engaged by government service contractors ("GSCs"). He called on the Administration to take into account the concept of living wage in setting a minimum wage level for workers engaged by GSCs. To this end, the Administration should make reference to the median monthly wages for different trades and industries as released by the Census and Statistics Department in setting the "wage level" in the marking schemes. Mr LUK took the view that procuring departments should ensure that the wage level of non-skilled employees engaged by GSCs in new contracts

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for the same jobs should not be lower than that in the previous ones. Moreover, their years of service with the previous contractors for performing the same jobs should be duly recognized in the new contracts.

24. SLW advised that in addition to "wage level", other consideration factors such as innovation and job security would also be taken into account in the tender assessment. Hence, he did not see much room for further increasing the relative weighting of "wage level" as an assessment criterion in the technical assessment of government service contracts. SLW further advised that when awarding new contracts to GSCs, individual employees' years of service would be regarded as unbroken if their employers remained unchanged. However, it was a complicated issue to mandate the incoming GSC to take over the workers of the outgoing GSC and adopt the "no worse off" principle for the wage level of these workers. That said, it was believed that the proposed increase in the technical weighting and weighting of "wage level" and other improvement measures would bring about higher wages for workers engaged by GSCs and better protect their employment rights and benefits.

25. Mr SHIU Ka-chun considered it a good start to provide the employees with contractual gratuity though the rate of gratuity could be further increased. Mr Andrew WAN asked whether consideration would also be given to applying contractual gratuity to existing service contracts. Mr WAN further asked why procuring departments were allowed to adopt a tenure of less than three years for the service contracts, which, in his view, might give rise to fragmentation of jobs.

26. SLW advised that it was estimated that the proposal to provide contractual gratuity to non-skilled employees engaged by GSCs would incur a 6% increase in the wage bill or 4% to 5% increase in the overall cost of the service contracts. In view of the lead time required for the preparatory work, the improvement measures would only be applicable to service contracts tendered from 1 April 2019 onwards. As regards the tenure of service contracts, while procuring departments would be encouraged to adopt three-year tenure service contracts, sufficient flexibility should be provided for procuring departments to adopt service contracts with a tenure of less than three years to meet evolving service needs.

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Safeguarding occupational safety and health

27. Mr Vincent CHENG sought more information on the strategy and staff deployment for conducting more in-depth surprise inspections of construction sites to strengthen protection of construction workers' occupational safety and health ("OSH"). Mr CHENG further enquired whether consideration would be given to conducting a review of the enforcement against OSH of employees performing outdoor duties under hot weather.

28. Mr Andrew WAN was concerned about whether contractors would be penalized when bidding tenders for public works projects if they had adverse records on safety performance.

29. In response, SLW said that the Administration would revert to the Panel on the specific improvement measures of OSH within the 2018-2019 session, including employees performing outdoor duties under hot weather and preventing the health risks of standing at work.

30. With respect to developing a new online platform by LD to facilitate employees to use mobile electronic devices to report unsafe working condition, Mr Vincent CHENG enquired whether the mobile applications would be made available in different ethnic minorities ("EM") languages. Mr CHENG and Dr KWOK Ka-ki were concerned about the effectiveness of such initiative if workers did not know how to use the devices. In Dr KWOK's view, it would be more effective for LD's labour inspectors to interview the workers during worksite inspections so as to better understand the OSH situation.

31. SLW and Commissioner for Labour ("C for L") responded that apart from increasing the manpower for conducting inspections to construction sites, LD had been providing a telephone hotline for members of the public to lodge complaints about OSH issues. LD would conduct prompt investigations upon receipt of such complaints. In order to further enhance the awareness of the complaint channel and encourage construction workers to lodge complaints against unsafe working environment, LD produced and distributed a new poster at the end of 2017 to step up the promotion of the OSH complaint hotline. To encourage EM workers to lodge complaints, the poster was also printed in six EM languages (Indonesian, Hindi, Nepali, Tagalog, Thai and Urdu) in addition to Chinese and English. C for L further gave a brief account of LD's development of a new online platform which sought to facilitate

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employees to use mobile electronic devices to report unsafe working condition so that LD could follow up promptly. LD would explore the feasibility of developing the mobile applications in different languages.

*Level of penalty*

32. Mr Andrew WAN said that members were in support of imposing heavier penalties on duty holders for non-compliance with the OSH legislation so as to enhance the deterrent effect of the penalty. Having regard to the occurrence of serious industrial injuries/fatalities including those related to the construction of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the low level of fines imposed on convicted cases related to fatal industrial accidents, Mr WAN asked about the Administration's plan to introduce legislative amendments to such effect.

33. SLW replied in the affirmative that the Administration intended to bring in higher penalties under the OSH legislation to increase the deterrent effect. LD would consult relevant stakeholders on the proposed legislative amendments.

Rehabilitation services for injured employees

34. Noting that the Administration was developing new measures to strengthen the rehabilitation services for injured employees, the Chairman, Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr POON Siu-ping expressed concern about the implementation timetable. Mr POON further sought information on the funding arrangements of the new measures.

35. In response, SLW said that the Government was actively looking into new measures to strengthen the protection of the rights and benefits of employees injured at work and suffered from occupational diseases. Consideration was being given to providing timely and coordinated treatment and rehabilitation services to injured workers in need through case management model and private medical services, with a view to speeding up their recovery and facilitating their early return to work. To this end, LD had set up an internal working group and would consider the views of different stakeholders when taking forward the initiative. The Administration was also exploring various options for funding the new measures, including the suggestion of setting up a designated fund. The Administration would revert to the Panel on the subject in due course.

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Importation of labour

36. Mr POON Siu-ping expressed concern that it had been reported that some subsidized elderly care service units had not used the additional resources solely for improving the employment benefits of the care workers in the sector. He was concerned that the Government would allow the sector to import more care workers to solve the manpower shortage problem.

37. SLW advised that a number of subsidized elderly services units had already used the additional resources to improve the salaries of their front-line care workers, for example, the subsidized elderly services units participated in the Job Expo for Elderly and Rehabilitation Services held in July 2018. The Administration would conduct a survey on the employment situation of the elderly care services sector in the coming two months to collect information including the vacancy situation and the wage level of care workers after the Government's provision of additional resources. Before considering importation of care workers, the Government would ensure that the additional resources provided to subsidized elderly service units had been used to improve the salaries of front-line care workers.

Employment of persons with disabilities in the Government

38. Mr Jeremy TAM was concerned that the number of civil servants known with disabilities had decreased from 3 256 to 3 230 during the period of 2006 to 2016 as opposed to the overall increase of about 11 000 in the strength of the civil service in the same period.

39. SLW explained that the reduction in the number of civil servants known with disabilities might be due to the retirement of some of these employees over the years. As a matter of fact, there was no mandatory requirement under the prevailing policy for government employees or job applicants to declare their disability status (if any), and such practice was in line with the Code of Practice on Employment issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission. Hence, the statistics so collected only reflected the information available to the departmental management. For instance, information on disabilities might be provided by job applicants with disabilities in connection with their requests for special arrangement or accommodation to attend a selection test/interview. The Government would explore whether collecting more data in relation to the disabilities of civil service job applicants would be in line with the

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principle of upholding equal opportunities and other relevant requirements.

Other concerns

40. Dr KWOK Ka-ki was of the view that the Administration should formulate specific code of practice/guidelines in relation to work arrangements in times of and after typhoons and rainstorms as well as under special circumstances. Dr KWOK also expressed disappointment that the previous-term Government and current-term Government had not seriously followed up on legislating for standard working hours ("SWH") regardless of the strong community call over the years. In his view, formulating sector-specific working hours guidelines was in effect a retrograde step in tackling the issue of long working hours.

41. Expressing disappointment at the little coverage on measures to address the long working hours situation in the CE's 2018 Policy Address as well as the subject of alignment of statutory holiday ("SH") with general holidays ("GH") in the CE's 2018 Policy Address, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung was concerned about the Government's stance and sincerity in tackling these issues.

42. SLW said that the Government had made clear its stance over the subjects of SWH and alignment of SH with GH on various occasions. He had nothing to add at the moment.

**IV. Briefing by the Secretary for Education on the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address**

(LC Paper No. CB(2)28/18-19(02), The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address and The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Agenda)

43. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the on-going initiatives of the Education Bureau ("EDB"), in particular the major development of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework ("HKQF") in 2018, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper.

*(Post-meeting note: The speaking note of SED tabled at the meeting was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)101/18-19 on 18 October 2018.)*

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Development of Hong Kong Qualifications Framework

44. The Deputy Chairman was of the view that HKQF should be tasked to enable formal recognition of the competence and experience acquired by practitioners in the workplace in order to enhance their competitiveness and advancement in the relevant sectors. The Administration should step up its efforts in promoting wider acceptance of QF by employers. To this end, the Administration should take the lead in giving due recognition of qualifications under HKQF by, say, specifying the corresponding QF Levels as comparable academic or professional qualifications in meeting the entry requirements of various grades in the civil service. The Deputy Chairman cited that health workers in the elderly care service sector had no incentive to attend QF training programmes, as they had to attend the relevant courses after work, and more importantly, they received no pay adjustment or career advancement after having acquired the relevant QF-recognized qualifications. In his view, the Administration should make good use of the additional injection of \$1.2 billion into the QF Fund to assist various industries in building the quality-assured pathways for career development of their practitioners.

45. SED said that the primary objective of establishing HKQF was to promote lifelong learning of practitioners in various trades and industries through pursuing different levels of academic and training attainment in an accessible articulation pathway according to their own roadmaps. Given that the implementation of HKQF and the setting up of Industry Training Advisory Committees ("ITACs") in individual industries were industry-led, it would be for individual ITACs to draw up the specification of competency standards for the industry, which would enable training institutions and course operators to design training courses to meet the needs of the industry. The attainment of QF-recognized qualifications would help equip the practitioners, enhance their competitiveness and prepare them for career advancement, although it might not necessarily lead to immediate wage upward adjustment. SED shared the view that while the QF-recognized qualifications should give due recognition to the skills and experience acquired by practitioners at the workplace of relevant industries, it was equally important to enhance employers' understanding and acceptance of QF. The QF Fund supported schemes and initiatives for the sustainable development and implementation of HKQF, including promotional and educational activities to foster development and enhance recognition of QF. SED added that some bureaux/departments had made reference to the QF

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attainment in their recruitment advertisement for certain posts. The Administration would progressively adopt the attainment of QF Levels in the relevant entry requirements for civil service posts where appropriate.

46. Mr LUK Chung-hung considered that the recognition of QF by the community at large, in particular employers and employees, was of critical importance to encourage employees to pursue further education and training under HKQF. Noting that 1 900 senior secondary school students from some 160 schools had attended the talks, workshops or visits in relation to QF in the 2017-2018 academic year and that 70 activities, events and briefings sessions were organized to promote QF for 23 industries in 2018, Mr LUK considered that the promotional coverage of HKQF should be further extended to more schools and the relevant industries. Mr LUK was concerned about how the Administration would step up its promotion and publicity of QF with a view to further enhancing the awareness and understanding of HKQF. Pointing out that the implementation of QF covered 23 industries with over 50% of the workforce in Hong Kong, Mr LUK further asked about the Administration's plan for promoting QF-recognized qualifications in other industries.

47. SED shared the view of the importance of promoting QF in different sectors and industries through various channels and media. Notably, a promotional video on the Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanism was launched. While the progress of setting up ITACs would hinge upon the industries' views on the implementation of QF, the Administration would continue to reach out to stakeholders of other industries with a view to facilitating their understanding of QF and assisting in the setting up of ITACs according to the needs of the sectors.

Co-operation with other places on Qualifications Framework

48. Mr IP Kin-yuen asked about the progress of QF development on the Mainland as announced in the National 13<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan in 2016 and the role played by Hong Kong in this regard as well as the feasibility of mutual qualifications recognition. SED advised that EDB and the QF Secretariat had shared on various occasions the experience in developing and implementing HKQF with their counterparts on the Mainland. The Administration would continue to liaise with the relevant authorities with a view to sharing the experience and playing an active role in the setting up of the country's QF. It would in effect foster the mobility of Hong Kong residents to work on the Mainland if their qualifications would be duly recognized.



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49. Noting from paragraph 14 of the Administration's paper that the Administration had completed referencing/comparability projects with QF of other places, Mr IP Kin-yuen enquired about the progress of mutual qualifications recognition with these countries.

50. SED advised that in developing HKQF, it was the long term objective to enhance collaboration and facilitate exchange and mutual qualifications recognition with other places worldwide. The Administration was working towards the direction and would explore opportunities to further enhance collaboration with other places. SED and Deputy Secretary for Education (1) further advised that the Administration had completed four comparability studies with QF of the European Union, Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand. Referencing projects had been undertaken to provide a platform to understand the corresponding levels of qualifications between HKQF and QF of these places. This would facilitate mutual qualifications recognition with these places in future, though it was envisaged that mutual recognition of specific qualifications would involve more in-depth discussion within individual trades and industries.

51. The Chairman considered that since HKQF was launched in 2008, the Administration should review the effectiveness of HKQF in enhancing the quality, professionalism and competitiveness of the workforce.

52. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:27 pm.