

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 42 – Electrical and Mechanical Services Subhead (No. & title):

Department

000 Operational expenses

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Development

Question :

On engagement of agency workers, please provide the following information:

	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09
Number of contracts with employment agencies	()	()	()	()
Contract sum paid to each employment agency	()	()	()	()
Total amount of commission paid to each employment agency	()	()	()	()
Duration of service for each employment agency	()	()	()	()
Number of agency workers	()	()	()	()
Details of the positions held by agency workers				
Monthly salary range of agency workers				
• \$30,001 or above	()	()	()	()
• \$16,001 - \$30,000	()	()	()	()
• \$8,001 - \$16,000	()	()	()	()
• \$6,501 - \$8,000	()	()	()	()
• \$5,001 - \$6,500	()	()	()	()
• \$5,000 or below	()	()	()	()
• number of workers with salary below \$5,824	()	()	()	()
• number of workers with salary between \$5,824 and \$6,500	()	()	()	()
Length of service of agency workers				
• 5 years or above	()	()	()	()
• 3 - 5 years	()	()	()	()
• 1 - 3 years	()	()	()	()
• less than 1 year	()	()	()	()
Percentage of agency workers against the total staff in the department	()	()	()	()
Percentage of expenditure for employment agencies against the total staff costs in the department	()	()	()	()
Number of workers with paid meal break	()	()	()	()
Number of workers without paid meal break	()	()	()	()
Number of workers working 5 days per week	()	()	()	()
Number of workers working 6 days per week	()	()	()	()

Figures in () denotes year-on-year changes

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The information in respect of engagement of agency workers is appended below. This information excludes services provided under term contracts centrally administered by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Moreover, we are unable to provide information for 2011-12 as the need for and the number of agency workers vary over time in accordance with the changing service needs.

(a) **The number of contracts with employment agencies (EAs)**

2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
5 (0%)	5 (0%)	5

(b) **Contract sums and duration of services**

Contract sum	2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
	Number of contracts		
Less than \$0.5 million	4 (0%)	4 (+33.3%)	3
\$0.5 million to \$1 million	1 (0%)	1 (-50%)	2
Over \$1 million	0	0	0
Total:	5 (0%)	5 (0%)	5

Duration of services	2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
	Number of contracts		
6 months or less	1 (0%)	1 (0%)	1
Over 6 months to 1 year	4 (0%)	4 (0%)	4
Over 1 year to 2 years	0	0	0
Over 2 years	0	0	0
Total:	5 (0%)	5 (0%)	5

(c) **Commission paid to EAs**

In procuring employment agency service, government departments are required to comply with the relevant Stores and Procurement Regulations, Financial Circulars and guidelines issued by the Civil Service Bureau. These regulations and guidelines do not require the departments to specify the amount or the rate of commission payable to EAs. As such, we do not have information on the commission paid to EAs.

(d) **Agency workers**

	2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
Number of workers	39 (0%)	39 (+11.4%)	35

Job categories of workers ^{Note}	2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
	Number of workers		
Backend office support	39 (0%)	39 (+11.4%)	35
Technical services	0	0	0
Total:	39 (0%)	39 (+11.4%)	35

Note: Agency workers are generally referred to as temporary staff and are not assigned any post titles. However, we have provided information on the workers by two broad job categories, viz. backend office support and technical services.

(e) **Monthly salary range of agency workers**

All our contracts made with EAs from 2008-09 to 2010-11 did not involve the supply of non-skilled workers. ^{Note} For contracts with quotations invited prior to April 2010, we specified only the service fee charged by the EAs in providing agency workers and we do not have information about the salary of the agency workers. Since April 2010, we have also specified in the contracts that the EAs must pay their agency workers wages no less than the average monthly wage of miscellaneous non-production workers in all selected industries published in the latest Census and Statistics Department's Quarterly Report of Wage and Payroll Statistics at the time when tenders are invited for the whole duration of the concerned service contracts. For the period from April to September 2010, the minimum monthly wages specified in the contracts ranged from \$6,800 to \$8,000.

Note: As a measure to protect non-skilled workers, the Administration promulgated a mandatory requirement on wage rates for government service contracts in May 2004. Under this requirement, service providers are required to offer monthly wages to non-skilled workers which are no less than the average monthly wages for the relevant industry/occupation as published in the latest Census and Statistics Department's Quarterly Report of Wage and Payroll Statistics at the time when tenders are invited. This requirement also applies to service contracts in respect of supply of non-skilled agency workers.

(f) **Length of service of agency workers**

The mode of using agency workers is that government departments and an EA enter into a service contract under which the agency will supply manpower as and when required. As long as the requirements of the government departments (in terms of the number of agency workers and the qualifications and/or experience required from agency workers) are satisfied, the EA may arrange any of their employees to work in the departments or arrange replacement agency workers during the contract period for different reasons. Therefore, we do not have information on the years of service of agency workers who are employees of the EAs and are at the disposal of the latter.

(g) Percentage of workers against the total staff in the Department

2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
10.4%	10.7%	9.6%

(h) Percentage of expenditure for EAs against the total staff costs in the Department

2010-11 (up to 30.9.10)	2009-10 (up to 31.3.10)	2008-09 (up to 31.3.09)
1.2%	1.2%	1%

(i) Meal break for workers

The agency workers are employed by the EAs, and whether the meal break is paid or not is governed by the employment contract between the two parties. We do not have information on this matter.

(j) Number of workers against working days

Working days	2010-11 (as at 30.9.10)	2009-10 (as at 31.3.10)	2008-09 (as at 31.3.09)
	Number of workers		
5 working days per week	39 (0%)	39 (+11.4%)	35
6 working days per week	0	0	0
Total:	39 (0%)	39 (+11.4%)	35

Figures in () denotes year-on-year changes.

Signature:



Name in block letters:

CHAN Hung-cheung, Stephen

Post Title: Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Date:

17 March 2011