

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB212**

**(Question Serial No. 0139)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Fire Services Department will provide community education programme on the provision of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation training for the general public in 2017-18. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the expenditure involved in providing the above training?
2. the number of people trained since the launch of the programme?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (Member Question No. 24)

Reply:

In 2017-18, the Fire Services Department plans to continue to provide half-day Community Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training courses for the general public free-of-charge. A total of 31 258 people have been trained since 1999. The training courses are taught by Ambulance Officers on duty with the assistance of 2 ambulance personnel working outside normal working hours. The overtime work is compensated by time-off in lieu. The implementation of the above programme therefore requires no additional expenditure.

The Department plans to take further forward the community education programme in 2017-18. Instructors rich in ambulance aid experience will visit local secondary schools to teach students to perform CPR. They will explain the importance of the prompt application of CPR and encourage the students to provide resuscitation for patients suffering from cardiac arrests in emergency situations. In 2017-18, the estimated expenditure (including staff remuneration and other expenses) on the implementation of this programme is about \$400,000.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB220**

**(Question Serial No. 0313)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (603) Plant, vehicles and equipment  
Programme: (-) Not specified  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the funding sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2017 for the following new item, please inform this Committee of the estimate for 2017-18:

Head	Account	Subhead (Code)	Subhead	Item (Code)	Ambit
45	Capital Account	603	Plant, vehicles and equipment	8F8	Replacement of Fireboat No. 2

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando (Member Question No. 2552)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure in 2017-18 for the proposed replacement of Fireboat No. 2 is \$500,000 and the additional commitment is \$97.5 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0406)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

There will be an increase of 33 posts under the Programme in the estimate for 2017-18. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of posts to be created to deal with matters relating to the combat of fire safety irregularities in industrial buildings and whether inspection of mini-storages will form part of the duties of the posts? Please provide the number of staff to be deployed.
2. the provision earmarked for this year by the Fire Services Department regarding the regulation of mini-storages and whether there is a schedule for the regulation work?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (Member Question No. 23)

Reply:

1. Of the 33 additional posts to be created in the Fire Services Department (FSD) under Programme (2) in 2017-18, 24 posts will be responsible for stepping up inspection and enforcement efforts in industrial buildings, undertaking the preparatory work for introducing legislation for upgrading the fire safety standards of old industrial buildings, and handling complaints about the fire safety of various types of buildings. Since mini-storages are mostly situated in industrial buildings, the aforesaid 24 new posts created for enhancing the fire safety of buildings will help step up inspection and enforcement efforts for mini-storages.
2. The estimated expenditure on the remuneration of the aforesaid 24 new posts created for enhancing the fire safety of buildings is about \$16.51 million. As at end February 2017, the FSD has inspected 885 mini-storages and found that fire hazards were prevalent on such premises. Fire Hazard Abatement Notices (FHANs) have been issued to the persons in charge of 453 mini-storages with fire hazards, and the persons in charge of the remaining mini-storages with irregularities identified will be issued

with FHANs in due course. The FSD will continue to carry out inspections and enforcement actions in accordance with the law.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB214**

**(Question Serial No. 0417)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The recent arson case in an MTR train compartment in the rush hour has aroused much public concern about the fire safety of our mass transit system. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the provision set aside under Programme (1) in the estimate for 2017-18 for enhancing the firefighting equipment of fire personnel and of which, the amount earmarked for personal protective equipment for firefighters?
2. the breakdown of the estimated expenditure for this year on the promotion of fire protection awareness and cultivation of crisis alertness for unexpected incidents in the community?
3. the details of the 231 posts to be created in the Fire Services Department?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (Member Question No. 21)

Reply:

1. The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the safety of frontline personnel and is committed to providing them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards to equip them for handling different types of incidents and ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also

been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat (hazardous materials) tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

2. The FSD has been actively promoting fire safety education. Various fire safety educational activities have been organised via different media and through liaison with different public/private organisations and district bodies with a view to enhancing the knowledge of the public on fire safety. The Community Relations Section under the Fire Safety Command of the FSD is mainly responsible for coordinating different kinds of fire safety educational activities, including coordinating the efforts of fire stations across the territory in organising fire drills, fire safety talks, seminars, exhibitions, etc. The FSD has also launched the Fire Safety Ambassador Scheme and the Building Fire Safety Envoy Scheme to provide participants with fire prevention training and enlist their help in disseminating fire prevention messages to the public for raising public awareness of fire safety.

The estimated expenditure involved in these activities (including staff remuneration of the Community Relations Section and expenses for the activities) in 2017-18 is about \$11.7 million.

3. In 2017-18, there will be a net increase of 231 posts under Programme (1) in the FSD, the details of which are as follows:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>No. of posts</b>	<b>Job nature</b>
Assistant Divisional Officer	4	To establish 4 Incident Safety Teams to conduct on-scene safety and quality assurance audits to enhance the operational safety of frontline fire personnel.
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer	16	
Senior Fireman	32	
Senior Station Officer/	5	To establish a Tactical Support Unit to

Station Officer		provide support for major or prolonged firefighting and rescue operations.
Principal Fireman	7	
Principal Fireman (Control)	1	
Senior Fireman	18	
Senior Fireman (Control)	1	
Fireman	18	
Senior Divisional Officer	1	To strengthen the management and staff training of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, the Mountain Search and Rescue Team, the Compartment Fire Behaviour Specialist Team and the HazMat Team in order to enhance the professional capabilities of fire personnel.
Assistant Divisional Officer	4	
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer	15	
Principal Fireman	9	
Senior Fireman	11	
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer	4	To strengthen the manpower of the Breathing Apparatus Unit.
Fireman	4	
Assistant Clerical Officer	1	
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer (Control)	3	To strengthen the manpower of the Mobilising and Communications Group to cope with service needs, including the operation of a newly developed computer system for the provision of post-dispatch advice.
Senior Ambulance Officer	1	
Principal Fireman (Control)	1	
Senior Fireman (Control)	22	
Principal Fireman	4	To provide manpower for the new fast rescue vessel in advance to facilitate relevant training.
Senior Fireman	4	
Fireman	8	
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer	1	To plan for the replacement of the communication and mobilising system for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency in deploying firefighting, rescue and ambulance resources.
Senior Ambulance Officer	1	
System Manager	1	
Electronics Engineer/ Telecommunications Engineer	2	
Artisan	10	To strengthen the maintenance and repair services of fire appliances and equipment in the Workshop and Transport Division.
Assistant Divisional Officer	1	To provide manpower for the fire station cum ambulance depot at the Boundary Crossing Facilities of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the fire station cum ambulance facilities at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point.
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer	9	
Principal Fireman	8	
Senior Fireman	19	
Fireman	(33)	
Assistant Clerical Officer	1	
Senior Station Officer/ Station Officer (Control)	4	To provide manpower for 1 new Mobile Command Unit to enhance on-scene

Principal Fireman (Control)	4	operational communication and command capabilities.
Senior Fireman (Control)	8	
Senior Principal Executive Officer	1#	To strengthen the administrative and other support for the Department.
Principal Executive Officer	(1)#	
Assistant Information Officer	1	

Note: Figures in brackets denote the numbers of posts to be deleted.

# It is proposed that the rank of the Departmental Secretary post be upgraded from Principal Executive Officer (Directorate Pay Scale Point 1) to Senior Principal Executive Officer (Directorate Pay Scale Point 2).

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0425)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the processing of loan applications on fire safety improvement works under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme, please provide the following information for the past 3 years:

1. the numbers of applications received and approved, with a breakdown by District Council district;
2. the amounts of loans released and recovered each year;
3. the amount of loans drawn down and its proportion in the total amount of the Loan Fund.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (Member Question No. 4)

Reply:

1. Administered and vetted by the Buildings Department (BD), the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme covers repair, maintenance and improvement works on building and sanitary services, fire service and electrical installations, replacement of lifts, underground drainage, removal of unauthorised building works, etc. The BD refers loan applications involving fire service installations or equipment (FSIs) to the Fire Services Department (FSD) for advice. In 2014, 2015 and 2016, the numbers of loan applications involving FSIs referred to the FSD by the BD were 354, 307 and 467 respectively.

The FSD does not have a breakdown of the above applications by District Council district.

2. According to the information provided by the BD, the amounts of loans released and recovered under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme in the past 3 years were as follows:

	Year		
	2014	2015	2016
Amount of loans approved (\$ million)	118	43	71
Actual amount of loans released (\$ million)	76	67	44
Amount of loans recovered (\$ million)	44	49	49

The BD does not have a breakdown of the amounts of loans involving fire safety works.

3. According to the information provided by the BD, as at end February 2017, about \$500 million of the fund under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme has been drawn down, representing about 71% of the total amount of the fund (\$700 million).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB240**

**(Question Serial No. 0581)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Department is responsible for the deployment of properly trained staff, equipment and appliances within each Command area to maintain effective firefighting and rescue services. Will the Government inform this Committee whether there was or will be expenditure on enhancing the personal equipment of firefighters in the past 2 years and the coming year and, if yes, of the details and the expenditure involved in each year?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-kin (Member Question No. 13)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) is committed to providing frontline personnel with the best equipment and protective clothing to ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The expenditure of the FSD on the acquisition or replenishment of uniform and personal equipment for frontline personnel was about \$33.26 million in 2015-16 and \$22.88 million in 2016-17. The expenditure incurred was mainly attributed to the procurement of, among others, a fire helmet complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards and a new model of handheld flashlight designed for prolonged use, as well as the replenishment of other equipment. In 2017-18, the estimated expenditure on the acquisition or replenishment of uniform and personal equipment for frontline personnel is about \$39.21 million, which is attributed to the procurement of, among others, safety ankle boots complying with the latest EU standards and the replenishment of other equipment.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB232**

**(Question Serial No. 0643)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

1. In 2017-18, there will be an increase of 67 posts under Programme (3) Ambulance Service in the Fire Services Department (FSD). Please list by rank the establishment, strength, wastage and number of retirees under the Programme in 2016-17 and 2017-18 (estimated figures).
2. The FSD states that it will continue to explore the long-term arrangement for the provision of emergency ambulance service this year. The frontline ambulance personnel require a certain level of physical strength to perform their duties. In this connection, will the Government provide the following information on the meal-taking situation of ambulancemen in the past 3 years (2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16):
  - (i) the percentage of ambulancemen who were able to take a continuous 30-minute meal break during the designated period;
  - (ii) the percentage of ambulancemen who were unable to take a continuous 30-minute meal break during the designated period and whose compensatory meal break was also interrupted at least once?

Asked by: Hon POON Siu-ping (Member Question No. 28)

Reply:

1. The establishment and strength under Programme (3) Ambulance Service of the Fire Services Department (FSD) in 2016-17 and 2017-18 are tabulated below:

Grade	2016-17		2017-18	
	Establishment	Strength*	Establishment (Estimate)	Strength
Ambulance Stream	2 937	2 962	3 003	The estimated strength of various

Civilian, technical and other grades	70	59	71	grades for 2017-18 is not available as the number of staff members varies from time to time.
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3 007</b>	<b>3 021</b>	<b>3 074</b>	

\* Strength as at 1 March 2017 (including staff members on pre-retirement leave)

The postings of the staff members of the FSD are subject to change from time to time, and may involve inter-programme transfers. The overall wastage in the Ambulance Stream and civilian, technical and other grades in the FSD (including Programmes (1), (2) and (3)) in 2016-17 is tabulated below:

Type of wastage	No. of persons					
	2016-17			2017-18 (Estimate)		
	Ambulance Stream	Civilian, technical and other grades	Total	Ambulance Stream	Civilian, technical and other grades	Total
Retirement	114	28	142	99	47	146
Exit for other reasons <sup>@</sup>	32	44	76	Not estimable		
<b>Total:</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>146</b>

@ Such as resignation and transfer to other grades

- To achieve a more effective deployment of manpower and to further enhance the meal break arrangements for ambulancemen, the FSD has been using a statistical computer program since July 2014 to systematically gauge the situation and collect detailed statistics on the actual duration of meal breaks taken by the ambulancemen in each ambulance within the designated period for reference purposes. Detailed statistics on meal break duration are therefore not available for 2013-14 and the first quarter of 2014-15. Information on the meal breaks taken by frontline ambulancemen in the past 2 years is set out as follows:

Year	Percentage of cases in which a continuous meal break of at least 30 minutes was taken	Number of cases in which a compensatory meal break was interrupted
2014-15#	96.66%	1
2015-16	97.07%	0

# From July 2014 to March 2015

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0823)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the plan for replacing fireboat No. 2 and the continuous monitoring of the progress of the replacement and procurement of other fire vessels, would the Fire Services Department (FSD) please reply to the following questions:

1. What are the details, timetable and cost of replacing fireboat No. 2; and comparing the old and new vessels, what are the differences in their facilities and what performance enhancements will be achieved by the new one?
2. Residents of the Islands District have all along hoped that the efficiency of marine rescue can be enhanced with the acquisition of ambulance launches. Does the FSD have any plans to allocate resources for the procurement of ambulance launches? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
3. Does the FSD have any plans to further upgrade its marine firefighting and rescue facilities in the future? If yes, please set out the plans in detail.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (Member Question No. 1)

Reply:

1. The FSD has proposed to replace fireboat No. 2. The new fireboat will be equipped with enhanced navigational and operational features as well as marine firefighting and rescue equipment, together with professional ambulance equipment and a designated treatment and ambulance area to meet the demand for marine firefighting and rescue services nowadays. The estimated cost of the new fireboat is \$97.5 million. It is expected to be commissioned in 2022.
2. In order to effectively handle maritime incidents, the Security Bureau formulated the interdepartmental Contingency Plan for Maritime and Aeronautical Search and Rescue "SAR" (the Contingency Plan). Under the Contingency Plan, in a maritime incident, departments including the Marine Department (MD), the FSD and the Police will

immediately initiate their search and rescue operations upon receipt of distress signals or emergency reports. The MD acts as the Search Director within the Hong Kong Maritime Search and Rescue Region to coordinate search and rescue operations through the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre. Its responsibilities include instructing and coordinating with the participating departments, and deploying the most suitable vessels and/or other search and rescue resources for operations. The frontline search and rescue operations are mainly handled by the FSD and the Police's Marine Region. Where necessary, the Government Flying Service (GFS) will also dispatch helicopters to assist in search and rescue operations, and to convey casualties to hospitals, or to helipads in various districts for ambulance transfer to the accident and emergency departments of hospitals after triage.

Upon receiving a call in relation to a maritime rescue incident, the FSD will assign its fire and ambulance personnel to board the fire vessels or police launches dispatched for the incident. The ambulance personnel will carry first aid apparatus and medications, such as oxygen regulator systems, automated external defibrillators and asthma medications, etc. for treating casualties at the scene of the maritime incident. Generally, ambulance personnel will conduct initial assessments and triage for casualties, and then consider suitable ways for transfer to hospital based on their conditions. After preliminary examinations, those with serious injuries will be conveyed to hospital by the GFS helicopters; and those with minor injuries will be conveyed to a nearby pier by fire vessels or police launches for further triage and pre-hospital care, and then conveyed to hospital by ambulances. Throughout the waiting period and the journey to hospital, casualties will receive appropriate pre-hospital care from ambulance personnel.

As the FSD understands, it has been suggested that if dedicated ambulance launches are procured, ambulance personnel can board the ambulance launches upon receipt of calls and promptly proceed to the scenes of incidents, attend to the casualties on the subject vessels and convey them ashore using the ambulance launches. Nonetheless, there is no difference in principle between this idea and the current practice of the FSD in carrying out search and rescue operations in response to maritime incidents. Under the existing arrangements, ambulance personnel can attend to maritime incidents and convey casualties ashore by fire vessels or police launches. The FSD therefore does not consider it necessary to procure dedicated ambulance launches at this stage. In fact, the fire vessels of the FSD (except speedboats) have all been equipped with ambulance equipment and/or a medical room for the use of ambulance personnel if necessary. The FSD is exploring the modifications of the existing fire vessels to better meet the needs of ambulance personnel in handling casualties in maritime incidents. In this regard, a task force has been set up to examine proposals on enhancing the ambulance equipment on the existing fire vessels. A multi-functional treatment room with professional ambulance equipment will be installed on the proposed new fireboat for the casualties and affected persons to receive initial on-scene treatments in a safe and stable environment.

3. To enhance its emergency response capability in the eastern waters of Hong Kong, the FSD has been deploying, in the daytime (i.e. from 10 am to 7 pm) during Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays between July and September every year, 1 diving support speedboat equipped with firefighting and rescue equipment and 1 diving team to the Sai Kung Marine Police Base and the Sai Kung Fire Station respectively for rendering



services to the eastern waters during peak seasons for water sports. The FSD has earlier obtained consent of the Drainage Services Department to set up a temporary rescue speedboat deployment point on the waterfront of the Sai Kung Sewage Treatment Works at Tui Min Hoi, Sai Kung. The deployment point was commissioned in July 2016. Currently 1 speedboat is deployed to stand by at the deployment point for providing round-the-clock firefighting and rescue services. The FSD will further deploy 1 diving team to the Sai Kung Fire Station during the abovementioned designated hours and days between July and September.

In addition, , the FSD obtained funding approval last year for the procurement of 1 major fireboat and 1 fast rescue vessel for stationing in the Sai Kung waters, so as to enhance the overall efficiency of firefighting, ambulance and emergency search and rescue operations in these waters. The FSD and the MD are discussing the design and technical specifications of the vessels concerned. The tendering process is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

The FSD will continue to closely monitor the demand for the marine emergency service and keep under review the relevant firefighting and rescue resources to meet operational needs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB216**

**(Question Serial No. 0824)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the processing of loan applications on fire safety improvement works under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme (the Scheme), could the Fire Services Department (FSD) please reply to the following questions:

1. What will be the amount of resources allocated for processing the loan applications on fire safety improvement works under the Scheme and the number of eligible buildings expected to be benefited from the loans in this financial year?
2. According to the FSD's figures, how many buildings in the territory meet the eligibility criteria of the Scheme? To date, how many buildings in the territory have applied for the above loans and what are their loan positions?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (Member Question No. 2)

Reply:

1. Administered and vetted by the Buildings Department (BD), the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme covers repair, maintenance and improvement works on building and sanitary services, fire service and electrical installations, replacement of lifts, underground drainage, removal of unauthorised building works, etc. The BD refers loan applications involving fire service installations or equipment to the Fire Services Department (FSD) for professional advice. Since the work is absorbed by the existing manpower of the FSD, no additional manpower and expenditure are involved.

According to the information provided by the BD, the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme is a revolving loan scheme with a commitment of \$700 million. Applicants may apply for loans to cover the cost of their improvement works. As at the end of February 2017, the amount of loan fund available for application under the Scheme was about \$200 million. The BD has not made any

estimation of the number of buildings which can benefit from the loan fund for carrying out improvement works.

2. The BD does not have a breakdown of the number of buildings that meet the eligibility criteria of the Scheme. As at end 2016, a total of 5 289 buildings were involved in the loan applications approved by the BD. According to the information provided by the BD, the amounts of loans released and recovered under the Scheme in the past 3 years were as follows:

	Year		
	2014	2015	2016
Amount of loans approved (\$ million)	118	43	71
Actual amount of loans released (\$ million)	76	67	44
Amount of loans recovered (\$ million)	44	49	49

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1121)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (661) Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

There is a sharp increase of 497.1% in the estimated provision under Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote) over that for 2016-17. Please advise on the provision for procuring equipment to enhance the safety of frontline personnel and provide a comparison with that for 2016-17.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Wah-fung, Christopher (Member Question No. 7)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the safety of frontline personnel and is committed to providing them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards to equip them for handling different types of incidents and ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

Under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to acquire safety equipment to enhance the safety of frontline personnel in 2017-18 with an estimated expenditure of about \$5.47 million, representing an increase of 348% over the relevant expenditure in 2016-17. The details are as follows:

Year	Item	Expenditure/ Estimated expenditure <sup>Note</sup>
2016-17	To acquire 2 HazMatID Elite Identifiers for the HazMat (hazardous materials) Team and 1 vehicle for the High Angle Rescue Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams.	\$1.22 million (The estimated total expenditure on this item is \$1.22 million)
2017-18	To acquire 1 HazMat tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and	\$5.471 million (The estimated total

	<p>operational efficiency of members of the teams.</p> <p>To acquire 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.</p>	<p>expenditure on this item is \$8.85 million)</p>
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Note: Cash flow in that financial year.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1124)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In the Controlling Officer's Report for 2017-18, the Government indicates that it will continue to monitor the implementation of a series of multi-faceted measures put forward to enhance building safety, which encompass legislation, enforcement, support and assistance to owners, as well as promotion and public education. There are many old districts in Hong Kong where buildings lack sufficient fire protection facilities, posing building safety hazards. Last year I moved a motion on "Urging the Government to amend the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance" in the Legislative Council, calling on the Government to amend the Ordinance to empower relevant departments to, under urgent circumstances, carry out improvement works on fire service installations of buildings unable to comply with the directions. I also recommended that the Government should, by making reference to the Operation Building Bright, provide subsidies, professional advice on property management and the like as well as technical support to households with difficulties in upgrading the fire safety measures of their buildings. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Will the Government consider allocating manpower and resources to subsidise households of old buildings for improving their fire service installations? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
2. What were the resources allocated by the Government for enforcing the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572) in the past 3 years? Please provide a breakdown of the expenditure involved.
3. At present, many old buildings do not have owners' corporations (OCs), residents' organisations or property management companies (the so-called "three-nil" buildings). As it takes time to establish an OC, will the Government consider introducing a new measure to help "three-nil" buildings upgrade their fire service equipment at an earlier time by, for example, coordinating the improvement works for the owners or occupiers of these buildings and recovering the costs incurred afterwards? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (Member Question No. 1)

Reply:

1. & 2. The Fire Services Department (FSD) and the Buildings Department (BD) have their own task forces to enforce the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 502) and the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572). The objective of the former is to enhance the fire safety standard of prescribed commercial premises and specified commercial buildings constructed in or before March 1987, while the latter stipulates that the protection from the risk of fire for composite and domestic buildings constructed in or before March 1987, or with their plans of the building works first submitted for approval at or before that time, should be enhanced to meet the current requirements. The task forces comprise a mix of civil servants and non-civil service staff. The strength of the FSD task force and that of the BD task force were 207 and 126 respectively in 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17. In the past 3 financial years, the related staff costs were about \$113 million, \$119 million and \$121 million respectively for the FSD; and about \$53 million, \$56 million and \$59 million respectively for the BD.

Under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (the Ordinance), both departments will issue Fire Safety Directions (FS Directions) in respect of the fire safety measures of the relevant buildings to their owners, requiring them to carry out fire safety improvement works. To assist owners of private buildings in maintaining and repairing their buildings (including the fire service installations and equipment (FSI) therein), the Government, the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority have been providing financial assistance for owners in need under various schemes, including the Building Safety Loan Scheme, the Integrated Building Maintenance Assistance Scheme (IBMAS) and the Building Maintenance Grant Scheme for Elderly Owners. Fire safety improvement works pertaining to the Ordinance have been included in the list of works eligible for subsidies or loans under these schemes. The application procedures of these schemes have also been streamlined. Owners can apply for multiple schemes by just completing a set of application forms for the IBMAS. Furthermore, leaflets introducing the services and financial assistance under the IBMAS are attached to the FS Directions for reference and application by eligible persons.

3. We are aware that in meeting the requirements of the Ordinance, owners of some old buildings (including owners of “three-nil” buildings) may not be able to fully comply with the requirements set out in the FS Directions because of financial problems or difficulties in coordinating the fire safety improvement works, or due to structural or spatial constraints of their buildings. The FSD adopts a flexible and pragmatic approach in handling individual cases on the premise that basic fire safety is not compromised. Case officers of the FSD are prepared to meet the owners to explain the FS Directions and assist them in solving potential problems associated with the works.

Besides the financial assistance mentioned in part “1. & 2.” of this reply, with a view to assisting owners of “three-nil” buildings in complying with the FS Directions, the FSD will refer a list of target buildings without owners’ corporations to the Home Affairs Department so that the latter may provide timely assistance to the owners. The FSD has taken the initiative to carry out publicity on the recruitment of “Building Fire Safety Envoys” and “Fire Safety Ambassadors” when

issuing FS Directions to “three-nil” buildings to enhance the residents’ awareness of fire prevention and enlist their help in coordinating FSI improvement works in the future.

In connection with the difficulties encountered by owners of old buildings in installing fire service water tanks, the FSD has continuously explored and tried out improvised measures, including the introduction of an improvised hose reel system targeted on composite buildings of 3 storeys or less to alleviate technical difficulties and costs of improvement works. The FSD has also lowered the capacity requirement for fire service water tanks of most composite buildings of 4 to 6 storeys from 2 000 litres to 500 litres. All these measures aim to help owners of relevant buildings comply with the FS Directions.

At present, there is no provision in the Ordinance empowering the enforcement authorities to carry out fire safety improvement works for target buildings. The relevant government departments would face great difficulties if they were to conduct certain works on the owners’ behalf, particularly those non-emergency works relating to private properties. Since these types of works often involve various feasible proposals and works arrangements (such as the locations where the facilities will be installed or the installations of various alternative equipment), the owners or occupiers concerned may disagree with the works proposals and the associated costs put forward by the departments. They may also disagree with the location of installing fire service water tanks or hose reel systems proposed by the departments due to title issues, spatial constraints and the impact on the appearance of the buildings. Besides, the associated costs may vary with different proposals; the owners of the buildings need to deliberate on the proposals and reach a consensus on their own. It is not appropriate for the enforcement authorities to make such decisions or to carry out the works for the owners. Otherwise it might lead to litigation and delay in the progress of the works.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB217**

**(Question Serial No. 1162)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Department included in Matters Requiring Special Attention this year the enhancement of live-fire and rescue training for and on-scene operational safety of frontline fire personnel. What are the estimated expenditure and specific plans for this undertaking?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Chung-tai (Member Question No. 10)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the training and safety of frontline personnel and is committed to enhancing live-fire and rescue training for frontline fire personnel. Besides arranging for its personnel to take part in exchange and training with fire departments of other jurisdictions from time to time, the FSD provides frontline fire personnel with various kinds of live-fire and rescue training, including training in compartment fire behaviour, simulated live-fire scenarios and technical rescue, to enable them to maintain a high level of performance in terms of operational efficiency, firefighting knowledge and rescue techniques. To further enhance the firefighting and rescue capabilities and the operational safety of frontline fire personnel, the FSD will create the following posts in 2017-18:

- (a) 52 posts for establishing 4 Incident Safety Teams to conduct on-scene safety and quality assurance audits;
- (b) 50 posts for establishing a Tactical Support Unit to provide support for major or prolonged firefighting or rescue operations;
- (c) 40 posts for strengthening the management and staff training of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, the Mountain Search and Rescue Team, the Compartment Fire Behaviour Specialist Team and the HazMat (hazardous materials) Team; and
- (d) 9 posts for strengthening the Breathing Apparatus Unit.

The 151 posts outlined above will involve an estimated expenditure of about \$79.72 million.

In equipping frontline personnel for handling different types of incidents, the FSD also provides them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards to ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB218**

**(Question Serial No. 1164)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The remuneration for firemen has always been about 10% lower than that for policemen. Has the Government considered raising the remuneration for firemen? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Chung-tai (Member Question No. 11)

Reply:

The Government has been implementing the Improved Civil Service Pay Adjustment Mechanism since 2007 such that civil service pay is broadly comparable with private sector pay through the conduct of the Pay Trend Survey, Starting Salaries Survey and Pay Level Survey on a regular basis. According to the decision made by the Chief Executive-in-Council, Grade Structure Reviews (GSRs) should only be considered in view of significant changes in the job nature and responsibilities; or proven recruitment and retention problems of a grade. The Government conducted a comprehensive GSR for the disciplined services (including the Fire Services Department) in 2008, followed by the implementation of a series of recommendations. The Government will continue to maintain close communication with the staff side, and will keep in view whether a GSR is justified to be conducted under the existing policy framework.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB219**

**(Question Serial No. 1185)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

What are the Fire Services Department's estimated ambulancemen recruitment targets and plans for this year? How will the Department improve the working hour arrangements for ambulancemen?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Chung-tai (Member Question No. 12)

Reply:

In 2017-18, the Fire Services Department (FSD) will have a net increase of 50 posts in the Ambulance Stream, including 5 Principal Ambulancemen, 9 Senior Ambulancemen and 36 Ambulancemen.

Staff in the Ambulanceman grade are subject to conditioned hours of work of 48 hours gross per week and, in normal circumstances, work 12-hour shifts on a cycle of "2 day shifts, 1 night shift and 2 days off". Some ambulancemen may work in 9.5-hour day shifts or 24-hour overnight shifts, depending on the operational needs of the respective units. The FSD will keep under review the working hour arrangements for ambulance stream staff and maintain dialogue and discussion with the staff side, with a view to providing reasonable working arrangements for frontline personnel while ensuring an efficient provision of emergency ambulance services to the public.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB229**

**(Question Serial No. 1317)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017-18 that the Department will continue to enhance live-fire and rescue training for and on-scene operational safety of frontline fire personnel. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

Whether the Department had any exchange training in live-fire scenarios or chemical incidents with fire departments of other jurisdictions in the past 2 years; and

Whether the Department will provide more equipment for or improve the equipment of fire personnel in 2017-18 to safeguard their on-scene operational safety? If yes, what are the details and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Che-cheung (Member Question No. 45)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the training and safety of frontline personnel and is committed to enhancing live-fire and rescue training for frontline fire personnel. Besides arranging for its personnel to take part in exchange and training with fire departments of other jurisdictions from time to time, the FSD provides frontline fire personnel with various kinds of live-fire and rescue training, including training in compartment fire behaviour, simulated live-fire scenarios and technical rescue, to enable them to maintain a high level of performance in terms of operational efficiency, firefighting knowledge and rescue techniques. The exchanges and training undertaken by the FSD on live-fire scenarios or chemical incidents with fire departments of other jurisdictions in the past 2 years are as follows:

Year	No. of overseas training for fire personnel	No. of exchanges/ training with visiting fire departments	Jurisdiction	Training content
2015	8	-	The United Kingdom, the United States, Singapore, Switzerland	Aircraft incident command, marine firefighting and rescue, handling of hazardous materials (HazMat), combating tunnel fires
	-	2	Singapore, Thailand	Marine firefighting and rescue, combating fires of oil and fuel tanks and high-rise buildings
2016	7	-	The United Kingdom, the United States, Spain, Thailand, Singapore	Aircraft incident command, marine firefighting and rescue, fire foam and contingency planning, handling of HazMat, combating tunnel fires
	-	1	Singapore	Marine firefighting and rescue

In equipping frontline personnel for handling different types of incidents, the FSD also provides them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards to ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB222**

**(Question Serial No. 1421)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service, (2) Fire Protection and Prevention

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding marine fire prevention strategies, please advise on the following:

- How long does it generally take for fireboats and fire speedboats to arrive at various typhoon shelters or bays from their respective berths? (Set out the time in the table below; put a slash "/" for areas beyond the respective service areas of the vessels.)

Typhoon shelter	Fireboat No.								Fire speedboat
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter									
Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter									
Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter									
Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter									
Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter									
New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter									
Sam Ka Tsuen Typhoon Shelter									
Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter									
To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter									
Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter									
Yim Tin Tsai Typhoon Shelter									
Tai O									
River Trade Terminal (Tuen Mun)									
Chai Wan Public Cargo Working Area									
Cafeteria Beach, Tuen Mun									

- What were the staffing and estimated expenditure involved in the fire prevention work for typhoon shelters in each of the past 3 years (from 2014-15 to 2016-17)?
- What will be the staffing and estimated expenditure involved in the fire prevention work for typhoon shelters in 2017-18?
- What strategies does the Government have to shorten the time taken for fireboats and fire speedboats to arrive at the scenes of incidents in the future?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (Member Question No. 55)



Reply:

1. The estimated journey time (in minutes) generally required for fire vessels, including fireboats and fire speedboats, to arrive at various typhoon shelters or bays within their main service areas from their respective stand-by berths is set out in the table below#:

Typhoon shelter / bay	Fireboat No.								Fire speedboat
	1	2*	3	4	5	6*	7*	8	
Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	1.5	/	/	/	/	19
Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	6	/	/	/	/	25
Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter	10	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	12
Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter	/	/	3	/	/	/	/	/	29
Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7	17
New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter	20	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	3.5
Sam Ka Tsuen Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7	16
Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	8	16
To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	8	12
Tuen Mun Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	/	15	/	/	/	13
Yim Tin Tsai Typhoon Shelter	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	45	10
Tai O	/	/	/	/	46	/	/	/	5
River Trade Terminal (Tuen Mun)	/	/	/	/	10	/	/	/	8
Chai Wan Public Cargo Working Area	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	12	19
Cafeteria Beach, Tuen Mun	/	/	/	/	15	/	/	/	12

Note: # The actual time taken for a fire vessel to arrive at the scene of a marine fire is affected by various factors, for example, whether the vessel is engaged in other operations (including participation in regular navigation training, exercise and inspection, or attendance at another emergency incident, etc.) when the fire call is received, and the marine traffic, waves, currents, wind direction, visibility and so forth at the time of the incident. Generally speaking, when the Fire Services Department (FSD) receives a marine fire call, it will deploy at least 2 fireboats nearest to the incident scene for operation. In addition, on-shore fire stations in the vicinity will promptly deploy fire appliances to nearby piers, where on-shore fire personnel carrying lightweight portable fire pumps and other firefighting equipment will board police launches or Marine Department (MD) vessels and head for the incident scene to provide support.

\* Fireboats No. 2 and No. 7 are reserve fireboats which mainly serve as substitutes for fireboats under maintenance and repair. They therefore do not have specific service areas. Fireboat No. 6 is deployed at Tsing Yi Fireboat Station and is responsible for waters near Tsing Yi and Ma Wan, including the oil terminals, oil tanker berths, dockyards, etc., in Tsing Yi District. The typhoon shelters and bays listed above are not within its service area. In addition, the FSD has 2 command boats and 8 speedboats stationed at the East and West Rescue Boat Berths of the airport. They are dedicated to handling incidents in the waters near the airport.

- 2 & 3. The firefighting, rescue and fire prevention education work in respect of typhoon shelters is mainly taken up by the personnel responsible for marine matters under

the Marine and Offshore Islands Division of the FSD, with support from fire stations near the typhoon shelters. The FSD does not have a breakdown of the expenditure involved in the fire prevention work for typhoon shelters. The establishment of the disciplined grade staff responsible for marine matters under the Marine and Offshore Islands Division of the FSD from 2014-15 to 2016-17 and in 2017-18 (estimated) is as follows:

Rank Year (as at 31 March)	Establishment			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (Estimated)
Senior Divisional Officer	1	1	1	1
Divisional Officer	1	1	1	1
Assistant Divisional Officer	1	1	1	1
Senior Station Officer / Station Officer	11	11	11	11
Principal Fireman	49	49	49	49
Senior Fireman	68	68	68	68
Fireman	110	110	110	110

4. The FSD reviews from time to time its marine firefighting and rescue strategies in Hong Kong as well as the related equipment, and conducts risk assessments for different water areas, taking into account factors including the distribution of vessels, utilisation of shipping channels, existence of high-risk facilities at sea and along coastal areas, etc., in deciding the location of fireboat stations and deployment of fire vessels (e.g. fireboats and fire speedboats). Last year, the FSD obtained funding approval for the procurement of 1 fast rescue vessel and 1 major fireboat for stationing in the Sai Kung waters, so as to enhance the overall efficiency of its firefighting, ambulance and emergency search and rescue operations in these waters. The FSD and the MD are discussing the design and technical specifications of the vessels concerned. The tendering process is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

The FSD will continue to closely monitor the demand for the marine emergency service and keep under review the relevant firefighting and rescue resources to meet operational needs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2101)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Since the deadly fire that broke out at a mini-storage at the Amoycan Industrial Centre in June last year, the Fire Services Department has carried out inspections to enhance the fire protection facilities in industrial buildings. However, as the design of many old industrial buildings is not easily alterable, or the owners have failed to take the initiative to effect the alterations, the old industrial buildings concerned are unable to comply with the prevailing fire safety standards, making it difficult for the small enterprises and shops therein to continue their operation. Please inform this Committee of the respective numbers of inspections carried out by the Government, industrial buildings inspected, fire safety directions issued, and fire safety improvement directions complied with or discharged in each of the past 2 years. What are the lines of business of the buildings and units issued with fire safety directions? In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017-18 under this Programme, the Government indicates that it will consider ways to improve fire safety standards of old industrial buildings through legislation. What are the details and timetable concerned?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (Member Question No. 28)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) and the Buildings Department (BD) are responsible for enforcing the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 502) and the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572), which aim to enhance the fire safety standards of prescribed commercial premises as well as specified commercial buildings, composite buildings and domestic buildings constructed in or before March 1987. The FSD and the BD issue Fire Safety Directions in respect of the fire safety measures of the relevant premises or buildings to the owners and/or occupiers, specifying the fire safety improvement works required to be carried out. However, the two Ordinances are not applicable to industrial buildings.

Nonetheless, personnel of various units under the 3 operational Fire Commands, the Fire Safety Command and the Licensing and Certification Command of the FSD inspect

different types of buildings (including industrial buildings) according to their respective scopes of work, and take enforcement actions related to the fire service installations and equipment, means of escape, ventilation systems, storage of dangerous goods and the fire safety of licensed premises in these buildings. The FSD also set up an Industrial Building Enforcement Team in April 2010 to follow up on the fire safety-related irregularities identified in industrial buildings. In 2015 and 2016, various units of the FSD conducted 8 548 and 10 806 inspections of industrial buildings and issued 1 212 and 2 812 Fire Hazard Abatement Notices respectively. The FSD does not keep information on the business of the buildings and units inspected.

As to legislative measures, the Government is considering introducing legislation for enhancing the fire safety standards of old industrial buildings. We will consult the Legislative Council Panel on Security this April on the initial legislative proposal.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB226**

**(Question Serial No. 2167)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In 2016, more than 700 000 emergency ambulance calls were received. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of calls which turned out to be genuine emergency cases;
2. its plan to reduce the misuse of the emergency ambulance service by the public?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis (Member Question No. 22)

Reply:

In 2015, the Fire Services Department (FSD) conducted an analysis of the emergency ambulance calls received to understand the use of the emergency ambulance service by the public. Of the approximately 10 000 randomly selected cases, about 2.2% were found to have no obvious need for the service. This revealed a downward trend in the percentage of such cases as against 10.3%, 4.2% and 2.7% recorded in similar analyses in 2009, 2011 and 2013 respectively. The FSD did not conduct such an analysis in 2016.

The above figures show that the FSD's efforts in educating the public on the proper use of ambulance service in the past few years have yielded positive results. To ensure effective use of public resources, the FSD will continue to closely monitor the need for and the use of the emergency ambulance service, and step up its efforts to convey the message of the proper use of ambulance service to the public through various channels.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB233**

**(Question Serial No. 2321)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

On 21 June 2016, a major fire broke out at Amoycan Industrial Centre in Ngau Tau Kok where unfortunately two firemen passed away as a result, and the said fire is now the longest-burning fire in Hong Kong in the past two decades. In the subsection *Matters requiring special attention in 2017-18*, it is stated that the FSD will 'continue to enhance live-fire and rescue training for and on-scene operational safety of frontline fire personnel'.

In light of this, would the government please inform this committee of the following:

1. Whether or not the FSD has formulated any work plan for 2017-18 to strengthen and better equip firemen in handling fires in old industrial buildings. If yes, what are the details of the work plan and the estimated expenditure involved; if not, what are the reasons?
2. After efforts taken to ensure fire safety in mini-storages in the past year, has the FSD inspected all mini-storages? If yes, please give details, specifically, how many of the inspected storages complied with the Fire Safety Ordinance. Please list by district the number of cases identified during the inspections.
3. Details of the actions taken by the FSD since the fire to ensure all mini-storages comply with the Fire Safety Ordinance, if any. If none, what are the reasons?
4. What were the measures taken to ensure that the FSD's staff will be better protected in order to prevent another tragedy where the safety of frontline firefighters was compromised?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 9)

Reply:

1. & 4. The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the training and safety of frontline personnel and is committed to enhancing live-fire

and rescue training for frontline fire personnel. Besides arranging for its personnel to take part in exchange and training with fire departments of other jurisdictions from time to time, the FSD provides frontline fire personnel with various kinds of live-fire and rescue training, including training in compartment fire behaviour, simulated live-fire scenarios and technical rescue, to enable them to maintain a high level of performance in terms of operational efficiency, firefighting knowledge and rescue techniques. To further enhance the firefighting and rescue capabilities and the operational safety of frontline fire personnel, the FSD will create the following posts in 2017-18:

- (a) 52 posts for establishing 4 Incident Safety Teams to conduct on-scene safety and quality assurance audits;
- (b) 50 posts for establishing a Tactical Support Unit to provide support for major or prolonged firefighting and rescue operations;
- (c) 40 posts for strengthening the management and staff training of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, the Mountain Search and Rescue Team, the Compartment Fire Behaviour Specialist Team and the HazMat (hazardous materials) Team; and
- (d) 9 posts for strengthening the Breathing Apparatus Unit.

The 151 posts outlined above will involve an estimated expenditure of about \$79.72 million.

In equipping frontline personnel for handling different types of incidents, the FSD also provides them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards to ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

2. & 3. According to information available from various departments, currently there are 885 mini-storages in Hong Kong, the distribution of which is as follows:

District	No. of Mini-storages
Eastern	171
Kwun Tong	140
Kwai Tsing	93
Tsuen Wan	82
Sha Tin	64
Wong Tai Sin	55
Sham Shui Po	50
Southern	47
Kowloon City	45
Tuen Mun	43
Central and Western	40
Yau Tsim Mong	27
Tai Po	10
Yuen Long	8
North	8
Wan Chai	1
Islands	1
Sai Kung	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>885</b>

By end February 2017, the FSD completed inspection of these 885 mini-storages and issued 2 548 Fire Hazard Abatement Notices (FHANs) to 453 mini-storages with irregularities identified. Out of the FHANs issued, 117 FHANs have been complied with. The FSD will continue to take fire hazard abatement actions against the remaining offending mini-storages.

The following potential fire hazards in contravention of the Fire Services Ordinance (Cap.95) were generally found in the mini-storages inspected by the FSD:

- (a) undesirable types of locking devices for escape doors;
- (b) insufficient coverage of the hose reel system;
- (c) insufficient exit signs and directional signs;
- (d) obstruction to or insufficient number of openable windows; and
- (e) layout and arrangement of the storage cubicles posing potential safety hazards.

Inspections and enforcement actions aside, the FSD and relevant departments have held a number of meetings with representatives of mini-storage operators and explained to them the statutory requirements of various departments. The operators have been requested to take all possible management measures to enhance fire safety, which include strengthening the management, increasing security



manpower, preventing the storage of dangerous goods and stepping up fire prevention training for staff. The FSD has also provided the trade with Building Fire Safety Envoys training targeted on enhancing the fire safety of mini-storages.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2322)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In order to provide 'an efficient and effective fire service to the community' as stated in programme (1), it is vital that staff under the Fire Services Department (FSD) will properly train and equip its staff with the relevant appliances. In view of this, would the government please inform this committee of the following:

1. The government's plan to utilise its estimated provision for 2017-2018. Please give a breakdown on how much will be allocated to FSD's manpower, equipment and other resources.
2. Will any additional subsidies and/or resources be allocated to ensure the quality of fire services is maintained while implementing the proposed plan to reduce the conditioned working hours of fire stream staff to 51 hours per week?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 10)

Reply:

1. The provision of Fire Services Department (FSD) for 2017-18 is \$6,049.8 million of which the breakdown is as follows:

	<b>2017-18 (\$ million)</b>
Personal emoluments and personnel related expenses	4,805.4
General departmental expenses	691.8
Specialist supplies and equipment	88.3
Plant, equipment and works	464.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,049.8</b>

The provision for Programme (1) Fire Service for 2017-18 is \$3,708.9 million, representing 61.3% of the total provision.

2. Under the pre-requisites of cost-neutrality, no additional manpower and the maintenance of the same level of service to the public, the FSD management formulated the proposal to reduce the conditioned hours of work of operational staff in the Fire Stream from 54 hours to 51 hours per week, achieved mainly through process re-engineering in light of the enhanced functionalities of the fire appliances/equipment, as well as the adoption of various efficiency measures taking into account the operational experience in recent years. A three-phase trial scheme was launched starting from 15 March 2013. The FSD closely monitored the situation during the trial scheme to ensure that the level of service provided to the public was maintained. Upon successful completion of the trial scheme, approval was given by the Secretary for the Civil Service to reduce the conditioned hours of work of the operational staff in the Fire Stream to 51 hours per week with effect from 18 July 2016.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2323)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is stated in subsection *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017-18*, that the Department will continue to monitor the development of a new fire station at the Boundary Crossing Facilities of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the construction of a new fire station with ambulance facilities at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point. With regard to this, will the Administration please provide more information on the following:

1. A breakdown of the expenditure and manpower involved in the above-mentioned fire stations respectively.
2. The detailed plan and timetable for such development at each fire station in discussion.
3. Whether or not the construction of fire stations will be completed in time to support the said venues? If yes, please give expected time of commencement of operation; if not, please give details of contingency plan.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 11)

Reply:

The works of the new fire station cum ambulance depot at the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge are being implemented under the project of "Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities – Reclamation and Superstructures" (Project Code 6845TH) and the timetable of the works will tie in with the progress of the project. The construction cost has been included in the project. The additional manpower for the fire station cum ambulance depot, with an estimated annual recurrent expenditure of about \$32.9 million, is tabulated below:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Number</b>
Fire stream	Assistant Divisional Officer	1
	Senior Station Officer/Station	8

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Number</b>
	Officer	
	Principal Fireman	8
	Senior Fireman	19
	Fireman	42
Ambulance stream	Senior Ambulance Officer	1
	Ambulance Officer	2
	Principal Ambulanceman*	5
	Senior Ambulanceman*	-5
Civilian grade	Assistant Clerical Officer	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>83</b>

*\* 5 existing Senior Ambulanceman posts will be upgraded to the rank of Principal Ambulanceman to serve as Watch Commanders upon commissioning of the Ambulance Depot.*

The works of the new fire station with ambulance facilities at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point are under the project of “Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point and associated works – construction of boundary control point buildings and associated facilities” (Project Code 3013GB) and the timetable of the works will tie in with the progress of the project. The construction cost involved has been included in the project. In 2017-18, FSD will create 9 Senior Station Officer/Station Officer posts to receive training in advance for deployment to the new fire station upon its commissioning. The estimated annual recurrent expenditure involved is about \$7 million. FSD will apply for further resources in due course according to the established procedures so as to provide the required manpower for the operation of the new fire station with ambulance facilities.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB236**

**(Question Serial No. 2450)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned in subsection *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017-18* that the Government will 'pursue the plan for replacing fireboat No.2 and continue to monitor the progress of the replacement and procurement of other fire vessels'. In regard to this, will the Government please inform this Committee of the resources to be involved and the details of the procurement?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 110)

Reply:

The details of the replacement and procurement of fire vessels currently in progress are shown below:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Estimated Project Cost (\$ million)</b>
Replacement of Fireboat No. 2	97.5
Replacement of Fireboat No. 7	98.3
Replacement of two diving support speedboats	32
Acquisition of a new major fireboat	125
Acquisition of a new fast rescue vessel	40

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2474)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In 2016, among the ambulance calls received, how many actually turned out not to be emergency cases? What was the expenditure incurred? Will the Department conduct a review on the misuse of the ambulance service to ensure effective use of public resources?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (Member Question No. 35)

Reply:

In 2015, the Fire Services Department (FSD) conducted an analysis of the emergency ambulance calls received to understand the use of the emergency ambulance service by the public. Of the approximately 10 000 randomly selected cases, about 2.2% were found to have no obvious need for the service. This revealed a downward trend in the percentage of such cases as against 10.3%, 4.2% and 2.7% recorded in similar analyses in 2009, 2011 and 2013 respectively. The FSD did not conduct such an analysis in 2016.

The above figures show that the FSD's efforts in educating the public on the proper use of ambulance service in the past few years have yielded positive results. The FSD's revised estimated expenditure on ambulance service for 2016-17 is about \$1.65 billion. There is no separate estimate for the expenditure incurred in handling the type of cases mentioned above. To ensure effective use of public resources, the FSD will continue to closely monitor the need for and the use of the emergency ambulance service, and step up its efforts to convey the message of the proper use of ambulance service to the public through various channels.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2855)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the enhancement of fire protection measures for prescribed commercial premises with floor area exceeding 230 square metres, specified commercial buildings, composite buildings and domestic buildings:

1. What are the respective amounts of funding and manpower allocated/to be allocated by the Department for the relevant inspection work in 2016-17 and 2017-18? Does the Department envisage an increase of relevant manpower in 2017-18? If yes, please provide a breakdown of the number of additional staff by rank, post and terms of employment, and indicate the respective numbers of staff to fill newly created posts and posts meant for replacing existing contract positions.
2. Has the Department conducted any comprehensive review of the relevant inspection work in respect of, among others, the adequacy of the manpower involved; the appropriateness of the ratio of the buildings and premises targeted for inspection to the inspection manpower; whether there are discrepancies between the Department's inspection targets and the manpower requirements; and whether there is a need for further streamlining the relevant administrative work and procedures. If yes, what are the findings and follow-up measures? If not, will the Department set aside any funding and manpower for such a review in 2017-18?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (Member Question No. 53)

Reply:

1. The Fire Services Department (FSD) has set up a task force to enforce the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 502) and the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572). The objective of the former is to enhance the fire safety standard of prescribed commercial premises and specified commercial buildings constructed on or before 1 March 1987; while the latter stipulates that the protection from the risk of fire for composite and domestic buildings constructed on or before 1 March 1987, or with their plans of the building works first submitted for approval on



or before that day, should be enhanced to meet the current requirements. The task force comprises a mix of civil servants and non-civil service staff. The strength of the task force is 207 in 2016-17, which includes 178 civil servants and 29 non-civil service staff, and the related staff costs are about \$121 million. In 2017-18, the FSD will continue to deploy existing manpower to undertake the relevant work, and the estimated staff costs are about \$124 million.

2. Since the implementation of the above Ordinances, the FSD has kept under review the relevant manpower and work arrangements with a view to optimising its resources to meet the actual operational needs. Having regard to its existing manpower capacity, actual operational experience and the recommendations of the Director of Audit's Report No. 61, the FSD has, through internal redeployment of resources since 2014, stepped up inspections of buildings newly issued with Fire Safety Directions and buildings granted with a fourth or further extension of time for compliance of the directions, with a view to expediting the enhancement of the fire safety of the buildings concerned.

The FSD will continue to explore the feasibility of streamlining the procedures and adopt a flexible and pragmatic approach in handling individual cases to help owners comply with the relevant requirements, on the premise that basic fire safety is not compromised. Measures including actively exploring ways to provide assistance in terms of financial aid, coordination of fire safety improvement works and resolution of structural or spatial constraints will be taken to enhance the fire safety standard of old buildings as soon as practicable. A total of 38 time-limited posts have been created since 2009 to deal with the work in relation to the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance. The Department will seek resources according to the established procedures if necessary.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2864)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the enhancement of on-scene operational safety of frontline fire personnel:

1. What specific initiatives will be implemented in 2017-18? What are the details, the costs and manpower involved, and the implementation timetable of each initiative?
2. Will the Department review the on-scene operational safety of frontline fire personnel in Hong Kong as compared to that in other countries or regions? Will the safety level be further enhanced? If the safety level will be reviewed and enhanced, what are the respective details? Will funding and manpower be set aside for such work in 2017-18?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (Member Question No. 54)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the training and safety of frontline personnel and is committed to enhancing live-fire and rescue training for frontline fire personnel. Besides arranging for its personnel to take part in exchange and training with fire departments of other jurisdictions from time to time, the FSD provides frontline fire personnel with various kinds of live-fire and rescue training, including training in compartment fire behaviour, simulated live-fire scenarios and technical rescue, to enable them to maintain a high level of performance in terms of operational efficiency, firefighting knowledge and rescue techniques. To further enhance the firefighting and rescue capabilities and the operational safety of frontline fire personnel, the FSD will create the following posts in 2017-18:

- (a) 52 posts for establishing 4 Incident Safety Teams to conduct on-scene safety and quality assurance audits;
- (b) 50 posts for establishing a Tactical Support Unit to provide support for major or prolonged firefighting or rescue operations;

- (c) 40 posts for strengthening the management and staff training of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, the Mountain Search and Rescue Team, the Compartment Fire Behaviour Specialist Team and the HazMat (hazardous materials) Team; and
- (d) 9 posts for strengthening the Breathing Apparatus Unit.

The 151 posts outlined above will involve an estimated expenditure of about \$79.72 million.

In equipping frontline personnel for handling different types of incidents, the FSD also provides them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards to ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2868)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (-) Not specified  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the employment of retired civil servants on contract terms for handling the daily work of the Fire Services Department:

1. What was the number of retired fire personnel employed on contract terms in the Department in 2016-17? Please provide a breakdown by rank, post and main duty. Was there any difference between the actual number of persons employed and the target number of recruits? What was the expenditure involved? Was the amount met by internal redeployment or by seeking additional provision from the relevant bureau?
2. In 2017-18, will it be necessary to continue the employment of retired fire personnel? If yes, what is the number of persons to be employed? Please provide a breakdown by rank, post and main duty. What is the estimated expenditure involved? Is the amount included in the Department's estimate for 2017-18? If not, how will the expenditure be met?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (Member Question No. 55)

Reply:

1. As at 1 March 2017, 42 retired fire personnel were employed on a full-time basis in the Fire Services Department (FSD) under the Post-retirement Service Contract Scheme. A breakdown by equivalent rank in the civil service is as follows:

<b>Equivalent rank in the civil service</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Job nature</b>
Assistant Divisional Officer	6	Combating illicit fuelling activities, conducting building inspections, providing technical and administrative support, training, etc.
Senior Station Officer	3	
Station Officer	11	
Principal Fireman	4	
Senior Fireman	18	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	

The aforesaid number of persons employed fell short of the original target by 4, namely 1 Station Officer, 1 Principal Fireman and 2 Senior Firemen. The expenditure involved was about \$19.4 million, which was paid from departmental votes. No separate provision from the bureau was required.

2. In 2017-18, the FSD will continue to engage 42 retired personnel under the above Scheme. Additional staff will be employed as appropriate in the light of service needs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB223**

**(Question Serial No. 2901)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The Fire Services Department maintains effective firefighting and rescue services through the strategic deployment of properly trained staff, equipment and appliances within each Command area. Will the Government advise on:

1. the estimated increase in frontline manpower this year;
2. whether it has assessed the establishment of frontline fire personnel to ensure sufficient manpower for firefighting given the dangerous nature of the work; and
3. the equipment to be acquired for frontline personnel to enhance their rescue capability this year, and the related financial commitment?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (Member Question No. 40)

Reply:

1. In 2017-18, there will be a net increase of 231 posts under Programme (1) Fire Service in the Fire Services Department (FSD), among which the posts created for further enhancing the firefighting and rescue capabilities and the operational safety of frontline fire personnel are as follows:
  - (a) 52 posts for establishing 4 Incident Safety Teams to conduct on-scene safety and quality assurance audits;
  - (b) 50 posts for establishing a Tactical Support Unit to provide support for major or prolonged firefighting or rescue operations;
  - (c) 40 posts for strengthening the management and staff training of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, the Mountain Search and Rescue Team, the Compartment Fire Behaviour Specialist Team and the HazMat (hazardous materials) Team; and

- (d) 9 posts for strengthening the Breathing Apparatus Unit.
2. The establishment of the FSD under Programme (1) Fire Service in 2017-18 is estimated to be 7 053, of which 6 557 will be in the Fire Stream. In addition, non-civil service staff on contract terms will be employed on a need basis. Through the strategic deployment of properly trained staff, equipment and appliances within various Commands, effective firefighting and rescue services will be provided to respond to emergency calls efficiently. The FSD will bid for resources under the established mechanism as and when necessary.
  3. The FSD has always attached utmost importance to the safety of frontline personnel and is committed to providing them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards for handling different types of incidents and ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g., mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB224**

**(Question Serial No. 2907)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

This year, the Fire Services Department will continue to strengthen publicity activities to educate the public on the proper use of emergency ambulance service, and explore the long-term arrangement for the provision of emergency ambulance service. Will the Government advise on:

1. the figures on misuse of emergency ambulance service in the past 3 years;
2. its specific plan to strengthen publicity activities to educate the public on the proper use of emergency ambulance service;
3. the details of the Rapid Response Vehicle Scheme it implemented, and how the Scheme effectively enhances the paramedic ambulance service?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (Member Question No. 41)

Reply:

1. In 2015, the Fire Services Department (FSD) conducted an analysis of the emergency ambulance calls received to understand the use of the emergency ambulance service by the public. Of the approximately 10 000 randomly selected cases, about 2.2% were found to have no obvious need for the service. This revealed a downward trend in the percentage of such cases as against 10.3%, 4.2% and 2.7% recorded in similar analyses in 2009, 2011 and 2013 respectively. The FSD did not conduct such an analysis in 2016.
2. The above figures show that the FSD's efforts in educating the public on the proper use of ambulance service in the past few years have yielded positive results. The FSD will continue to closely monitor the need for and the use of emergency ambulance service, and step up its efforts to convey the message of the proper use of ambulance service to the public through various channels, including school/community outreaching activities, competitions promoting the message of "use



the ambulance service properly”, roving exhibitions and advertisements, as well as the display of “use the ambulance service properly” posters and banners in various districts, etc.

3. The FSD launched the Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) Scheme in November 2006. Each RRV is manned by 1 Ambulance Officer who mainly provides support to frontline personnel and performs service quality assurance duties to enhance frontline management and operational efficiency. Currently there are 2 RRVs providing round-the-clock service in the FSD, which are stationed at Wong Tai Sin Ambulance Depot and Sheung Shui Ambulance Depot respectively. In 2016, the RRVs provided support for a total of 4 498 emergency calls, and conducted 4 831 field audits of emergency ambulance cases and 9 398 inspections. In 2017-18, the FSD will introduce 2 more RRVs to operate round-the-clock to enhance the quality of paramedic ambulance service.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3034)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In the past year, several firefighters died whilst combating a fire. There have been concerns about whether the Government has made enough investment in enhancing the equipment of firefighters. Will the Government inform this Committee of the amount earmarked for enhancing firefighters' equipment under the provision made for Fire Service in 2017-18, and the specific firefighting equipment to be acquired for firefighters with that amount?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (Member Question No. 9)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has always attached utmost importance to the safety of frontline personnel and is committed to providing them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of the highest rescue standards for handling different types of incidents and ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD has earmarked about \$39 million for the acquisition or replenishment of uniforms and personal equipment for frontline personnel in 2017-18, including a provision of some \$12.9 million for the procurement of safety ankle boots complying with the latest European Union (EU) standards. A sum of about \$51 million has also been set aside for the acquisition or replacement of various supplies and equipment to meet the overall rescue needs.

In addition, under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote), the FSD plans to procure the following appliances in 2017-18 with an estimated total expenditure of about \$8.85 million to enhance the safety of frontline personnel:

- (a) 1 HazMat (hazardous materials) tender for the HazMat Team and 1 vehicle for the Mountain Search and Rescue Support Team to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of members of the teams; and
- (b) 1 supplies vehicle to deliver logistical items (e.g. mobile tents, cooling mist fans and other replenishment supplies) to the “rest areas” set up near the scenes of major incidents to strengthen the support for frontline personnel and better safeguard their health so as to ensure the efficiency of firefighting and rescue operations.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3194)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

In the subsection *Matters requiring special attention in 2017-18*, it is mentioned that the Department will develop a computer system for the provision of post-dispatch advice to callers requesting emergency ambulance service. With regard to this, will the Government please give more information on the following:

1. The detailed plan and timeframe for the development of computer system as mentioned above.
2. The expenditure and manpower involved in this development.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 111)

Reply:

1. Since May 2011, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has been gradually providing post-dispatch advice (PDA) to emergency ambulance service (EAS) callers in respect of 6 common types of injuries and sicknesses (i.e. bleeding, fracture/dislocation of limbs, burns, convulsions, heat stroke and hypothermia). The computer system that FSD is developing will incorporate an internationally-accredited questioning protocol software to assist operators of the Fire Services Communications Centre in identifying various conditions of injuries and sicknesses, so as to provide EAS callers with more comprehensive and appropriate PDA and guide them to render assistance to patients, thereby helping stabilise patients' conditions. The PDA will cover over 30 types of injuries and sicknesses, including physical trauma, loss of consciousness, cardiac arrest, etc., basically all types of injuries and sicknesses that the FSD deals with in its daily handling of EAS calls. The computer system is scheduled to be launched in the first half of 2018.
2. The estimated expenditure for the development of the computer system is \$37.88 million, including the costs of computer hardware and software, service implementation, engagement of contract staff and training. The FSD has engaged a

contract Project Manager to support the development and implementation of the system as well as a contract Medical Director to provide professional medical input.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB238**

**(Question Serial No. 3222)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

How many fire drills, fire safety talks, seminars, exhibitions, meetings and operational visits were organised by the Fire Services Department in each of the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 112)

Reply:

To enhance the knowledge of the public on fire safety, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has been organising various fire safety publicity activities through liaison with different local organisations, including schools, building management companies, etc.

The numbers of fire drills, fire safety talks, seminars, exhibitions, meetings and operational visits organised/attended by the FSD in the past 3 years are as follows-

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Fire drills	1 042	1 135	1 282
Fire safety talks	2 276	2 046	2 644
Seminars	11	8	11
Exhibitions	12	9	8
Meetings	53	36	42
Operational visits	14 279	15 116	14 245

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB239**

**(Question Serial No. 3243)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Please provide the number of existing fire appliances of the Fire Services Department by their age and type.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 114)

Reply:

As at 1 March 2017, the numbers of fire appliances of the Fire Services Department by their age and type are as follows:

Age of fire appliances	Number of fire appliances	
	Frontline fire appliances*	Other supporting vehicles#
Less than 5 years	75	54
5 to 10 years	73	13
10 to 15 years	78	22
Above 15 years	39	38
<b>Total:</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>127</b>

\* Frontline fire appliances generally include Hydraulic Platforms, Major Pumps, Major/Light Rescue Units, Turntable Ladders/Aerial Ladder Platforms/Snorkels, and airport rescue and firefighting vehicles.

# Other supporting fire appliances include Foam Tenders, Hose Layers, a Hazmat Tender, Lighting Tenders, Mobile Command Units, Rescue Tenders, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB535**

**(Question Serial No. 3334)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service, (2) Fire Protection and Prevention, (3) Ambulance Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Does the Fire Services Department provide sign language interpretation services? If yes, what are the manpower and expenditure involved; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (Member Question No. 74)

Reply:

At present, the Fire Services Department (FSD) does not provide sign language interpretation services in its daily operations. However, if the need arises, the FSD will consider arranging for the provision of such services to people in need on a case-by-case basis in the future.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3353)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (-) Not specified  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding outsourcing of services in your department, please inform this Committee of the following in respect of the past 3 years:

1. the total number of outsourced service staff engaged by your department and the percentage of outsourced service staff against the total number of staff with the same types of duties in your department;
2. the total expenditure on staff of your department; the total amount paid to outsourced service providers; and the percentage of amount paid to outsourced service providers against the total expenditure on staff of your department; and
3. the nature of your department's outsourced services and the duration of the relevant contracts.

In addition, according to the Government's guidelines for tendering of outsourced services revised last year, if the procured service relies heavily on the deployment of non-skilled workers, and a marking scheme for assessing the tenders is adopted, the procuring department, when assessing the tenders, should include in the assessment criteria the evaluation of the tenderers' proposed wage rates and working hours for non-skilled workers. In this regard, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the current number of outsourced service contracts involving a large number of non-skilled workers awarded by your department since the implementation of the guidelines;
2. the departments which have adjusted their assessment criteria in respect of wage rates and working hours for the outsourced service contracts involving a large number of non-skilled workers in the light of the new guidelines since their implementation; how your department has made adjustment; and if no relevant information is available, the reasons for it;

3. whether there have been any rises in the average wage rates for workers in the contracts of outsourced services that rely heavily on the deployment of non-skilled workers since the implementation of the guidelines; if yes, the number of contracts with rises in wage rates; if no relevant information is available, the reasons for it;
4. your department's measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the new tendering guidelines;
5. whether your department is required to adopt the existing mechanism of two-envelope assessment of the technical and price aspects when evaluating tenders for contracts of outsourced service; if no, the number of contracts awarded without adopting the existing mechanism of two-envelope assessment of the technical and price aspects in the past 3 years;
6. the annual numbers of cases of government service contractors breaching the service contracts, the Employment Ordinance or the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance as revealed by the inspections conducted by your department, and the annual numbers of complaints lodged by the outsourced service staff;
7. the details of follow-up actions on the aforementioned non-compliance and complaint cases; and
8. the number and details of cases involving contractors being punished for non-compliance or sustained complaints.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (Member Question No. 98)

Reply:

Regarding the first part of the question, our reply is as follows:

- (1)&(2) In the past 3 years, the number of staff employed by outsourced service providers of the Fire Services Department (FSD) and its percentage against the number of staff with the same types of duties in the FSD, the total expenditure on staff of the FSD, the total amount paid to outsourced service providers and its percentage against the total expenditure on staff of the FSD are as follows:

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17*
Number of staff employed by outsourced service providers	Relevant statistics not available		
Percentage of outsourced service staff against the number of staff with the same types of duties in the FSD	Relevant statistics not available		
Total expenditure on staff of the FSD (\$ billion)	3.930	4.394	4.689
Total amount paid to outsourced service providers (\$ million)	45	48	52
Percentage of the amount paid to outsourced service providers against the total expenditure on staff of the FSD	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%

\* Estimated full-year amount payable.

- (3) In the past 3 years, the types of outsourced services engaged by the FSD and the contract duration are as follows:

<b>Type of outsourced services</b>	<b>Contract duration</b>
Cleansing services and/or general support services	varies from 10 to 36 months
Catering services	36 months
Security services	24 months
Video and photographic services	varies from 12 to 24 months

Regarding the second part of the question, our reply is as follows:

- (1) to (4) Since the implementation of the revised guidelines on the tendering of outsourced services last year, the FSD has not engaged a large number of non-skilled workers through outsourcing.
- (5) It is stated in the Stores and Procurement Regulations that as a general rule, departments shall award contracts to tenderers who comply fully with the tender specifications, terms and conditions as specified and who are fully capable of undertaking the contracts and whose prices are the lowest tenders. In the past 3 years, the FSD awarded 20 contracts following this principle.
- (6) to (8) In the past 3 years, there was a total of 9 substantiated cases of outsourced service contractors failing to provide services in strict accordance with the contractual terms. However, the FSD did not find any breaches of the relevant ordinances by outsourced service contractors or receive any complaints from outsourced service staff.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB537**

**(Question Serial No. 6486)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Please provide figures for work injury and fatal work injury incidents in each rank of the Fire Services Department (FSD) and their respective percentage of such incidents among the total number of staff at the particular rank in the past 5 years.

Please also provide details of actions taken by the FSD to prevent work injury and the promotion of occupational safety and health.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 115)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) recorded a total of 932 work injury cases in the past 5 years. The figures by rank are listed below:

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Assistant Divisional Officer	-	-	-	-	3(1.82%)
Senior Station Officer/Station Officer (Operational)	4(0.56%)	10(1.36%)	7(1.03%)	3(0.43%)	4(0.55%)
Principal Fireman (Operational/Marine)	7(1.19%)	5(0.86%)	11(1.84%)	6(0.97%)	6(0.93%)
Senior Fireman (Operational/Marine)	15(1.46%)	14(1.35%)	9(0.87%)	9(0.82%)	10(0.92%)
Senior Fireman (Control)	1(0.85%)	1(0.84%)	-	-	-
Fireman (Operational/Marine)	77(2.08%)	61(1.66%)	68(1.85%)	57(1.58%)	58(1.58%)
Senior Ambulance Officer	-	-	-	2(4.00%)	-

Principal Ambulanceman	9(3.44%)	6(2.21%)	5(1.87%)	6(2.08%)	5(1.78%)
Senior Ambulanceman	34(5.56%)	33(5.41%)	30(4.78%)	34(5.26%)	31(4.75%)
Ambulanceman	56(3.18%)	46(2.63%)	49(2.84%)	47(2.72%)	56(3.10%)
Clerical Officer	-	-	1(3.23%)	-	1(3.33%)
Assistant Clerical Officer	-	-	1(0.41%)	-	1(0.40%)
Clerical Assistant	-	-	2(2.20%)	1(1.08%)	-
Cook	9(14.06%)	3(5.45%)	2(3.92%)	8(18.18%)	3(8.11%)
Artisan	1(11.11%)	-	1(12.50%)	1(10.00%)	-
Workman II	1(2.94%)	-	-	-	-

Remark:

( ) Figure in brackets denotes the percentage among the total number of staff at that rank in the FSD.

Of these cases, FSD recorded 1 fatal work injury case in 2014, which involved 1 Principal Fireman (Operational/Marine), representing 0.17 % of staff at the rank. In addition, 2 fatal work injury cases in 2016, which involved 1 Senior Station Officer (Operational) and 1 Senior Fireman (Operational/Marine), representing 0.14% and 0.09% of staff at the respective ranks, were recorded.

The firefighting and rescue services of the FSD are high-risk operations. The FSD has always attached the utmost importance to the training and safety of frontline personnel and is committed to enhancing live-fire and rescue training for frontline fire personnel. Besides arranging for its personnel to take part in exchange and training with fire departments of other jurisdictions from time to time, the FSD provides frontline fire personnel with various kinds of live-fire and rescue training, including training in compartment fire behaviour, simulated live-fire scenarios and technical rescue, etc. to enable them to maintain a high level of performance in terms of operational efficiency, firefighting knowledge and rescue techniques. To further enhance the firefighting and rescue capabilities and the operational safety of frontline fire personnel, the FSD will create the following posts in 2017-18:

1. 52 posts for establishing 4 Incident Safety Teams to conduct on-scene safety and quality assurance audits;
2. 50 posts for establishing a Tactical Support Unit to provide support for major or prolonged firefighting and rescue operations;
3. 40 posts for strengthening the management and staff training of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, the Mountain Search and Rescue Team, the Compartment Fire Behaviour Specialist Team and the HazMat (hazardous materials) Team; and
4. 9 posts for strengthening the Breathing Apparatus Unit.

In equipping frontline personnel for handling different types of incidents, the FSD also provides them with the best equipment and protective clothing, as well as operation tools of

the highest rescue standards to ensure their operational safety and efficiency. The existing firefighting equipment of the FSD is comparable to that of the fire brigades in other advanced countries/regions around the world.

The FSD will continue to review its various types of tools and equipment from time to time and keep abreast of the latest development of firefighting equipment. It will introduce suitable equipment for frontline fire personnel to ensure their operational safety and efficiency in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public money and relevant Government requirements.

In April 2008, the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Unit was officially established in FSD to facilitate the formulation of a better “safety management system”. For prevention of work injury and promotion of OSH, the Department has implemented measures which include actively arranging OSH training with the Occupational Safety and Health Council, conducting quarterly safety inspections at workplaces, refining the investigation process of work injury cases, reviewing the guidelines for wearing personal protective equipment, fortifying various OSH promotion campaigns, etc. Apart from these measures, the OSH Unit has designed an internal web-based learning course on manual handling operations, with a view to enhancing the FSD members’ understanding of the OSH culture.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB538**

**(Question Serial No. 6487)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (1) Fire Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of the number of existing fire appliances and ambulances at each fire station of the Fire Services Department (FSD) by type and age. What is the plan, if any, for the FSD to replace aging fire appliances and ambulances? Please give a breakdown of the costs involved in replacing them.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 116)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) strives to ensure that its fire appliances and ambulances are in an immediate state of readiness to respond to emergency calls at all times. When devising the procurement plans of its appliances, the FSD takes into consideration factors such as types and expected serviceable lives, maintenance and replacement costs, breakdown and fault rates of the appliances etc.

As at 1 March 2017, the numbers of fire appliances of the FSD by their age and type as well as distribution in the Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories regions are as follows-

Age of fire appliances@	Number of fire appliances	
	Frontline fire appliances*	Other supporting vehicles#
Less than 5 years	75	54
5 to 10 years	73	13
10 to 15 years	78	22
Above 15 years	39	38
<b>Total</b> (distribution by region^):	<b>265</b> (Hong Kong: 64 Kowloon: 88 New Territories: 113)	<b>127</b> (Hong Kong: 54 Kowloon: 28 New Territories: 45)

@ The expected serviceable lives of frontline fire appliances and other supporting vehicles are 10-15 years and 5-15 years respectively.

- \* Frontline fire appliances generally include Hydraulic Platforms, Major Pumps, Major/Light Rescue Units, Turntable Ladders/Aerial Ladder Platforms/Snorkels, and airport rescue and fire-fighting vehicles.
- # Other supporting fire appliances include Foam Tenders, Hose Layers, a Hazmat Tender, Lighting Tenders, Mobile Command Units, Rescue Tenders, etc.
- ^ There are 26 fire stations in the Hong Kong region, 21 in Kowloon and 34 in the New Territories.

In 2017-18, FSD will replace the following fire appliances:

Type of fire appliances	Number of appliances	Estimated project cost (\$million)	Estimated expenditure in 2017-18 (\$million)
Hydraulic Platform	13	78.7	55.1
Major Pump	17	82.3	57.6
Rescue Tender	4	19.1	13.4

As at 1 March 2017, the numbers of ambulances of the FSD by age and their distribution in the Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories regions are as follows:

Age of ambulances@	Number of ambulance vehicles	
	Frontline ambulances*	Other supporting vehicles#
Less than 3 years	154	38
3 to 5 years	117	1
5 to 7 years	103	18
Above 7 years	0	2
<b>Total</b> (distribution by region^):	<b>374</b> (Hong Kong: 68 Kowloon: 130 New Territories: 176)	<b>59</b> (Hong Kong: 12 Kowloon: 25 New Territories: 22)

@ The expected serviceable lives of ambulances and other supporting vehicles are 6-7 years and 5-12 years respectively.

\* Frontline ambulances include Ambulances, Light Ambulances, Cross Country Ambulances and Village Ambulances.

# Other supporting vehicles include Emergency Medical Assistant Motorcycles, Mobile Casualty Treatment Centres, Paramedic Equipment Tender, Rapid Response Vehicles and Hospital Transfer Ambulances.

^ There are 7 ambulance depots in the Hong Kong region, 14 in Kowloon and 18 in the New Territories.

In 2017-18, FSD will replace a total of 65 ambulances with an estimated overall cost of \$105.4 million. The estimated expenditure in 2017-18 is about \$70 million.



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB539**

**(Question Serial No. 6488)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The revised estimate for 2016-17 is 0.6% lower than the original estimate for 2016-17. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 117)

Reply:

The revised estimate for Programme (1) Fire Service for 2016-17 is 0.6% lower than the original estimate. This is mainly due to the decreased cash flow requirement for capital items.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB540**

**(Question Serial No. 6489)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

The estimate for 2017-18 is 8.3% higher than the revised estimate for 2016-17. What are the reasons? Does it involve additional manpower and expenditure items? What are the details?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 118)

Reply:

Provision for Programme (1) Fire Service for 2017-18 is 8.3% higher than the revised estimate for 2016-17. This is mainly due to the net increase of 231 posts, as well as additional provision for filling vacancies, and increased cash flow requirement for capital items.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB541**

**(Question Serial No. 6490)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Please give details on the Administration's efforts to provide community education programme on the provision of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training for the general public in the past 3 years. What were the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 119)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) provides half-day, free-of-charge Community Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training courses to the general public. The number of courses organised and the number of people trained by the FSD over the past 3 years are as follows:

	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b> <b>(as at 28 February 2017)</b>
Number of Community CPR training courses	55	54	38
Number of people trained	879	877	629

The above courses are taught by Ambulance Officers on duty with the assistance of 2 ambulance personnel working outside normal working hours. The overtime work is compensated by time-off in lieu. The implementation of these courses therefore requires no additional expenditure.

Training programmes on the provision of CPR are also provided to members of the public by various private, public and charitable organisations, such as the Auxiliary Medical Service, Hong Kong St. John Ambulance and Hong Kong Red Cross.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB542**

**(Question Serial No. 6491)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (-) Not specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Will the Administration please provide details of the following points regarding (a) non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff, (b) outsourced workers and (c) agency workers, respectively under the Fire Services Department (FSD):

1. The number of workers for each category.
2. Expenditure involved for each category.
3. The length of service for each category.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 120)

Reply:

The number of Non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff and agency workers serving in the Fire Services Department (FSD) and the expenditure involved in 2016-17 (as at 28 February 2017) are shown as follows:

	<b>NCSC staff</b>	<b>Agency workers</b>
Number of workers	16	16
Expenditure involved (\$million)	11.0	0.4
Length of service	1 month to 12.6 years	The employment contracts were entered into between the employment agencies and their employees. The FSD does not keep such information.

As regards services outsourced, the number of workers engaged is determined by outsourced service providers according to the services required. The length of their employment is not specified in the contract in the procurement of outsourced services by Government departments. The FSD therefore does not have the total number of these workers or their length of employment. The estimated full-year cost of payments to outsourced service providers is about \$51.8 million in 2016-17.

- End -

**SB543**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 6492)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned in subsection *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017-18* that the Fire Services Department (FSD) will continue to step up inspection of pre-1987 composite or domestic buildings. What is the number of buildings targeted for inspection in 2017-18? Please give more information on the manpower and expenditure involved. What measures will the FSD implement to expedite compliance with the fire safety directions issued to these premises?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 121)

Reply:

The Fire Services Department (FSD) has set up a task force to enforce the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 502) and the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572). The objective of the former is to enhance the fire safety standard of prescribed commercial premises and specified commercial buildings constructed on or before 1 March 1987; while the latter stipulates that the protection from the risk of fire for composite and domestic buildings constructed on or before 1 March 1987, or with their plans of the building works first submitted for approval on or before that day, should be enhanced to meet the current requirements. The task force comprises a mix of civil servants and non-civil service staff. It will have a strength of 207 members in 2017-18, including 178 civil servants and 29 non-civil service staff, and the related staff costs are estimated to be about \$124 million. The FSD plans to inspect 400 target composite buildings in 2017.

Under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (the Ordinance), the FSD and the Buildings Department will issue Fire Safety Directions (FS Directions) in respect of the fire safety measures of the relevant buildings to their owners, requiring them to carry out fire safety improvement works. We are aware that in meeting the requirements of the Ordinance, owners of some old buildings may not be able to fully comply with the requirements set out in the FS Directions because of financial problems or difficulties in coordinating the fire safety improvement works, or due to structural or spatial constraints of their buildings. The FSD adopts a flexible and pragmatic approach in handling individual cases on the

premise that basic fire safety is not compromised. Case officers of the FSD are prepared to meet the owners to explain the FS Directions and assist them in solving potential problems associated with the works.

In connection with the difficulties encountered by owners of old buildings in installing fire service water tanks, the FSD has continuously explored and tried out improvised measures, including the introduction of an improvised hose reel system targeted on composite buildings of 3 storeys or less to alleviate technical difficulties and costs of improvement works. The FSD has also lowered the capacity requirement for fire service water tanks of most composite buildings of 4 to 6 storeys from 2 000 litres to 500 litres. All these measures aim to help owners of relevant buildings comply with the FS Directions.

The FSD will review the measures implemented from time to time and continue to explore various options to help streamline the procedures in conducting fire safety improvement works in old buildings and lower the costs borne by the owners without compromising basic fire safety. We hope that these measures will enhance the fire safety standard of old buildings, strengthen the protection for people who work, recreate or live at these places, and reduce the threat of fire.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB544**

**(Question Serial No. 6493)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Will the Fire Services Department (FSD) continue with the meal break arrangement under which ambulancemen are required to work 12 hours per shift, and take turns to have meals for 30 minutes within a designated meal break period of 2 to 3 hours? Meal breaks of ambulancemen are frequently interrupted by emergency calls, hence affecting staff morale and quality of service. Will the Department review the arrangement this year? Please give figures of the expenditure involved to improve this arrangement.

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 122)

Reply:

As in the cases of many other disciplined services staff, the scheduled meal breaks of frontline ambulancemen may be interrupted because of the need to discharge emergency duties. In view of this, the Fire Services Department (FSD) has made flexible meal break arrangements for frontline ambulancemen, taking into account the emergency nature of ambulance service. Staff in the Ambulanceman grade are subject to conditioned hours of work of 48 hours gross per week and, in normal circumstances, work 12-hour shifts on a cycle of "2 day shifts, 1 night shift and 2 days off". Some ambulancemen may work in 9.5-hour day shifts or 24-hour overnight shifts, depending on the operational needs of the respective units.

In general, frontline ambulancemen may have meals during a designated lunch break period of 2 hours 30 minutes and, save for responding to emergency calls, they are only required to stand by at their depots during the designated lunch break period without the need to perform other duties. During the lunch break period, the Depot Commander may, having regard to the circumstances, accord lower dispatch priority to certain ambulances to facilitate the ambulancemen in taking meals. However, if no other ambulances are available for dispatch at that time, the ambulancemen would still have to stop their meals to respond to emergency calls. In the event that ambulancemen are unable to take a continuous 30-minute meal break during the designated lunch break period, they may take a



30-minute compensatory meal break afterwards, during which they will be free from attending to ambulance calls.

The FSD has been paying close attention to the meal break arrangements for frontline ambulancemen, and has formulated and implemented various improvement measures over the years on the premise that the provision of emergency ambulance services to the public is not affected. More recent measures include increasing the number of compensatory meal break quota for day-shift ambulancemen, and according a lower dispatch priority to ambulancemen serving in busier units to facilitate their return from hospital to their respective units for meals. To provide better support for frontline ambulancemen, the FSD set up the Special Support Unit comprising 24 ambulance staff members in April 2014, which has further expanded to 36 members through internal redeployment of resources since August 2016. Not only has the Unit enhanced the efficiency of emergency ambulance services and the operational capability in meeting the demand for ambulance service arising from festive occasions and major incidents, it has also helped relieve the workload of other ambulance units. Besides, the FSD has added two 9.5-hour shift ambulances since May 2016 to cope with the higher demand for emergency ambulance services during daytime, which also shares the workload during lunch time.

In 2016, around 97.43% of ambulancemen on average had a continuous lunch break of at least 30 minutes. To address the increasing need for emergency ambulance services, the FSD will have a net increase of 50 Ambulanceman grade posts, including 5 Principal Ambulanceman, 9 Senior Ambulanceman and 36 Ambulanceman posts in 2017-18, with an estimated expenditure of about \$16 million. The FSD will continue to keep under review the efficacy of existing meal break measures and maintain dialogue and discussion with the staff side, with a view to providing reasonable meal break arrangements for frontline personnel while ensuring the efficient provision of emergency ambulance services to the public.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB545**

**(Question Serial No. 6494)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (3) Ambulance Service  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Will the Department review the wage level of ambulancemen this year? If not, what are the reasons? Does the Department consider that the existing wage level of ambulancemen is commensurate with their working hours?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 123)

Reply:

The Government has been implementing the Improved Civil Service Pay Adjustment Mechanism since 2007 such that civil service pay is broadly comparable with private sector pay through the conduct of the Pay Trend Survey, Starting Salaries Survey and Pay Level Survey on a regular basis. According to the decision made by the Chief Executive-in-Council, Grade Structure Reviews (GSRs) should only be considered in view of significant changes in the job nature, responsibilities; or proven recruitment and retention problems of a grade. The Government conducted a comprehensive GSR for the disciplined services (including the Fire Services Department) in 2008, followed by the implementation of a series of recommendations. The Government will continue to maintain close communication with the staff side, and will keep in view whether a GSR is justified to be conducted under the existing policy framework.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB546**

**(Question Serial No. 6495)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Will the Fire Service Department review the wage level of firemen this year? If not, what are the reasons? Does the Department consider that the existing wage level of firemen is commensurate with their working hours?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 124)

Reply:

The Government has been implementing the Improved Civil Service Pay Adjustment Mechanism since 2007 such that civil service pay is broadly comparable with private sector pay through the conduct of the Pay Trend Survey, Starting Salaries Survey and Pay Level Survey on a regular basis. According to the decision made by the Chief Executive-in-Council, Grade Structure Reviews (GSRs) should only be considered in view of significant changes in the job nature, responsibilities; or proven recruitment and retention problems of a grade. The Government conducted a comprehensive GSR for the disciplined services (including the Fire Services Department) in 2008, followed by the implementation of a series of recommendations. The Government will continue to maintain close communication with the staff side, and will keep in view whether a GSR is justified to be conducted under the existing policy framework.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 6496)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Fire Protection and Prevention  
Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

As the Fire Services Department (FSD) will conduct inspections to ensure that buildings and licensed premises are up to the fire safety standard, will the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the expenditure and manpower involved in the inspections of industrial buildings conducted by the FSD in 2016-2017?
2. What were the total numbers of inspections and prosecutions in 2016-2017?
3. Will the FSD allocate additional resources and manpower in 2017-2018 to strengthen inspections and enforcement actions in this respect? If yes, what will be the estimated expenditure and manpower involved? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. 125)

Reply:

1. Personnel of various units under the 3 operational Fire Commands, the Fire Safety Command and the Licensing and Certification Command of the Fire Services Department (FSD) inspect different types of buildings (including industrial buildings) according to their respective scopes of work, and take enforcement actions related to the fire service installations and equipment, means of escape, ventilating systems, storage of dangerous goods and the fire safety of licensed premises in these buildings. The FSD also set up an Industrial Building Enforcement Team in April 2010 through internal redeployment of resources to follow up on the fire safety-related irregularities in industrial buildings. The FSD does not keep separate statistics on the expenditure and manpower involved in the inspections of industrial buildings.
2. In 2016, the FSD conducted 10 806 inspections of industrial buildings and instituted a total of 111 prosecutions against fire safety-related irregularities, which included 83 cases of contravention of the Fire Services (Fire Hazard Abatement) Regulation, 5

cases of contravention of Fire Service (Installations and Equipment) Regulations and 23 cases of contravention of the Dangerous Goods Ordinance.

3. Under Programme (2), the FSD will create 33 additional posts, of which 24 are for stepping up inspection and enforcement actions in industrial buildings; undertaking the preparatory work for introducing legislation for upgrading the fire safety standards of old industrial buildings; and handling complaints about the fire safety of various types of buildings. The estimated salary costs for these 24 new posts are about \$16.51 million.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB534**

**(Question Serial No. 6857)**

Head: (45) Fire Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Fire Service

Controlling Officer: Director of Fire Services (LI Kin-yat)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the fireboat fleet of the Fire Services Department (FSD), will the Government inform this Committee of

1. the current berthing location, service area, equipment and purposes of each of the fireboats; and
2. the construction progress and expected time of commissioning of the new fireboats acquired by the FSD?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Tanya (Member Question No. 50)

Reply:

1. Details of the major service areas, functions, etc., of the existing fire vessels in the fleet of the Fire Services Department (FSD) are as follows:

<b>Name of vessel (Type)</b>	<b>Berth</b>	<b>Major service area</b>	<b>Function and major rescue/firefighting equipment</b>
Elite (Major fireboat)	Central Fireboat Station	Victoria Harbour, Sai Kung and the northeastern waters of Hong Kong	Major fireboats can be used as frontline command posts in major marine incidents, and in firefighting and rescue operations. In addition, in case of a shipwreck incident, major fireboats can also function as rescue platforms as well as assembly and triage points for casualties.
Excellence (Major fireboat)	Tsing Yi Fireboat Station	The western waters of Hong Kong	Major equipment includes fire pump, water/foam monitor, fire hydrant, diving cage, rescue speedboat equipped with fire pump and water monitor,

<b>Name of vessel (Type)</b>	<b>Berth</b>	<b>Major service area</b>	<b>Function and major rescue/firefighting equipment</b>
			survivors' cabin with lying spaces, medical room, ambulance equipment, etc.
No. 2* (Medium fireboat)	North Point Fireboat Station	To be deployed to various waters as required	Medium fireboats are mainly deployed to carry out firefighting and rescue operations for incidents and fires on small vessels, in shallow waters or onshore areas, and in waters where vessels are closely berthed, such as typhoon shelters.  Major equipment includes fire pump, water/foam monitor, fire hydrant, rescue speedboat, ambulance equipment, etc.
No. 3 (Medium fireboat)	Cheung Chau Fireboat Station	Cheung Chau and the southern waters of Lantau Island	
No. 4 (Medium fireboat)	Aberdeen Fireboat Station	Lamma Island and the southern waters of Hong Kong Island	
No. 5 (Medium fireboat)	Tuen Mun Fireboat Station	The northern and the western waters of Lantau Island	
No. 7* (Rescue vessel)	Hong Kong International Airport	To be deployed to various waters as required	
No. 8 (Support vessel)	North Point Fireboat Station	To be deployed to various waters as required	The support vessel is mainly tasked to convey land-based fire personnel or divers and equipment to incident scenes or offshore incident scenes for firefighting and rescue operations.  Major equipment includes fire pump, water/foam monitor, fire hydrant, inflatable speedboat, ambulance equipment, etc.
Diving Support Vessel (Support vessel)	FSD Ngong Shuen Chau Diving Base	To be deployed to various waters as required	To provide a diving rescue platform and convey divers and equipment to incident scenes for firefighting and diving rescue operations.
Diving Support Speedboats (2 nos. in total)	FSD Ngong Shuen Chau Diving Base and Hong Kong International Airport	To be deployed to various waters as required	Major equipment includes fire pump, water monitor, outlet, etc.

Name of vessel (Type)	Berth	Major service area	Function and major rescue/firefighting equipment
Command Boats No. 1 and No. 2	Hong Kong International Airport	Dedicated to handling incidents in the waters near the Hong Kong International Airport	To carry out firefighting and rescue duties in the waters within 5 km from the Hong Kong International Airport.
Speedboats (8 nos. in total)			Major equipment on board the command boats includes fire pump, life raft, water/foam monitor, fire hydrant, inflatable speedboat, survivors' cabin with lying spaces, medical room, ambulance equipment, etc.
			Among the 8 speedboats, 4 are each equipped with separate fire pumps, water monitors and fire hydrants.

- \* Fireboats No. 2 and No. 7 are reserve fireboats which mainly serve as substitutes for fireboats under maintenance and repair. They therefore do not have specific service areas.
2. Last year, the FSD obtained funding approval for the procurement of 1 fast rescue vessel and 1 major fireboat for stationing in the Sai Kung waters, so as to enhance the overall efficiency of its firefighting, ambulance and emergency search and rescue operations in these waters. The FSD and the Marine Department are discussing the design and technical specifications of the vessels concerned. The tendering process is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

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