

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB241

(Question Serial No. 0943)

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Re-integration

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (LAM Kwok-leung)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the re-integration programme for persons in custody (PICs), please inform this Committee of :

- (1) the details, including the expenditure and manpower involved, of the education and vocational training programmes for adult and young PICs under the Prison Programme in 2017-18? Will the Correctional Services Department (CSD) consider increasing the coverage and the types of trade of the vocational training programmes to meet the social needs?
- (2) the number of adult PICs taking university courses, and the number of these PICs receiving financial assistance under education funds and subsidy schemes in 2017-18?
- (3) the respective expenditure and manpower to be allocated for education and vocational training for adult and young PICs in 2018-19 so as to provide them with opportunities of continuous education or gainful employment on release?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 45)

Reply:

- (1) In 2017-18, the Correctional Services Department (CSD), having regard to the situation of the local employment market, worked with various training bodies such as the Employees Retraining Board, the Construction Industry Council and the Vocational Training Council to provide eligible adult persons in custody (PICs) with remaining sentences from 3 to 24 months with more than 1 400 training places of 40 full-time and part-time vocational training courses. These courses covered construction, business, food and beverage, retail, beauty care, transport, logistics, laundry services, computer application and environmental services, etc. Eligible adult PICs could enrol in these courses and sit for the relevant examinations so as to obtain recognised qualifications, thereby enhancing their employability and

facilitating their re-integration into society after release.

For young PICs under the age of 21, CSD provided half-day compulsory formal education and arranged qualified teachers to teach the subjects. Moreover, half-day compulsory vocational training was provided to guide them to better understand future directions and develop interests, so that they might choose to further study or work after release. In 2017-18, CSD provided young PICs with 20 vocational training courses covering the construction, business and service industries. Arrangements were made to facilitate the trainees to sit for the examinations held by the accreditation bodies, such as the certification examinations of the City and Guilds and the intermediate trade tests of the Construction Industry Council, and take certificate courses offered by various training bodies.

In 2017-18, the expenditure of the department on education for all PICs was about \$35.78 million, which was mainly used on young PICs, whereas the expenditure on vocational training was about \$29.51 million including manpower and provision of vocational training courses, etc. As regards manpower, the Education Unit under the Rehabilitation Division of CSD has a total of 40 staff members dedicated to the provision of education for PICs, while the Vocational Training Unit has a total of 22 staff members dedicated to the coordination of vocational training in various correctional institutions.

Having regard to the overall situation of the local employment market and labour demand, and to cater for the industries with labour shortage problems such as the construction and service industries, CSD will continue to offer diversified vocational training courses, and adjust the courses according to the employment rate of particular industries and the response of PICs. Moreover, CSD will regularly review the courses with individual sectors to meet the market needs. For example, in 2018-19, CSD will introduce new courses such as Foundation Certificate in Preparation for Intermediate Trade Test for Floor Layer (Timber Flooring) of Interior Renovation and Foundation Certificate in AutoCAD in Renovation Drawings. In 2018-19, a total of 41 and 20 vocational training courses will be provided for adult and young PICs respectively.

- (2) CSD encourages adult PICs to pursue further studies on a voluntary basis, and take public examinations or enrol in university distance learning courses under the users-pay principle. In 2017-18, a total of 193 PICs enrolled in university courses. If PICs want to pursue further studies but have difficulties in paying for public examination fees, the examination and tuition fees for university distance learning courses or purchasing reference books, they can apply for financial assistance under a number of education funds and subsidy schemes. These funds and subsidy schemes are contributed by donations from charitable organisations and members of the public. In 2017-18, there were 177 enrolments of PICs receiving subsidies of about \$0.94 million for university courses.
- (3) In 2018-19, CSD's estimated expenditures on vocational training courses and education are about \$31.25 million and 36.76 million respectively. The manpower allocated is the same as that in the last financial year.

Furthermore, CSD will continue to co-operate with various training bodies which provide employment follow-up service, so that CSD will keep abreast of the market changes and the employment situation of discharged persons for reviewing its vocational training programmes. CSD will also provide appropriate education support to PICs according to their learning needs to assist them in obtaining recognised qualifications for further studies or employment after release.

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