

LCQ22: Creation of time-limited jobs

Following is a question by the Hon Holden Chow and a written reply by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, in the Legislative Council today (January 20):

With the economy of Hong Kong having been hard hit by social movements and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, a wave of layoffs has emerged in recent months. With a view to mitigating the unemployment situation, the Government has earmarked \$6 billion to create a total of around 30 000 time-limited jobs in both the public and private sectors within two years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of time-limited jobs that have been created so far, with a breakdown by industry; the number of applicants for such jobs, and the number of appointees who have reported duty;

(2) whether it will consider organising short-term training courses related to such jobs (e.g. courses related to landscaping and anti-epidemic work) through various channels, so as to assist the unemployed grassroots in applying for these jobs; and

(3) whether the various government departments and (according to its understanding) the various public and private organisations will create more time-limited jobs in addition to such jobs?

Reply:

President,

To relieve the unemployment situation as a result of the epidemic and the anti-epidemic measures, the Government has earmarked funding under the Anti-epidemic Fund 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. 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. The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) is responsible for co-ordinating with bureaux and departments the implementation of the Job Creation Scheme.

Regarding the question raised by the Hon Holden Chow, having consulted the Labour and Welfare Bureau, our reply to respective parts is as follows:

(1) As at end December 2020, around 31 000 jobs have already been created under the Job Creation Scheme. About half of the jobs are created in the Government while the other half are in the non-governmental sector. The detailed breakdown by job type is attached at Annex. Among these jobs, around 14 000 jobs have been filled while the recruitment of the remaining 17 000

jobs has already commenced or will commence shortly. The CSB does not keep statistical record on the number of applicants for the jobs under the Job Creation Scheme.

(2) Apart from the training services provided by the Employees Retraining Board and Vocational Training Council having regard to the needs of the employment market, bureaux and departments also provide industry-specific training or funding schemes for employees in specific industries to upgrade their job skills through various ways.

The Job Creation Scheme include various jobs that are suitable for people of different skill sets and academic qualifications. Some of them have added training elements. For example, the CSB, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Jockey Club, implements a training-cum-job placement subsidy scheme for the first-time job seekers. Besides, the Government launched the Matching Grant Scheme for Skills Upgrading under the Anti-epidemic Fund on July 15, 2020. It provides training funds on a matching basis to eligible applicants, which are suitable organisations identified by policy bureaux, for organising training programmes for employees in various sectors, in particular those hard-hit by the epidemic, so that they will be better equipped with enhanced skills to prepare for the economic turnaround. So far, a total of 37 applications, involving total matching grant of about \$15.4 million, have been approved. The approved training programmes will be launched gradually.

(3) The Job Creation Scheme is one of the measures implemented by the Government to support employment and relieve the unemployment situation. We will continue to closely review the implementation progress of the Scheme, and will create more sector-specific job opportunities for those who are interested to work in the related industries.