

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION****SB053**

Question Serial No.

0298

Head: 45 Fire Services Department Subhead (No. & title): 000 – Operational expensesProgramme:Controlling Officer: Director of Fire ServicesDirector of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: Regarding the studies (including in-house studies or those entrusted to consultants) conducted by the Fire Services Department for the purposes of formulating and assessing policies, please provide the relevant information in the following format :

- (1) For the projects that have reserved funds for conducting consultancy studies in 2007-08, please provide information in the following format :

Name of consultant (if any)	Content	Revised Estimate (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	The follow-ups taken by the Administration on the study reports and their progress (if any)	If completed, have they been released to the public? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?

- (2) Is there any project that will reserve funds for conducting consultancy study in 2008-09? If yes, please provide the following information :

Name of consultant (if any)	Content	Expenditure (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	Will the studies be released to the public if they are expected to be completed in the 2008-09 financial year? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply: (1) The consultancy studies conducted with the financial provision earmarked in 2007-08 are as follows:

Name of consultant (if any)	Content	Revised Estimate (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	The follow-ups taken by the Administration on the study reports and their progress (if any)	If completed, have they been released to the public? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?
1. Advance Management Consultants Ltd.	Fire Services Department (FSD) Emergency Ambulance Service Customer Satisfaction Survey	810,000 (The total consultancy fee is \$0.99 million, of which \$0.18 million was paid in 2006-07.)	Completed	FSD is following up with the recommendations of the survey report.	FSD publicised the results of the survey at the Year-end Review on 29 January 2008.
2. Fitch & Associates, LLC	Analysis of various response time scenarios for the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS)	403,000	Completed	The Administration will make reference to the Analysis to further consider the feasibility of MPDS.	The Administration will make reference to the Analysis and consider relevant factors to formulate proposals for public consultation.
3. Assessment and Training Centre, The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Formulation of "Competency Standards" for different streams of work in FSD to facilitate the Department in implementing the "Qualifications Framework"	390,000 (The total consultancy fee is \$1.3 million, of which \$0.39 million was paid in 2007-08.)	In Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

4. Institute of Human Performance, The University of Hong Kong	Review of the Annual Physical Fitness Test of serving firemen and ambulancemen	381,348 (The total consultancy fee is \$1,271,260, of which \$381,348 was paid in 2007-08.)	In Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
--	--	--	-------------	----------------	----------------

(2) The consultancy studies conducted with the financial provision earmarked in 2008-09 are as follows:

Name of consultant (if any)	Content	Expenditure (\$)	Progress of Studies (under planning / in progress / completed)	Will the studies be released to the public if they are expected to be completed in the 2008-09 financial year? If yes, through which channels? If no, what are the reasons?
1. Assessment and Training Centre, The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Formulation of "Competency Standards" for different streams of work in FSD to facilitate the Department in implementing the "Qualifications Framework"	910,000 (The total consultancy fee is \$1.3 million, of which \$0.91 million will be paid in 2008-09.)	In Progress	Not Applicable
2. Institute of Human Performance, The University of Hong Kong	Review of the Annual Physical Fitness Test of serving firemen and ambulancemen	889,912 (The total consultancy fee is \$1,271,260, of which \$889,912 will be paid in 2008-09.)	In Progress	Not Applicable

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB054**

Question Serial No.

1917

Head: 45 Fire Services Department      Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: As the Department has planned for the replacement of the existing breathing apparatus in 2008-09, what are the details and estimated expenditure? What is the difference between the new international safety standards and the existing ones?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The Fire Services Department plans to replace over 1 000 sets of breathing apparatus in 2008-09. The estimated expenditure involved is \$43.48 million.

The specifications of the new breathing apparatus will meet the latest requirements prescribed by the European Committee for Standardization. They will be superior to the existing ones in terms of their overall design, constituting materials, protectiveness against chemical, biological and radio-nuclear agents, fire and explosion resistance, technical performance, and testing methods, etc. The new breathing apparatus will, therefore, help enhance the operational efficiency of the frontline fire personnel and provide better protection for their safety.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB055**

Question Serial No.

1918

Head: 45 Fire Services Department      Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: As the Department has planned to strengthen the promotion of occupational safety and health to all staff, what were the details and expenditure for 2007-08 and what is the estimate for 2008-09? Has any annual review on the effectiveness been conducted?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The Fire Services Department (FSD) has all along been promoting occupational safety and health (OSH) in the Department through the formulation of a safety management system and the setting up of OSH Committees at different levels. The main responsibilities of the OSH Committees are to implement OSH policies, look into each injury on duty cases and make recommendations for improvement measures, assist in devising work safety guidelines, as well as to organise publicity and promotional activities on OSH. In 2007-08, the expenditure involved in the above work was about \$3.3 million. FSD plans to further strengthen the promotion of OSH in 2008-09 by establishing an OSH Unit in the Department's Headquarters Command to coordinate various OSH promotion programmes within the Department and strengthen the Department's overall management on OSH work. In this connection, the Department expects that the expenditure involved in 2008-09 will increase to about \$4.85 million.

The Department reviews the effectiveness of its OSH work from time to time. According to the statistics collated by FSD, there is a downward trend in the number of fire and ambulance personnel being injured while on duty in recent years.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB056**

Question Serial No.

1919

Head: 45 Fire Services Department      Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: Why was there an increase exceeding 50% in the “emergency ambulance calls attended by first responders” in 2007 as compared with 2006? What is the estimated expenditure for such service in 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The objective of the “First Responder Programme” is to provide basic life support to injured persons and patients in critical condition (such as those suffering from cardiac arrest, airway obstruction, severe bleeding, absence of breathing and loss of consciousness) before the arrival of an ambulance. As “First Responders” have proven to be effective in enhancing the survival rate of the said injured persons and patients, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has been gradually increasing the number of fire appliances capable of offering first responder service recently from 94 in early 2006 to 127 at the end of 2007. Coupled with the rising demand for emergency ambulance service, the number of emergency ambulance calls attended by First Responders increased from 25 223 in 2006 to 38 917 in 2007.

FSD will continue to assess if there is a need to further increase the number of fire appliances that can offer first responder service in 2008-09. Since the duties of first responders are undertaken by frontline fire personnel, no additional manpower is involved in expanding the programme. However, FSD has to procure additional medical equipment costing around \$ 47,000 for each appliance offering first responder service.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB057**

Question Serial No.

1920

Head: 45 Fire Services Department      Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: Why was there an increase exceeding 50% in the “emergency move-ups of fire appliances to provide operational coverage” in 2007 as compared with 2006? What is the current number of fire appliances in all fire stations and the number of turnouts? Has there been any review conducted on the sufficiency of fire appliances in each region?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: When all the fire appliances in a fire station have been turned out, the Fire Services Communication Centre will immediately deploy fire appliances from other fire stations to that station, so as to ensure that fire appliances are available for handling emergency calls in all districts at all times. The above arrangement was mainly implemented during daytime in the past. However, to further strengthen the provision of fire services, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has started to apply the above arrangement during night-time as well since January 2007. This has increased the number of move-ups. Moreover, as the number of turnouts of first responders increased significantly in 2007 when compared with 2006, the number of move-ups of fire appliances required to maintain operational coverage also rose accordingly.

FSD deploys suitable types and number of fire appliances to different districts having regard to their fire risks. At present, there are 307 fire appliances at different fire stations, and their total number of turnouts in 2007 was 189 236. The current number of fire appliances in different districts should be sufficient to cope with the service demand. Notwithstanding this, FSD will conduct reviews on this from time to time.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB058**

Question Serial No.

1921

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: What was the result of the Department's monitoring of the performance of Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors in the past? Were there any irregularities found?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: In 2007, the Fire Services Department (FSD) inspected on a random basis a total of 9 835 certificates issued by Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors, among which 21 cases were found to be in breach of the relevant regulations. FSD considers that the Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors performed satisfactorily in general.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ **LO CHUN HUNG**

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ **Director of Fire Services**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ **27.3.2008**



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

**SB059**

Question Serial No.

1922

Head: 45 Fire Services Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: As the Department has planned to step up the inspection of pre-1973 composite / domestic buildings in 2008-09, what were the results of these inspections conducted in the past? Also, what is the estimated number of pre-1973 composite / domestic buildings in Hong Kong as a whole? How much time will the Department need to complete the inspection?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572) (the Ordinance), which commenced operation on 1 July 2007, aims at enhancing the fire safety standards of pre-1987 composite / domestic buildings. Up to 29 February 2008, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has inspected a total of 714 pre-1973 composite / domestic buildings pursuant to the Ordinance in collaboration with the Buildings Department, and has issued a total of 8 589 "Fire Safety Directions" requiring owners and occupiers to improve the fire service installations and equipment of their buildings.

Enforcement of the Ordinance will be carried out in three phases. Details are as follows:

First phase (2007 to 2013):	To deal with about 5 000 pre-1973 composite buildings;
Second phase (2013 to 2017):	To deal with about 4 000 composite buildings constructed between 1973 and 1987;
Third phase (After 2017):	To deal with about 3 000 pre-1987 domestic buildings.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB060**

Question Serial No.

1923

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: What are the establishment and estimated expenditure for the holding of talks and the provision of advisory service for 2008? Has the Department reviewed on the effectiveness of such service?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The main responsibilities of the Community Relations Section (CRS) under the Fire Safety Command of the Fire Services Department (FSD) is to organise and co-ordinate the fire safety talks given by various units of FSD, and to provide advisory service to the general public. Through years of extensive publicity work, the public awareness of fire safety has improved in general, and the number of fires has been declining in recent years.

In the financial year of 2008-09, the establishment of CRS is as follows:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Establishment</u>
Assistant Divisional Officer	3
Liaison Officer II	2
Assistant Clerical Officer	1
Clerical Assistant	1

-----  
7  
=====

The estimated expenditure of CRS in 2008-09 is about \$3.28 million.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB061**

Question Serial No.

1924

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: Did the Department serve any warning or advice against irregularities as a result of inspections of fire safety in schools, child care centres, food premises, places of public entertainment etc. in 2007? If yes, how many?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: When the personnel of the Fire Services Department identifies any fire hazard during inspection of schools, child care centres, food premises and places of public entertainment, they will consider instituting prosecution against the responsible persons concerned in light of the actual situation.

In 2007, eight food premises were found to have contravened the Fire Services Ordinance, e.g. obstruction of means of escape or locked exits. The responsible persons of these food premises were subsequently prosecuted.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB062**

Question Serial No.

1925

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: The "inspection of Fire Services Installations and equipment" in 2007 outnumbered that in 2006 by 4 006, and it is expected that the number will reach 91 000 in 2008. What is the reason for such increase? Is there a need for increase in manpower on this in 2008?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The increase in the number of inspections of Fire Services Installations and equipment in 2007 as compared with 2006 was mainly due to the stepping up of inspections on those installations and equipment in all markets and industrial buildings in the territory, in light of the two No. 3 alarm fire incidents occurred respectively in Hau Tak Market, Tseung Kwan O in March 2007, and QPL Industrial Building, Texaco Road, Tsuen Wan, in May 2007. These were achieved through internal staff redeployment.

FSD plans to create 31 posts in the Fire Service Installation Task Force in 2008-09 to speed up the relevant inspection work. It expects that the number of such inspections will reach 91 000 in 2008.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB063**

Question Serial No.

1926

Head: 45 Fire Services Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: The increase in provision for 2008-09 is mainly due to the creation of 77 posts and the increase in operating expenses. Please give a list of the ranks and scope of work of the 77 posts in question.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: In 2008-09, the Fire Services Department will create 77 posts under the programme of Fire Protection and Prevention. Their ranks and scope of work are as follows:

- (1) Creation of 3 Senior Station Officer/Station Officer, 1 Principal Fireman, 1 Building Services Engineer, 1 Principal Technical Officer, 3 Senior Technical Officer, 11 Building Services Inspector and 13 Assistant Building Services Inspector posts to implement the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance which commenced operation on 1 July 2007 and step up the inspection of pre-1973 composite and domestic buildings, thereby improving fire safety in buildings;
- (2) Creation of 1 Senior Divisional Officer, 1 Assistant Divisional Officer, 16 Senior Station Officer/Station Officer, 1 Principal Fireman, 11 Senior Fireman, 1 Senior Building Services Inspector, 7 Building Services Inspector, 1 Assistant Building Services Inspector, 1 Clerical Officer and 2 Assistant Clerical Officer posts to step up the inspection of fire service installations and ventilation systems in different types of buildings, and carry out investigations and prosecutions in respect of defaulting cases, so as to minimize fire hazards in the community; and
- (3) Creation of 2 Liaison Officer II posts to strengthen the promotion of fire safety in the community.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB064**

Question Serial No.

1934

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: Why did the number of “emergency move-ups of ambulances to provide operational coverage” in 2007 increase up to almost 50% as compared with 2006? How was the figure different from that in last year’s estimate? Is it necessary for the Department to increase resources to cope with it?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: To improve the response time for emergency ambulance service and strengthen the service coverage, the Fire Services Department (FSD) flexibly deploys the ambulance resources of different districts and moves up ambulances to other fire stations or ambulance depots as stand-bys.

The significant increase in the number of “emergency move-ups of ambulances to provide operational coverage” in 2007 as compared with 2006 was mainly due to a change in the method for collating the relevant figures when the Department switched from manual to computerized data collection starting from 2007. For example, in the past, when an ambulance received a dispatch instruction to stand-by at another depot, but received a further instruction on its way to attend to other places, the entire journey would be counted as one move-up only. However, under the present arrangement, if an ambulance receives a further dispatch instruction while on its way as in the above case, two move-ups would be recorded.

FSD expects that the number of emergency move-ups of ambulances to provide operational coverage will increase with the rising volume of emergency ambulance calls, from 66 619 in 2007 to 69 000 in 2008, representing an increase of about 3.5%. In 2008-09, there will be a net creation of 31 posts under the programme of Ambulance Service in FSD to cope with the demand for emergency ambulance service in all aspects.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB065**

Question Serial No.

1935

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: What is the progress of the feasibility study regarding the Medical Priority Dispatch System? When is the preliminary study on this expected to complete? Will the Administration consult the ambulancemen?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Kong-wah

Reply: The Fire Services Department (FSD) commissioned consultancies in the past two years to study the feasibility of implementing a Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) in Hong Kong and to analyse the different response time scenarios under MPDS. The Administration will make reference to the consultancies and consider other relevant factors, including the interface between MPDS and the Third Generation Mobilizing System, and the associated arrangements for categorizing calls, with a view to formulating recommendations within this year. When formal recommendations are available, the Administration will seek the views of the public and the staff of FSD (including ambulancemen).

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB066**

Question Serial No.

2027

Head: 45 Fire Services Department      Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:                      (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer:      Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau:      Secretary for Security

Question:      In 2008-09, there will be a net creation of 31 posts in the Fire Services Department. In this connection, please provide the following details:

- a) A breakdown of the 31 new posts by rank, function and region;
- b) the number of persons filling the vacancies in 2007-08 by rank, office and region, and the total amount of expenditures involved;
- c) the establishment of all ranks of the ambulance stream in the Department.
- d) In meeting the increasing demand for ambulance service, does the Department have any measures to alleviate the workload of frontline staff? If yes, please provide details; if no, why?

Asked by:      Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:      a) In 2008-09, there will be a net creation of 31 posts under the programme of Ambulance Service in the Fire Services Department (FSD). The details are as follows:

Rank	No. of posts created / deleted	Function	Division / District to which the created posts belong
Senior Ambulanceman	10	To create 5 additional “ambulance shifts” to cope with the demand for emergency ambulance service.	The created posts do not belong to any specific division / district. Upon completion of their induction training, the new recruits will be flexibly deployed to operational units with greater service need.
Ambulanceman	<u>20</u> <b>30</b>		



Superintendent (Ambulance)	1	To strengthen the promotion of occupational safety and health to ambulance personnel.	Occupational Safety and Health Unit, FSD Headquarters Command
Senior Ambulance Officer	$\frac{1}{2}$		
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer	- 1	To delete the time-limited post for the planning of the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events (This post will lapse on 1 October 2008.)	Headquarters, FSD Ambulance Command
<b>Total:</b>	<b>31</b>		

- b) In 2007-08, FSD recruited 93 staff members to fill the vacancies under the programme of Ambulance Service. The details are as follows:

Rank	No. of staff	Expenditure in 2007-08(Note)
Ambulance Officer	13	About \$3.5 million
Ambulanceman	80	About \$6.3 million
<b>Total:</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>About \$9.8 million</b>

Note: Calculated from the date of appointment of the new recruits to the end of the 2007-08 financial year.

In light of the demand for ambulance service, FSD will flexibly deploy the new recruits to units with greater service need. As these staff will not belong to any specific division or district, the above data cannot be broken down by region.

- c) In 2007-08, the establishment of the Ambulance Officer grade and the Ambulanceman grade in FSD is as follows:

Rank (as at 31 March 2008)	Establishment
Chief Ambulance Officer	1
Deputy Chief Ambulance Officer	1
Senior Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer	3
Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer	6
Superintendent (Ambulance)	9
Senior Ambulance Officer	42
Ambulance Officer	69
Principal Ambulanceman	249
Senior Ambulanceman	567
Ambulanceman	1 452
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2 399</b>

- d) FSD pays close attention to the pressure faced by frontline ambulance personnel in their day-to-day work. To this end, the Department provides regular counseling, and arranges topic-specific courses on stress management, customer service and emotional quotient, etc., for those frontline staff in need, where appropriate. FSD also offers overtime allowance to off-duty ambulance personnel who volunteer to work extra hours during the period of higher service demand, so as to make available more manpower and alleviate the work pressure of frontline ambulance personnel. In the long run, the Administration will continue to review the resources for emergency ambulance service in the light of the service demand.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

**SB067**

Question Serial No.

0686

Head: 45 Fire Services Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: As regards the computer aided Quality Assurance System the Department planned to procure for enhancing the quality of paramedic ambulance service, please provide the following details:

- a) The specific details of the system and when it will be operative; the expenditure involved (please provide a breakdown by hardware / software / maintenance)?
- b) According to the estimation of the Department, how much resources can be saved as a result of the system? In what ways can the system enhance the quality of paramedic ambulance service?
- c) How can the Department ensure that frontline ambulance staff are well-versed with the operation of the system? For instance, will the Department provide any training courses? If yes, what will be the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. SIN Chung-kai

- Reply:
- a) At present, very few staff of the Fire Services Department (FSD) is responsible for carrying out random checks on paramedic ambulance service to assure its quality. With a view to enhancing the overall quality of paramedic ambulance service, FSD plans to procure a computer system to strengthen the above work. The Department has already put the procurement of such system to tender. It is estimated that the system can commence operation in the second half of the 2009. As the system is now under tender, specific details of the expenditure involved are not yet available. The estimated expenditure is about a few million dollars.
  - b) The objective of implementing the above-mentioned computer system is to make more efficient use of resources. With the help of information technology, the time required for random check can be shortened, and the number of cases that will be put to such random checks can thus be increased significantly. This will result in more effective assurance of the quality of paramedic ambulance service.
  - c) Before the system commences operation, FSD will provide the concerned staff with suitable training to ensure that they are able to master operation of the system. The estimated cost for such training has been accounted for by the overall estimated expenditure of the entire system.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters LO CHUN HUNG

Post Title Director of Fire Services

Date 27.3.2008

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

<b>SB068</b>
--------------

Question Serial No.

2090
------

Head: 45 Fire Services Department    Subhead (No. & title):Programme: (3) Ambulance ServiceControlling Officer: Director of Fire ServicesDirector of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question: The number of emergency calls for ambulance service is expected to reach 595 000 by 2008. According to some frontline ambulance personnel, owing to the shortage of ambulances and ambulance manpower, the problem of having to attend ambulance calls in other districts was very serious. It was particularly so during night-shifts when the number of ambulances was reduced to half. Some frontline ambulance personnel pointed out an occasion where they were handling patients in other districts from 8:30 p.m. to 5 a.m., sparing them no time to handle patients in their own district. In this connection, how many additional ambulances has the Department planned to procure in 2008-09? How will those additional ambulances be allocated to the various districts? What are the criteria for the allocation? What is the model of the new ambulances? Will the Department take into account issues such as the frequent need for charging of electricity, insufficient work space, as well as the position of the Mini MDT located at the front part of the ambulance?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply: Upon receipt of an emergency ambulance call, the dispatch system of the Fire Services Department (FSD) will assign the ambulance that can reach the scene within the shortest time to attend to the call. As ambulances may have to travel to various districts in Hong Kong due to operational needs, the dispatch system will only take into account the real-time location of ambulances in identifying the suitable ambulance for deployment, with a view to providing the timeliest emergency ambulance service to the injured persons or patients. The location of the ambulance's home depot is not a factor considered by the system.

In 2008-09, FSD will replace 35 ambulances with Mercedes Benz model 518CDI. The replacement vehicles are expected to commence operation in batches before the end of 2008. In addition, FSD has earmarked funding for the replacement of 88 serving ambulances. The allocation of the new ambulances will depend on the actual service needs at the time of commissioning of these ambulances.

When drawing up the specifications of new ambulances, FSD will consider the concerns of the frontline ambulance personnel, such as the charging of electricity, the work space inside the compartment, and the positions of various equipment, so as to facilitate their work in daily operation. The model of the new ambulances will be subject to the result of the tender.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters    LO CHUN HUNGPost Title    Director of Fire ServicesDate    27.3.2008