

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****S-DEVB(W)03****(Question Serial No. S0103)**

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

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

Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety

Controlling Officer: Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (CHAN Fan)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

According to the Administration's reply of serial number DEVB(W)107, the average daily wages of lift and escalator mechanic in the past four years were \$696, \$644, \$605 and \$648 respectively. Although the wage increase in the last year appeared to be quite good, it mainly resulted from the significant wage drop in previous years. Low wages and unsafe working conditions have led to high staff turnover rate. Relevant worker union further points out that aging of existing workforce and lack of new entrants have contributed to manpower shortage in the industry. As proper functioning of lifts and escalators is important to ensure public safety in use of lifts and escalators, does the Administration have any plan to cooperate with the trade to attract better personnel to join the industry so as to sustain a high quality maintenance services for lifts and escalators?

Asked by: Hon. TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The Administration has been collaborating with the lift and escalator trade to take measures to attract more personnel to join the industry so as to sustain a high quality maintenance services. The measures include -

(i) Enhancing the status and job flexibility of workers

Registration of lift and escalator workers has been introduced under the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (LEO) which commenced in late 2012. The registration regime for workers under LEO is to replace the employer-tied arrangement to provide workers with more flexibility in choosing jobs and hence, better bargaining power in negotiating remuneration packages.

(ii) Strengthening training

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) has incorporated the lift and escalator trade into the "Contractors Cooperation Training Scheme". Apart from enhancing job security through training employment by contractors, trainees will receive training subsidy from CIC in addition to the salary.

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) has introduced the Pilot Training and Support Scheme which covers the lift and escalator trade. It offers vocational education and training

by integrating structured apprenticeship training programmes with clear career pathways. An allowance and a guaranteed salary are offered to the apprentice. In addition, the VTC and the Employees Retraining Board have jointly organised the "Lift and Escalator Assistant Mechanics Certificate Course" to provide training for new entrants to the trade.

(iii) Attracting new comers to the trade

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), together with other electrical and mechanical trade organisations and VTC, has organised the "Electrical and Mechanical (E&M) Trades Expo - Manpower Recruitment" for two successive years in 2013 and 2014 to attract new comers to join E&M trades including the lift and escalator trade. In addition, EMSD commissioned the Radio Television Hong Kong to launch the TV series "Engineering, Life and Dream" in 2014 to arouse the interest of the public, particularly the younger generation, with a view to attracting new entrants to the E&M trades. One episode in this TV series focuses on the lift and escalator trade.

(iv) Improving working conditions

EMSD has updated the Code of Practice for Lift Works and Escalator Works ("CoP") with a view to improving the working conditions. The CoP introduced a new provision that required contractors to assess and confirm that the environmental factors, such as temperature, ventilation, lightings, etc., inside the lift shaft are suitable for working before commencement of work. Moreover, the CIC also issued Guidelines on Safety of Lift Shaft Works (Volume 3) in December 2013 to promote work safety in lift maintenance.