

LCQ5: Training courses commissioned by Employees Retraining Board

Following is a question by the Hon Holden Chow and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, in the Legislative Council today (February 26):

Question:

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has commissioned various training bodies to offer training courses. To help the upgrading of skills and the self-enhancement of those persons who became unemployed or under-employed on or after June 1 last year, with a view to assisting them in re-entering the employment market as early as possible, ERB launched a six-month "Love Upgrading Special Scheme" (the Scheme) in October last year to provide such persons with integrated training courses of two to three months. Those trainees who have attained an attendance rate of 80 per cent may be granted special allowances, capped at \$4,000 per month per person. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) Whether it knows the number of applications for enrolment on the courses received under the Scheme so far, and a breakdown by course title of the enrolments for the training courses under the Scheme;

(2) Whether the authorities will raise the ceiling of the special allowances that the trainees of the various courses under the Scheme may be granted;

(3) Whether it has compiled statistics on the number of trainees so far who, after completing the courses under the Scheme, have been engaged in course-related jobs; if so, of the titles of the top three courses with the highest number of trainees engaged in related jobs;

(4) Whether it knows the respective enrolments on and graduates of the various training courses commissioned by ERB in the financial year of 2018-2019 (set out by training body); and

(5) Whether it knows the percentage of those graduates of the training courses in the financial year of 2018-2019 who have engaged in course-related jobs?

Reply:

President,

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) launched the "Love Upgrading Special Scheme" (the Scheme) in October 2019 to provide employees affected by economic downturn with comprehensive training for two to three months. Special allowance is provided to trainees during the training period.

The Scheme imposes no restriction on the trade or education attainment of trainees. Courses covering "Vocational Skills" of 23 trades, as well as "Innovation and Technology" and "Generic Skills" are conducted in full-time and part-time (half-day/evening) modes. Trainees who have completed full-time "Vocational Skills" courses would receive follow-up placement services. Trainees shall attend the courses by end June 2020. It is planned that 10 000 affected employees could take part in the Scheme. My reply to various parts of the Member's question is as follows:

(1) As at end January 2020, a total of 8 401 trainees have applied for enrolment in the Scheme. Each trainee may enrol up to four courses under the Scheme. The total number of applications for enrolment in various training courses during the same period is 9 836. The number of applications for enrolment in various training courses under the Scheme is at Annex 1.

(2) The Financial Secretary announced in December 2019 a new package of measures to support enterprises and employment, which included the enhancement and extension of the Scheme, and increasing the maximum amount of monthly allowance per eligible trainee from \$4,000 to \$5,800 through amendment of the subsidiary legislation concerned. ERB is making the necessary preparation.

(3) The training bodies of ERB will start to collect information on the "percentage of engagement in jobs related to training courses" (note) during the follow-up placement period upon completion of the classes of training courses under the Scheme. As the placement period of respective classes has yet been completed, no relevant information is available at this stage.

(4) The number of enrolled trainees and that of graduate trainees of training courses organised by respective training bodies appointed by ERB in 2018-19 are set out at Annex 2.

(5) The overall percentage of engagement in jobs related to training courses for ERB's placement-tied courses in 2018-19 is 46 per cent.

Note: "Percentage of engagement in jobs related to training courses" means the percentage of trainees who engaged in jobs related to their training courses during the follow-up placement period over the number of trainees who engaged in employment.