

## LCQ11: Creation of time-limited jobs

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a written reply by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, in the Legislative Council today (May 12):

Question:

To relieve the unemployment situation, the Government earmarked \$6.6 billion under the Anti-epidemic Fund last year to create some 30 000 time-limited jobs in the public and private sectors within two years (the Job Creation Scheme). Moreover, the Government has recently created under the Scheme some 2 000 short-term jobs available for application by practitioners of the tourism industry (including tour guides, tour escorts, staff of travel agents, hotel practitioners and drivers of tourist coaches). The appointees will be responsible for providing managerial and administrative support for community vaccination centres starting this month. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the up-to-date expenditure and the current balance of the Job Creation Scheme;

(2) of the jobs to be created under the Job Creation Scheme currently under study by the Government, as well as the relevant estimated expenditure and number of jobs, with a breakdown by the industry and the rank to which such jobs belong; and

(3) whether it will create under the Job Creation Scheme time-limited jobs with responsibilities for providing managerial and administrative support for individual schemes (such as the scheme under which the Government disburses electronic consumption vouchers to eligible Hong Kong residents), to be available for application by practitioners of those industries hard hit by the epidemic, thereby according priority to such persons in the creation of job opportunities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

To relieve the unemployment situation due to the epidemic, the Government has earmarked \$6.6 billion under the Anti-epidemic Fund last year to create around 30 000 time-limited jobs in the public and private sectors within two years for people of different skill sets and academic qualifications. In view of the persistently high unemployment rate, the Government announced in the Budget this year to further earmark \$6.6 billion to create an additional 30 000 time-limited jobs. Regarding the question raised by the Hon Yiu Si-wing, our reply is as follows:

(1) Since the launch of the Job Creation Scheme in April last year, around 31 000 jobs have been created, which include around 15 800 jobs in the

Government and around 15 600 jobs in the non-governmental sector. Around 22 300 jobs have been filled while the recruitment of the remaining 9 100 jobs is in progress or will commence shortly. Under the Job Creation Scheme, in addition to bearing the salary of the jobs created in various government departments, the Government subsidises part of the cost of the jobs created in the non-government sector. As at end April this year, a total expenditure of \$1,523 million has been incurred for the Scheme. The remaining provision will be used to meet the expenditure involved in the jobs created for the coming year.

(2) and (3) Among the 31 000 jobs created, they include jobs suitable for people of different skill sets and qualifications, such as jobs for technical and non-skilled workers, cleansing and supporting staff, staff providing administrative, executive and clerical support, and staff for carrying out anti-epidemic work related duties. As young people lacking work experience are particularly difficult in finding job opportunities under the prevailing economic situation, many of the jobs under the Job Creation Scheme are created specifically for fresh graduates, or suitable for young people to apply. Around 10 000 jobs belong to this type. Besides, about 40 per cent of the jobs are relatively junior to cater for the need of the grassroots.

As regards the new round of 30 000 time-limited jobs to be created under the additional provision of \$6.6 billion, we will broadly adopt the mode of the previous round of the Job Creation Scheme, with a view to creating jobs to benefit people of different skill sets and qualifications. Apart from the time-limited jobs created in the Government, relevant government departments are also liaising with the non-governmental organisations or relevant associations under their purview to formulate detailed proposals of creating additional jobs in the non-governmental sector.

We understand that people from certain industries have been particularly affected by the epidemic and are facing the situation of underemployment or even unemployment. Relevant departments will particularly take into account the situation of those industries when formulating detailed proposals of creating time-limited jobs. Starting from May 1, the some 1 700 short-term jobs for practitioners in the travel trade to be responsible for the operation and administrative work at 24 community vaccination centres are those jobs created especially having regard to the underemployment situation of the travel trade and the proposal put forth by the travel trade. Since many practitioners in the travel trade have been engaged in reception and administrative work for many years, we believe that they will be able to take up the relevant work after receiving a short period of training and familiarisation.