

# LCQ8: Staffing establishment and employment arrangements of Hongkong Post

Following is a question by the Hon Dennis Leung and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Dr Bernard Chan, in the Legislative Council today (May 24):

Question:

Regarding the staffing establishment and employment arrangements of Hongkong Post (HKP), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the staffing establishment of the following ranks at HKP in each year from 2018 to March this year: (i) Senior Postal Officer, (ii) Senior Postman, (iii) Superintendent of Posts, (iv) Postman, (v) Postal Officer, (vi) Assistant Controller of Posts II, (vii) Assistant Controller of Posts I and (viii) Controller of Posts (set out in Table 1);

Table 1

Rank	2018	.....	2023 (up to March)
(i)			
.....			
(viii)			

(2) of the (a) numbers of vacancies of, (b) target numbers of recruitment for, as well as (c) anticipated time for commencing the recruitment exercises for the following ranks at HKP at present: (i) Senior Postal Officer, (ii) Senior Postman, (iii) Superintendent of Posts, (iv) Postman, (v) Postal Officer, (vi) Assistant Controller of Posts II, (vii) Assistant Controller of Posts I and (viii) Controller of Posts (set out in Table 2);

Table 2

Rank	(a)	(b)	(c)
(i)			
.....			
(viii)			

(3) whether HKP will introduce measures to retain staff or attract talents to join the industry; if so, of the details; and

(4) as some frontline postal staff have relayed that at present, the contracts of some senior HKP management staff have been repeatedly extended after their retirement, and expressed worries that the promotion prospects of grassroots workers would be affected, of the arrangements and policies adopted by HKP for extending the employment of retired senior management staff (including the time limits for extension of the employment); of the

current number of senior management staff who have their employment extended under such arrangements?

Reply:

President,

Hongkong Post (HKP) attaches great importance to maintaining reasonable and sufficient manpower in meeting service demand and ensuring service quality. The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

From 2018 to 2023, the staff establishment of Postman, Postal Officer and Controller of Posts grades is set out below:

	Rank	Staff Establishment (Figures as of December 31 each year)					
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*	2023#
Postman Grade							
(i)	Senior Postman	398	397	387	384	374	374
(ii)	Postman	2 907	2 830	2 749	2 612	2 358	2 302
Postal Officer Grade							
(iii)	Superintendent of Posts	117	117	112	106	104	103
(iv)	Senior Postal Officer	474	465	451	442	438	431
(v)	Postal Officer	1 067	1 068	1 047	1 007	995	995
Controller of Posts Grade							
(vi)	Controller of Posts	31	31	29	26	26	26
(vii)	Assistant Controller of Posts I	39	39	39	39	40	40
(viii)	Assistant Controller of Posts II	48	51	48	50	50	50

\*The change in the establishment includes the deletion of 258 posts in the Postman grade, comprising 248 posts at the Postman rank and 10 posts at the Senior Postman rank, since the implementation of five-day mail delivery service in mid-May 2022.

#The staff establishment as of March 31, 2023.

At present, the vacancies of each grade and related recruitment situation in HKP are as follows:

	Rank	Number of Vacancies@ (Figures as of April 30, 2023)	Time of Recruitment and Recruitment Targets^
<b>Postman Grade</b>			
(i)	Senior Postman	30	A new round of open recruitment exercise for the post of Postman commenced in January 2023. The target number of officers to be recruited is about 170.  It is expected that new recruits will report for duty starting from the third quarter of 2023.
(ii)	Postman	104	
<b>Postal Officer Grade</b>			
(iii)	Superintendent of Posts	12	For the 2022 open recruitment exercise for the post of Postal Officer, the target number of officers to be recruited is about 150.
(iv)	Senior Postal Officer	34	New recruits have been reporting for duty since February 2023.
(v)	Postal Officer	67	It is expected that a new round of recruitment exercise will commence in the third quarter of 2023.
<b>Controller of Posts Grade</b>			
(vi)	Controller of Posts	7	For the 2022 open recruitment exercise for the post of Assistant Controller of Posts II, the target number of officers to be recruited is about 20.
(vii)	Assistant Controller of Posts I and II	15	New recruits have been reporting for duty since February 2023.  It is expected that a new round of recruitment exercise will commence in early 2024.

@The number of vacancies is calculated by deducting the strength from the establishment. Appropriate manpower arrangements, for example acting appointments and recruitments, will be made by the department to fill the vacancies based on the operational needs.

^In setting the recruitment targets, HKP will consider the anticipated vacancies arising from natural wastage (for example retirement) in addition to the existing vacancies. As such, the target number of new recruits may be larger than the number of vacancies.

In the open recruitment exercises conducted by HKP for its various civil service grades in recent years, a significant number of applications have been received and the number of applicants is sufficient for the selection of suitable personnel to fill the vacancies. Besides, HKP is committed to retaining talent by providing a good working environment, career development, training plan as well as promotion opportunities for its staff.

As regards the arrangements for further employment (FE) of civil servants beyond retirement age, HKP has been following the relevant guidelines issued by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) to first determine whether there is a need for FE of an officer beyond retirement age for a period of time (normally a FE period of 12 months or less for promotion ranks in each FE selection exercise) by taking into account the overall manpower situation of individual grades/ranks, so as to meet operational needs, upkeep the quality of public service and facilitate succession planning. The department should normally convene a promotion board beforehand to ensure that there is no undue promotion blockage. At present, only one out of the seven directorate officers in HKP is on FE under the above mechanism.

At the same time, in accordance with the relevant guidelines issued by the CSB, HKP may employ, where necessary, retired civil servants on contract terms under the Post-retirement Service Contract (PRSC) Scheme to undertake ad hoc, time-limited and seasonal or part-time tasks that require specific civil service expertise/experience. All these positions should be at non-directorate equivalent level. The employment period of these retired civil servants, in general, should not exceed five years. As PRSC staff are not employed to take up posts on the civil service establishment, the promotion opportunities for civil servants will not be affected. The civil service vacancies arising from the retirement of these staff from the civil service will be filled by promotion (for posts of promotion ranks) or open recruitment (for posts of entry ranks) under the established mechanism. As of April 30, 2023, the number of PRSC staff employed by HKP stood at 46, including six at the managerial level and 40 at the non-managerial level.

HKP has been maintaining communication with the staff side on various human resources management issues, including the implementation of the measures concerned.