

LCQ16: Non-skilled employees engaged under government service contracts

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Fernando Cheung and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, in the Legislative Council today (January 8):

Question:

Regarding the statistics on the non-skilled employees engaged under government service contracts (contracts), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of non-skilled employees, up to December 31, 2019, engaged by the service contractors (contractors) of the four major procuring government departments (namely, (i) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, (ii) Leisure and Cultural Services Department, (iii) Government Property Agency, and (iv) Housing Department), and set out in Table 1 a breakdown of such numbers by the type of service (i.e. (a) cleansing, (b) security and (c) others) and the range of hourly wages as pledged in the contracts;

Table 1

Type of service	Procuring department	Range of hourly wages pledged (\$)							Total
		37.5 to 39.5	37.6 to 39.5	39.6 to 41.5	41.6 to 43.5	43.6 to 45.5	45.6 to 47.5	47.6 or more	
(a)	(i)								
	(ii)								
	(iii)								
	(iv)								
	Sub-total								
...									
All types	(i)								
	(ii)								
	(iii)								
	(iv)								
	Total								

(2) among the non-skilled employees engaged by the contractors of the aforesaid four departments up to December 31, 2019, of the number of those who were: (A) aged 65 or above, (B) engaged on a part-time basis, (C) entitled to 17 days of paid general holidays (other than Sundays), and (D) entitled to paid meal breaks, and set out in Table 2 a breakdown of such

numbers by the aforesaid types of service;

Table 2

Type of service	Procuring department	Number of employees			
		(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
(a)	(i)				
	(ii)				
	(iii)				
	(iv)				
	Sub-total				
...					
All types	(i)				
	(ii)				
	(iii)				
	(iv)				
	Total				

(3) of (A) the number of cases of the contractors of the aforesaid four departments reporting to the Labour Department on injuries or deaths of non-skilled employees caused by accidents in the course of their employment, and (B) among such cases, the number of those in which the employers and employees failed to reach agreements on the compensation claims, in each of the past three years, and set out in Table 3 a breakdown of such numbers by the aforesaid types of service; and

Table 3

Type of service	Procuring department	2017		2018		2019	
		(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)	(A)	(B)
(a)	(i)						
	(ii)						
	(iii)						
	(iv)						
	Sub-total						
...							
All types	(i)						
	(ii)						
	(iii)						
	(iv)						
	Total						

(4) in respect of the work injury incidents mentioned in (3), of the respective numbers of (A) fatal cases and (B) cases involving sick leave lasting six weeks or more (set out in a table of the same format as Table 3)?

Reply:

President,

We have consulted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Government Property Agency (GPA), Housing Department (HD) (being the executive arm of the Housing Authority (HA)) and Labour Department (LD). The reply to each part of the question is as follows:

(1) Since April 2019, government departments and HA have introduced new measures to enhance the protection of non-skilled workers employed by government service contractors (GSCs) when they procure service contracts that rely heavily on the deployment of non-skilled workers (service contracts). Information on the committed hourly wages pledged by GSCs and the non-skilled workers under the service contracts tendered and awarded by FEHD, LCSD and HD (representing HA) since the implementation of the new measures and up to November 30, 2019 is at Annex. GPA did not award any such service contract during the period.

Information as at December 2019 is still under compilation and hence not available.

(2) FEHD, LCSD and GPA do not keep information on the age, mode of employment (whether on a part-time basis), holiday and meal break arrangement of non-skilled workers engaged by their GSCs.

118 non-skilled workers were engaged on a part-time basis under the service contracts tendered and awarded by HD (representing HA) during the period of April 1, 2019 to November 30, 2019. HD does not keep information on the age, holiday and meal break arrangement of the non-skilled workers engaged by their GSCs.

(3) and (4) According to LD, reports of work injuries do not record whether the work injury cases are concerned with government service contracts. LD does not keep information on the number of work injury cases reported by GSCs in respect of their employees, as well as the number of work injury cases involving disputes of employees' compensation liability, fatal cases and work injury cases with sick leave days of six weeks or above.