

LCQ9: Courses and services commissioned by Employees Retraining Board

Following is a question by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, in the Legislative Council today (October 27):

Question:

Regarding the training courses and services offered by training bodies as commissioned by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the (i) number, (ii) total enrolment, (iii) total number of graduates and (iv) placement rate of graduated trainees of (a) the training courses offered by each training body, and (b) the total amount of funding granted to each training body for the purposes of offering such courses, in each of the past two financial years; set out a breakdown by teaching mode of the courses (i.e. full-time, half-day, evening and other modes);

(2) whether it knows, among the trainees of the placement-tied courses offered in each of the past three years, the numbers and percentages of those trainees who were provided with employment counselling, referral and follow-up services by the training bodies; how the ERB evaluated the effectiveness of such services;

(3) whether it knows if the ERB conducted, in the past three years, comprehensive surveys on and analyses of the labour market conditions of various industries, so as to commission training bodies to offer training courses which may cater better for market demands and are related to those industries with a more promising employment outlook; if the ERB did, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) whether it knows, since May 25 last year (i.e. the date on which the maximum amount of monthly special allowance disburseable to each trainee under the "Love Upgrading Special Scheme" was raised to \$5,800), (i) the enrolment, (ii) the number and percentage of those trainees who completed the courses with an attendance rate of 60 per cent or over, and (iii) the average amount of special allowance disbursed to each eligible trainee per month, in respect of the courses offered under each tranche; and

(5) given that the service targets of the courses commissioned by the ERB (except for those courses under the "Love Upgrading Special Scheme") are persons with educational attainment at sub-degree or below, whether it knows if the ERB will remove such a restriction on educational attainment, so that all eligible employees in Hong Kong (including new arrivals) may attend such

courses and obtain the relevant services; if the ERB will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Based on the information provided by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), my reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) The number of training courses approved by the ERB for each training body for organising training courses in 2019-20 and 2020-21 is at Annex I. The total numbers of trainees who enrolled in and completed courses in 2019-20 were 108 985 and 105 224 respectively; the numbers of enrolment and completion in 2020-21 were 113 308 and 94 124 respectively. The ERB does not keep a separate breakdown of the number of trainees enrolled in and completed courses by each training body.

In 2019-20 and 2020-21, the overall placement rate of placement-tied courses provided by training bodies was 81 per cent and 83 per cent respectively; the amount of funding allocated for organising training courses is at Annex II.

(2) The training bodies of the ERB provide placement follow-up services for three to six months to all trainees who have completed the placement-tied courses, helping them enter the employment market. During the past three years (2018-19 to 2020-21), trainees completed a total of about 111 300 placement-tied courses and received placement follow-up services, with an overall placement rate of about 83 per cent. The ERB sets the target level of performance indicator for placement rate at 70 per cent.

(3) The ERB has 20 Industry Consultative Networks, whose members comprising representatives of industrial associations, trade unions and professional bodies, rendering expert advice on the content of existing courses and development of new courses to complement the latest changes in the market. The ERB also monitors from time to time the latest information of the employment market, e.g. various open statistical data and manpower survey reports by the Vocational Training Council, etc., as the reference of developing training courses to meet market demand.

(4) The ERB launched the four tranches of the Love Upgrading Special Scheme (Special Scheme) in October 2019, July 2020, January 2021 and July 2021 respectively, providing employees affected by economic downturn with training and special allowance. The amount of special allowance is determined by the actual number of training sessions attended by a trainee and is disbursed to trainees upon completion of each training course. The attendance requirement for course completion is 80 per cent. The numbers of enrolled trainees, trainees completed courses and average amount of allowance disbursed to each trainee completing courses under respective tranches of the Special Scheme are at Annex III.

(5) The service targets of the ERB are eligible employees of Hong Kong aged

15 or above with an educational attainment of sub-degree or below. There is currently no plan to revise the restriction on educational attainment. If persons of degree level or above have genuine difficulties in seeking jobs or employment, The ERB will consider their applications for enrolment individually under its current discretionary mechanism. The Special Scheme and "Post-50 Love Upgrading Scheme" of the ERB impose no restriction on the educational attainment of trainees.