

Index Page

Replies to supplementary questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2023-24

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Session No. : 20

Consolidated e-file name : LWB(W)-2S-e1.docx

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
S-LWB(W)01	SV040	KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian	141	(5) Subvention: Shine Skills Centres
S-LWB(W)02	SV039	CHAN Kapui, Judy	170	(3) Services for The Elderly
S-LWB(W)03	SV037	CHAU Siu-chung	170	(2) Social Security
S-LWB(W)04	S025	TANG Ka-piu	170	
S-LWB(W)05	S026	TANG Ka-piu	170	
S-LWB(W)06	SV041	TSE Wai-chuen, Tony	170	(3) Services for The Elderly (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services
S-LWB(W)07	SV042	YUNG Hoi-yan	170	(7) Young People
S-LWB(W)08	SV038	ZHANG Xinyu, Gary	186	(5) Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities and Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. SV040)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Shine Skills Centres

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Ms Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the number of persons with disabilities currently employed by the Government? Is there any increase or decrease in the number in recent years? Moreover, will the Government introduce measures to provide more employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in government departments?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian

Reply:

The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) collects statistical information from Bureaux/Departments (B/Ds) on employment of persons with disabilities each year. B/Ds collect relevant information through different channels, such as when applicants declare their disabilities on a voluntary basis and request for special arrangements in attending the selection interviews/tests having regard to their disabilities, or when serving employees apply for financial assistance to purchase technical aids to assist in their performance of duties. The Government does not require and does not request serving civil servants and applicants for government jobs to declare their disabilities. The number of civil servants known to have disabilities (excluding persons with colour blindness or defective colour perception) from 2019-20 to 2021-22 are 2 830, 2 715 and 2 607 respectively. As civil servants and applicants for government jobs declare their disabilities on a voluntary basis, the actual figures may be greater than the afore-mentioned statistical figures.

As an employer providing equal employment opportunities, the Government has been committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities have equal opportunities when applying for government jobs. CSB has formulated and implemented appropriate measures to facilitate the application for government jobs by persons with disabilities, and issued relevant guidelines to B/Ds for reference. These facilitation measures include: (i) if an applicant with disabilities meets the basic entry requirements for a post, he/she will be directly invited to attend the selection interview/test, without the need to go through any shortlisting procedure; (ii) the recruiting B/D is required to proactively check with individual applicants

with disabilities whether they need any assistance or adjustment arrangement, and suitably adjust the interview/test process to cater for their special needs; (iii) if an applicant with disabilities is considered by the recruitment board to be suitable to carry out the duties of certain posts in a specific rank, he/she may be recommended for appointment even though he/she may not be able to perform the full range of duties of every post in the rank concerned due to his/her disabilities; (iv) the recruitment board will consider giving an appropriate degree of priority for appointment to applicants with disabilities found suitable for appointment among other applicants of comparable suitability for appointment; and (v) if an applicant with disabilities who meets the basic entry requirements for a post is not recommended for appointment, the recruitment board is required to submit the recommendation to an officer at a rank not lower than the Assistant Director level in the recruiting department/grade for consideration and decision.

Moreover, CSB has since 2016 launched the Internship Scheme for Students with Disabilities (“the Scheme”), and doubled the number of internship places since 2018 from an average of 50 a year to 100. The Scheme enables students with disabilities to gain work experience and gives B/Ds opportunities to enhance their understanding of the talents and potential of persons with disabilities. Since its inception, a total of 575 full-time tertiary students with disabilities and students of the Shine Skills Centre of the Vocational Training Council have participated in the Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(W)02

(Question Serial No. SV039)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Charmaine LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide the statistics on the demand for day respite service for the elderly in each of the 18 districts in Hong Kong.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy

Reply:

The number of day respite service places provided by day care centres/units for the elderly (DEs/DCUs) in 2022-23 (as at the end of December 2022) with a break down by District Council (DC) district is set out at Annex. The overall utilisation rate of respite service is 26.1%.

Day respite service for the elderly aims at relieving the pressure of carers of elderly persons, allowing them to take short breaks or attend to other matters as needed. The Social Welfare Department does not have the statistics on the demand for day respite service by DC district.

**Number of day respite service places at DEs/DCUs by district
in 2022-23**

District	2022-2023 (as at end-December 2022)
Central & Western	13
Eastern	3
Wan Chai	3
Southern	2
Islands	2
Kwun Tong	41
Wong Tai Sin	14
Sai Kung	13
Kowloon City	-
Sham Shui Po	29
Yau Tsim Mong	5
Sha Tin	28
Tai Po	12
North	5
Yuen Long	13
Tsuen Wan	18
Kwai Tsing	15
Tuen Mun	23
Total	239

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(W)03

(Question Serial No. SV037)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Charmaine LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide the number of persons participating in the Integrated Employment Assistance Programme for Self-reliance (IEAPS) and/or receiving employment support services each year from 2013 to 2022, as well as the numbers of participants who have “secured employment” and “returned to mainstream schooling” during the same period.

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung

Reply:

From January 2013 to end-December 2022, a cumulative headcount of 133 609 persons had participated in the IEAPS and/or received employment support services, and 26 691 persons (20%) had secured employment or returned to mainstream schooling. As individual participants may leave or re-join owing to short-term paid employment or change in their personal circumstances (such as health conditions), SWD currently does not have a breakdown of the number of participants or the number of those who have secured employment or returned to mainstream schooling by year. The relevant information will be compiled for reference in the future.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(W)04

(Question Serial No. S025)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Charmaine LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2022-23, among the 166 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that applied for Lump Sum Grant (LSG) subventions:

- (a) How many NGOs used government properties to provide services?
- (b) How many government properties were involved? Among these properties, how many (i) charged or (ii) did not charge rent?
- (c) What was the Government's total rental income?

(Please provide the information in the table below)

(a) NGO	(b) Location of government property	(c) Total rent charged in 2022-23
A	AAA	\$xxx,xxx
	BBB	\$0

B	CCC	...
...
Total		
XXX	XXX (i) Charging rent: XXX (ii) Not charging rent: XXX	\$xxx,xxx,xxx

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

In 2022-23, a total of 166 NGOs operated over 3 100 subvented service units under the LSG Subvention System. These welfare facilities were located in different premises, including government properties, public housing units or commercial buildings, etc. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will pay NGOs operating the subvented service units for the rent, rates and other expenses of the premises concerned. Generally speaking, NGOs that rent government properties to operate subvented services will only be charged a nominal rent by the Government. SWD does not maintain separate statistics on the number of subvented service units located in government properties or the rent of such properties, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(W)05

(Question Serial No. S026)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Charmaine LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

When the Social Welfare Department (SWD) signs service agreements with non-governmental organisations (NGOs):

- (a) Has an agreement period been set for individual services provided by the NGOs? If yes, please provide the relevant information in a table. If no, how many NGOs and services are operating without a set period and why?
- (b) Are there any terms stipulating under what circumstances will the agreements for individual services be terminated?
- (c) Further to the question above, have any NGOs had their individual service agreements terminated in the past 3 years? If yes, what are the details and reasons for that?
- (d) If a service agreement is terminated, what arrangements will be made to ensure that the affected service users do not suddenly lose the service they need?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

- (a) As at 31 March 2023, SWD signed a total of 390 Funding and Service Agreements (FSAs) with 166 NGOs. Details are tabulated below:

	No. of FSAs
Time-defined FSA	263
Non-time-defined FSA	127

Some NGOs had signed service agreements with SWD prior to the implementation of the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System. Agreements signed under the previous subvention system were not time-defined. At present, all FSAs signed by new service units subvented by SWD are time-defined. SWD will review the contents of FSAs from time to time as necessary, and will convert non-time-defined FSAs to time-defined ones when revisions are made.

- (b) Whether they are operating under time-defined or non-time-defined FSAs, NGOs are required to properly monitor and manage their service units to ensure their compliance with FSA requirements. In the event of non-compliance with the terms and requirements of FSAs, SWD will require the NGO concerned to formulate an action plan for implementing rectification or improvement measures within a specified timeframe, and, depending on circumstances, may also conduct investigations, issue warnings and/or directions for remedial measures, or even consider termination of the related FSAs.
- (c) In the past 3 years (i.e. from 2020-21 to 2022-23), none of the NGOs have had their FSAs terminated due to non-compliance with FSA requirements.
- (d) In making the decision to terminate an FSA, SWD will fully consider the possible impacts on the service users and the remedial measures to be taken, while making appropriate arrangements to ensure that they continue to receive the welfare services they need.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(W)06

(Question Serial No. SV041)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly
(4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Charmaine LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What criteria should a product meet to be included in the Reference List of Recognised Technology Application Products (Reference List) of the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (I&T Fund)?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony

Reply:

The Government allocated \$1 billion to launch the I&T Fund in December 2018 to subsidise eligible elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure, rent or try out technology products, with a view to improving the quality of life of service users and reducing the pressure on care staff and carers.

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) gauges the demand for technology products in the elderly and rehabilitation care service sector through The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS). HKCSS has also established an Expert Group to help develop the Reference List for organisations to refer to when applying for the procurement or rental of technology products. The list is updated from time to time, and the latest version was released in September 2022. Furthermore, an Assessment Panel (AP) has been formed to examine and advise on the applications for the I&T Fund, and recommend the appropriate funding amount to be approved. The AP comprises professionals from the academia, information technology, allied health, social welfare sectors, as well as representatives of the relevant government bureaux and departments. If the technology products under application are not on the Reference List, the AP will decide whether to approve the application having regard to the established assessment criteria, including the feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the products, as well as the benefits that the products can bring to service users, etc.

SWD will work with HKCSS to continuously collect stakeholders and service users' feedback on the application of technology, and will review and update the Reference List in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(W)07

(Question Serial No. SV042)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (7) Young People

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Charmaine LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What are the key performance indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the Strive and Rise Programme (the Programme) in lifting underprivileged students out of intergenerational poverty?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan

Reply:

The performance indicator we set for the Programme is that no less than 70% of mentees who completed the one-year Programme to achieve improvement in terms of personal development and positive thinking. We have commissioned a research team from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to evaluate the Programme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. SV038)

Head: (186) Transport Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (5) Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities and Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Transport (Miss Rosanna LAW)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has to set aside an amount to provide Special Fare Days for incidents causing service disruptions. Has this caused an increase in the Government's expenditure on reimbursement of the revenue forgone to MTRCL on these days under the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the \$2 Scheme)? If yes, will relevant measures be implemented to avoid the extra cost being borne by the Government?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary

Reply:

Under the new arrangement of the reviewed Fare Adjustment Mechanism by MTRCL and the Government, MTRCL will rebate passengers for service disruptions by arranging "Thank You Day" on specific weekend(s). On a "Thank You Day", all Octopus or QR code ticket users travelling on MTR lines can enjoy a 50% fare discount. MTRCL held the first "Thank You Days" under the new arrangement on 8 and 9 April 2023.

When beneficiaries of the \$2 Scheme travel on MTR services covered by the \$2 Scheme on a "Thank You Day", MTRCL will offer them a \$1 fare discount, which is half the \$2 flat fare, meaning they will only need to pay \$1 per trip. According to the agreement entered into between the Government and MTRCL under the \$2 Scheme, fare concessions offered by MTRCL will be deducted from the Government's reimbursement of the revenue forgone to the company under the \$2 Scheme. As such, no additional expenditure will be incurred for each trip on a "Thank You Day" in relation to the Government's reimbursement of the revenue forgone to MTRCL under the \$2 Scheme. On the contrary, the Government will pay \$1 less for each of these trips.

- End -