

CS visits Christian Action for update on ERB's Love Upgrading Special Scheme (with photos/video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, today (November 19) called at the Christian Action Head Office for an update on the Employees Retraining Board's (ERB) implementation of the Love Upgrading Special Scheme.

Mr Cheung stressed that the Government will continue to create and stabilise employment through a range of measures for providing appropriate support to people affected by the epidemic.

The Scheme, launched by the ERB and commissioned by the Government, aims at providing free training courses of two to three months to help the unemployed or underemployed, who are affected by the economic downturn, to upgrade their skills for re-entering the employment market as early as possible.

Accompanied by the ERB Chairman, Mr Yu Pang-chun; the ERB Executive Director, Mr Byron Ng; and the Executive Director of Christian Action, Mrs Cheung Ang Siew-mei, Mr Cheung viewed several courses arranged by Christian Action under the Scheme and received an update on the Scheme's latest developments.

Mr Cheung said he was pleased to learn that the Scheme launched since last October has drawn a total enrolment of over 23 000 trainees, and over 2 200 classes have been held.

He noted that the ERB, as tasked by the Government, launched Phase 2 of the Scheme this July. It has introduced a series of enhancements, including increasing the number of training courses to about 300. Furthermore, under the Government's support, it has from May onwards raised the maximum amount of the monthly allowance per trainee from \$4,000 to \$5,800.

Mr Cheung also chatted with course trainees to learn about the impact of the epidemic on them.

He pointed out that in face of the tremendous challenges brought about by the epidemic to Hong Kong's employment conditions and overall economy, the Government has implemented a series of measures to ease the unemployment situation. In addition to having launched this Scheme, the Government has earmarked \$6 billion under the Anti-epidemic Fund to take forward the Job Creation Scheme, which is expected to create 30 000 time-limited jobs in the public and private sectors in the coming two years. The Government has also extended the Special Scheme of Assistance to the Unemployed under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance framework for six months till May 31 next year.

Mr Cheung reiterated that the Government will monitor the employment situation closely and will consider providing further assistance to persons in need in a timely manner.

