[LCQ16: Job creation for information technology sector](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Charles Mok and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, in the Legislative Council today (June 24):

Question:

The second-round relief measures, launched by the Government in April this year, include the allocation of around $6 billion to create about 30 000 time-limited jobs in both public and private bodies in the coming two years. Such jobs include (i) some 4 600 positions for technicians and supporting staff, (ii) some 1 640 positions for seasoned professionals, and (iii) over 200 positions for fresh graduates. Regarding job creation for the information technology (IT) sector, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the details of those positions, among the aforesaid positions, which belong to the IT sector, including (i) the number of positions, job nature, entry requirements and pay levels, as well as (ii) the mode by which those positions created in private bodies will be subsidised by public funds; the latest progress of creation of such jobs and the timetable for the recruitment work;

(2) whether it will create more positions for seasoned professionals in the IT sector, in order to expedite the work on implementing eâ€'Government Services, development of Smart City, etc.; and

(3) whether it will, by making reference to the Graduate Employment Training Scheme launched by the Government after the epidemic in 2003, consider implementing the following scheme: where an enterprise hires fresh graduates from university IT programmes for the purpose of supporting its participation in the Government's schemes such as the Distance Business Programme and the Technology Voucher Programme, and provides on-the-job training for such graduates, the enterprise is eligible for receiving from the Government a monthly training allowance of $6,000 for each graduate so employed, with a view to creating jobs and encouraging enterprises to enhance the application of IT; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

To relieve the worsening unemployment situation due to the epidemic, the Government has earmarked $6 billion under the Anti-epidemic Fund to create around 30 000 time-limited jobs in both the public and private sectors in the coming two years for people of different skill sets and academic qualifications. The time-limited jobs created under this measure will

normally not exceed 12 months. Bureaux and Departments (B/Ds) are actively planning and implementing related preparatory and recruitment work.

Regarding the various parts of the question, our reply which is prepared in consultation with the Civil Service Bureau is as follows:

(1) According to the information provided by B/Ds (as at May 31, 2020), about 1 200 short-term positions involving information technology-related work are being planned for the time being. The relevant positions are mainly for supporting the development of FinTech and meeting short-term or time-limited manpower needs on information technology (IT) in B/Ds, including provision of technical support for anti-epidemic work, such as the StayHomeSafe Mobile App, e-wristbands, data processing and analytics related to anti-epidemic work. Depending on the requirements of individual positions, their academic qualification requirements include Secondary Education, Diploma, Higher Diploma, Associate Degree or University Degree. The remuneration would also be different depending on the requirements of the positions and the qualification of appointees.

Apart from providing subsidy to individual industries to increase manpower, majority of these additional jobs would be created by procurement of services from private consultants or contractors through contractual arrangements. It triggers the demand for manpower which in turn drives the private organisations to recruit more staff. Besides, the Government will arrange open recruitment of Non-Civil Service Contract staff to fill the positions within the relevant departments. The above additional jobs would be realised progressively within the next few months at the soonest.

(2) B/Ds have been actively carrying out information technology projects in recent years in order to enhance internal operational efficiency, promote digital government services and facilitate smart city development. To cope with the aforementioned work, the Government has been directly hiring IT grade civil servants, contract IT staff and IT service contractors' staff. In the past three years, the Government has recruited some 150 IT grade civil servants and some 230 contract IT staff on average per year.

We will continue to promote digital transformation of public services, including the launch of the Next Generation Government Cloud and Big Data Analytics Platform in the third quarter of 2020 and the iAM Smart one-stop personalised service platform in the fourth quarter of 2020. With reference to the nature of the existing and new measures, the hiring period, the qualification and working experience requirements, B/Ds will continue to adopt effective methods to hire IT grade civil servants, contract IT staff and IT service contractors' staff to cope with the manpower requirements.

(3) Home office and distance service models have become a new trend under the epidemic. In this connection, the Government has launched the Distance Business Programme under the Anti-epidemic Fund to provide funding support for enterprises to adopt information technology solutions. The Programme supports enterprises to continue their business and services during the epidemic, create business opportunities and manpower demand for the industry,

and will hopefully promote employment.

    In fact, the Government has all along launched and enhanced various schemes to nurture and retain innovation and technology (I&T) talent. The Researcher Programme and Postdoctoral Hub under the Innovation and Technology Fund provide funding support for eligible enterprises to engage local university graduates and postdoctoral talent respectively to conduct R&D work. Each bachelor, master and postdoctoral researcher will receive a monthly subsidy of $18,000, $21,000 and $32,000 respectively. We will consolidate the two programmes in July this year to provide more flexibility in hiring talent.

    In addition, we have launched the STEM Internship Scheme to subsidise eligible STEM undergraduates and postgraduates to take up short-term I&T-related internship positions, with a view to encouraging them to experience relevant work and foster their interest in pursuing a career in I&T later on. Each intern will receive a monthly subsidy of $10,500.

    Under the Reindustrialisation and Technology Training Programme, we fund staff of local enterprises on a 2(Government):1(enterprise) matching basis to receive trainings in advanced technologies, including those related to IT.

    In the long term, the Government will continue to actively implement a wide range of initatives with a view to generating more business opportunities for the IT industry and creating more IT-related job opportunities for the youth.