

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**SB177****(Question Serial No. 1198)**

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Re-integration

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (SIN Yat-kin)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 136

Question (Member Question No. 13):

What is the number of staff on the establishment of the Department responsible for helping rehabilitated offenders to find jobs upon release? What is the expenditure involved? What is the estimated number of rehabilitated offenders who will receive assistance in finding jobs in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Wong-fat

Reply:

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) introduced a new pre-release employment service for persons in custody in August 2012. Systematic job matching service is provided for persons in custody who will be released within 3 months to help them seek employment before discharge. Under the new arrangement, persons in custody will have access to job vacancy information through the Pre-release Re-integration Orientation Course, Light Emitting Diode (LED) display boards in correctional facilities and the job vacancy notices displayed in institutions. When necessary, CSD will make arrangements for employers concerned to conduct job interviews with the applicants at the institutions. Since the introduction of the new pre-release employment service, 237 employers have registered to offer 447 job vacancies as at end-February 2014. CSD will also provide those rehabilitated persons who are subject to statutory supervision upon release with employment counselling and support, thereby helping them to rebuild self-confidence and re-integrate into society. For those who are not subject to statutory supervision, CSD will encourage and refer them to receive post-release employment follow-up service provided by relevant non-government organisations on a voluntary basis. In respect of seeking employment, we encourage persons in custody to actively find jobs. They may do so through referrals made by their family members and friends, reference to the job vacancy information provided by "Caring Employers" shown on the Light Emitting Diode (LED) display boards and notice boards in correctional facilities. If they need assistance or encounter difficulties, they may also take the initiative in seeking assistance from the staff of CSD's Rehabilitation Division in respect of employment information, job applications and arrangements for the interviews concerned.

As the above work is part of the routine duties of CSD's Rehabilitation Division¹, we do not have separate figures on the establishment and expenditure involved in helping rehabilitated persons to seek employment.

Since the number of persons in custody who are sentenced to imprisonment in correctional institutions and the length of sentence are determined by the courts, there is a great variation in the number of persons in

¹ The establishment of the Rehabilitation Division is around 730. It is responsible for pre-sentence assessment, custody of offenders, assessment of re-offending risks and rehabilitative needs as well as programme matching, welfare and counselling services, psychological services, education, industries and vocational training, supervision services, publicity and education, etc.

custody to be discharged each year. Moreover, the background of each person in custody, their choice of occupation and their needs for securing a job are all different and may be depend on the social and economic circumstances, etc. Therefore, CSD is unable to provide an estimate on the number of rehabilitated persons who will seek employment. Nonetheless, CSD is committed to spare rendering assistance to every case where necessary.