

LCQ22: One-stop contact point 1823

Following is a question by the Hon Nixie Lam and a written reply by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, in the Legislative Council today (January 10):

Question:

1823 provides members of the public with a round-the-clock, one-stop contact point to answer their general enquiries about the services of a number of government departments and receive their complaints and suggestions about government service. There are views that the performance of 1823 needs enhancement. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the staffing establishment of 1823, the actual number of full-time and part-time staff and the number of job vacancies in the past year;

(2) of the respective numbers of cases of enquiries, requests for assistance and complaints received by 1823 in the past year, with a breakdown by (i) the government department involved and (ii) the channel for receiving those cases (including telephone call, online form, email, fax and mobile application) and their respective percentages;

(3) given that while the authorities have set a performance indicator of 80 per cent of the calls have to be answered within 12 seconds for 1823, the target was not met by 1823 in the whole year of 2022 and in the first 10 months of 2023, of the average waiting time for calls not answered within the time specified by the indicator; whether the authorities have conducted a review on the relevant situation and taken improvement measures; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether it will, by drawing reference from the experience of the Mainland's "12345 Government Service Convenience Hotline", analyse the cases received by 1823 through the pooled big data, and regularly submit feedback analysis reports to the relevant government departments for reference in service improvement and community governance?

Reply:

President,

1823 is managed by the Efficiency Office. It answers enquiries for 23 participating departments and receives complaints, suggestions and compliments about all government services. Apart from telephone, members of the public can contact 1823 via other channels, such as web form, email, mobile app, SMS and fax.

My reply to the question raised by the Hon Nixie Lam is as follows:

(1) 1823 has been closely monitoring the public's demand for 1823 services to

plan its manpower resources. In 2023, both the establishment and strength of civil service posts are nine while the number of full-time and part-time Non-Civil Service Contract staff are 430 and 132 respectively.

(2) In 2023, the number of public enquiry and complaint cases received by 1823, the departments involved, and the channels through which the cases were received are set out in Tables (1) and (2) at Annex.

(3) The three key performance indicators for 1823 are "customer satisfaction rate", "percentage of callers that have their enquiries addressed at the first time of calling" and "percentage of calls that can be answered within 12 seconds". In 2023, the performance of the first and second indicators were 4.56 points (out of a five-point scale) and 99 per cent respectively, both of which exceeded the targets. For the third one, 74 per cent of calls in 2023 were answered within 12 seconds while the average waiting time for all calls answered was 30 seconds. Whether the planned target can be achieved is affected by various factors such as the number of calls and written correspondence received, whether there is a sudden surge in calls (for instance, a large number of enquiries were received during the peak period of the epidemic and a large number of fallen trees and flooding reports were received during typhoons), the complexity of enquiries or complaints, etc. With reference to the past figures and operational experience, 1823 will develop more recruitment channels and design work models of different natures to attract more people to join the 1823 team. In view of the high mobility of 1823's staff, 1823 will also strive to speed up the staff on-boarding process through various means including adjusting the training programme and duties of the new recruits. On introduction of new technologies, 1823 will fully expand its artificial intelligence chatbot to answer common enquiries within its service scope; pilot the use of generative artificial intelligence technology to assist colleagues in drafting responses to written enquiries from the public; and adopt the artificial intelligence speech recognition technology through which callers can use voice to input the required options for obtaining the relevant information, etc, so as to increase the case handling capability and efficiency and streamline the process.

(4) 1823 is one of the channels for government departments to receive enquiries and complaints. Each department also has its own channels for receiving enquiries and complaints. Currently, 1823 provides relevant case data to departments and submit various case statistics and analysis reports to participating departments to facilitate the departments to conduct further data analysis by integrating with their own operation data as well as enquiry and complaint data received from other channels, so as to enhance their services and improve district governance.