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5 August 2021

Clerk to the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Ms Peggy CHUNG)

Dear Ms Chung,

Panel on Public Service

Enquiry Relating to Government Non-Civil Service Contract staff

Thank you for your letter of 22 July 2021 referring an enquiry from a member of the public regarding government non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff to us.

Government departments employ their staff through the NCSC Staff Scheme in a relatively flexible manner for coping with any changing operational and service needs. Departments review the employment situation of their NCSC staff from time to time to ascertain if there is any need for replacing those NCSC positions with established long-term operational and service needs by civil service posts. The number of full-time NCSC positions in the Government reached a historical peak of 18 500 in 2006. Since then, the number has been on a decreasing trend generally. More than 8 800 full-time NCSC positions have been replaced by civil service posts so far.

The civil service recruitment policy of the Government is that the most suitable persons should be selected to fill civil service vacancies through an open, fair and competitive process. NCSC staff interested in civil service openings are welcome to take part in the open recruitment exercises of the civil service vacancies. As relevant working experience is one of the factors to be considered in the recruitment of civil servants, NCSC staff who meet the basic entry requirements of civil service ranks do generally enjoy a competitive edge over other applicants because of their working experience.

Regarding the NCSC staff employed by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), most of them are engaged under the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund (EMSTF) for providing various government departments and clientele organisations with maintenance, project management and consultancy services in the areas of electrical and mechanical engineering, air-conditioning, building services, electronics and vehicle engineering. The operation of the EMSTF is fully open to market competition. EMSD's service demand is subject to uncertainties associated with the fiscal conditions of its clients and competition in the open market. As such, it is more suitable for some of its services to be undertaken by NCSC staff in order to allow the needed flexibility in its operation. This will enable EMSD to adjust its staffing level and staff mix as necessary to dovetail with the peaks and troughs of business, while meeting the changing operational and service needs which are subject to market fluctuation and maintaining the service level and quality.

EMSD reviews its number of NCSC staff as well as its long-term business and operational needs from time to time with a view to retaining the necessary manpower flexibility to meet the specific operational and service needs. EMSD will continue to recruit different grades and ranks of civil servants in an open manner having regard to operational needs. It also encourages qualified NCSC staff to apply for civil service posts from time to time so that they may continue to serve the department and the community.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Linda LEUNG)
for Secretary for the Civil Service