

**Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in
examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Session No. : 11**

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)001

Question Serial No.

Head: 90 – Labour Department Subhead(No. & title):

0073

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In the Budget, it is proposed to raise the ceiling of monthly income under the Pilot Transport Support Scheme (TSS) to \$6,500, extend the subsidy period to 12 months and allow people working and living in the same district to apply for the allowance. How will the Administration step up publicity on the Scheme and the relaxation measures to the low income group? What is the expected number of new applicants? Has assessment been made on whether funding for the Scheme is adequate? Will the Administration consider allowing low income earners from other districts (e.g. Sham Shui Po, Tai Kok Tsui, Kwun Tong and Wong Tai San) to apply for the Scheme?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The TSS aims to provide a time-limited transport subsidy as an incentive to the needy job-seekers and low-income employees living in Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands districts to seek jobs and work across districts. After reviewing the Scheme, the Government considers that its objective should remain broadly unchanged. The Financial Secretary announced in his 2008-09 Budget that the eligibility criteria of applicants and the period of allowance could be suitably relaxed. To widely publicise the relaxations and the details of the pilot TSS, the Labour Department will stage a series of promotional and publicity activities, including broadcasting Announcements in the Public Interest, issuing press release, distributing posters and publicity leaflets, arranging advertisements on public transport systems serving the four designated remote districts, promoting in job fairs and road shows etc.

According to the 2006 district statistics, there were 40 500 unemployed persons and 157 100 employees with monthly income of \$6,500 or less and working 18 hours or more a week living in the four designated districts. However, these figures have not taken into account those with personal asset value of no more than \$44,000 (which is one of the eligibility criteria under the scheme) as no such data are available. Thus it is difficult to estimate the actual number of persons who will join the Scheme under the relaxed regime. Notwithstanding this, we believe that the remainder of the non-recurrent commitment of \$365 million approved by the Finance Committee in April 2007 should be adequate to implement the relaxations.

Since there is no change to the objective of the Scheme, only eligible persons living in the four designated remote districts will be covered.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)002

Question Serial No.

0074

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the pilot Transport Support Scheme under the matters requiring special attention, will the Administration inform this Council of the latest number of low-income earners applying for the Scheme; their distribution by district and occupation; the payouts approved since the implementation of the Scheme, the distribution of the payouts by districts and the percentage of the funding accounted for?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

Up to end-February 2008, a total of 6 412 persons applied to join the pilot Transport Support Scheme. Of these, 2 924 (45.6%) came from Yuen Long District, 2 185 (34.1%) from Tuen Mun District, 831 (12.9%) from North District and 472 (7.4%) from Islands District. The applicants admitted were engaged in elementary occupations (50.8%), service workers and shop sales workers (23.9%), clerks (14.3%), associate professionals (5.9%) and others (5.1%).

By end-February 2008, an approved payout of \$ 9.15 million was recorded, accounting for 2.5% of the non-recurrent commitment of \$365 million approved by the Finance Committee in April 2007 to provide for allowances, processing cost and publicity expenditure etc. The breakdown of the approved payout by district is as follows:

District	Amount of approved payout (\$million)
Yuen Long	\$3.846
Tuen Mun	\$3.541
North	\$1.019
Islands	\$0.744

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)003

Question Serial No.

0075

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Brief Description that the Labour Department will combat illegal employment through inspection to workplaces. Please provide information on the numbers of related inspections and prosecutions taken in 2007 as compared with those of 2005 and 2006.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

In 2007, labour inspectors of the Labour Department conducted 131 224 workplace inspections to check, among other things, employees' proof of identity and employee records kept by employers with a view to detecting suspected cases of illegal employment. The number of such inspections in 2005 and 2006 were 131 399 and 127 871 respectively.

The Labour Department does not have the power to arrest and prosecute illegal workers and their employers. Suspected cases of illegal employment detected during workplace inspections are referred to the Police or the Immigration Department for further investigation and prosecution as appropriate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)004

Question Serial No.

0076

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The actual figure of the cases related to imported workers investigated in 2007 has substantially increased over that of 2006 as shown in the Indicators. Would the Administration provide reasons for the increase?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The number of cases related to imported workers investigated increased by 20 in 2007, compared with that in 2006. This was due to an increase in the applications processed under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS) and an increase in the number of employers who were new to SLS and hence less familiar with the Scheme's conditions.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)005

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Question Serial No.

0077

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With respect to the rights and benefits of employees under the Employment Ordinance, will the Administration conduct a comprehensive review to ensure that the legislation can keep up with the changes in the present labour market and labour relations? If yes, what is the timetable for the review and the expenditure involved? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Employment Ordinance (EO) provides a wide range of protection and entitlements to employees. We constantly keep the EO under review and make suitable improvements in tandem with Hong Kong's socio-economic developments. A recent example is the revision to the mode of calculation of statutory entitlements to ensure that all components of wages under the EO including commission are included in such calculation.

At present, there are two priority items for review, namely, provisions on "continuous contract" under the EO and issues relating to the enforcement of Labour Tribunal awards. The reviews are in progress.

The review of the EO is an ongoing process. We do not have a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title Commissioner for Labour

Date 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)006

Question Serial No.

0078

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the Brief Description that the Labour Department will continue to inspect workplaces to render protection to cleaning workers and security guards under the Wage Protection Movement (WPM). Will the Administration advise on the irregularities spotted under the WPM and the related figures since its implementation? Given the voluntary nature of the WPM, what specific measures are in place to deter participating employers from non-compliance of their pledges and punish the offending employers?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

Up to 29 February 2008, 14 employers participating in the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) were found to have breached the terms of the WPM. Of these, 13 employers or their contractors paid wages to their cleaning workers or security guards at a level below the relevant average market rates, and one employer did not enter into written employment contracts with his cleaning workers.

The concerned employers were urged to take remedial actions. Two employers subsequently rectified the breaches and six employers withdrew from the WPM. The Labour Department (LD) is taking follow-up actions with the other six employers with a view to rectifying the situation.

LD will continue to conduct inspections to workplaces where cleaning workers and security guards are engaged by employers participating in the WPM and their contractors. Any breach of the terms of the WPM will be conveyed to the concerned employers for rectification. An employer who fails to take remedial actions will have his name removed from the list of entities participating in the WPM.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)007

Question Serial No.

0424

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the strike of bar-benders in 2007, would the Administration inform this Council if a review has been conducted on the causes, the ways of handling the strike adopted by the Administration and the long-term impact on labour relations? If yes, what are the findings? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) has taken a critical look at the bar-benders' strike and the possible implications for labour relations, particularly for the construction industry. The causes of the labour dispute were complex, but, as with most labour disputes, the lack of effective communication between the parties concerned was a major contributing factor. In the light of the said labour dispute, LD will strengthen liaison with the stakeholders and encourage them to enter into constructive and early dialogue on employment matters of mutual concern.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)008

Question Serial No.

0425

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Youth Employment Resource Centres (YERCs) are coming into operation gradually. In this regard, will the Administration inform this Council whether plans have been made to step up publicity of the YERCs to young people? If yes, what are the details of the specific publicity programmes? Will they include strengthening ties with secondary schools so that publicity can be targeted at the graduating students directly?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) adopts a multi-pronged promotional strategy to publicise the services of the two new Youth Employment Resource Centres (YERCs), including broadcasting television and radio Announcements in the Public Interest, disseminating information on YERC activities through a dedicated website, launching district-based promotional activities as well as staging membership recruitment campaigns in secondary schools and at locations much frequented by young people.

To strengthen collaboration with secondary schools and enhance students' career awareness, LD has arranged meetings with associations of school principals in different districts as well as the Hong Kong Association of Careers Masters and Guidance Masters to promote YERC services and jointly organise school-based careers projects.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)009

Question Serial No.

0426

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the preparatory work for possible introduction of statutory minimum wage for cleaning workers and security guards mentioned in the matters requiring special attention, would the Administration inform this Council of the details of the preparatory work and whether overseas visits by staff will be included? Please also provide a comparison of the cost and manpower for the preparatory work involved in 2008-09 with those in 2007-08.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

Preparatory work for the possible introduction of a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards is broadly categorised into five major areas, namely, definitions of cleaning workers and security guards; special measures, if any, for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and youth without working experience; definition of a SMW; mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level; as well as enforcement and penalty in relation to the implementation of a SMW. To tap the experience of overseas jurisdictions in the implementation of the SMW, the Labour Department will arrange staff to conduct visits to the United Kingdom and the United States in mid-2008.

A comparison of the cost and manpower required for the preparatory work in 2008-09 and 2007-08 is given below:

Financial Year	Manpower required for the preparatory work	Estimated staff cost (\$)
2008-09	One Senior Labour Officer, one Labour Officer and one Programme Officer (non-civil service contract staff)	1.97 million
2007-08 (Since September 2007)	One Senior Labour Officer, one Labour Officer and one Programme Officer (non-civil service contract staff) (employment effective from November 2007 for the latter officer)	1.05 million

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)010

Question Serial No.

0427

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the preparation for the final review of the Wage Protection Movement (WPM) mentioned in the matters requiring special attention, would the Administration inform this Council of the criteria and the methods for assessing the effectiveness of the WPM in the final review? How can neutrality and accuracy of the review be ensured? Will the Administration consider commissioning an independent academic institution to conduct the review? What are the estimated cost and manpower involved for the final review?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) will consult the Labour Advisory Board on the criteria for assessing the overall effectiveness of the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) in the second quarter of 2008 and the overall review of the WPM will be conducted in October 2008.

LD does not have any plans to commission outside bodies to conduct the overall review. The review will be undertaken by existing staff of the LD with technical support from the Census & Statistics Department.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)011

Question Serial No.

0428

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the promotion of employment practices to support working parents, will the Administration inform this Council what specific work has been carried out in this area in the past and the resources and manpower involved? Were any studies and comparisons with other jurisdictions made on policies to support working parents? If yes, what are the findings? Will the Administration consider introducing new measures including paternity leave and parental leave? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

To help working parents take care of their family needs, the Labour Department (LD) has been actively encouraging the adoption of family-friendly employment practices (FFEPs) in the workplace. A large-scale seminar targeting employers and human resources practitioners was held in June 2007. The seminar was very well received and attracted over 350 participants. In 2007-08, we organised six roving exhibitions at various locations throughout the territory to increase public awareness of FFEPs. Enlightened FFEPs were also promoted among employers and human resources practitioners through LD's regular promotional activities. Total expenditure for organising these activities was around \$270,000. As these activities were part of our ongoing tasks, we did not have a breakdown of the manpower requirement in relation to these promotional activities.

We are conducting a study on the legislation governing paternity leave and related entitlements in other economies. The study is in progress.

In considering whether we should introduce any new employment measures to support working parents, we need to take into account local circumstances as well as overseas experience and strike a balance between the interests of employees and employers. In the meantime, LD will continue to act as a facilitator partnering with the business community and relevant organisations in promoting FFEPs, including the provision of paternity leave, to help employees balance work and family commitments.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)012

Question Serial No.

0429

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the promotion of family-friendly employment practices, will the Labour Department (LD) inform this Council of the specific work in this area in 2007-08 and the next financial year? What family-friendly measures are promoted? What are the expenditure and manpower involved? Is there any target to assess the effectiveness of the promotional efforts and the employers' response? Will LD consider conducting relevant surveys to study the implementation of family-friendly practices by employers in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) has been encouraging employers to adopt family-friendly employment practices (FFEPs) such as family leave benefits, flexible work arrangements and employee support schemes. In 2007-08, six roving exhibitions were held at various locations throughout the territory to increase public awareness of the subject. A large-scale seminar targeting employers and human resources practitioners was organised in June 2007. We have also promoted enlightened FFEPs through our network of nine Industry-based Tripartite Committees (TCs) and 18 Human Resources Managers Clubs (HRMCs) formed in various trades and industries.

In 2008-09, we will, apart from our regular promotional activities, produce a series of newspaper supplements and a booklet on good people management measures, including FFEPs, to encourage their adoption by employers in the workplace.

For the above-mentioned activities, the total expenditure incurred in 2007-08 is \$270,000 while the estimated expenditure for 2008-09 is \$500,000. We do not have a separate breakdown of the manpower requirement as these activities are part of our on-going tasks.

Feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of our activities is collected from time to time. For the seminar held in June 2007, participants' comments were obtained by means of a questionnaire and 94.2% of the participants rated the event as very satisfactory or satisfactory. They considered that the seminar provided a useful forum for experience sharing and helped to enhance their understanding on the implementation of FFEPs.

Officers of LD have been collecting information on FFEPs adopted in different establishments through their regular contacts with employers and human resources practitioners and such information has been helpful to facilitate the drawing up of suitable promotional programmes. We have at present no plan to conduct any formal study on FFEPs in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)013

Question Serial No.

0430

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the promotion of the Wage Protection Movement (WPM) mentioned in the Brief Description, will the Administration advise this Council on the latest figures on the expected expenditure and manpower required for promoting the movement in the 2008-09 estimates; the total cost and staffing arrangements involved since the implementation of the WPM; whether extra non-civil service contract staff and outsourcing arrangements are required, and the expenses involved?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The total estimated expenditure in 2008-09 of \$14.04 million under the Labour Relations Programme and the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme covers expenditure for publicity, as well as staff and related costs for overseeing the implementation of the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM), providing conciliation service, and carrying out inspection, investigation and prosecution of wage offences, as appropriate. The 23 posts created in 2007-08 will continue to be responsible for the implementation of the WPM, as well as for stepping up enforcement against wage offences.

The total estimated expenditure involved since the launch of the WPM (i.e. October 2006 – March 2008) was \$14.5 million, including \$0.38 million for the employment of two non-civil service contract staff.

The service of outside bodies was procured in mounting publicity activities, such as the production of the Announcement in the Public Interest and publicity materials (for example, leaflets and posters). The expenditure was included in the sum of \$14.5 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)014

Question Serial No.

0431

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the promotion of the Wage Protection Movement mentioned in the Brief Description, will the Administration inform this Council of the latest progress of the movement, including the number of workers benefited, their percentages among the total workforce of cleaning workers and security guards, the numbers of participating employers and enterprises, and their percentage among enterprises hiring cleaning workers and security guards?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

Up to end-February 2008, a total of 1089 enterprises and organisations have pledged their support for the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM). According to the information provided by 1 020 participating entities, a total of 36 500 cleaning workers and security guards are being directly employed by these entities or by their cleansing and guarding services contractors and sub-contractors. Together with the 27 000 cleaning workers and security guards who have benefited under the wage requirement applicable to service contractors of government departments, public bodies and other related bodies, it is estimated that some 63 500 (i.e. 34%) workers out of the total workforce of 189 500-plus cleaning workers and security guards enjoy wage protection.

As we do not have the information on the total number of employers or enterprises that employ cleaning workers and security guards, we are not able to provide the percentage of the WPM participating entities over those employers or enterprises.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)015

Question Serial No.

0432

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Chief Executive undertook that legislation for a minimum wage for cleaning workers and security guards would be introduced if the Wage Protection Movement (WPM) failed to yield satisfactory results. As the comprehensive review of the WPM would be conducted in October 2008, will the Administration inform this Council whether any contingency plans are in hand for early submission of the relevant bill to the Legislative Council in case the WPM fails to yield satisfactory results? If yes, what are the plans and the expected legislative timetable? Will the Administration expand the wage protection to cover other job titles?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) was launched in October 2006 with an overall review scheduled for October 2008 to evaluate its effectiveness. If the overall review indicates that the WPM fails to yield satisfactory results, the Administration will introduce a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards. Prior to this, a mid-term review would be conducted to gauge its progress. The Chief Executive (CE) stated in his 2007-08 Policy Address that if the mid-term review showed that the progress was unsatisfactory, the Administration “will further promote the movement as well as proceed immediately with the preparatory legislative work on a statutory minimum wage”.

The mid-term review of the WPM was conducted in October 2007. Views as to whether the progress was satisfactory were mixed. Since then, the Labour Department has stepped up the promotion of the WPM and, at the same time, commenced studies on issues that need to be tackled should the WPM eventually fail to yield satisfactory results and a SMW for cleaning workers and security guard needs to be introduced.

The CE also made it clear that if the overall review of the WPM to be conducted in October 2008 indicates that the movement has failed, the Government will introduce a bill on a SMW for cleaning workers and security guards as early as possible in the 2008-09 legislative session.

The Labour Department is making every effort to encourage employers to participate in the WPM as well as expediting the preparatory work for possible SMW legislation for cleaning workers and security guards in consultation with stakeholders.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)016

Question Serial No.

0433

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In respect of Chief Executive's policy orientation for promotion of social enterprise development, please advise this Council on whether the Labour Department has put in place relevant measures with regard to employment services to tie in with the policy. If yes, what are the measures? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

Promoting self-reliance through provision of appropriate employment services is one of the missions of the Labour Department (LD). Pursuant to this, we provide free recruitment services to help enterprises, including social enterprises, to hire suitable employees through means such as the dissemination of vacancy information, referral of job seekers and organisation of tailor-made recruitment activities, etc. Of the 565 236 vacancies netted by LD during 2007, 44.5% were suitable for persons with education of Secondary Three or below. Free employment support is also provided to facilitate the placement of job seekers, with some programmes especially designed for those who may have more difficulties in securing placement.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)017

Question Serial No.

0434

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In respect of the promotion of corporate social responsibility, please inform this Council of the specific work in 2007-08 and the coming year including measures to promote corporate social responsibility and the expenditure and manpower involved. Will the Administration consider conducting a relevant study to find out the level of awareness of enterprises in social responsibility and the implementation work?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

To promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the field of employment, LD has been encouraging employers to adopt “people-oriented” management measures, including family-friendly employment practices, in addition to their obligations towards their employees and family members.

In 2007-08, we did not organise any specific CSR-related activities but the concept of CSR had been incorporated where appropriate in the various promotional activities undertaken by LD. In 2008-09, we will continue with such promotional efforts. As these activities form part of our ongoing tasks, we do not have a breakdown of the resources and manpower required. Currently, LD has no plan to conduct a study on CSR.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)018

Question Serial No.

0435

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding a series of exhibitions to be staged to promote public understanding of the Employment Ordinance (EO) and related matters mentioned in the matters requiring special attention, would the Administration inform this Council whether any assessment has been made on the effectiveness of such exhibitions? If yes, in what ways has the assessment been made? Were questionnaires issued in the past to gauge visitors' views on the exhibitions and their usefulness in enhancing understanding of the EO and related matters? If no, will the Administration consider introducing assessment measures?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

In 2007-08, the Labour Department staged six exhibitions on the EO and related matters in various locations throughout the territory.

The exhibitions were well received, attracting a total of 19 300 visitors. We have assessed the effectiveness of the exhibitions by means of a quiz designed to test the visitors' understanding of the provisions of the EO. Altogether 1 900 visitors participated in the quiz.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)019

Question Serial No.

1206

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

- (a) Regarding inspections to employment agencies under the indicators, will the Administration advise this Council on the number of non-compliant employment agencies and the major irregularities in the previous year?
- (b) The Administration explains that the drop in the number of inspections to employment agencies was due to re-prioritisation of service. Will this result in the lack of monitoring of some employment agencies thus giving rise to the false picture of a decline in irregularities?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

- (a) The Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department is responsible for the licensing of employment agencies (EAs). EAA regulates EA activities in Hong Kong by way of inspection, complaint investigation and prosecution. Officers of EAA conducted 1 086 inspection visits in 2007 resulting in the conviction of three EAs. One EA was convicted of overcharging of commission and unlicensed operation before obtaining a licence, one for failure to display information on the maximum commission receivable by EA and one for failure to notify EAA on the change of management. EAA revoked one licence and refused to renew one licence in the same year.
- (b) Although the number of inspections in 2007 dropped as compared with the figure in 2006, EAA focused on EAs with higher risk to maintain the effectiveness of enforcement action.

With the filling of existing vacancy, EAA's inspections in 2008 will return to the target of 1 300 visits.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)020

Question Serial No.

1207

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the numbers of talks, lectures and seminars organised as shown in the targets, will the Administration advise on whether the increase in actual numbers over the target figures in 2006 and 2007 reflected a higher demand for such talks from the public or the trades concerned? Will the Administration consider raising the target figures? Moreover, has the Administration made any assessment on the effectiveness of these talks, lectures and seminars? If yes, please provide information on the assessment methods and results. If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The target number of talks, lectures and seminars is only a planning target, not a ceiling of such activities to be conducted. The Labour Department (LD) will conduct more talks, lectures and seminars in respect of specific occupational safety and health issues, e.g. “Prevention of Plantar Fasciitis” and “Safety and Health for Elderly Home Workers”, when there is a need to raise the awareness of employers and employees in these areas, or when there is an increase in demand.

LD evaluates the effectiveness of these talks, lectures and seminars through evaluation and suggestion forms completed by participants. The feedback has been generally positive.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)021

Question Serial No.

1208

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the accident rates of industrial and non-industrial employees as shown in the indicators, will the Administration inform this Council whether assessment has been made on the reasons for the drop in the two figures? Will the Administration consider setting specific targets for the accident rates so as to measure the performance of the Labour Department in promoting industrial safety?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

In 2007, there were improvements in the safety performance of major industries in the industrial sector (including the construction, catering and manufacturing industries) as well as those in the non-industrial sector e.g. the wholesale and retail trade, the medical and health services, sanitary and similar services, and education services. These had contributed to the decline in accident rates in 2007. Indeed, it represents part of a continuous trend of improvements in occupational safety over the past few years in Hong Kong resulting from the concerted efforts of all parties concerned, including employers, employees, contractors, interested bodies and the Government in promoting compliance with relevant legislation, safety training and respect for safety at work in general.

There are many factors which affect the accident rates, such as general economic conditions, technology, changing nature of work and workforce demographics, etc. Hence, it would be difficult for the Administration to set realistic targets for accident rates. Nevertheless, the Labour Department will continue to proactively promote safety and health at work through the three-pronged strategy of legislation and enforcement, publicity and promotion, and education and training.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)022

Question Serial No.

1209

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The indicators show that over the years, the placements achieved were less than the number of able-bodied and disabled job seekers registered. In this connection, will the Administration inform this Council what measures are taken by the Labour Department to assist registered job seekers who are eventually not placed into employment?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

For able-bodied job seekers, the Labour Department (LD) will keep up its efforts to improve the quality of employment services and enhance the employment opportunities of job seekers. We will strengthen district-based and tailor-made recruitment activities for employers to canvass more local vacancies for job seekers of different districts. For those job seekers who need more intensive and personalised services, we will invite them to join the Job Matching Programme where career counselling and active job matching services are provided. We will also continue to implement the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged and the Work Trial Scheme to help place middle-aged job seekers and job seekers with special difficulties into employment.

LD will also continue to promote its special employment programmes for people with disabilities, e.g. the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme and the Self Help Integrated Placement Service, to enhance their employability. We will organise public education and publicity activities such as screening/broadcasting TV/radio programmes, arranging advertisement on bus bodies and newspapers, and organising seminars for employers to promote public understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities, with a view to helping disabled job seekers secure employment in the open market.

LD achieved all-time high placements for 135 489 able-bodied job seekers and 2 619 disabled job seekers in 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)023

Question Serial No.

1210

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the Brief Description that publicity and enforcement efforts were enhanced to ensure adequate protection of drainage workers from gas poisoning. Please provide the trend of gas poisoning cases involving drainage workers over the past 3 years. What specific measures have been taken to prevent gas poisoning accidents and has assessment of the effectiveness of these measures been made?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

In 2005-2007, there were two gassing accidents in 2006 involving four drainage workers (three killed and one injured).

The Labour Department (LD) attaches great importance to gassing accidents involving drainage workers and has taken various measures to prevent such accidents. In 2007, LD conducted a targeted campaign to promote prevention of gas poisoning for drainage workers. On the publicity and education fronts, LD arranged publicity and promotional activities such as broadcasting Announcements in the Public Interest on television and radio, showing educational videos on mobile advertising media and organizing occupational health talks for drainage contractors and workers. LD also published two guides to introduce appropriate preventive measures.

On the enforcement front, LD conducted a total of 619 inspections to drainage work sites in 2007, including inspections during night-time. These inspections focused on the adequacy and effectiveness of preventive measures taken, including risk assessments, ventilation, use of breathing apparatus and provision of information, instruction and training for workers. A total of 46 warning letters and four improvement notices were issued and two prosecutions taken. Conducting safety inspection is an integral part of LD's work. Over the years, we have observed that there has been a gradual improvement in the overall awareness of contractors and workers in preventing gassing accidents and implementation of preventive measures in general.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)024

Question Serial No.

1211

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the number of applications for payment under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund processed in 2007 as shown in the indicators, please provide a breakdown of the actual figures by the percentage accounted for by each industry.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department processed a total of 5 789 applications for payment under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund. A breakdown of these applications by industry is as follows:

Industry	No. of applications processed	Percentage
Construction	1 489	25.7%
Restaurants	1 436	24.8%
Land Freight Transport	473	8.2%
Import/Export	471	8.1%
Business Services	247	4.3%
Miscellaneous Personal Services	220	3.8%
Retail	207	3.6%
Others	1 246	21.5%
Total	5 789	100.0%

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)025

Question Serial No.

0224

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department will produce a booklet on enlightened employment practices to encourage their adoption by employers in the workplace. What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Kwan-yuen, Andrew

Reply:

The estimated cost of producing the booklet on enlightened employment practices is \$100,000.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)026

Question Serial No.

0293

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title): 000 Operational expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the studies conducted by the Department for the purposes of formulating and assessing policies (including in-house studies or those entrusted to consultants), please provide the relevant information in the following format:

(1) For the projects that have reserved funds for conducting consultancy studies in 2007-08, please provide information in the following format:

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Revised Estimate (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	The follow-ups taken by the Administration on the study reports and their progress (if any)	If completed, have they been released to the public? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?

(2) Is there any project that will reserve funds for conducting consultancy study in 2008-09? If yes, please provide the following information:

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Expenditure (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	Will the studies be released to the public if they are expected to be completed in the 2008-09 financial year? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply:

The details of projects for which the Labour Department has reserved funds for conducting consultancy studies for the purposes of formulating and assessing policies are set out below:

(1) 2007-08

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Revised Estimate (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	The follow-ups taken by the Administration on the study reports and their progress (if any)	If completed, have they been released to the public? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	To conduct a survey on the subsequent development of trainees of the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS) upon their completion of participation in the Scheme.	\$200,000	In progress	N.A. Survey report is not yet available.	Upon completion of the survey, the key findings will be disseminated on YWETS's website.

(2) 2008-09

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Expenditure (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	Will the studies be released to the public if they are expected to be completed in the 2008-09 financial year? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?
To be commissioned through Census & Statistics Department (C&SD)	Opinion survey on age discrimination in employment. The survey will be conducted via the Thematic Household Survey (THS) series of C&SD.	As the topics for inclusion in the THS and the data items to be covered for each topic are still being finalised by C&SD, a cost estimation for the survey is not yet available at the moment.	Under planning	Upon the completion of the survey by the contractor, C&SD will prepare a survey report for release to the public, probably in 2009-10, both in printed version and on its website.

To be commissioned through C&SD	As part of the preparatory work for introducing a statutory minimum wage for cleaning workers and security guards, the Labour Department (LD), in collaboration with C&SD, will conduct a survey on cleansing and guarding services in private residential buildings through a contractor. The purpose of the survey is to find out the correlation among key variables (including the attributes of cleaning workers and security guards and the affordability of the residents in private residential buildings) to facilitate deliberations on both the coverage and the level of statutory minimum wage.	About \$1 million	The survey will start in March 2008 and is expected to be completed in 5 months' time.	LD and C&SD will report the survey findings to the Labour Advisory Board and the Manpower Panel of the Legislative Council.
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Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)027

Question Serial No.

0335

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

After relaxing the eligibility criteria of the pilot Transport Support Scheme in 2008-09, what is the expected increase in the number of applicants and the expenditure of allowance? What is the rate of increase in comparison with similar figures in 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

According to the 2006 district statistics, there were 40 500 unemployed persons and 157 100 employees with monthly income of \$6,500 or less and working 18 hours or more a week living in the four remote districts, viz Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands. However, these figures have not taken into account those with personal asset value of no more than \$44,000 (which is one of the eligibility criteria under the Transport Support Scheme) as no such data are available. Thus it is difficult to estimate the number of persons who will join the Scheme under the relaxed regime and the expenditure of allowance in 2008-09 and to compare them with those in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)028

Question Serial No.

0336

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the wage offences, please provide information on the number of cases on intelligence collection and successful convictions against employers contravening the wage provisions for 2005-6, 2006-07 and 2007-08. What are the respective figures of these cases relating to the catering, construction and import and export industries?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The total number of intelligence on wage offences collected by the Labour Department in 2005, 2006 and 2007 was 313, 491 and 457 respectively. The respective figures involving the catering, construction and import/export industries were as follows:

Industry	Number of intelligence collected		
	2005	2006	2007
Catering	118	115	69
Construction	14	96	127
Import/Export	18	18	26

The total number of convicted summonses against employers contravening the wage provisions in 2005, 2006 and 2007 was 587, 785 and 960 respectively. The respective figures involving the catering, construction and import/export industries were as follows:

Industry	Number of summonses convicted		
	2005	2006	2007
Catering	114	92	124
Construction	141	261	199
Import/Export	18	5	37

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)029

Question Serial No.

0337

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please set out in a table, by the amount of payments and number of applications, the top three industries that account for the largest number of applications for payment under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF) for 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08. What was the financial situation of the PWIF in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 respectively and the estimated financial situation in 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The information requested is provided below:

Top three industries by the amount of payment made by the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF)

Year	Industry	Amount of payment (\$ million)
2005-06	Restaurants	55.6
	Construction	36.3
	Import/Export	19.5
	Others	80.5
	Total	191.9
2006-07	Construction	31.4
	Restaurants	19.1
	Import/Export	16.9
	Others	69.7
	Total	137.1
2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)	Construction	16.9
	Restaurants	11.0
	Import/Export	10.1
	Others	34.4
	Total	72.4

Top three industries by the number of applications to the PWIF

Year	Industry	Number of applications
2005-06	Restaurants	2 923
	Construction	2 033
	Miscellaneous Personal Services	508
	Others	3 287
	Total	8 751
2006-07	Construction	1 950
	Restaurants	1 761
	Import/Export	615
	Others	2 939
	Total	7 265
2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)	Construction	1 116
	Restaurants	899
	Import/Export	576
	Others	1 553
	Total	4 144

Financial position of the PWIF

Year	Income (\$ million)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Surplus (\$ million)
2005-06	502.0	215.6	286.4
2006-07	522.1	160.1	362.0
2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)	516.2	94.1	422.1
2008-09 Estimates	438.2	166.9	271.3

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)030

Question Serial No.

0338

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the 15 new posts created under this programme, please list the posts to be created, highlighting the grades, duties and annual staff remuneration involved. Please also indicate what services will be improved following the creation of these posts.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The ranks and annual salaries of the 15 posts to be created under the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme are provided below:

Rank	Number of post	Annual salary (at mid-point) per post (\$)	Total annual salary (\$)
Assistant Labour Officer II	10	333,180	3,331,800
Accounting Officer II	2	333,180	666,360
Assistant Clerical Officer	3	179,880	539,640
Total	15	--	4,537,800

These 15 posts are created to replace 15 existing non-civil service contract positions in various functional areas of the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme. The officers concerned are mainly responsible for processing applications for payment from the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF), maintaining the financial accounts of the PWIF, determining whether applicants are entitled to compensation from the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund, assisting in the formulation and implementation of new initiatives on employee's compensation, rendering support services in processing prosecution cases and compiling information and statistics on labour administration. The Labour Department considers that such duties should more appropriately be performed by civil servants.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)031

Question Serial No.

0371

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What specific and proactive measures will be taken by the Labour Department to combat illegal employment? What are the details of the measures and the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

The Labour Department adopts a multi-pronged approach to combat illegal employment. We will strengthen our intelligence collection and analysis and mount more targeted operations with other enforcement departments against establishments with suspected illegal workers. We will publicise our complaint hotline (2815 2200) to encourage reporting of illegal employment activities. We will also launch public education programmes to raise public awareness of the severe penalty of imprisonment for employing illegal workers.

As the officers concerned also enforce labour laws and assist in related activities to enhance public understanding, we do not have a separate breakdown of the manpower and expenditure involved in combating illegal employment.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)032

Question Serial No.

0372

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With regard to continual promotion of the Wage Protection Movement and the preparatory work on the study of possible introduction of minimum wage legislation for cleaning workers and security guards, what are the specific details of the work involved? How will the Labour Department allocate resources including manpower and expenditure to carry out both work?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) will continue to promote the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) through different publicity activities in 2008-09. These include screening television and radio Announcements in the Public Interest through various media channels; distributing publicity materials such as leaflets and posters to different stakeholders; arranging outdoor advertisement through different channels and organising roving exhibitions. A total of 23 posts were created in 2007-08 for the implementation of the WPM as well as for stepping up enforcement against wage offences.

As for the preparatory work for introducing a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards, it is broadly categorised into five major areas, namely, definitions of cleaning workers and security guards; special measures, if any, for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and youth without working experience; definition of a SMW; mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level; as well as enforcement and penalty in relation to the implementation of a SMW. A total of three posts, comprising one Senior Labour Officer, one Labour Officer and one Programme Officer (non-civil service contract staff), will provide dedicated support to undertake the preparatory work for introducing a SMW. The estimated cost of these three posts for 2008-09 is \$1.97 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)033

Question Serial No.

0373

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2007, the Labour Department (LD) processed 647 applications under the Supplementary Labour Scheme, an increase of 79 cases over 2006. It is estimated that the number of applications to be processed in 2008 will continue to rise to 670. In this regard, please advise on:

1. the distribution of applications by industry, job title and wages over the last two years;
2. the reasons for the expected continual increase in applications in 2008, and the major industries and job titles that are expected to be involved;
3. whether the LD has analysed the reasons for the increase in applications? If yes, what are the results? If no, what are the reasons?
4. whether a comprehensive review of the Scheme will be held including areas such as effectiveness and eligibility criteria? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

In 2006 and 2007, the Labour Department (LD) processed 568 and 647 applications respectively under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS).

1. Each application under the SLS usually involves more than one vacancy. Details of the distribution of vacancies processed under the SLS in 2006 and 2007 by industry, job title and wages are at Appendices 1 to 6.
2. In view of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining local workers for certain posts as a result of the continual improvement in the local economy and unemployment rate, the number of applications under the SLS processed in 2008 is expected to increase. The demand for imported care workers (elderly service) and farm workers is expected to continue in 2008.
3. The LD has studied the reasons for the increase in applications under the SLS. There was a substantial increase in applications from private residential care homes for the elderly in 2007 over that in 2006. The likely factors for the increase include the growth in our ageing population (thus generating demand for more care workers) and improvement in the economy (thus reducing the unemployment rate).
4. We do not have any plan to conduct a comprehensive review of the SLS.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**Vacancies under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2006
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of vacancies
1. Agriculture and fishing	387
2. Manufacturing	1 137
3. Construction	322
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	141
5. Transport, storage and communication	142
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	125
7. Community, social and personal services	450
Total	2 704

**Vacancies under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2007
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of vacancies
1. Agriculture and fishing	300
2. Manufacturing	518
3. Construction	46
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	205
5. Transport, storage and communication	44
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	37
7. Community, social and personal services	1 006
Total	2 156

**Vacancies under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2006
with breakdown by job title**

Job title	Number of vacancies
1. Livestock/ Poultry/ Fish/ Crops Farm Worker	345
2. Care Worker (Elderly Service)	332
3. Knitting Machine Operator	198
4. Exhibition Technician/ Specialist	144
5. Special Sewing Machine Operator	127
6. General Sewing Machine Operator	121
7. Aircraft Maintenance Technician	120
8. Life Guard	100
9. Cook	63
10. Others	1 154
Total	2 704

**Vacancies under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2007
with breakdown by job title**

Job title	Number of vacancies
1. Care Worker (Elderly Service)	854
2. Livestock/ Poultry/ Fish/ Crops Farm Worker	279
3. Cook	111
4. Transmission Tower Painter	100
5. Machine Setter	62
6. Machine Operator	49
7. Knitting Machine Operator	43
8. Bean Curd/ Soya Bean/ Bean Sprout Processing Worker	36
9. Ship Fitter	30
10. Others	592
Total	2 156

**Vacancies under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2006
with breakdown by wage level**

Monthly wage		Number of vacancies
1.	\$6,000 or below	345
2.	\$6,001-\$8,000	727
3.	\$8,001-\$10,000	505
4.	\$10,001-\$12,000	444
5.	\$12,001-\$14,000	252
6.	\$14,001-\$16,000	36
7.	\$16,001-\$18,000	151
8.	\$18,001-\$20,000	157
9.	Above \$20,000	87
Total		2 704

**Vacancies under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2007
with breakdown by wage level**

Monthly wage		Number of vacancies
1.	\$6,000 or below	55
2.	\$6,001-\$8,000	1 031
3.	\$8,001-\$10,000	476
4.	\$10,001-\$12,000	247
5.	\$12,001-\$14,000	155
6.	\$14,001-\$16,000	77
7.	\$16,001-\$18,000	34
8.	\$18,001-\$20,000	49
9.	Above \$20,000	32
Total		2 156

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)034

Question Serial No.

0720

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department will set up a central inspection team to independently handle complaints lodged by workers/employees, with a view to encouraging them to report malpractices in their workplaces for the Department's enforcement action. In this connection:

- (a) what will be the number, ranks and terms of appointment of the staff in the central inspection team? Is the team to be set up by internal deployment of staff or through creation of posts? What will be the cost incurred?
- (b) what will be the specific functions of the team?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

The Central Inspection Team will be staffed by one Divisional Occupational Safety Officer, five Occupational Safety Officers I and one Clerical Assistant. These officers are on permanent establishment and the estimated cost of these posts is \$3.3 million. The team will be set up through internal deployment as well as creation of new posts.

The establishment of a Central Inspection Team was the recommendation of the Corruption Prevention Department of the Independent Commission Against Corruption following its study on the Labour Department's enforcement of occupational safety and health legislation. The main function of the Central Inspection Team is to independently investigate complaints lodged by workers and employees about unsafe work practices in their workplaces. Such complaint handling mechanism, independent of district-based divisional offices, aims at encouraging workers and employees to come forth and report unsafe practices in their workplaces without fear of reprisal from employers. In addition, the team also conducts surprise inspections to workplaces randomly selected from different geographical areas. The objective is to have a system of independent inspection to enhance the current geographically based workplace inspection system.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)035

Question Serial No.

0721

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide information on the following:

- (a) Regarding inspections to industrial establishments where chemical and ergonomic hazards are common, what are the number of inspections made, the number of staff undertaking the inspections, the number of non-compliance cases requiring follow-up actions and the follow-up actions taken each year between 2005-06 and 2007-08?
- (b) What specific measures will be taken to step up inspections of these industrial establishments? What will be the manpower and expenditure involved? Will additional staff be recruited for these inspections? If yes, what will be the number of staff, ranks, terms of appointment and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) conducts inspections to workplaces to ensure that workers are adequately protected from occupational safety and health hazards, including chemical and ergonomic hazards. For cases of non-compliance with the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (FIUO) and the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (OSHO), LD will issue warning letters, improvement notices and suspension notices and take out prosecutions as appropriate, and will conduct follow-up inspections to the workplaces concerned to ensure compliance with the safety and health laws.

LD does not maintain separate statistics on inspections and enforcement actions in respect of inspections to industrial establishments where chemical and ergonomic hazards are common. Nevertheless, the total number of inspections conducted to different types of workplaces, the number of field inspectors undertaking the inspections, and the enforcement actions taken in 2005-2007 are as follows -

Year	2005	2006	2007
No. of inspections conducted under the FIUO and the OSHO	118 907	116 500	111 933
No. of field inspectors conducting the inspections	245	234	230
No. of warnings issued	34 292	32 393	32 938
No. of suspension/improvement notices issued	1 568	1 528	1 619
No. of prosecutions taken	2 164	2 076	2 196

- (b) In 2008-09, LD will conduct a comprehensive survey on health risks in industrial establishments (e.g. printing factories, shipyards, warehouses, etc.) where chemical and ergonomic hazards are common. The survey will target 300 such industrial establishments. Occupational hygienists will conduct about 800 inspections to these establishments, and will make in-depth assessments on health hazards, such as noise, lighting, temperature, chemicals and manual handling, and review the adequacy and effectiveness of the control measures in place. They will also take appropriate enforcement actions against offences uncovered in the inspections. They will also analyse the information obtained in the survey to produce an occupational hygiene profile of these industrial establishments, and to formulate an appropriate strategy for the prevention of occupational diseases.

The survey will be undertaken by serving occupational hygienists and will not require additional manpower and expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)036

Question Serial No.

0722

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title): 000 Operational expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the increase of 67 permanent posts in 2008-09, what ranks will be involved and what are the terms of appointment?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

The ranks of the 67 permanent posts to be created in 2008-09 include Senior Labour Officer, Labour Officer, Assistant Labour Officer I, Assistant Labour Officer II, Divisional Occupational Safety Officer, Occupational Safety Officer I, Accounting Officer II and Assistant Clerical Officer. The new recruits, including the filling of consequential vacancies, will be appointed on new civil service terms.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)037

Question Serial No.

0723

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What specific measures are taken by the Department to step up publicity on employment programmes? Please give information on the manpower, expenditure, implementation timetable and details of the measures involved.

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

In 2008-09, the Labour Department will step up publicity on three employment programmes, namely the pilot Transport Support Scheme (TSS), the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged and the Work Trial Scheme to enhance the employment opportunities of the unemployed.

To publicise the relaxations and the details of the pilot TSS, we will stage a series of promotional and publicity activities at both territory-wide and district levels, including broadcasting Announcements in the Public Interest, issuing press release, distributing posters and publicity leaflets, arranging advertisements on public transport systems serving the four designated remote districts (viz Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands), and promoting in job fairs and road shows etc.

We will also produce publicity videos for the three programmes for screening on television and advertising on public transport systems.

The estimated expenditure for the publicity of these programmes is \$2.1 million. We will utilise existing manpower to step up publicity of the above programmes.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)038

Question Serial No.

2080

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the creation of 43 posts, what will be the ranks and modes of employment involved? What are the reasons for increasing manpower for employment services when there is a decrease rather than an increase in the demand for some of the services as shown under the Indicators of the Programme?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

A total of 43 civil service posts will be created under the Employment Services (ES) Programme in 2008-09. Of the 43 posts to be created, 39 Assistant Labour Officer II posts and 1 Assistant Clerical Officer post will be created to replace 40 existing non-civil service contract positions, and 1 Assistant Labour Officer I and 2 Assistant Labour Officer II posts will be created to meet the manpower needs of the Yuen Long and Sheung Shui Job Centres opened in September 2006.

The estimates for 2008 under the Indicators of the ES Programme do not show a significant difference when compared with the actual figures of 2007. It is expected that the demand for employment services in 2008 will remain at a high level.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)039

Question Serial No.

2081

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is estimated that the number of inspections to workplaces in 2008 will be reduced by over 3 800 as compared with 2007. What are the reasons? Is it related to insufficient manpower? If yes, what is the existing number of labour inspectors for conducting these inspections? Will the number of labour inspectors be increased? If yes, what are the number, expenditure and timetable involved?

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

In 2008, the Labour Department will further intensify its efforts in intelligence collection and analysis to mount more targeted operations to tackle wage offences and combat illegal employment. As more efforts are required for intelligence collection as well as planning and investigation, the target number of workplace inspections in 2008 is set at a reasonable and realistic level. This targeted mode of enforcement has proved very effective in offence detection.

There is currently no plan to increase the establishment of the Labour Inspector grade in 2008-09.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)040

Question Serial No.

0474

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Why does the Administration raise the planned target for the number of applications under the “Supplementary Labour Scheme” to 670 in 2008? Is it because an increase in the number of applications is expected? What are the reasons for the expected increase?

Asked by: Hon. KWONG Chi-kin

Reply:

It is estimated that the number of applications processed under the Supplementary Labour Scheme will increase by 23 in 2008. More applications are expected in view of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining local workers for certain jobs, given the continual improvement in the local economy and the unemployment rate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)041

Question Serial No.

0475

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of the total vacancies in 2007 by industry, occupation and salary.

Asked by: Hon. KWONG Chi-kin

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department received a total of 565 236 vacancies. The breakdowns of vacancies by industry, occupation and salary are as follows:

Industry	No. of vacancies
Manufacturing	65 906
Construction	27 415
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	191 714
Transport, storage and communication	45 324
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	122 894
Community, social and personal services	103 514
Others (including government sector)	8 469
Total	565 236

Occupational Group	No. of vacancies
Managers and Administrators	8 739
Professionals	14 695
Associate Professionals	118 590
Clerks	147 732
Service Workers	74 397
Shop Sales Workers	47 132
Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forestry Workers and Fishermen	1 294
Craft and Related Workers	23 302
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	16 172
Elementary Occupations	110 869
Others	2 314
Total	565 236

Monthly Salary	No. of vacancies
Below \$5,000	107 225
\$5,000 - \$5,999	72 294
\$6,000 - \$6,999	112 183
\$7,000 - \$7,999	99 954
\$8,000 - \$8,999	65 027
\$9,000 - \$9,999	32 902
\$10,000 or above	75 651
Total	565 236

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)042

Question Serial No.

0476

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What were the numbers of job seekers registered, successful placements and in-depth employment counselling sessions arranged under the Job Matching Programme in 2007?

Asked by: Hon. KWONG Chi-kin

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department's (LD) Job Matching Programme registered 9 024 job seekers, conducted 16 424 in-depth interviews and secured 5 359 placements through job centres' referrals.

Apart from directly introducing suitable jobs to registrants, placement officers also provide advice and guidance on job search skills through LD's vacancy database.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 13 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)043

Question Serial No.

0532

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What are the details of the enlightened employment practices? How many booklets will be published? What is the expected effectiveness? What are the relations between enlightened employment practices and family-friendly policy?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

In 2008-09, the Labour Department (LD) will produce a booklet on enlightened employment practices for reference by employers. The booklet will feature real-life examples to showcase exemplary employment practices, with particular emphasis on family-friendly employment practices (FFEPs).

We plan to produce 10 000 copies of the booklet for distribution among employers, employer associations, human resources practitioners as well as trade unions. An electronic version will also be uploaded onto LD's website to facilitate public viewing.

The aim of the booklet is to illustrate with actual cases the benefits of adopting enlightened employment practices and to provide practical advice on their implementation, thus helping to promote the wider adoption of such practices. This will also help inculcate a culture of family-friendliness in the workplace.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)044

Question Serial No.

0533

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What work is involved in the continual promotion of the Wage Protection Movement? How many new organisations have been contacted this year? Are non-governmental organisations included?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) will continue to promote the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) through different publicity activities in 2008-09, including screening television and radio Announcements in the Public Interest through various media channels; distributing publicity materials such as leaflets and posters to different stakeholders; arranging outdoor advertisement through different channels and organising roving exhibitions.

Among our publicity measures, appeal letters were sent to some 16 000 companies/organisations in various sectors of the community in 2007-08, including non-governmental organisations, employers who had placed vacancies at LD as well as Owners' Corporations / Owners' Committees (OCs). Briefings on WPM were also conducted for OCs, employer associations and other related bodies.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)045

Question Serial No.

0534

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the existing manpower for studying practical issues relevant to the preparatory work for introduction of minimum wage legislation for cleaning workers and security guards? What work will be included? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

At present, one Senior Labour Officer and one Labour Officer undertake the preparatory work for introducing a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards. One Programme Officer (non-civil service contract staff) has also been assigned to provide support. The estimated cost of these three posts for 2007-08 is \$1.05 million.

The preparatory work is broadly categorised into five major areas, namely, definitions of cleaning workers and security guards; special measures, if any, for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and youth without working experience; definition of a SMW; mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level; as well as enforcement and penalty in relation to the implementation of a SMW.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)046

Question Serial No.

0740

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP) which provides career counselling and pre-employment and on-the-job training for young school leavers aged between 15 and 19, please provide the following information:

- a. the estimated and actual enrolments for each module under the YPTP in 2007-08.
- b. the number of training places and actual enrolment in the various job-specific skill training courses (including Customer Service and Salesmanship Training; Clerical Training; Logistics and Warehouse Management Training; Information Technology Training; Hairdressing Training; Beauty Culture and Stylist Training; Entrepreneurship Training; Programme Assistant and Tutor Training; Tourism Training; Hotel Training; Catering Industry Training; Textile and Clothing Industry Training; Technical Training; Security Guard and Property Management Training; Pet Grooming and Care Training; Video Production, Advertising and Photography Skills Training; Performing Arts Training) in 2007-08.
- c. the estimated number of training places in 2008-09.

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (a) The 2007/08 Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP), running from September 2007 to August 2008, is being delivered in two phases. Up to end-February 2008, the number of trainees who received training under Phase I of the 2007/08 Programme is as follows:

Training Modules	Number of Trainees Trained
Module A: Leadership, discipline and team building	500
Module B: Job search and interpersonal skills	2 552
Module C: Computer application	879
Module D: Job-specific skills	2011

As regards Phase II of the 2007/08 Programme, enrolment of trainees has just commenced on 16 February 2008. It is difficult to estimate the number of participants as this depends on the labour market situation and the availability of other opportunities for training and further studies.

- (b) The 2007/08 Programme offers job-skills training courses in 18 categories. We do not have fixed quota of training places and will flexibly admit all eligible trainees. Up to end-February 2008, the number of trainees who received job-skills training under Phase I of the 2007/08 Programme is as follows :

<u>Categories</u>	Number of Trainees Trained*
Catering	533
Clerical Work	427
Beauty Culture and Stylist	401
Hotel	249
Health Care, Design, Child Work and Others	212
Information Technology	141
Hairdressing	119
Programme Assistant and Tutor	98
Pet Grooming and Care	86
Logistics and Warehouse Management	50
Performing Arts	45
Tourism	41
Customer Service and Salesmanship	29
Textile and Clothing	17
Video Production, Advertising and Photography Skills	14
Technical Training	13
Entrepreneurship	8
Security Guard and Property Management	0

* A trainee may enrol in not more than four job-skills training courses.

- (c) For the 2008/09 Programme, we do not have fixed quota of training places and will flexibly admit all eligible trainees.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)047

Question Serial No.

0741

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP) which provides career counselling and pre-employment and on-the-job training for young school leavers aged between 15 and 19, please provide the following information:

- a. How many trainees were employed after completing the YPTP in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? What was their percentage among all the YPTP trainees as a whole? How many trainees were offered employment by the companies where they were attached for workplace training? What was their percentage among all the YPTP trainees?
- b. What was the average wage level of the trainees who secured employment after completion of the YPTP in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? What were the highest and the lowest monthly wage rates in these cases? What were the industries in which the highest and the lowest wages were recorded?
- c. What were the median wages of the trainees employed after completion of the YPTP in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department conducts annual placement surveys for those trainees who have completed training under the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP). Since the 2007/08 Programme will run until August 2008, placement survey for the current programme has not yet commenced. For the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes, 4 098 and 3 814 trainees had found work at the time of surveys, representing placement rates of 69.2% and 71.2% respectively.

The YPTP mainly provides modular pre-employment training to young school leavers aged between 15 and 19. On completion of modular training, trainees may undergo a one-month workplace attachment (WPA) with the hosting organisations during which no employment relationship would be established. The WPA aims to enhance trainees' work exposure and understanding of the world of work. For the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes, 1 409 and 895 trainees respectively joined WPA. We do not maintain statistics on employment offered by the hosting organisations to trainees on completion of WPA.

- (b) According to information reported by trainees during placement surveys, the average, highest and lowest monthly wages of trainees who had found full-time jobs at the time of placement surveys are as follows:

	2005/06 Programme	2006/07 Programme
Average monthly wages	\$5,200	\$5,500
Highest monthly wages	\$13,500	\$11,000
Lowest monthly wages	\$3,750	\$3,800

Industries in which trainees with employment of the highest and lowest monthly wages recorded are shown below:

	2005/06 Programme	2006/07 Programme
Industry in which trainees with employment of the highest monthly wages recorded	Telecommunications	Import and Export Trades; Culture, Entertainment and Recreation
Industry in which trainees with employment of the lowest monthly wages recorded	Retail; Catering	Retail

- (c) We do not maintain separate statistics on the median monthly wages of trainees.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)048

Question Serial No.

0742

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP) which provides career counselling and pre-employment and on-the-job training for young school leavers aged between 15 and 19, please provide the following information:

- a. How many employers participated in the YPTP in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? How many training places were offered each year? How many participating companies have joined the YPTP for three consecutive years? What is their percentage among the participating companies?
- b. How many YPTP trainees received “workplace attachment training” in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? What was the expenditure for workplace attachment training each year?
- c. How many trainees have applied for transport allowance since it was introduced? What was the expenditure for allowance payouts?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (a) The Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP) mainly provides modular pre-employment training to young people aged between 15 and 19. On completion of modular training, trainees may undergo a one-month workplace attachment (WPA) with hosting organisations during which no employment relationship would be established. As trainees of the 2007/08 Programme will receive WPA until October 2008, the final figures of participating organisations and training places offered are not yet available. The number of WPA places offered by organisations in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes is as follows:

Programme Year	Number of Participating Organisations	Number of WPA Places Offered
2005/06	940	6 788
2006/07	758	4 717

A total of 363 of the 940 organisations (38.6%) in the 2005/06 Programme continued to offer WPA places for the 2006/07 Programme.

- (b) The 2007/08 Programme is still in progress. The number of trainees who joined WPA and the expenditure involved in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes are as follows:

Programme Year	Number of Trainees Who Joined WPA	WPA Allowance (\$ million)
2005/06	1 409	2.36
2006/07	895	1.54

- (c) Transport allowance is provided to YPTP trainees starting from the 2007/08 Programme (from September 2007 to August 2008). Training bodies of YPTP help process applications from trainees for transport allowance. Up to end-February 2008, 2 390 applications submitted by training bodies involving transport allowance of \$579,000 were approved.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)049

Question Serial No.

0743

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Administration will step up publicity on employment programmes in 2008-09. In this regard, please provide details on the following:

- a. Names of the employment programmes on which publicity will be enhanced.
- b. Please list the dates, venues, nature (e.g. careers expo, public education, etc.) of the exhibitions organised in 2007-08, as well as the costs for each exhibition.
- c. Will the Administration organise exhibitions in 2008-09? If yes, what are the expected dates and venues of the exhibitions, the manpower and posts required and the costs involved in each exhibition? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. In 2008-09, the Labour Department will step up publicity on three employment programmes, namely the pilot Transport Support Scheme, the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged and the Work Trial Scheme to enhance employment opportunities of the unemployed.
- b. We did not organise exhibitions in 2007-08. We staged a series of promotional and publicity activities at both territory-wide and district levels, including screening Announcements in the Public Interest, issuing press release, distributing posters and leaflets, arranging advertisements on public transport systems and promotion during job fairs.
- c. We have no plan to organise exhibitions in 2008-09. We will continue to launch a wide range of promotional activities including production of publicity videos for the three employment programmes. We will utilise existing manpower to step up publicity of the above programmes. The estimated expenditure for the publicity of these programmes is \$2.1 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)050

Question Serial No.

0744

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Administration will step up publicity on employment programmes in 2008-09. In this regard:

- a. Please provide a breakdown of the publications and publicity materials published in 2007-08 by theme, quantity and expenditure.
- b. Will the Administration publish any publicity materials and pamphlets in 2008-09? If yes, please list the theme and estimated quantity of each pamphlet and the estimated expenditure involved. If no, in what way will the Administration step up publicity?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. In 2007-08, the Labour Department (LD) produced a range of publications and publicity materials to promote the pilot Transport Support Scheme (TSS), Employment Programme for the Middle-aged (EPM) and Work Trial Scheme (WTS), including handbooks, souvenirs, posters, publicity leaflets, roadside/wall banners, etc. The breakdowns by theme, quantity and expenditure are as follows:

Theme	Quantities	Expenditure (\$)
TSS	307 082	352,165
EPM	35 000	36,000
WTS	5 500	50,000

- b. In 2008-09, LD will continue to produce publications and publicity materials to widely publicise the relaxations of pilot TSS, as well as EPM and WTS. The breakdowns by theme, quantity and expenditure are as follows:

Theme	Estimated Quantities	Estimated Expenditure (\$)
TSS	402 330	426,000
EPM	15 000	36,000
WTS	31 000	22,000

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)051

Question Serial No.

0745

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Administration will step up publicity on employment programmes in 2008-09. In this regard, please provide details on the following:

- a. Regarding the advertisements placed in newspapers and put on radio and television by the Administration in 2007-08, what were the duration of advertising, names of the media engaged and expenditure per occasion?
- b. Will the Administration place advertisements in newspapers in 2008-09? If yes, what are the expected number of times, estimated expenditure per occasion and names of the newspapers involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (a) In 2007-08, to introduce and promote the pilot Transport Support Scheme (TSS) to target beneficiaries, the Labour Department (LD) launched radio Announcements in the Public Interest (API) and placed an advertisement in a community newspaper, Ming Pao New Territories (NT) Edition, which was widely distributed to residents of the four designated remote districts (viz Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands). Particulars are given below:

Media engaged	Duration	Expenditure (\$)
Radio API	One year starting from 25.6.2007	6,250*
Advertisement in Ming Pao NT Edition	One issue on 22.9.2007	6,200
	Total:	12,450

* Only production costs were incurred

Moreover, a publicity video on the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged (EPM) was broadcast on buses and outdoor television of commercial buildings between May and July 2007 at a total expenditure of \$177,440. A radio API on the Work Trial Scheme (WTS) was re-run during the period from May to July 2007 and February to March 2008.

- (b) In 2008-09, LD will place advertisements in community newspapers to publicise the relaxations under the TSS. The estimated expenditure for placing two or three advertisements in community newspapers at different time intervals is \$15,000. In addition, LD will continue to promote EPM and WTS through distributing leaflets and posters, putting up banners, and screening television and radio API in 2008-09.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)052

Question Serial No.

0942

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title): 700 General non-recurrent

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide the following information on the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS):

1. the estimated and actual enrolments for the YWETS in 2007-08 and the actual expenditure involved;
2. the estimated number of training places in 2008-09;
3. How many employers participated in the YWETS in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? How many training vacancies were offered each year? How many participating companies have joined the YWETS for three consecutive years? What is their percentage among the participating companies?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (1) The Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS) provides on-the-job training of 6 to 12 months for young people aged between 15 and 24 with educational attainment below degree level. The current 2007/08 Programme commenced on 7 August 2007 and will run until 6 August 2008. As at end-February 2008, 6 076 trainees had joined the Scheme under the current Programme. It is difficult to estimate the total number of participants as this depends on the labour market situation and availability of opportunities for training and further studies. The estimated expenditure for the 2007-08 financial year is \$70 million.
- (2) The 2008/09 Programme will commence in August 2008. We do not have fixed quota of enrolment and will flexibly admit all eligible trainees.
- (3) Since the 2007/08 Programme will run until August 2008, the final figures of participating employers and training vacancies offered are not yet available. Figures for the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes are as follows:

Programme Year	Number of Participating Employers	Number of Training Vacancies Offered
2005/06	4 537	16 321
2006/07	3 982	11 729

A total of 1 723 of the 4 537 employers (38%) in the 2005/06 Programme continued to offer training vacancies for the 2006/07 Programme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)053

Question Serial No.

0943

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title): 700 General non-recurrent

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide the following information on the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS):

1. How many trainees were employed after completing the YWETS in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? What was their percentage among all the YWETS trainees as a whole? How many trainees were offered employment by the companies where they were attached for workplace training? What was their percentage among all the YWETS trainees?
2. What was the average wage level of the trainees who secured employment after completion of the YWETS in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08? What were the highest and the lowest monthly wage rates in these cases? What were the industries in which the highest and the lowest wages were recorded?
3. What were the median wages of the trainees employed after completion of the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (1) The Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS) provides on-the-job training of six to 12 months in the form of real work opportunities for young people aged between 15 and 24 with educational attainment below the degree level. Since the 2007/08 Programme will run until August 2008, the final placement figure is not yet available. Figures for the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes are as follows:

	2005/06 Programme	2006/07 Programme
(a) No. of trainees placed into training vacancies of the Scheme	6 163	5 248
(b) No. of trainees placed into other jobs	2 330	1 877
Total number of placements	8 493	7 125

Of the 2 853 and 2 300 trainees who were placed into training vacancies of the Scheme and completed on-the-job training in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes respectively, 67% of them were offered continued employment by their employers. Other trainees, before or after the completion of on-the-job training, might have pursued further studies or secured other jobs. Commissioned by the Labour Department, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University completed a longitudinal study on more than 800 trainees of the Scheme in 2006. The findings revealed that after joining YWETS for one year, 72.8% of the trainees were employed at the time of the longitudinal study.

- (2) For trainees placed into training vacancies of the Scheme, their average, highest and lowest monthly wages recorded in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Programmes are as follows:

	2005/06 Programme	2006/07 Programme
Average monthly wages	\$4,990	\$5,200
Highest monthly wages	\$10,000	\$10,000
Lowest monthly wages	\$4,000	\$4,000

Industries in which trainees secured placements of training vacancies with the highest and lowest monthly wages are shown below:

	2005/06 Programme	2006/07 Programme
Industry in which trainees secured placements of training vacancies with the highest monthly wages recorded	Personal Services; Import and Export Trades	Printing and Publishing
Industry in which trainees secured placements of training vacancies with the lowest monthly wages recorded	Personal Services; Education Services	Personal Services; Construction and Engineering

- (3) We do not maintain separate statistics on the median monthly wages of trainees.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)054

Question Serial No.

1900

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Administration provides voluntary conciliation service to assist employers and employees to settle their disputes and claims. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- a. Among the cases with conciliation service rendered in the past 5 years, how many were applications made by employees? What were the respective numbers of cases for referral to the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board and the Labour Tribunal after conciliation? What were the amounts of money involved?
- b. In the past 5 years, what were the respective numbers of cases where conciliation service had not been rendered because the employers concerned were insolvent or could not be reached for conciliation? What were the respective amounts of money involved in these two situations?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. Statistics on the number of labour disputes and claims referred to the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board (MECAB) and the Labour Tribunal (LT) after conciliation by the Labour Department (LD) and the amount involved are as follows:

Year	Labour disputes and claims referred to MECAB after conciliation		Labour disputes and claims referred to LT after conciliation	
	No. of cases	Amount claimed	No. of cases	Amount claimed
2003	2 403	\$14 million	10 103	\$1,080 million
2004	2 230	\$14 million	7 612	\$749 million
2005	2 188	\$14 million	6 194	\$596 million
2006	2 165	\$14 million	5 768	\$617 million
2007	1 750	\$12 million	4 930	\$526 million

We do not keep separate statistics on claims lodged by employees.

- b. Statistics on labour disputes and claims where conciliation service had not been rendered because the employers concerned were insolvent or could not be reached for conciliation are as follows:

	Number of labour disputes and claims where conciliation service has not been rendered			
	For reason that the employers concerned were insolvent		For reason that the employers could not be reached for conciliation	
Year	No. of cases	Amount claimed	No. of cases	Amount claimed
2003	1 113	\$415 million	1 494	} Figures not kept
2004	826	\$273 million	1 108	
2005	471	\$201 million	891	
2006	290	\$123 million	914	
2007	169	\$59 million	772	

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)055

Question Serial No.

1901

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Administration provides voluntary conciliation service to assist employers and employees to settle their disputes and claims. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- a. Among the cases with conciliation service rendered in the past 5 years, what were the respective numbers of cases involving default in wage payment and non-granting of paid holidays or statutory holidays? How many cases, by number and percentage, were referred to the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board and the Labour Tribunal respectively after conciliation? What were the amounts of money involved?
- b. In the past 5 years, what was the average number of conciliation meetings for each case? What was the highest number of conciliation meetings arranged for a case?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. Statistics with respect to labour disputes and claims involving arrears of wages which were referred to the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board (MECAB) and the Labour Tribunal (LT) after conciliation by the Labour Department are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of cases involving arrears of wages</u>	<u>No. of cases referred to MECAB</u>	<u>No. of cases referred to LT</u>
2003	10 492	855 (8.1%)	2 668 (25.4%)
2004	9 476	803 (8.5%)	2 163 (22.8%)
2005	9 279	751 (8.1%)	1 743 (18.8%)
2006	8 858	807 (9.1%)	1 637 (18.5%)
2007	7 885	676 (8.6%)	1 318 (16.7%)

Note: Figures in brackets denote the percentage of cases over the total number of cases involving arrears of wages.

Similar statistics with respect to paid holidays and statutory holidays are not kept.

Also, we do not keep statistics on the amount involved in labour disputes and claims.

- b. We do not keep information on the number of conciliation meetings required for each case.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)056

Question Serial No.

1902

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Department will produce a booklet on enlightened employment practices in 2008-09. In this connection, please provide the following information:

- a. What is the estimated quantity of publication? What is the estimated expenditure? Please also state how the Administration will distribute the booklets and the estimated expenditure for the distribution.
- b. The booklet will encourage employers to adopt enlightened employment practices in the workplace. Please list the practices to be included.

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. In 2008-09, the Labour Department (LD) will produce 10 000 copies of the booklet on enlightened employment practices at an estimated cost of \$100,000. Copies of the booklet will be distributed among employers, employer associations, human resources practitioners and trade unions. They will also be made available at offices of LD, the Industry and Trade Department and Trade Development Council, as well as district offices of the Home Affairs Department and public libraries. The estimated distribution cost is \$15,000. To facilitate public viewing, an electronic version will also be uploaded onto LD's website.
- b. The booklet will feature real-life examples to showcase exemplary employment practices, with particular emphasis on family-friendly employment practices such as family leave benefits, flexible work arrangements and employee support schemes.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)057

Question Serial No.

1903

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Administration will step up efforts in staging exhibitions to promote public understanding of the Employment Ordinance and good people management practices in 2008-09. In this regard, please provide details on the following:

- a. Please list the dates and venues of the exhibitions staged in 2007-08 and the costs for each exhibition.
- b. What are the expected dates and venues of the exhibitions, the manpower and posts required and the costs involved in each exhibition in 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. In 2007-08, the Labour Department staged six exhibitions in various districts with details summarised below: -

Date	Venue	Expenditure
26-27 May 2007	Discovery Park Shopping Centre, Tsuen Wan	\$18,900
23-24 June 2007	Landmark North, Sheung Shui	\$32,400
7-8 July 2007	Ma On Shan Plaza, Ma On Shan	\$3,200
15-16 September 2007	Fu Tung Shopping Centre, Tung Chung	\$12,700
8-9 December 2007	Siu Sai Wan Shopping Centre, Siu Sai Wan	\$6,700
12-13 January 2008	Kingswood Ginza, Tin Shui Wai	\$3,500
	Total:	\$77,400

- b. In 2008-09, we plan to stage at least six exhibitions in various districts and the estimated cost involved is \$100,000. As details of these exhibitions have yet to be worked out, the dates, venues, manpower required and breakdown of the costs involved are not available at this stage.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)058

Question Serial No.

2652

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the promotion of the Wage Protection Movement in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08, please provide the following information:

- a. What was the respective quantity of publicity materials produced and the expenditure involved?
- b. A breakdown of the advertisements placed in newspapers and put on radio and television by the Administration in terms of duration of advertising, names of the media engaged and expenditure per occasion.
- c. With respect to the study on the preparatory work for implementation of minimum wage legislation for specific industries, has any consultancy study or industry-based survey been conducted? If yes, please list the commencement and completion dates, topic and expenditure of each study/survey.
- d. Has the Administration met with industry representatives to study the issue of legislation on minimum wage for specific industries? If yes, please list the meeting dates and the names of the employee and employer representatives of the industry taking part in each meeting.

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- a. The publicity and promotional work of the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) started in October 2006. Breakdowns of the quantity and the expenditure involved for publicity materials produced in 2006-07 and 2007-08 are as follows:

	2006-07		2007-08 (up to end-February 2008)	
	Quantity	Expenditure	Quantity	Expenditure
Leaflets	154 000	\$75,100	81 000	\$48,130
Posters	29 000	\$26,000	26 000	\$23,400
Flyers attached to water bills	-	-	2.45 million	\$156,996
Flyers attached to demand notes for rates and government rent	-	-	2.2 million	\$261,717
Roadside banners	-	-	100	\$30,370

- b. Breakdowns of the duration, media engaged and expenditure for advertisements placed in newspapers and put on radio and television are as follows:

	2006-07		2007-08 (up to end-February 2008)	
	Media	Expenditure	Media	Expenditure
Free publication of newspaper op-ed (one day)	- Sing Tao Daily - HK Economic Times	0	-	-
Free publication of newspaper gap filler (one day)	-	-	- Apple Daily - HK Commercial Daily - HK Daily	0
Newspaper advertisements (one day)	-	-	- Headline Daily - AM 730 - Metro	\$74,092
Radio Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) since November 2006	All local radio stations	0	All local radio stations	0
Television APIs since December 2006	All local television stations	0	All local television stations	0

- c. As part of the preparatory work for the possible introduction of a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards, the Labour Department (LD) has commissioned the Census and Statistics Department to conduct a survey on cleansing and guarding services in private residential buildings. The survey entitled "Survey on Cleansing and Guarding Services in Private Residential Buildings" will start in March 2008 and is expected to be completed by July 2008. The estimated expenditure is \$1 million.

So far, we have not undertaken any consultancy study on the preparatory work for the possible introduction of an SMW for cleaning workers and security guards other than this industry-based survey.

- d. In undertaking the preparatory work for the possible introduction of an SMW for cleaning workers and security guards, LD discussed with, among others, 12 trade unions/union federations and 6 employers' associations in the cleansing, guarding services and building management sectors to exchange views on the subject in December 2007 and January 2008. The meeting with trade unions/union federations and employers' associations on each occasion lasted for one to two hours.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)059

Question Serial No.

0901

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

How many vacancies of labour inspectors were filled in 2007? Will the Administration consider increasing the number of labour inspectors to cope with additional work?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department (LD) filled 8 vacancies of Labour Inspector II by recruitment. LD is conducting another recruitment exercise to fill outstanding vacancies of Labour Inspector II. There is currently no plan to increase the establishment of the Labour Inspector grade.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 14 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)060

Question Serial No.

0902

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What are the 15 posts to be created in 2008-09? What amount of provision will be offset?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The 15 posts to be created in 2008-09 under the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme comprise 10 Assistant Labour Officer II posts, 2 Accounting Officer II posts and 3 Assistant Clerical Officer posts. They are created to replace 15 existing non-civil service contract positions. The annual cost of the 15 posts to be created is \$4.5 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)061

Question Serial No.

1612

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

How many cases were approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2007? What was the total number of imported workers? Please provide a breakdown of the figures by industry.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

In 2007, 410 applications under the Supplementary Labour Scheme were approved involving a total of 845 imported workers. Breakdowns by industry of these applications approved and imported workers involved are at the Appendix.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**Number of applications approved and imported workers involved
under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2007
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of applications approved	Number of imported workers involved
1. Agriculture and fishing	126	224
2. Manufacturing	49	163
3. Construction	2	2
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	35	46
5. Transport, storage and communication	3	17
6. Community, social and personal services	195	393
Total	410	845

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)062

Question Serial No.

1613

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Were ethnic minorities given assistance under the Job Matching Programme in 2007? If yes, what was the figure? How many successful job referrals were made?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

Like other general citizens of Hong Kong, ethnic minorities can make use of Labour Department's (LD) employment services offered through our network of 12 job centres, telephone employment service hotline and interactive employment service on the internet. Such services include the introduction of suitable jobs to registrants and the provision of advice and guidance on job search skills through LD's vacancy database. We do not categorise usage of LD's general employment services on the basis of race.

In respect of the individualised provision of services under the Job Matching Programme, LD registered 182 ethnic minority job seekers and secured 71 placements through job centres' referrals in 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)063

Question Serial No.

1614

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the reason for the Trade Development Council to fully take up the organisation of careers expo for young people?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) is well experienced in conducting the expo as it has co-organised the annual education and careers expo with the Labour Department (LD) for over 15 years. Experience this year suggests that the HKTDC is fully competent to organise the expo on its own. Such an arrangement will also enable the LD to focus on the preparation and setting up of the two new Youth Employment Resource Centres to provide one-stop advisory and support services on employment and self-employment to young persons aged 15 to 29.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)064

Question Serial No.

1615

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Will the indicator reflecting the performance of Youth Employment Resource Centres cover the effectiveness of careers expo for young people which will be fully taken up by the Trade Development Council?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The two Youth Employment Resource Centres (YERC) provide one-stop advisory and support services on employment and self-employment to youngsters aged 15 to 29. The services and facilities provided by YERCs include career assessment, career guidance, latest labour market information, value-added training and self-employment support. It is estimated that around 63 000 young people will utilise the services and facilities of the centres in 2008. The figure will not include visitors to the Education and Careers Expo 2008 organised by the Trade Development Council.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)065

Question Serial No.

1108

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the labour disputes handled in 2007, please provide a breakdown of the figures by industry and cause.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

The breakdown of labour disputes handled by the Labour Relations Division of the Labour Department in 2007 is as follows:

Breakdown of labour disputes by industry

Industry	No. of labour disputes
Construction	72
Restaurants & hotels	21
Transport, storage and communication	11
Manufacturing	10
Community, social and personal services	5
Financing, insurance, real estate & business services	4
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades	1
Total	124

Breakdown of labour disputes by cause

Cause	No. of labour disputes
Disputes involving principal contractor and subcontractor	58
Cessation of business	28
Non-payment of wages	13
Insolvency	9
Retrenchment	4
Variation of terms of employment contract	2
Dismissal	1
Others	9

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)066

Question Serial No.

1109

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the claims handled in 2007, please provide a breakdown of the figures by cause.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

The breakdown of claims handled by the Labour Relations Division of the Labour Department in 2007 is as follows:

Breakdown of claims by cause

Cause	No. of claims
Termination of contract	9 344
Non-payment of wages	7 872
Non-payment of holiday pay/ annual leave pay/ rest day pay/ sickness allowance	2 143
Cessation of business	447
Retrenchment	125
Insolvency	102
Lay-off	65
Variation of terms of employment contract	48
Others	1 552

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)067

Question Serial No.

1896

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the placements secured through the employment services of the Labour Department for able-bodied job seekers in 2007, please provide a breakdown of the figures by sex, age, industry, occupation and earnings. Among them, what were the respective numbers of part-time, temporary and full-time jobs with monthly earnings less than \$4,000?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department (LD) secured 135 489 placements for able-bodied job seekers. Of these, 23 872 were made through referrals by LD while the rest were by job seekers successfully applying to employers direct for jobs posted by LD. The breakdowns of placements through LD's referrals by sex and age, industry, occupation and earnings are as follows:

Age Group	Male	Female	No. of placements
15-19	1 033	1 126	2 159
20-29	3 662	3 258	6 920
30-39	1 409	2 073	3 482
40-49	1 934	4 522	6 456
50-59	1 696	2 498	4 194
60 or above	444	217	661
Total	10 178	13 694	23 872

Industry	No. of placements
Manufacturing	2 916
Construction	940
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	6 265
Transport, storage and communication	1 216
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	3 634
Community, social and personal services	5 752
Others (including government sector)	3 149
Total	23 872

Occupational Group	No. of placements
Managers and Administrators	242
Professionals	138
Associate Professionals	2 032
Clerks	6 723
Service Workers	2 193
Shop Sales Workers	1 601
Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forestry Workers and Fishermen	107
Craft and Related Workers	866
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	741
Elementary Occupations	9 139
Others	90
Total	23 872

Monthly Earnings	No. of placements
Below \$4,000	4 567
\$4,000 - \$4,999	1 782
\$5,000 - \$5,999	4 701
\$6,000 - \$6,999	5 418
\$7,000 - \$7,999	3 535
\$8,000 - \$8,999	1 516
\$9,000 - \$9,999	917
\$10,000 or above	1 436
Total	23 872

Of the 4 567 placements with monthly earnings below \$4,000, 4 173 (91%) were part-time or temporary jobs while 394 (9%) were full-time jobs.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)068

Question Serial No.

1897

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the placements secured through the employment services of the Labour Department for disabled job seekers in 2007, please provide a breakdown of the figures by sex, age, industry, occupation and earnings. Among them, what were the respective numbers of part-time and full-time jobs with monthly earnings less than \$3,000?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department secured 2 619 placements for job seekers with disabilities. A breakdown by sex, age, industry, occupation and earnings is set out below.

(a) By sex and age

Age	Male	Female	Total
15-19	51	38	89
20-29	672	543	1 215
30-39	365	298	663
40-49	255	229	484
50-59	90	62	152
60 or above	9	7	16
Total	1 442	1 177	2 619

(b) By industry

Industry	Number of placements
Manufacturing	333
Construction	57
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	860
Transport, storage and communication	107
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	435
Community, social and personal services	640
Others (including government sector)	187
Total	2 619

(c) By occupation

Occupational Group	Number of placements
Professional, technical and related workers	53
Administrative and managerial workers	23
Clerical and related workers	661
Sales workers	593
Service workers	529
Agricultural, animal husbandry, forestry worker and fishermen	1
Production workers, transport equipment operators and labourers	759
Total	2 619

(d) By earnings

Monthly earnings	Number of placements
Below \$3,000	1 064
\$3,000 - \$3,999	278
\$4,000 - \$4,999	372
\$5,000 - \$5,999	435
\$6,000 - \$6,999	297
\$7,000 - \$7,999	102
\$8,000 - \$8,999	34
\$9,000 or above	37
Total	2 619

For the 1 064 placements with monthly earnings below \$3,000, 811 (76%) were part-time jobs and 253 (24%) were full-time jobs.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)069

Question Serial No.

1904

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2007-08, what were the details of the measures taken by the Administration in respect of employment services for non-Chinese speaking people and the expenditure involved? In 2008-09, what are the details of relevant measures and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

In 2007-08, the Labour Department (LD) provides a wide range of free employment services through its network of 12 Job Centres, Telephone Employment Service Centre and the bilingual Interactive Employment Service website to all job seekers, including the non-Chinese speaking ones. Vacancy information is displayed in both English and Chinese on touch-screen vacancy search terminals located in all Job Centres, Social Security Field Units of the Social Welfare Department and Public Enquiry Service Counters of the Home Affairs Department throughout the territory. To facilitate non-Chinese speaking job seekers to use our employment services, LD has produced a leaflet entitled “Easy-to-use Employment Services of the Labour Department” in various languages of ethnic minorities. For non-Chinese speaking job seekers who wish to know more about a particular vacancy or require our employment services, they may approach our Job Centres or the Telephone Employment Service hotline for assistance. For those who need more intensive and personalised services, we will invite them to join the Job Matching Programme. Employment briefings conducted in English are also organised regularly at Job Centres.

In 2008-09, we will strengthen our employment services and support for job seekers who cannot speak either Chinese or English through interpretation service by appointment.

Since LD's employment services are provided to both Chinese speaking and non-Chinese speaking job seekers, we do not have separate breakdown of the expenditure involved for serving non-Chinese speaking job seekers.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)070

Question Serial No.

1905

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2007-08, what were the details of information on industrial safety and health provided by the Administration to non-Chinese speaking people mainly in their native languages and the expenditure involved? In 2008-09, what are the details of relevant measures and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) produces a wide range of information on work safety and health for free distribution to both Chinese speaking and non-Chinese speaking people. These include publications (e.g. guide books, approved codes of practices and leaflets) and publicity materials (e.g. posters and CD-ROMs). All Announcements in the Public Interest on television and radio on work safety and health are presented in both English and Chinese. Non-Chinese speaking people may also approach LD's Safety and Health Advisory Telephone Enquiry Service hotline for assistance in occupational safety and health matters.

Taking into account the needs of non-Chinese speaking people such as those coming from South and Southeast Asia, the LD and the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) have also produced publications and publicity materials in their native languages, such as Pakistani, Nepali and Filipino. Outreaching programmes and promotional campaigns have also been organised to disseminate work safety and health messages, including visits to construction sites with non-Chinese speaking workers. Seminars and promotional activities for non-Chinese workers have also been organised in collaboration with non-governmental organisations. In 2008-09, the LD and OSHC will continue their work in these areas.

We do not have separate breakdown of the expenditure for providing occupational safety and health information to non-Chinese speaking people.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)071

Question Serial No.

1906

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2007-08, what were the details of information on employee rights and benefits provided by the Administration to non-Chinese speaking people mainly in their native languages and the expenditure involved? In 2008-09, what are the details of relevant measures and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

In 2007-08, the Labour Department (LD) adopted a multi-pronged approach in enhancing the understanding of employee rights and benefits by non-Chinese speaking people. Details are as follows:

- (a) producing publications on the main provisions of the Employment Ordinance (EO) and procedures for investigation of offences in English, Tagalog, Indonesian, Thai and Nepali;
- (b) organising briefings and staging mini-exhibitions on the EO and placing advertisements on key messages of the EO in local newspapers for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs);
- (c) disseminating information on entitlements to employees' compensation in work injury and occupational disease cases in English through television and radio announcements, publicity posters, leaflets and newspaper articles;
- (d) producing leaflets on the main provisions of the Employees' Compensation Ordinance in English, Tagalog, Indonesian, Urdu, Hindi, Nepali, Japanese and Korean;
- (e) staging two information kiosks for FDHs at places where they frequently gather;
- (f) screening the publicity video for FDHs in English, Tagalog, Indonesian and Thai at public venues, including the visa-issuing offices of the Immigration Department;
- (g) distributing copies of the publicity videos for FDHs to migrant worker groups and employment agencies which provide placement services to FDHs to promote awareness of their rights and obligations; and
- (h) providing translation and simultaneous interpretation services to non-Chinese speaking people as circumstances warrant.

The total cost for the above initiatives was about \$1.2 million.

In 2008-09, we will continue to publicise key messages on employee rights and benefits to non-Chinese speaking people through various channels. We will produce and distribute leaflets and publications, organise briefings, stage mini-exhibitions and organise other promotional activities to foster their understanding of employee rights and benefits. We will also continue to provide translation and simultaneous interpretation services to non-Chinese speaking people as circumstances warrant. The estimated cost is \$1.4 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)072

Question Serial No.

2269

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Among those people who sought consultation service at the occupational health clinics of the Labour Department in 2007, please provide the numbers of people suffering from diseases or injuries caused by work, related to work or aggravated by work. How many of them had diseases or injuries unrelated to work? Please provide a breakdown, by sex, age, industry, occupation and type of disease, on the number of these two groups of patients.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

In 2007, a total of 3 043 patients sought consultation at the Labour Department's occupational health clinics. Of these, 2 588 (85%) suffered from diseases or injuries caused by work, related to work or aggravated by work, and 455 (15%) had diseases or injuries unrelated to work.

The following tables give a breakdown of the two groups of patients by sex, age, industry, occupation and nature of disease -

By sex

Sex	Disease/injury	
	Caused by, related to or aggravated by work	Unrelated to work
Male	1 004 (38.8%)	188 (41.3%)
Female	1 584 (61.2%)	267 (58.7%)
Total	2 588 (100%)	455 (100%)

By age

Age group	Disease/injury	
	Caused by, related to or aggravated by work	Unrelated to work
< = 20	14 (0.5%)	2 (0.4%)
21-40	864 (33.4%)	118 (26.0%)
41-60	1 685 (65.1%)	314 (69.0%)
>60	25 (1.0%)	21 (4.6%)
Total	2 588 (100%)	455 (100%)

By industry

Industry	Disease/injury	
	Caused by, related to or aggravated by work	Unrelated to work
Community, social and personal services	918 (35.5%)	143 (31.4%)
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	589 (22.8%)	88 (19.3%)
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	422 (16.3%)	53 (11.6%)
Manufacturing	296 (11.4%)	44 (9.7%)
Transport, storage and communications	181 (7.0%)	29 (6.4%)
Others	182 (7.0%)	98 (21.6%)
Total	2 588 (100%)	455 (100%)

By occupation

Occupation	Disease/injury	
	Caused by, related to or aggravated by work	Unrelated to work
Service personnel	817 (31.6%)	89 (19.6%)
Clerical and related personnel	622 (24.0%)	116 (25.5%)
Production and related personnel, transport equipment operators and labourers	590 (22.8%)	95 (20.9%)
Professionals and technicians	303 (11.7%)	47 (10.3%)
Others	256 (9.9%)	108 (23.7%)
Total	2 588 (100%)	455 (100%)

By nature of disease

Nature of disease	Caused by, related to or aggravated by work	Unrelated to work
Musculoskeletal	2 393 (92.5%)	296 (65.1%)
Skin	39 (1.5%)	18 (4.0%)
Auditory	23 (0.9%)	16 (3.5%)
Respiratory	9 (0.3%)	4 (0.9%)
Neurological	10 (0.4%)	7 (1.5%)
Visual	6 (0.2%)	7 (1.5%)
Others	108 (4.2%)	107 (23.5%)
Total	2 588 (100%)	455 (100%)

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)073

Question Serial No.

2270

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of cases on the basis of the time required to effect payment in respect of applications to the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund in 2007.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

The time required to effect payment from the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund in respect of applications processed in 2007 is as follows:

Payment Time	Number of Applications
4 weeks or less	3 848
More than 4 weeks to 6 weeks	618
More than 6 weeks to 8 weeks	299
More than 8 weeks to 10 weeks	147
More than 10 weeks	1
Total	4 913

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)074

Question Serial No.

2271

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the employee compensation claims processed in 2007, please provide a breakdown of the figures by industry. As at the end of 2007, how many cases had been resolved? How much compensation was involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply:

In 2007, the Labour Department (LD) processed 62 241 employees' compensation cases reported under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance. Of these, 16 239 were minor cases which did not incapacitate the employees for more than 3 days and did not result in permanent incapacity. As the employers made direct payment of compensation to the employees in these minor cases, the LD did not keep detailed statistics including their industry breakdown.

Of the remaining 46 002 cases, a breakdown by industries is as follows:

Industry	Number of Cases
Community, Social and Personal Services	12 128
Catering	9 501
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	5 895
Transport, Storage and Communication	4 966
Wholesale/Retail, Import/Export and Hotel	4 643
Manufacturing	4 023
Construction	3 200
Others	1 646
Total	46 002

Of all the 62 241 reported cases, 48 124 cases involving employees' compensation of \$241.2 million were resolved as at the end of 2007. The rest are pending expiry of sick leave, assessment of permanent incapacity or determination by the court.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)075

Question Serial No.

1149

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2008-09, the Department will mount large-scale promotional programmes to raise the safety awareness of stakeholders in the catering and construction industries. How do the programmes work and how much resources will be allocated?

Asked by: Hon. YOUNG Howard

Reply:

In 2008-09, we will launch two large-scale promotional campaigns to raise the safety awareness of stakeholders in the catering and construction industries. They will be organised jointly with key players in the two industries, including the Occupational Safety and Health Council, major trade associations, labour unions, related organisations and other government departments concerned.

Both campaigns will feature a territory-wide competition on occupational safety and health performance in the two industries, complemented by publicity activities like roving exhibitions, promotional visits, Announcements in the Public Interest on television and radio, radio programmes, a fun day, an award presentation ceremony and broadcast of award-winning catering establishments and construction sites on the "RoadShow".

The promotional campaigns for the catering and construction industries are estimated to cost \$1.3 million and \$1.8 million respectively, and will be jointly funded by the Labour Department and co-organisers.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)076

Question Serial No.

1272

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the expenditure involved in implementing the Wage Protection Movement (WPM) since it was launched? What is the expenditure for work such as publicity on the WPM and the mid-term review? What is the estimated expenditure for the WPM in 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. TONG Ka-wah, Ronny

Reply:

The total estimated expenditure involved since the launch of the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) (i.e. October 2006 – March 2008) was \$14.5 million under the Labour Relations Programme and the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme. This covers expenditure for publicity, as well as staff and related costs for overseeing the implementation of the WPM, providing conciliation service, and carrying out inspection, investigation and prosecution of wage offences, as appropriate. Of the \$14.5 million, the expenditure for the promotion of the WPM is around \$5.7 million. As for the mid-term review of the WPM, it was undertaken by the existing staff of the Labour Department. In 2008-09, the total expenditure for the WPM is estimated to be \$14.04 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)077

Question Serial No.

1273

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the expenditure involved in the preparatory work for introduction of statutory minimum wage legislation for cleaning workers and security guards? What is the progress made? Given the present progress of the preparatory work, if the Wage Protection Movement fails to yield satisfactory results, is it likely that the legislation will be tabled to the Legislative Council at the same time when the comprehensive review report is submitted?

Asked by: Hon. TONG Ka-wah, Ronny

Reply:

The Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) was launched in October 2006 with an overall review scheduled for October 2008 to evaluate its effectiveness. The Chief Executive has made it clear in his 2007-08 Policy Address that if the overall review of the WPM indicates that the movement has failed, the Government will introduce a bill on a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards as early as possible in the 2008-09 legislative session.

In 2008-09, the estimated expenditure, including staff cost and other expenses, earmarked for the preparatory work for the possible introduction of a SMW for cleaning workers and security guards if the WPM has failed is \$3.72 million.

As for the preparatory work, it is broadly categorised into five major areas, namely, definitions of cleaning workers and security guards; special measures, if any, for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and youth without working experience; definition of a SMW; mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level; as well as enforcement and penalty in relation to the implementation of a SMW. So far, the preparatory work in respect of mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level and special measures for certain vulnerable groups in other jurisdictions have been reported to the Labour Advisory Board and the Legislative Council Panel on Manpower. We are working in earnest in respect of other aspects of the preparatory work.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)078

Question Serial No.

1274

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Has the Administration made any assessment on the expenditure involved in legislating for a minimum wage for the two industries and a minimum wage across the board? If yes, please list the related work and estimated expenditure? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. TONG Ka-wah, Ronny

Reply:

The Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) was launched in October 2006 with an overall review scheduled for October 2008 to evaluate its effectiveness. The Chief Executive has made it clear in his 2007-08 Policy Address that if the overall review of the WPM indicates that the movement has failed, the Government will introduce a bill on a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards as early as possible in the 2008-09 legislative session. Against this background, we only have the estimated expenditure involved in the preparatory work for possible introduction of legislation for a minimum wage for these two occupations. In 2008-09, the estimated expenditure, including staff cost and other expenses, earmarked for the preparatory work for possible introduction of a SMW for cleaning workers and security guards if the WPM has failed is \$3.72 million.

The preparatory work is broadly categorised into five major areas, namely, definitions of the cleaning workers and security guards; special measures, if any, for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and youth without working experience; definition of a SMW; mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level; as well as enforcement and penalty in relation to the implementation of a SMW.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)079

Question Serial No.

1529

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to paragraph 145-147 of the 2008-09 Budget, the Administration has relaxed the eligibility criteria for the Transport Support Scheme by increasing the ceiling for monthly income from \$5,600 to \$6,500. However, the \$600 cross-district transport subsidies is a fixed amount, regardless of the travel distance of each applicant. Would the Government consider making the scheme more flexible by granting varying amount of allowance to applicants on a case-by-case basis?

Asked by: Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply:

The objective of the pilot Transport Support Scheme is to provide a time-limited transport allowance as an incentive for residents of remote districts to seek jobs and work across district. Such allowance is not meant to cover all transport costs incurred in seeking job and working across district.

Granting varying amount of transport allowance to applicants on a case-by-case basis would complicate the verification procedures and processing of claims, thereby increasing the administrative costs for both Government department and the non-governmental organisations involved and lengthening the processing time. In order to keep the Scheme simple, easy to understand and not costly to operate vis-a-vis the limited amount of allowance to be disbursed, the Administration has therefore decided to grant a fixed amount of transport allowance.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____

Commissioner for Labour

Date _____

18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)080

Question Serial No.

1875

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

How many cases seeking assistance were received by the branch offices of the Employees' Compensation Division in 2007-08? What was the breakdown of these cases by causes? Please provide a breakdown of the received cases by branch office.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

In 2007, 62 241 employees' compensation cases were reported to the various branch offices of the Employees' Compensation Division. In the majority of cases, the employees concerned required the services of the Labour Department (LD) in processing their claims for employees' compensation, determining the degree of permanent loss of earning capacity and the amount of employees' compensation payable, and resolving disputes in different areas including the causal relationship between the injury and employment. As the employees concerned might require assistance in more than one aspect, the LD did not keep statistical breakdown of the nature of assistance required in the reported cases.

The breakdown of employees' compensation cases reported to different branch offices of the Employees' Compensation Division is as follows:

Branch Office	Number of Reported Cases
Hong Kong East Office	6 549
Hong Kong West Office	9 759
Kowloon East Office	7 440
Kowloon West Office	5 537
Kwun Tong Office	7 475
Government Servants and Seamen Office	7 141
Kwai Chung Office	5 551
Tsuen Wan Office	5 640
Shatin Office	6 963
Fatal Cases Office	186
Total	62 241

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)081

Question Serial No.

1876

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

How many cases were handled by the Fatal Cases Office in 2007-08? What were the respective figures of completed and uncompleted cases in the year? What were the reasons that accounted for the uncompleted cases?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

In 2007, 186 cases were reported to the Fatal Cases Office. Of these, 51 cases were settled in the year and the remaining 135 cases were still being processed as at the end of 2007.

For the majority of the outstanding cases, more time is needed for collection of relevant information and documents from the employers and the family members of the deceased employees, verification of the particulars of the claims, and adjudication by the court over issues in dispute.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)082

Question Serial No.

1877

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the breakdown of the cases, by industry and occupation, handled by the Fatal Cases Office in 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

In 2007, 186 cases were reported to the Fatal Cases Office. A breakdown of these cases by industry is as follows:

Industry	Number of Reported Cases
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	49
Construction	34
Community, Social and Personal Services	27
Transport, Storage and Communication	27
Manufacturing	21
Catering	9
Wholesale/Retail, Import/Export and Hotel	5
Electricity, Gas and Water	1
To be confirmed	13
Total	186

The Fatal Cases Office does not maintain statistical breakdown of the cases by occupations.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 19 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)083

Question Serial No.

2228

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide a breakdown, by industry and job titles, of occupational accidents which occurred in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

The occupational accident statistics for the full year of 2007 will not be available until mid-April this year. However, in the first three quarters of 2007, there were 33 349 occupational accidents. As for 2006, there were a total of 46 937 occupational accidents. The breakdown of occupational accidents in 2006 and the first three quarters of 2007 by major economic activities is shown in the **Table** below. We do not compile a separate breakdown of the figures by type of work.

Table: Occupational Accidents of All Economic Activities in 2006 and 1st Three Quarters of 2007

Major Economic Activity	2006		1st Three Quarters of 2007	
	No. of Accidents	%	No. of Accidents	%
Manufacturing Industry	4 228	9.0%	3 026	9.1%
Construction Industry	3 499	7.5%	2 390	7.2%
Catering Industry	9 775	20.8%	7 113	21.3%
Wholesale Trade	819	1.7%	486	1.5%
Retail Trade	2 929	6.2%	2 036	6.1%
Hotels and Boarding Houses	1 142	2.4%	927	2.8%
Transport & Related Services	5 134	10.9%	3 484	10.4%
Financial Institutions	207	0.4%	179	0.5%
Business Services (including Import & Export Trade)	5 568	11.9%	4 138	12.4%
Education Services	1 277	2.7%	898	2.7%
Medical, Dental & Other Health Services	2 241	4.8%	1 545	4.6%
Welfare Institutions	1 505	3.2%	1 240	3.7%
Sanitary and Similar Services	2 366	5.0%	1 668	5.0%
Other Economic Activities	6 247	13.5%	4 219	12.7%
TOTAL	46 937	100.0%	33 349	100.0%

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)084

Question Serial No.

2229

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Does the Administration have any specific plans for reducing the overall number of occupational accidents in light of the trend of occupational accidents?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

The number of occupational accidents in the first three quarters of 2007 recorded a decrease, compared with the same period in 2006. The construction and catering industries remain the major areas of concern, with the construction industry continuing to record the highest accident rate and number of fatalities, and the catering industry topping the list among all industries in terms of the number of accidents. The Labour Department (LD) has been addressing the safety problems of these two industries, as a matter of priority, through enforcement, promotion and publicity.

On enforcement, LD will continue to step up inspections, including launching enforcement campaigns to construction sites and catering establishments to ensure compliance with relevant safety legislation and seek improvements in safety and health standards. We will pay particular attention to high-risk activities, such as building repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (RMAA) works, work-at-height, as well as the use of scaffolds and tower cranes on construction sites.

On promotion and publicity, we will continue to focus on accident-prone industries and high-risk work areas. In 2008-09, LD will launch two large-scale promotional campaigns to enhance the safety awareness of employers and employees in the construction and catering industries. These two campaigns will be organised jointly with the Occupational Safety and Health Council and key stakeholders in the two industries, including major trade associations, labour unions, related organisations and concerned government departments. They will both feature a territory-wide competition on occupational safety and health performance and a variety of promotional activities. We will also step up efforts to promote safety in work-at-height, RMAA works, crane operation as well as use of mobile plants and heavy vehicles in the construction industry, through roving exhibitions, Announcements in the Public Interest on television and radio, broadcast of promotional films on public transport media, display of posters, and publication of accident casebooks.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 17 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)085

Question Serial No.

2230

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the prosecutions taken out by the Labour Department under this Programme in 2006-07 and 2007-08, what was the breakdown by industry and reason(s) for prosecutions? What were the convictions and penalties?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

The number of prosecutions under the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme in 2006 and 2007 by industries and results are as follows:

Industry	2006		2007	
	Prosecutions Taken	Convictions	Prosecutions Taken	Convictions
Catering	827	631	637	530
Manufacturing	282	201	313	269
Construction	433	353	393	301
Import/Export	174	151	222	201
Wholesale/Retail	383	335	564	507
Transport, Storage and Communication	217	188	188	154
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	253	228	242	212
Community, Social and Personal Services	421	353	492	410
Others	103	93	194	150
Total	3 093	2 533	3 245	2 734

In 2006, the Labour Department took out 1 043, 1 047 and 740 prosecutions against wage offence, holiday offence and failure to take out employees' compensation insurance, resulting in 785, 851 and 697 convictions respectively. In 2007, the corresponding prosecutions were 1 225, 759 and 993, resulting in 960, 612 and 951 convictions respectively.

In 2006, the highest fine imposed in a case involving wage offence, holiday offence and failure to take out employees' compensation insurance was \$109,000, \$60,000 and \$50,000 respectively. In 2007, the corresponding highest fine imposed was \$114,000, \$20,000 and \$13,000 respectively. The highest custodial sentence imposed was 3 months' imprisonment in 2006 and 4 months' imprisonment in 2007. In 2007, the court imposed community service orders on employers in 2 convicted wage offence cases.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)086

Question Serial No.

2231

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is expected that inspections to workplaces in 2008-09 will decrease as compared with 2007-08. Does it indicate a reduction in the manpower of labour inspectors?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

In 2008, the Labour Department will further intensify its efforts in intelligence collection and analysis to mount more targeted operations to tackle wage offences and combat illegal employment. As more efforts are required for intelligence collection as well as planning and investigation, the target number of workplace inspections in 2008 is set at a reasonable and realistic level. This targeted mode of enforcement has proved very effective in offence detection.

There will be no reduction in the establishment of the Labour Inspector grade in 2008-09.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)087

Question Serial No.

2232

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What were the details of the work of the Administration, the expenditure involved and the effectiveness in eliminating age discrimination in employment in 2006-07 and 2007-08? What is the actual situation of age discrimination in employment at present? What additional measures and resources will be provided for promotion of equal employment opportunities in 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply:

In 2006-07 and 2007-08, the Labour Department (LD) publicised the importance of eliminating age discrimination in employment through various measures. We broadcast Announcements in the Public Interest entitled "Count on talent not age in employment" through the electronic media and on buses, trains, concourses of train stations, at commercial buildings as well as on the outside walls of commercial buildings. We also displayed large publicity banners at prominent locations and distributed practical guidelines and leaflets for public consumption. These publicity efforts should go a long way towards enhancing public awareness of the matter.

Total expenditure on the education and publicity measures in 2006-07 and 2007-08 was about \$900,000.

In 2008-09, apart from continuing with education and publicity to promote equal opportunities in employment, the LD also plans to conduct an opinion survey to gauge the views of the public on age discrimination in employment. The survey would include, amongst other things, respondents' views on the status of age discrimination in employment, as well as the most effective measures to tackle it.

We have earmarked about \$600,000 for education and publicity measures in 2008-09. The cost estimate for the opinion survey is not yet available.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)088

Question Serial No.

2064

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please set out the titles and respective duties of the 15 posts to be created in 2008-09 for meeting operational needs.

Asked by: Hon. TSANG Yok-sing, Jasper

Reply:

The 15 posts to be created in 2008-09 under the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme comprise 10 Assistant Labour Officer II posts, 2 Accounting Officer II posts and 3 Assistant Clerical Officer posts. They are created to replace 15 existing non-civil service contract positions.

The officers concerned are mainly responsible for processing applications for payment from the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund and maintaining the financial accounts of the Fund, determining whether applicants are entitled to compensation from the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund, assisting in the formulation and implementation of new initiatives on employees' compensation, rendering support services in processing prosecution cases, and compiling information and statistics on labour administration. The Labour Department considers that such duties should more appropriately be performed by civil servants.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)089

Question Serial No.

2065

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the 14% increase to 647 in the number of applications under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2007, please state the reasons and specific circumstances, and set out the involved. Also, the estimated figure for 2008 has been set as 670, a small increase compared with the previous year. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. TSANG Yok-sing, Jasper

Reply:

The increase in the number of applications processed in 2007 under the Supplementary Labour Scheme was mainly due to a surge of applications from care homes for the elderly. The applications processed in 2006 and 2007 with breakdown by industry are at Appendices 1 and 2. We expect a rise in the number of applications in 2008 in view of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining local workers for certain jobs, given the continual improvement in the local economy and the unemployment rate. The figure of 670 is no more than an estimate, assuming that the rate of increase in 2008 will be similar to that of 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**Applications under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2006
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of applications
1. Agriculture and fishing	187
2. Manufacturing	135
3. Construction	12
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	58
5. Transport, storage and communication	10
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	10
7. Community, social and personal services (including care homes for the elderly)	156
Total	568

**Applications under the Supplementary Labour Scheme processed in 2007
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of applications
1. Agriculture and fishing	163
2. Manufacturing	77
3. Construction	6
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	85
5. Transport, storage and communication	5
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	10
7. Community, social and personal services (including care homes for the elderly)	301
Total	647

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)090

Question Serial No.

2066

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The provision for 2008-09 is 6% higher than the revised estimate for 2007-08. This is mainly due to the creation of 43 posts to meet operational needs, and the full-year operating cost of two Youth Employment Resource Centres (YERCs) opened in 2007-08, etc.

- a. Please set out in detail the titles and duties of the 43 posts to be created;
- b. What is the full-year operating cost of the two YERCs?

Asked by: Hon. TSANG Yok-sing, Jasper

Reply:

- (a) In 2008-09, a total of 43 civil service posts will be created under the Employment Services Programme. Of the 43 posts to be created, 39 Assistant Labour Officer II posts and 1 Assistant Clerical Officer post will be created to replace 40 existing non-civil service contract positions, and 1 Assistant Labour Officer I and 2 Assistant Labour Officer II posts will be created to meet the manpower needs of the Yuen Long and Sheung Shui Job Centres opened in September 2006.

The officers concerned are mainly responsible for providing a wide range of employment services to help job seekers enter/re-enter the labour market, performing as placement officers of able-bodied and disabled job seekers, administering employment programmes for young people and meeting the recruitment needs of employers by organising job fairs and processing job vacancies.

- (b) The estimated annual recurrent expenditure for the two YERCs is \$20.7 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)091

Question Serial No.

2458

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title): 295 Contribution to the
Occupational Deafness
Compensation Board

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is understood that under the Employees' Compensation Insurance Levies Ordinance, the rate of the Employees' Compensation Insurance Levy payable by an employer in taking out employees' compensation insurance should have dropped by 0.5% from 6.3% to 5.8%. The proportion of levy to be distributed to the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board has also been adjusted downward from 1.2% to 0.7%.

However, it is stated in the description of Subhead 295 Contribution to the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board that the 65.4% increase of provision over the revised estimate for 2007–08 is mainly due to the upward adjustment in the proportion of levy allocated to the Board stipulated under the Employees' Compensation Insurance Levies Ordinance.

Will the Administration advise on whether the situation mentioned in the first paragraph is correct? If yes, what is the reason for the increase of provision in the second paragraph? What is meant by “due to the upward adjustment in the proportion of levy allocated to the Board stipulated under the Employees' Compensation Insurance Levies Ordinance”?

Asked by: Hon. TSANG Yok-sing, Jasper

Reply:

The current rate of the Employees' Compensation Insurance (ECI) Levy prescribed under the Employees' Compensation Insurance Levies Ordinance is 6.3% on the premium paid in respect of employees' compensation insurance policies. Pursuant to the Employees Compensation Assistance (Amendment) Ordinance 2002, the proportion of distribution of the ECI Levy income to the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board (ODCB) has been revised upward from 12/63 to 18/63 with effect from 1 October 2007. Since the Government, as an employer, is to make annual payments to the ODCB based on a proportion of the ECI Levy income to be distributed to the ODCB, with the proportion equivalent to the ratio of the number of employees in the civil service to that of the private sector in Hong Kong, there is a need to increase the provision under Subhead 295 for making annual contribution to the ODCB in 2008-09.

The Labour Department is reviewing the rate of the ECI Levy and the proportion of distribution of the levy income to the ODCB.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)092

Question Serial No.

2214

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the relaxation of eligibility criteria for the pilot Transport Support Scheme mentioned in the 2008-09 Budget, what is the expected increase in the number of beneficiaries in 2008-09? What is the expected expenditure of the Scheme in 2008-09? Has the Administration assessed the financial implication of further relaxation of eligibility criteria to cover all low-income earners in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

According to the 2006 district statistics, there were 40 500 unemployed persons and 157 100 employees with monthly income of \$6,500 or less and working 18 hours or more a week living in the four designated districts viz Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands districts. However, these figures have not taken into account those with personal asset value of no more than \$44,000 (which is one of the eligibility criteria under the Scheme) as no such data is available. Thus it is difficult to have an accurate estimate of the actual number of persons who will join the Transport Support Scheme under the relaxed regime and the expenditure involved in 2008-09. Notwithstanding this, we believe the remainder of the non-recurrent commitment of \$365 million approved by the Finance Committee in April 2007 should be adequate to implement the relaxations.

Since there is no change to the objective of the Scheme, only eligible persons living in the four designated remote districts will be covered. The Administration has not assessed the financial implication of the Scheme if extended to cover all low-income earners throughout the territory.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____

Commissioner for Labour

Date _____

19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)093

Question Serial No.

2215

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What were the details of the number of applications for the Supplementary Labour Scheme and the number of approved applications by industry and job title in 2006-07 and 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

The number of applications received under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS) in 2006 and 2007 was 514 and 586 respectively, whilst the number of applications approved was 334 and 410 respectively.

Each application under the SLS usually involves more than one vacancy. Breakdowns of the vacancies received and approved under the SLS in 2006 and 2007 by industry and job title are at Appendices 1 to 8.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**Vacancies received under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2006
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of vacancies
1. Agriculture and fishing	375
2. Manufacturing	1 019
3. Construction	322
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	120
5. Transport, storage and communication	135
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	125
7. Community, social and personal services	410
Total	2 506

**Vacancies received under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2007
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of vacancies
1. Agriculture and fishing	275
2. Manufacturing	444
3. Construction	21
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	182
5. Transport, storage and communication	24
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	37
7. Community, social and personal services	942
Total	1 925

**Vacancies received under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2006
with breakdown by job title**

Job title	Number of vacancies
1. Livestock/ Poultry/ Fish/ Crops Farm Worker	337
2. Care Worker (Elderly Service)	293
3. Knitting Machine Operator	186
4. Exhibition Technician/ Specialist	144
5. General Sewing Machine Operator	121
6. Special Sewing Machine Operator	121
7. Aircraft Maintenance Technician	120
8. Life Guard	100
9. Cook	54
10. Others	1 030
Total	2 506

**Vacancies received under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2007
with breakdown by job title**

Job title	Number of vacancies
1. Care Worker (Elderly Service)	797
2. Livestock/ Poultry/ Fish/ Crops Farm Worker	261
3. Cook	101
4. Machine Setter	62
5. Transmission Tower Painter	50
6. Machine Operator	44
7. Knitting Machine Operator	39
8. Bean Curd/ Soya Bean/ Bean Sprout Processing Worker	36
9. Ship Fitter	30
10. Others	505
Total	1 925

**Vacancies approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2006
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of vacancies
1. Agriculture and fishing	282
2. Manufacturing	212
3. Construction	93
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	33
5. Transport, storage and communication	122
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	0
7. Community, social and personal services	166
Total	908

**Vacancies approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2007
with breakdown by industry**

Industry	Number of vacancies
1. Agriculture and fishing	224
2. Manufacturing	163
3. Construction	2
4. Wholesale, retail and import/ export trades, restaurants and hotels	46
5. Transport, storage and communication	17
6. Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	0
7. Community, social and personal services	393
Total	845

**Vacancies approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2006
with breakdown by job title**

Job title	Number of vacancies
1. Livestock/ Poultry/ Fish/ Crops Farm Worker	271
2. Care Worker (Elderly Service)	155
3. Aircraft Maintenance Technician	120
4. Exhibition Technician/ Specialist	62
5. Knitting Machine Operator	41
6. General Sewing Machine Operator	40
7. Special Sewing Machine Operator	29
8. Steel Bridge Segment Assembler	25
9. Bean Curd/ Soya Bean/ Bean Sprout Processing Worker	22
10. Others	143
Total	908

**Vacancies approved under the Supplementary Labour Scheme in 2007
with breakdown by job title**

Job title	Number of vacancies
1. Care Worker (Elderly Service)	372
2. Livestock/ Poultry/ Fish/ Crops Farm Worker	211
3. Knitting Machine Operator	46
4. Bean Curd/ Soya Bean/ Bean Sprout Processing Worker	37
5. Cook	29
6. Gardening Worker	14
7. Ship Fitter	12
8. Mechanical Engineering Technician	12
9. Machine Operator	11
10. Others	101
Total	845

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)094

Question Serial No.

2274

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department launched the one-year pilot Transport Support Scheme in June 2007. As at the end of 2007, a total of 5 293 applicants were admitted to the Scheme. Will the Government advise on the total numbers of applicants and approved cases by district, reasons for not granting transport allowance, the approved payouts in 2007 and the expenditure involved? Will the Government consider extending the Scheme to all districts in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply:

Up to end-December 2007, 5 683 persons applied to join the pilot Scheme. Of these, 5 293 persons were admitted, 114 were refused while applications from 276 persons were under processing. The breakdown by district is as follows:

District	Number of persons	
	Applied	Admitted
Yuen Long	2 574	2 318
Tuen Mun	1 936	1 864
North	748	700
Islands	425	411
Total:	5 683	5 293

The main reason for rejection was that the applicants' monthly incomes exceeded the ceiling of \$5,600.

By end-2007, an approved payout of allowance of \$5.9 million, processing fees of \$0.9 million and publicity cost of \$0.6 million were incurred.

A review of the pilot Scheme completed recently confirmed that there should be no change to the objective and basic parameters of the Scheme, including confining the geographical coverage of the Scheme to the four designated remote districts of Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands districts. The Government has no plan to extend the Scheme to all districts in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)095

Question Serial No.

2330

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title): 000 Operational expenses

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The estimated 1 774 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2008 will rise by 68 posts to 1 842 posts as at 31 March 2009. Please provide a list of the 68 new posts specifying the ranks, duties and salary expenses.

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

The 68 posts to be created in 2008-09 include 1 Senior Labour Officer, 1 Labour Officer, 1 Assistant Labour Officer I, 52 Assistant Labour Officer II, 2 Divisional Occupational Safety Officer, 5 Occupational Safety Officer I, 2 Accounting Officer II and 4 Assistant Clerical Officer posts. Of the 68 posts, 56 will be created to replace 56 existing non-civil service contract positions.

Of the 68 posts to be created, 3 will be created under the Labour Relations Programme and are mainly responsible for providing dedicated support to undertake the preparatory work for the possible introduction of a statutory minimum wage for cleaning workers and security guards; 43 will be created under the Employment Services Programme and are mainly responsible for providing a wide range of employment services to help job seekers enter/re-enter the labour market, performing as placement officers of able-bodied and disabled job seekers, providing active employment assistance to youths and meeting the recruitment needs of employers by organising job fairs and processing job vacancies; 7 will be created under the Safety and Health at Work Programme and are mainly responsible for handling complaints lodged by workers/employers and monitoring of the mandatory safety training courses; and 15 will be created under the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme and are mainly responsible for processing applications for payment from the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF), maintaining the financial accounts of the PWIF, determining whether applicants are entitled to compensation from the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund, assisting in the formulation and implementation of new initiatives on employees' compensation, rendering support services in processing prosecution cases and compiling information and statistics on labour administration.

The annual cost of the 68 posts is \$24.7 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)096

Question Serial No.

2331

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2008-09, the Labour Department will continue to promote the Wage Protection Movement (WPM) while studying practical issues relevant to both the continued implementation of the WPM and the preparatory work for possible introduction of a statutory minimum wage legislation for cleaning workers and security guards should the final review of the WPM in October 2008 indicate that the Movement has not yielded satisfactory results.

- a) Please list the funding for the above work in 2008-09; and
- b) Please provide details on the staffing establishment, ranks, specific job duties and the salary expenses involved.

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

- a) The estimated expenditure in 2008-09 of \$14.04 million under the Labour Relations Programme and the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme covers expenditure for publicity, as well as staff and related costs for overseeing the implementation of the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM), providing conciliation service, and carrying out inspection, investigation and prosecution of wage offences, as appropriate.

In 2008-09, the estimated expenditure, including staff cost and other expenses, earmarked for the preparatory work for possible introduction of a statutory minimum wage (SMW) for cleaning workers and security guards if the WPM has failed, is \$3.72 million.

- b) A total of 23 posts were created in 2007-08 under the Labour Relations Programme and the Employee Rights and Benefits Programme for the implementation of the WPM, as well as for stepping up enforcement against wage offences, through providing conciliation service, and carrying out inspection, investigation and prosecution of wage offences, as appropriate. The posts comprise three Labour Officers, seven Assistant Labour Officers I, one Chief Labour Inspector, two Senior Labour Inspectors and 10 Labour Inspectors I. The estimated salary provision in 2008-09 is \$11.15 million.

In addition, a total of three posts, comprising one Senior Labour Officer, one Labour Officer and one Programme Officer (non-civil service contract staff), will provide dedicated support to undertake the preparatory work for the possible introduction of a SMW for cleaning workers and security guards if the WPM has failed. The estimated salary provision in 2008-09 is \$1.97 million. The preparatory work involved can be broadly categorised into five major areas, namely, definitions of cleaning workers and security guards; special measures, if any, for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and youth without working experience; definition of a SMW; mechanism for setting and adjusting the minimum wage level; as well as enforcement and penalty in relation to the implementation of a SMW.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 20 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)097

Question Serial No.

2332

Head: 90 – Labour Department

Subhead(No. & title):

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2008-09, the Labour Department will consider relaxing the eligibility criteria of the pilot Transport Support Scheme with a view to benefiting more needy unemployed persons and low-income employees.

- a) What will be the additional expenditure involved in providing subsidy to the applicants?
- b) How many people are expected to benefit from the relaxation of the Scheme?

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

(a) & (b)

The Financial Secretary announced in his Budget Speech on 27 February 2008 the following relaxations under the pilot Transport Support Scheme:

- (i) raising the monthly income ceiling of applicants from \$5,600 to \$6,500;
- (ii) covering intra-district travels; and
- (iii) extending the duration of transport allowance from six months to 12 months.

According to the 2006 district statistics, there were 40 500 unemployed persons and 157 100 employees with monthly income of \$6,500 or less and working 18 hours or more a week resident in the four designated districts viz Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, North and Islands districts. However, these figures have not taken into account those with personal asset value of no more than \$44,000 as no such data is available. Thus it is difficult to have an accurate estimate of the actual number of persons who will join the Scheme under the relaxed regime and the additional expenditure involved in disbursing allowances to applicants. Notwithstanding this, we believe that the unspent balance of the non-recurrent commitment of \$365 million approved by the Finance Committee in April 2007 should be adequate for the purpose of the relaxations outlined above.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Cherry TSE

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Labour

Date _____ 28 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

With regard to the key performance indicators, there is an increase in trainee places and trainee hours in 2007-08 when compared with 2006-07, whereas there is a decrease instead of an increase in the overall expenditure of the Vocational Training Council. What are the reasons? What are the additional expenditure and manpower required to meet the estimated increase in trainee places and trainee hours in 2008-09?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

The reduction in the subvention to the Vocational Training Council (VTC) in 2007-08 under this programme area is mainly attributed to savings achieved by the VTC through productivity enhancement measures. The subvention will be increased in 2008-09 to meet the increased salary provision for the VTC arising from the 2007 pay adjustment exercise. The increases in trainee places and trainee hours in 2007-08 and 2008-09 are mainly due to the provision of more self-financed courses by the VTC which will not affect the Government's subvention to the VTC.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Regarding the frequency of inspections of establishments employing registered apprentices under key performance indicators, please inform this Council the figures for breaches over the past three years and the main offences?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

Breakdown of non-compliance cases identified during inspections of the establishments employing registered apprentices conducted during the past three years is as follows:

Types of Non-compliance Cases	2005	2006	2007
i) Inadequate training to apprentices	226	271	256
ii) Employment of young persons aged between 14 and 18 in designated trades without contracts under Apprenticeship Ordinance (Cap. 47)	20	21	24
iii) Delay in salary payment	3	3	2
iv) Delay in payment of course fees for courses attended by apprentices under Attendance Order	2	5	2
Total	251	300	284

Following the advice given by the Inspectors of Apprentices, all the employers concerned have since made improvements and fully complied with the requirements under the Apprenticeship Ordinance. No prosecution action was required.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)100

0083

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operating
Labour and Welfare Bureau Expenses

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will cease receiving recurrent subvention from Labour and Welfare Bureau but will meet its operating expenses from the Employees Retraining Levy instead. This means that the ERB will have more resources at its disposal. Does the Administration have any monitoring mechanism to ensure that the expenditure of the ERB is well-spent?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) is a statutory body established under the Employees Retraining Ordinance (ERO) (Cap.423). The ERO specifies the monitoring mechanism on the work of the ERB. Under the ERO, the ERB is required to submit its annual plans and budgets to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval before the commencement of each financial year. The ERO also stipulates that the ERB's annual reports (including the administration of the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF)) and audited accounts should be tabled at the Legislative Council. The Director of Audit may also carry out examinations as he thinks fit into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the ERB has used its resources in discharging its functions and exercising its powers. On the operational level, two senior government officials, namely the Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare and the Commissioner for Labour, are appointed as members of the ERB. Their presence serves to ensure the smooth operation of the ERB, including the implementation of appropriate financial arrangements.

Separately, the ERB has put out for public consultation a series of proposals in the context of its strategic review to, among others, strengthen the quality assurance mechanism and ensure better value-for-money for the services provided by its training bodies. The ERB is also formulating a long-term capital management strategy with the aim to enhance the investment return of the ERF and build up a solid financial base for the sustainable development of its services in future. All these would further help ensure the optimum use of the ERF.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)101

0333

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

To facilitate the development of Hong Kong into a wine trading and distribution centre in Asia, will the Administration recommend the Continuing Education Fund to subsidise relevant professional training courses? If yes, please provide the details, including the types of courses that can be subsidised and the estimated number of training places.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

At present, subject to prior assessment by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), education and training courses that fall within eight specified domains may be registered as reimbursable courses under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF). These eight domains are business services, financial services, logistics, tourism, creative industry, design, language¹, and interpersonal and intrapersonal skills for the workplace. While wine trading and distribution does not fall within the specified domains, there are already registered CEF courses which contain elements relating to wine education or training. Examples of such elements include wine tasting, wine appreciation and wine assessment.

The objective of the CEF is to provide subsidy to learners direct so as to encourage them to pursue continuing learning, according to their own learning needs. It is therefore up to the applicants to make use of the subsidy to take part in the registered CEF course(s) of their choice. As to course providers, it is also up to them to design and organise courses that fall within the specified domains having regard to the market needs. Subject to prior assessment by the HKCAAVQ, the course providers may apply for registration of these courses as reimbursable courses under the CEF.

¹ At present, language courses in English, Chinese (written), Putonghua, French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Korean are eligible for registration under the CEF.

The Administration will continue to closely monitor the registered CEF courses to ensure their quality and smooth operation.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

As one of the matters requiring special attention in 2008-09 under this programme, the Administration will continue to build capacity to support the expansion of the range and number of training courses for better supporting Hong Kong's manpower development. Please advise if there is any plan to provide relevant professional training programmes so as to facilitate Hong Kong's development into a wine trading and distribution centre in Asia. If yes, please provide the details, such as the types of courses that can be provided, the estimated number of training places and the funding required.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Following the re-organisation of the Government Secretariat on 1 July 2007, subvented courses leading to formal qualifications offered by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) are funded by the Education Bureau (EDB) under the programme area of "vocational education", whereas subvented training courses of short duration and programmes which do not lead to formal qualifications are funded by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) under the programme area of "vocational training".

The VTC offers a range of subvented and self-financed courses of different durations which contain elements relating to wine education or training and some 1 400 places are offered in the 2007/08 academic year. Among these 1 400 places, 350 places are funded by LWB under the programme area of "vocational training" and the amount of subvention involved is estimated to be about \$700,000. Examples of subvented vocational training courses include Certificate in Wine and Bartending Service, and Certificate in Wine Studies at various levels. The remaining wine-related places are either funded by EDB under the programme area of "vocational education" or offered on a self-financing basis. Examples of such courses include Certificate in Western Cuisine and Food and Beverage Operations, and Higher Diploma in Hotel & Catering. The VTC will continue to maintain close liaison with the industry to ensure that its courses are able to meet the market and manpower needs.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Is there any surplus from the Skills Upgrading Scheme in 2007-08? What is the amount?

What is the provision made for the Skills Upgrading Scheme for 2008-09? How many years' continuous operation can be supported by the provision already made for the Scheme?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply :

By the end of 2007-08, the expenditure of the Skills Upgrading Scheme (SUS) is estimated to amount to \$299.3 million. We expect the remaining balance of \$100.7 million to be able to support the continued operation of the SUS for about two more years. The estimated expenditure of the SUS in 2008-09 is \$49.7 million.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Among applicants for the Continuing Education Fund, what is the respective proportion of degree holders and non-degree holders?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply :

When the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) was first introduced in June 2002, only persons who were Hong Kong residents aged between 18 and 60 with academic qualification at below degree level were eligible to apply for the CEF. In September 2003, the eligibility criteria of the CEF were relaxed to cover degree holders.

The Office of the Continuing Education Fund started to collect statistics on the education level of new CEF applicants in November 2005. Between November 2005 and February 2008, 58 884 (33.1%) CEF applicants were degree holders, 95 460 (53.7%) were non-degree holders and 23 475 (13.2%) did not specify their education level.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

In 2008-09, expenditure savings will be partly offset by the creation of one post. Please provide details as to this post and the amount offset.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

One Executive Officer grade post will be created to strengthen the general administrative support in the Bureau to cope with the increasing workload under this programme area. The amount to be offset, in terms of notional annual mid-point salary, is around \$0.5 million.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	18 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Many trainees and retrainees remain unemployed after receiving services provided by the Employees Retraining Board. What measures will be taken to establish closer partnerships with the business sector to facilitate their placement? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. TONG Ka-wah, Ronny

Reply :

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) is offering through its network of 58 training bodies a wide range of retraining courses to eligible persons and over 50% of the training places are placement-tied. For placement-tied courses, the ERB requires the training bodies to provide the graduates with placement service and achieve a target placement rate of 70%. In 2006-07, around 47 000 graduates completed placement-tied courses and the overall placement rate was 84%. In the first half of 2007-08, the placement rate was 85%. According to retention surveys, about 67% of the graduates were still in employment nine months after graduation.

The ERB has been working closely with employers to help retrainees secure employment and to provide skilled workers who can best meet the employers' needs. To further strengthen partnership with the industries, the ERB intends to re-organize its existing Trade Advisory Groups, Course Steering Groups and Course Advisory Groups into the Industry Consultative Network comprising employers, employees, professionals and training institutions, etc. Through closer liaison with the industries, the ERB will be able to have a better grasp of the market needs and skills requirements of different job types, and as a result, enhance the training services to be offered. Industry liaison is part and parcel of the work of the ERB. It is not feasible to provide a separate breakdown of the costs involved.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)107

1768

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational
Labour and Welfare Bureau expenses

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

The Employees Retraining Board has been using the market-led and customer-focus approach in the provision of training courses, so that the courses can swiftly adapt to the needs and changes of the labour market. Will the Administration please advise if it has ever conducted any manpower survey or labour market study for any industry in the past 5 years? If it has, please list out the commencement and completion dates of such surveys/studies, the target industries and the expenditure involved in each survey/studies. If it has not, please advise on the approach adopted in developing training courses with potential in the past 5 years. Please list out all the methods used (such as the names of trade associations or industry committees consulted), new courses developed with such methods, and advise whether the courses are placement-tied or standardised courses.

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has been conducting research studies of different scales on the manpower demands and training needs of various industries, particularly those that have been identified as having good potential for offering employment. Some of the studies were conducted internally by the Executive Office of the ERB and some were commissioned to external research agencies. Details of the research studies conducted in the past five years are set out below –

No.	Year	Research Study	Target Industry	Study Period	Cost (\$'000)
1	2008	Study on Training Needs of New Target Group	All industries	Feb 2008 - May 2008	275
2	2007	Study on the Manpower Demand in Various Industries for the New Target Group [@] in 2008-09	Insurance, real estate, information technology, hotel, tourism and exhibition, logistics and warehouse, fitness trainers, beauty and hairdressing, pet care, property management, facilities management	Oct 2007 - Jan 2008	*
3	2007	Opinion Survey on the Inclination of Graduates of Healthcare Massage Courses in Providing Home-based Massage Service	Healthcare massage industry	Aug 2007 - Sep 2007	6
4	2007	Study on the Manpower Demand in Various Industries for the Existing Target Group [#] in 2008-09	Domestic helper, property management, healthcare massage, hotel and restaurant, environmental and sanitary cleaning services, gardening, building renovation and maintenance	Apr 2007 - Jul 2007	*
5	2007	Survey on the Market Demand for Home-based Massage Service	Healthcare massage industry	Jun 2007	13
6	2006	Study on the Market Potential of the Industries in Existing Training Areas	Domestic helper, property management, healthcare massage, hotel and restaurant, environmental and sanitary cleaning services, gardening, building renovation and maintenance	Jun 2007 - Jul 2007	*
7	2005	Survey on the Market Demand for Foot Reflexology and Healthcare Massage services	Healthcare massage industry	Aug 2005	*
8	2005	Survey on the Market Demand for Post-natal Care and Infant and Child Care Services	Post-natal, infant and child care services	Jul 2005	*
9	2005	Survey on the Market Demand for Elderly Care Services	Elderly care services	Jul 2005	*
10	2004	Survey on the Market Demand for Foot Reflexology and Healthcare Massage services	Healthcare massage industry	Feb 2004 - Mar 2004	39

* Projects conducted internally

@ New target group refers to people eligible to enrol in the Employees Retraining Scheme (ERS) after the relaxation of eligibility criteria (i.e. people aged between 15 and 29 and people with education level ranging beyond junior secondary level to sub-degree level) with effect from 1 December 2007.

Existing target group refers to people eligible to enrol in the ERS before the relaxation of eligibility criteria (i.e. people aged 30 or above with education level at junior secondary level or below).

Apart from conducting market research, the ERB also collects information on the manpower demands and training needs of industries through consultation. Thirteen Trade Advisory Groups (TAGs) comprising representatives of employers, trade associations, trade unions, and professional bodies have been established to provide advice on the manpower demands of specific industries as well as suggestions on the vocational skills training required for the specific job types. The 13 TAGs are listed below -

1. Security and property management
2. Massage and related industries
3. Domestic helper
4. Elderly care
5. Post-natal care and child care
6. Hotel
7. Sanitary
8. Laundry
9. Clerical training
10. Self-employment and business start-up
11. Soft skills
12. Computer training
13. Livestock and poultry

For new courses on which no relevant TAG has been set up, the Executive Office will consult the concerned trade associations, professional bodies and major employers in the industry.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

According to the Consultation Paper on the Future Development of the Employees Retraining Board, the Vocational Training Council will conduct manpower surveys on different trades, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the 25 trades/areas of coverage included in the manpower surveys; the commencement and completion dates of each of the manpower survey? Whether any provision is earmarked for such purpose in 2008-09;
- (b) Whether the above manpower surveys are conducted in light of the implementation of the Qualifications Framework. If yes, when will the Administration make use of various survey results to help restructure the vocational training system? When will the specific plan be implemented? If not, will the Administration carry out any other manpower survey and hold consultation with sector members so as to work out the competency requirement under the Qualifications Framework?
- (c) The Administration administers full-time pre-service professional education and training courses, part-time professional education and training courses as well as modular vocational curricula. If it intends to restructure the vocational training system, in how many stages will the specific plan be implemented? Please separately list out the curricula/courses and the institutions involved in each stage.

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

Manpower surveys on the following 25 economic sectors are conducted once every two years. A provision of about \$20 million has been included for this purpose in 2008-09. The table below sets out the schedules of commencement and completion for these surveys -

No.	Economic Sector	Start Date	Completion Date
1	Information Technology	Apr 2008	Oct 2008
2	Electronics & Telecommunications		
3	Metals (including Jewellery)	Mid-May 2008	Mid-Nov 2008
4	Printing		
5	Publishing		
6	Transport Logistics	Mid-Jul 2008	Mid-Jan 2009
7	Maritime Services		
8	Tourism		
9	Retail Trades	Oct 2008	Apr 2009
10	Wholesale and Import/Export Trades		
11	Management & Supervisory Training		
12	Banking & Finance	Jan 2009	Jul 2009
13	Insurance		
14	Accountancy		
15	Building & Civil Engineering	Mar 2009	Sep 2009
16	Electrical & Mechanical Services	May 2009	Nov 2009
17	Real Estate Services		
18	Security Services		
19	Textile, Clothing, Footwear & Handbag	Jul 2009	Jan 2010
20	Plastics	Aug 2009	Feb 2010
21	Hotel	Oct 2009	Apr 2010
22	Catering		
23	Beauty Care, Hairdressing & Cosmetics	Dec 2009	Jun 2010
24	Mass Communications	Jan 2010	Jul 2010
25	Automobile	Mid-Feb 2010	Mid-Aug 2010

The planning and execution of these manpower surveys are steered by the industry/sector-specific Training Boards/General Committees of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), in the light of the latest developments in the industries/sectors concerned, including the development of the Qualifications Framework (QF), and the Specifications of Competency Standards for individual industries. The results of the surveys will help shape course and curriculum planning by training institutions.

On the revamp of the vocational education and training system, we have consulted the Education Bureau. The VTC is revamping its course and curriculum structure for both pre-employment and in-service programmes to align with the new secondary academic structure and the development of the QF. At the post-secondary 3 level, a new competency-based programme of Diploma of Vocational Studies has been successfully piloted, and a module accumulation system is being developed to support flexibility, allowing for different entry points, duration of studies and destinations, and for recognition of prior learning to meet the diverse abilities and needs of students. The VTC plans to introduce the new system at this level in September 2009. At the post-secondary 5 level, a new Higher Diploma structure with a flexible module accumulation system is being developed in the light of the new senior secondary curriculum, the changes in the level of student intake and the development of the QF. Pilot courses will be launched as from the 2008/09 academic year, and the new Higher Diploma programme will be formally introduced to the first cohort of senior secondary 3 leavers in the 2012/13 academic year.

Signature

Name in block letters

Paul TANG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

Date

19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

To encourage training providers to develop new training courses, the Administration has introduced the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy” since April 2007. In this connection, will the Administration please provide the following information:

- (a) After the introduction of “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy”, how many training providers have submitted applications for the two subsidies respectively? How many training providers have been provided with the two subsidies respectively? What is the amount of subsidy involved in each application?
- (b) How many new courses have been developed by the training providers with the help of the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy” respectively? What is the number of places offered in each course? What is the number of participants in each course?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

To encourage training providers to develop new training courses, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) introduced an Incentive Scheme, which comprises the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy”, in April 2007. Information on the applications received and subsidies approved so far (as at February 2008) is as follows -

	No. of Applications Received[#] (No. of Relevant Training Bodies*)	No. of Applications Approved[#] (No. of Relevant Training Bodies*)	Range of Subsidies Approved for Each Application
Course Development Subsidy	13 (11)	11 (9)	\$10,000 to \$50,000
Training Facilities Subsidy	22 (11)	15 (10)	\$5,680 to \$20,000

Applications for the Course Development Subsidy and Training Facilities Subsidy are made on the basis of new courses developed under the Incentive Scheme.

* Some training bodies applied for only one kind of subsidy whereas some applied for both.

As at February 2008, a total of 13 new courses have been developed under the Incentive Scheme. The number of training places provided by the approved new courses ranges from 15 (one class) to 225 (seven classes) whereas the number of enrolment for courses already commenced ranges from 15 (one class) to 153 (seven classes).

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

To encourage training providers to develop new training courses, the Administration has introduced the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy” since April 2007. In this connection, will the Administration please provide the following information:

- (a) What are the trial periods of various new courses subsidised by the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy”? Are the benchmark placement rates set for various courses different from each other? If yes, please provide a breakdown of the trial periods of various courses and the benchmark placement rates used during the trial periods. If no, please provide information on the standard trial period and the benchmark placement rates used during the standard trial period.
- (b) What are the employment rates of trainees during the trial period of each new course subsidised by the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy”? Did the Administration set higher benchmark placement rates after the trial periods? If yes, please provide a breakdown of the higher benchmark placement rates set for various courses and the actual employment rates of trainees of various courses after the trial periods. If no, how does the Administration strike a balance between the benchmark placement rates of the new courses and that of the old courses?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

To encourage training providers to develop new training courses, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) introduced an Incentive Scheme, comprising the “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy”, in April 2007. In order to encourage training bodies to take greater initiative in offering new courses with more varieties so as to cater for the different training needs of the target clients, a benchmark placement rate of 50%, which is lower than the general benchmark rate of 70%, is set for all the new courses developed under the Incentive Scheme during their nine-month trial period.

As at February 2008, a total of 11 classes of five new courses developed under the Incentive Scheme have been completed with placement rates ranging from 54% to 91%. In other words, the placement rates of all the completed classes met the 50% requirement. After the trial period, the placement rate requirement for these courses will be aligned with other existing general placement-tied courses, i.e. 70% for each class. All the approved new courses under the Incentive Scheme are still within the trial period which began in August 2007 for the first course and therefore the actual placement rates after the trial period are not yet available.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational
Labour and Welfare Bureau Expenses

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

With effect from 1 December 2007, the eligibility criteria for course enrolment under the Employees Retraining Scheme (ERS) has been relaxed to cover non-engaged and unemployed persons aged 15 or above with education level at sub-degree or below. In this connection, will the Administration inform us of the following:

- a. After the relaxation of the eligibility criteria for course enrolment, how many people aged between 15 and 30 have enrolled in ERS courses?
- b. After the relaxation of the eligibility criteria for course enrolment, how many people with education level at Secondary 3 to 5 have enrolled in ERS courses? Likewise, how many are at matriculation level? And how many are sub-degree holders?

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

With effect from 1 December 2007, the eligibility criteria of the Employees Retraining Scheme (ERS) have been relaxed to cover young people aged between 15 and 29 and people with education level at sub-degree or below. Between 1 December 2007 and 31 January 2008, a total of 461 persons aged between 15 and 29 enrolled in ERS courses. The number of persons with education level between Secondary 3 and sub-degree enrolled during that two-month period and their education level is tabulated below –

Education Level	Enrolment
Secondary 3 to 5	8 416
Matriculation	297
Sub-degree	65

Signature

Name in block letters

Paul TANG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

Date

19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :

Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Over the past 16 years, the Administration had been providing retraining courses for unemployed middle-aged people. In this connection, please provide details as to the following:

- a. The titles, number of places, number of enrolled participants of the retraining courses related to finance, logistics, tourism and trading provided in the past 5 years;
- b. In 2008-09, will the Administration organise more advanced training courses related to finance, logistics, tourism and trading? If yes, please provide the title, number of places and estimated expenditure for each course to be provided.
- c. Will the Administration strengthen collaboration with the finance, logistics, tourism and trading industries in 2008-09? If yes, which trade associations will the Administration meet in determining how to assist those interested in joining these trades to join the trades through participation in the retraining courses? Please list the trade associations concerned and provide a schedule of meetings.

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

Between 2002-03 and 2006-07, a total of 6 554 training places were provided under courses relating to logistics, tourism and trading funded by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB). Detailed information on the relevant courses is given at the **Annex**. No finance-related courses were offered during the five-year period.

The ERB is in the process of designing and developing new courses, including those relating to finance, logistics, tourism and trading, for the new target clientele in consultation with its training bodies and other relevant stakeholders. Thus, information relating to new courses to be organised, the corresponding number of training places to be offered as well as the estimated expenditure for each course, is not available at this stage. The ERB will continue to work closely with the relevant parties with a view to launching the new courses in phases as and when ready.

The ERB has maintained close liaison with employers to help retrainees secure employment and to provide skilled workers who can best meet the employers' needs. For the finance, logistics, tourism and trading industries, the ERB will meet the relevant trade associations, professional bodies and major employers in the next few months to strengthen collaboration, and to solicit their views on course development and manpower demands. Examples of such organisations are listed below -

Industry	Examples of Trade Associations/ Professional Bodies/ Major Employers
Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Hong Kong Institute of Bankers 2. The Chinese Banks' Association Ltd 3. The Hong Kong Association of Banks 4. The Institute of Financial Planner 5. Hong Kong Securities Institute
Logistics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminals Ltd 2. Hong Kong Shippers' Council 3. Asia Airfreight Terminal
Tourism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hong Kong Exhibition and Convention Industry Association 2. Hong Kong Hotels Association 3. Hong Kong Travel Agent Owners Association Ltd 4. Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong
Trading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Hong Kong Chinese Importers' & Exporters' Association 2. The Hong Kong Exporters' Association

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

19 March 2008

**Courses relating to Logistics, Tourism and Trading provided
between 2002-03 and 2006-07**

Course Category	Course Title	Number of Places Provided	Number of Enrolled Participants
Logistics	Courier Training Course	21	15
	Logistics/Warehouse Assistant Training Course	357	328
	Removal & Logistics Training Course	40	46
	Sub-total	418	389
Tourism	Integrated Tour Service Training Course	60	56
	Travel Assistant Training Course	442	369
	Ticketing Officer Training Course	227	202
	Tour Escort Training Course	466	428
	Abacus Skill Training Course	209	172
	Sub-total	1404	1227
Trading	Shipping & Import / Export Training Course	3980	3767
	Import / Export Junior Clerk Course	752	738
	Sub-total	4732	4505
	Total:	6554	6121

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

LWB(L)113

1794

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational
Labour and Welfare Bureau Expenses

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

What is the reason for the significant reduction of the provision under Operational Expenses for the Vocational Training Council (VTC) (Vocational Training) in the estimate for 2008-09 as compared with the revised estimate for 2007-08? Will the Administration review the role of the VTC and the contents of its courses so as to further review the estimate?

Asked by : Hon. HO Chun-yan, Albert

Reply :

Following the re-organisation of the Government Secretariat on 1 July 2007, subvented courses leading to formal qualifications offered by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) are funded by the Education Bureau (EDB) under the programme area of “vocational education”, whereas subvented training courses of short duration and programmes which do not lead to formal qualifications are funded by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) under the programme area of “vocational training”.

The revised estimate of the financial provision for the VTC under the programme area of “vocational training” for 2007-08 (\$368,404,000) represents a nine-month provision for “vocational training” under LWB’s purview, covering the period from 1 July 2007 to 31 March 2008. The decrease in the financial provision under the programme area of “vocational training” for 2008-09 as compared to the revised estimate for 2007-08 is mainly due to the exclusion of the provision for “vocational education” courses provided by the VTC under EDB’s purview and the corresponding transfer of the relevant financial provision to the programme area of “vocational education” under EDB. The transfer will not affect the role of the VTC in the provision of vocational education and training services.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

19 March 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

The Administration abolished with effect from December 2007 the requirement that applicants of retraining programmes must possess two years' working experience and increased the number of training places in 2007-08. Please provide the following information:

- (a) additional training places by category of courses and the number of enrolment in 2007-08;
- (b) a breakdown of the titles of new course programmes to be organised and the number of training places to be offered by each course.

Asked by : Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply :

Upon the relaxation of the eligibility criteria of the Employees Retraining Scheme with effect from 1 December 2007, a total of 10 784 additional training places for placement-tied courses have been provided between December 2007 and March 2008 to meet the needs of the new target clientele. Breakdown of the additional training places by course category and the number of enrolment for those categories in 2007-08 are provided at **Annex**.

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) is in the process of developing new courses for the new target clientele in consultation with its training bodies and other relevant stakeholders. Thus, information relating to new courses to be organised and the corresponding number of training places to be offered is not available at this stage. The ERB will continue to work closely with the relevant parties with a view to launching the new courses in phases as and when ready.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Permanent Secretary
for Labour and Welfare

19 March 2008

Additional Training Places Provided in 2007-08

Category of Placement-tied Courses	Additional Training Places Provided (1 December 2007 - 31 March 2008)
Security / Property Management	2 267
Household Services (Note 1)	1 932
Healthcare Assistant (Note 2)	435
Healthcare Massage	558
Hotel and Catering	1 513
Customer Services	918
Others (Note 3)	2 338
Tailor-made Courses	557
Job Search Skills	54
Job Search Skills for New Arrivals	40
Courses for the Disabled and People Recovered from Industrial Accidents	172
Total	10 784

Note 1: Including post-natal care worker and infant & child care worker training

Note 2: Including personal care worker and elderly care worker training

Note 3: Including training related to clerical work, beauty care, logistics, tourism, etc.

Number of Enrolment in 2007-08

Category of Placement-tied Courses	Number of Enrolment (1 March 2007 - 31 January 2008)
Security / Property Management	11 893
Household Services (Note 1)	15 433
Healthcare Assistant (Note 2)	2 621
Healthcare Massage	3 436
Hotel and Catering	3 335
Customer Services	1 405
Others (Note 3)	3 479
Tailor-made Courses	896
Job Search Skills	82
Job Search Skills for New Arrivals	163
Courses for the Disabled and People Recovered from Industrial Accidents	608
Total	43 351

Note 1: Including post-natal care worker and infant & child care worker training

Note 2: Including personal care worker and elderly care worker training

Note 3: Including training related to clerical work, beauty care, logistics, tourism, etc.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (4) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please give the reasons for the significant decrease by 80% of the provision for manpower development. How will manpower development, in particular the implementation of retraining programmes and the provision of service, be affected by the sharp fall in the estimated provision? What will be the changes in the policies, measures and staffing requirements for taking forward retraining initiatives?

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply :

From 2008-09 onwards, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will cease to receive recurrent subvention from the Government and will meet its operating expenses from the Employees Retraining Levy. This explains the substantial reduction in the estimated financial provision for the programme area of “Manpower Development” in 2008-09 but this will not affect in any way the implementation of retraining services.

The ERB has completed a strategic review and released a consultation document on its future directions on 24 January 2008 for a two-month consultation. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the ERB is expected to offer more comprehensive and diversified training and retraining services for the local workforce to help them adapt to the changing market and manpower needs of our society.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	19 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)116

Question Serial No.

0668

Head : 173 Student Financial
Assistance Agency

Subhead (No. & title) :
700 General non-recurrent
Item 508 Continuing Education
Fund

Programme : Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer : Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide a breakdown, by types of courses, of the number of applications and cases approved under the Continuing Education Fund in 2006-07.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

In 2006-07, the Office of Continuing Education Fund (CEF) received 83 670 CEF applications. Of these, 77 216 were approved. Breakdown of the applications and those approved by course domain is as follows-

Course domain	No. of applications	No. of approved applications
(a) Financial services	17 850	16 226
(b) Languages	30 655	28 888
(c) Logistics	3 696	3 413
(d) Design	7 264	6 730
(e) Tourism	3 669	3 376
(f) Business services	18 245	16 676
(g) Creative industries	1 396	1 278
(h) Interpersonal and intrapersonal skills for the workplace	674	629
(i) Courses which are not reimbursable under the CEF	221	0
Total	83 670	77 216

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

LI Wing

Post Title _____

Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Date _____

26 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)117

Question Serial No.

0669

Head : 173 Student Financial Assistance Agency Subhead (No. & title) :
700 General non-recurrent
Item 508 Continuing Education Fund

Programme : Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer : Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide a breakdown of the number of reimbursable courses currently under the Continuing Education Fund by academic qualifications awarded.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

As at 29 February 2008, there were 6 986 reimbursable courses registered under the Continuing Education Fund. Breakdown of these courses by academic qualifications to be awarded is as follows:

Academic qualifications to be awarded	Number of courses
Doctorate	1
Master Degree	89
Postgraduate Diploma	21
Bachelor Degree	82
Postgraduate Certificate / Postgraduate Award	10
Associate Degree	18
Higher Diploma	44
Advanced Diploma / Professional Diploma / Post-diploma Certificate	238
Diploma / Executive Diploma / Graduate Diploma	363
Associate Diploma	2
Advanced / Professional / Higher Certificate	216
Certificate / Executive Certificate / Graduate Certificate	814
Others, e.g. certificate of completion / attendance	5 088
Total	6 986

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ LI Wing

Post Title _____ Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Date _____ 26 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)118

Question Serial No.

0671

Head : 173 Student Financial
 Assistance Agency

Subhead (No. & title) :
 700 General non-recurrent
 Item 508 Continuing Education
 Fund

Programme : Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer : Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide the reasons for not granting reimbursement to the applicants of Continuing Education Fund after completing a course, the number of such cases and the amount involved by types of courses in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

Breakdown of the rejected applications for reimbursement under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF), reasons for the rejection and the amount under claim in 2006-07 and 2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008) is as follows-

Reasons for rejection	2006-07		2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)	
	No. of rejected cases	Amount under claim (\$)	No. of rejected cases	Amount under claim (\$)
Claimant is not an approved applicant	0	0	2	21,500
Claimant failed to provide the required information	152	886,826	2	18,500
Claimant has not successfully completed the course	58	359,220	14	110,045
The claim was submitted after the reimbursement validity period	54	421,198	502	4,284,974
Claimant has already claimed the maximum amount	14	129,941	43	524,230
The course is not reimbursable	4	15,390	2	81,360
The course commenced before the applicant submitted application	51	618,534	105	1,210,778
The course was not reimbursable at the time the claimant attended the course	19	141,911	44	276,585
The course was completed after the validity period	5	27,455	11	95,449
The benchmark examination taken was not the one specified under the CEF	5	31,600	0	0
The benchmark examination was taken after the validity period	1	15,255	2	16,943
Fee for the same benchmark examination already reimbursed in a previous claim	8	47,886	3	27,544
Total	371	2,695,216	730	6,667,908

Breakdown of the rejected applications for reimbursement under the CEF and the amount under claim in 2006-07 and 2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008) by course domain is as follows:

Course domain	2006-07		2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)	
	No. of rejected cases	Amount under claim (\$)	No. of rejected cases	Amount under claim (\$)
(a) Financial Services	57	332,469	261	2,227,733
(b) Languages	128	784,606	123	1,038,407
(c) Logistics	7	66,510	62	489,393
(d) Design	35	443,688	43	531,893
(e) Tourism	8	69,535	29	267,892
(f) Business Services	122	934,314	200	1,930,601
(g) Creative Industries	8	44,404	10	100,629
(h) Interpersonal and intrapersonal skills for the workplace	2	4,300	0	0
(i) Courses which are not reimbursable under the CEF	4	15,390	2	81,360
Total	371	2,695,216	730	6,667,908

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ LI Wing

Post Title _____ Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Date _____ 26 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
 INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

<u>LWB(L)119</u>

Question Serial No.

1757

Head : 173 Student Financial Assistance Agency Subhead (No. & title) :
 700 General non-recurrent
 Item 508 Continuing Education Fund

Programme : Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer : Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Regarding the studies (including in-house studies or those entrusted to consultants) conducted by the Bureau for the purposes of formulating and assessing policies, please provide the relevant information in the following format:

- (1) For the projects that have reserved funds for conducting consultancy studies in 2007-08, please provide information in the following format:

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Revised Estimate (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	The follow-ups taken by the Administration on the study reports and their progress (if any)	If completed, have they been released to the public? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?

- (2) Is there any project that will reserve funds for conducting consultancy study in 2008-09? If yes, please provide the following information:

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Expenditure (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	Will the studies be released to the public if they are expected to be completed in the 2008-09 financial year? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply :

(1) No consultancy study for the Continuing Education Fund has been conducted in 2007-08.

(2) Information about a consultancy study planned for 2008-09 is as follows -

Name of Consultant (if any)	Content	Expenditure (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	Will the studies be released to the public if they are expected to be completed in the 2008-09 financial year? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?
To be confirmed	Evaluation of the Continuing Education Fund	1,300,000 (estimate)	Under planning	Major findings will be made public. Exact arrangement to be confirmed.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ LI Wing

Post Title _____ Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Date _____ 26 March 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)120

Question Serial No.

2123

Head : 173 Student Financial
Assistance Agency

Subhead (No. & title) :
700 General non-recurrent
Item 508 Continuing Education
Fund

Programme : Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer : Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide information on the number of applications for enlisting on the list of providers and courses, the number of course providers approved, and the number of courses approved for inclusion into the Reimbursable Course List of the Continuing Education Fund during each of the years from 2005-06 to 2007-08. Please furnish the respective numbers of de-listed courses and appeal cases.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Man-kwong

Reply :

The number of applications for registering a course under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF), the number of applications approved, the corresponding number of course providers involved, as well as the number of courses de-registered and appeal cases from 2005-06 to 2007-08 are as follows -

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)
Number of applications for course registration ¹ (Number of course providers involved)	975 (111)	1 540 (112)	1 148 (101)
Number of applications approved ¹ (Number of course providers involved)	849 (101)	865 (106)	1 458 (88)
Number of de-registered courses ²	3	14	2
Number of appeal cases	0	0	0

¹ Applications received in February/March each year may only be approved in April. Thus, the corresponding approval figures will only feature in the next financial year.

² These are courses de-registered due to non-compliance with CEF conditions.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **LI Wing** _____

Post Title _____ **Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency** _____

Date _____ **26 March 2008** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

LWB(L)121

Question Serial No.

2644

Head : 173 Student Financial Assistance Agency Subhead (No. & title) :
700 General non-recurrent
Item 508 Continuing Education Fund

Programme : Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer : Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide a list of funds under Head 173 Student Financial Assistance Agency that help to promote continuing education and the approved amount disbursed in 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 respectively. What is the estimated number of beneficiaries?

Asked by : Hon. CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, Selina

Reply :

The Continuing Education Fund (CEF) under Head 173 Student Financial Assistance Agency aims to encourage our workforce to pursue continuing education. The amount disbursed under the CEF from 2005-06 to 2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008) is as follows:

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08 (up to 29 February 2008)
Amount disbursed (\$ million)	449.02	507.12	447.20

Given that the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a commitment of \$5 billion in April 2002 to launch the CEF and that each eligible CEF applicant may receive a subsidy of up to \$10,000, we expect that some 500 000 eligible applicants may benefit from the Fund.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ LI Wing

Post Title _____ Controller, Student Financial Assistance Agency

Date _____ 26 March 2008