LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE

Commendation Schemes for Civil Servants

Purpose

The Government has endeavoured to encourage civil servants to strive for excellence and provide quality public service through various commendation schemes. This paper reports to Members the relevant schemes and the latest progress of their implementation.

Background

The HKSAR Government has been ranked among the top 2. worldwide for its efficiency over the years, reflecting the good qualities of the civil service which deserve recognition in many areas. To encourage civil servants to constantly strive for excellence, the Chief Executive announced in the 2022 Policy Address that the "Chief Executive's Award for Exemplary Performance" would be launched in the second quarter of 2023 to give recognition to exemplary teams or individuals on a regular basis. At the same time, the Government continues to tap the various existing commendation schemes for civil servants to motivate them to provide quality public service and sustain These existing schemes include the Civil meritorious performance. Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme, the HKSAR Honours and Awards System, the Secretary for the Civil Service's Commendation Award Scheme, the Commendation Letter Scheme, and the Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme.

New Initiative: "Chief Executive's Award for Exemplary Performance"

3. The Government plans to launch the "Chief Executive's Award for Exemplary Performance" in the second quarter of 2023 to give recognition to exemplary teams or individuals every three to six months on a regular basis. Acclaimed contributions may cover a wide variety of different areas, such as spearheading reform in organisational culture, promoting selfless dedication to volunteer services, accomplishing "missions impossible" by overcoming obstacles, saving resources while substantially enhancing efficiency, and exceeding requirements and targets of important tasks. There is no limit on the number of teams or individuals to be acclaimed each time but their performance has to be outstanding enough to warrant commendation. We will publicise the "good stories" of the award recipients so that the public can have a better understanding of the Government's work and the excellence of the civil service.

4. We are working out on the implementation details of the "Chief Executive's Award for Exemplary Performance". We aim to announce the first round of award recipients and publicise their "good stories" in the second quarter of 2023.

Other Existing Schemes

(a) The Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme

5. The Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") conducts the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme every two to three years. The Scheme aims to recognise the exceptional achievements of departments and teams in providing quality service; promote a citizen-centric culture in the civil service; encourage team spirit; inspire innovation; and share experience in pioneering public service improvement. For the Scheme this year, we introduce for the first time the "Innovation and Technology Award" in collaboration with the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau ("ITIB") to recognise bureaux/departments (B/Ds) which are proactive in devising and taking forward innovative measures and impactful solutions, and encourage a wider adoption of innovation and technology by civil servants to enhance public services.

- 6. The Scheme covers the following four groups of awards
 - (i) Excellence in Partnership Award for quality services provided to the public through collaboration among departments;
 - (ii) Excellence in Service Enhancement Award (comprising the Large Department Category and the Small Department Category) for departments' exceptional achievements in continuous service enhancement;

- (iii) Excellence in Team Collaboration Award (comprising five categories, namely General Service, Specialised Service, Internal Service, Regulatory Service and Crisis Management) for joint and concerted efforts of a team in providing professional service for the public; and
- (iv) Innovation and Technology Award (comprising three categories, namely Best Use of Technology, Best Citizencentric Innovation, and Best Stakeholder Collaboration) for B/Ds' proactive efforts in coming up with innovative measures and effective technological solutions, and taking them forward.

7. More than 190 entries were received for the Scheme in 2022 and a total of 55 entries from 32 B/Ds were awarded Gold, Silver and Bronze Prizes and Meritorious Awards. In addition to the trophies presented to the winning departments and teams, appreciation letters would be issued to members of the winning teams for record in their personal files. The list of winners, which was announced on 12 December 2022, is at <u>Annex</u>.

8. In line with the practice, the Scheme adopts a rigorous two-stage adjudication process this time. The first-stage adjudication was from different sectors conducted by experts and professions. Adjudication board members were required to screen the written submissions, interview representatives from participating departments and teams, shortlist entries for each award category to compete in the next stage for the Gold, Silver and Bronze Prizes and select winners of the The Adjudication Panels for the second-stage Meritorious Awards. adjudication comprised Legislative Councillors, representatives from professional bodies, staff side members of the Central Consultative Councils and directorate officers from bureaux. The shortlisted departments and teams were required to present their entries to the Panels The Panels then made final decisions on the winners and take questions. for the Gold, Silver and Bronze Prizes.

9. The award presentation ceremony of the Scheme was held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on 12 December; with the Chief Executive and guests of honour officiating the ceremony and presenting the awards. On the same day, representatives of the winning departments gave interviews to the media on their outstanding public service projects. In addition to a three-episode dedicated TV programme to be broadcast on the RTHK TV 31 channel, we are also producing a video series on civil servants' efforts both at the frontline and behind the scene to provide quality public service, as well as the

accomplishment of their efforts. The video series will be streamed on different channels, including the Facebook pages of CSB and ITIB, YouTube channel, the thematic website on Service Excellence, and will be played at some government venues. Moreover, we will organise seminars for the winning departments and teams to share their experience and insights in providing quality public services.

(b) HKSAR Honours and Awards System

10. Under the honours and awards system of the HKSAR, the award recipients come from different walks of life with diverse backgrounds. Civil servants who have made significant contributions at work can also be nominated for awards under the system. Many officers have, over the years, received Bauhinia Awards, Bravery Awards, Disciplined Services and ICAC Awards, Medals of Honour and Chief Executive's Commendations. In 2022, a total of 452 civil servants were awarded under this system. Amongst them, 84 received awards of different kinds 368 received the Chief Executive's Commendation and for Government/Public Service. A full list of recipients is published every The Chief Executive presents awards to recipients, in the presence year. of relatives and friends invited by them as guests at a ceremony held at the Government House each year.

(c) The Secretary for the Civil Service's Commendation Award Scheme

11. The Secretary for the Civil Service ("SCS") gives recognition each year to selected civil servants on a service-wide basis for their consistently outstanding performance under this scheme which is specific to the civil service. To qualify for an award under the scheme, a civil servant should have put up outstanding performance for at least five consecutive years. The target number of recipients per annum is 100. Nominations are made by Permanent Secretaries or Heads of Departments/Grades. Recipients of awards are selected by SCS on the recommendation of an Award Committee comprising representatives of CSB and other bureaux/grades.

12. The awards are presented by SCS at a ceremony held annually, in the presence of guests invited by the recipients and representatives from their B/Ds. Each award recipient receives a certificate of recognition and a gold pin. Those who have 20 or more years of service and have not enjoyed government sponsored travel outside Hong Kong before will receive a travel award as well¹. A record of the award granted will be made in the personal files of the recipients to register the Government's appreciation of their outstanding performance. In 2022, 100 civil servants from 37 B/Ds were commended.

13. We publicise the achievements of the award recipients through various channels, including featured articles in newspapers, online news media, the Civil Service Newsletter and departmental newsletters. We also produce videos featuring the outstanding services of some award recipients and upload them to the website and Facebook page of CSB for public viewing.

(d) The Commendation Letter Scheme

14. Apart from the above schemes, Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments may also issue commendation letters to officers whose performance can meet the prescribed criteria under the Commendation Letter Scheme. Such criteria include: whether the officers have put up outstanding service for at least three consecutive years; or have made significant contribution towards enhancing the efficiency or the image of their B/Ds; or have performed a meritorious or brave act warranting special recognition. Nominations may be made all year round and they are considered by a commendation committee set up by individual B/Ds under the chairmanship of a directorate officer. Same as the practice of the SCS's Commendation Award Scheme, a record of the commendation letter issued will be made in the personal files of the recipients.

(e) Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme

15. The Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme aims at recognising and awarding long and meritorious service of serving civil servants. All local non-directorate officers with a continuous service of 20 years or more and a track record of consistently very good performance are eligible for consideration for the grant of an award. Civil servants may only be awarded once in their civil service career. The award is granted on a reimbursement basis. The awardees can choose to nominate a travelling companion, and use the granted amount for a single trip, which is \$27,470 per person in 2022-23. The number of awards for each year is determined on the basis of one award for every 27 officers meeting the service requirement (i.e. at a ratio of 1:27). In 2022-23, there are about 2 000 award quotas. In most circumstances,

¹ The rate of the travel amount and the way in which the travel amount is granted to the recipient are the same as those of the Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme mentioned in paragraphs 15 and 16 of this paper.

the number of eligible officers in a B/D would exceed the award quotas, and the departmental management is required to assess carefully and select the most suitable candidates to receive the awards.

Under ordinary arrangements, awardees of the Scheme have to 16. use the travel award to make a trip outside Hong Kong within a validity period (i.e. within the financial year of receiving the award or before the pre-retirement leave ends (whichever is the earlier)). As the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted seriously on outbound travel since 2020, the Government decided to make an exceptional arrangement. Starting from July 2021, awardees and their travelling companions who are unable to use the award for travel may use it for local spending and apply for reimbursements on items comparable to those which may be reimbursed for outbound travel. Such exceptional arrangement, apart from allowing the awardees to use the travel award, also helps boost the economy by encouraging local consumption. The exceptional arrangement is well received by the awardees. As the exceptional arrangement is due to end on 31 March 2023, we will make appropriate arrangements in light of the development of the pandemic.

Other Measures to Encourage and Support Civil Servants

17. Due to rising public expectation, civil servants have to constantly seek breakthrough and are subject to a great deal of pressure when carrying out their daily duties. The management should encourage and support colleagues so as to sustain their drives for improvement and help them cope with stress. To this end, we will continue to make full use of the award schemes to give recognition to good performance for boosting staff morale while publicising exemplary cases. It is important for the outstanding performance and professionalism of civil servants, their challenges at work, as well as cases of their dedicated service to the society to be known to the public, so that the contributions of the civil servants may receive from the public the recognition they fairly deserve.

18. We will also continue to provide civil servants with training on quality service and managing emotional wellness to help enhance their skills, knowledge and mindset for serving the public. CSB has commissioned professional bodies to provide hotline counselling service on stress management to help staff cope with stress arising from work and other personal problems. The service, available to staff from some 60 B/Ds, includes telephone and face-to-face counselling and referral services. Separately, about 10 departments provide dedicated counselling services for their own staff.

19. SCS visits departments to keep abreast of their latest achievements and the new challenges faced by them as well as to exchange views directly with frontline staff. We also encourage departmental management to maintain close communication with staff, particularly frontline staff, with a view to promoting mutual understanding and partnership between the two sides and better fostering a sense of belonging among staff.

Awards and Commendations from Outside Organisations

20. Apart from commendations under schemes set up by the Government, government departments also receive awards and commendations from time to time from outside organisations (including international awards). These awards and commendations not only show that their work is widely recognised, but also play an important role in giving the acclaimed teams and colleagues with strong encouragement.

Advice Sought

21. Members are invited to note the information in this paper on the various civil service award schemes and their implementation, and offer comments.

Civil Service Bureau December 2022

Annex

List of Winners in the 2022 Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme

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Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Gold Prize: Health Bureau, Development Bureau, Architectural Services Department, Buildings Department, Civil Aid Service, Civil Aviation Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department, Customs and Excise Department, Department of Health, Drainage Services Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Environmental Protection Department, Hong Kong Fire Services Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Lands Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Tourism Commission, Transport Department, Water Supplies Department	Together We Build [Building over 4 000 quarantine units in ten construction sites (e.g. Penny Bay) within a very tight schedule, which greatly relieved the pressure on the demand for quarantine camps during the epidemic.]
Silver Prize:	
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Technological Innovation Boosting the Cemeteries and Crematoria Services [Optimising the workflow of handling post-funeral arrangements through adoption of technological innovation and active collaboration with the trade and stakeholders.]
Bronze Prize:	
Architectural Services Department, Environment and Ecology Bureau, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department	FEHD Skylight Market [Adopting "Modular Integrated Construction" method for the first time to construct a modern market at the open space adjacent to Tin Sau Road Park in Tin Shui Wai.]
Meritorious Award:	
Development Bureau, Highways Department	Heritage Reborn: Restoration of Duddell Street Steps and Gas Lamps [Restoring Duddell Street Steps and Gas Lamps and facilitating the transmission of experience in restoration of monuments.]

Excellence in Partnership Award

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Meritorious Award: (Cont'd)	
Drainage Services Department, Environmental Protection Department	Sewage Surveillance [Tracing the epidemic development in the community through collaborating with the University of Hong Kong to develop a sewage surveillance system.]
Department of Health, Architectural Services Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Transport Department, Water Supplies Department	Temporary Body Storage Facility near Fu Shan Public Mortuary [Provision of over 2 000 temporary storage spaces to handle dead bodies in a respectful way in the 5 th wave of epidemic.]
Highways Department, Home Affairs Department, Transport Department	Saving a Stonewall Tree [Saving a stonewall tree located on a slope at Bonham Road through technology application, and enhancing the maintenance and conservation work on stonewall trees.]
Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Development Bureau, Architectural Services Department, Hong Kong Observatory	Centenary of the Bell - Revival of Bell Chiming of the Tsim Sha Tsui Clock Tower [Enabling the Clock Tower to chime everyday again through active collaboration with various experts.]

Excellence in Service Enhancement Award

Large Department Category	Small Department Category
Gold Prize:	Gold Prize:
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Hong Kong Observatory
Silver Prize:	Silver Prize:
Correctional Services Department	Security Bureau
Bronze Prize:	Bronze Prize:
Hong Kong Fire Services Department	Companies Registry
Meritorious Award:	Meritorious Award:
Immigration Department	Planning Department

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
General Service	
<u>Gold Prize</u> : Highways Department	Rebuild with Innovation [A high risk works project on the demolition of the Yau Ma Tei Carpark Building that supporting the Gascoigne Road Flyover.]
Silver Prize: Hong Kong Fire Services Department	Together against COVID-19 [Co-ordinating inter-departmental operations to fight against the 5 th wave epidemic through deploying resources for ambulance service flexibly.]
Bronze Prize: Housing Department	Cash Allowance Trial Scheme [Providing cash allowance to alleviate the financial burden faced by around 160 000 grass-roots families who have been waiting for public rental housing.]
<u>Meritorious Award</u> : Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Same Roots · Same Origins [Exploring and conserving the cultural heritage in the villages of Hong Kong Geopark and turning them into education and ecotourism resources.]
Drainage Services Department	Rivers in the City \cdot Low Carbon Future [Integrating rivers into the community by adopting green technologies to facilitate greening of channels and ecological conservation.]
Hong Kong Police Force	Narcotics Bureau's Anti-Drugs Campaign [Adopting new approaches and technologies to establish a fresh and positive image for anti-drugs campaign.]
Immigration Department	Immigration Department Tuen Mun Regional Office [Provision of first one-stop service platform for various personal documentations in Hong Kong at Tuen Mun Regional Office.]
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	The Remaking of Hong Kong Museum of Art [Promoting art and East-meets-West cultural exchange by adopting new positioning, branding, promotional strategies and technologies.]

Excellence in Team Collaboration Award

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Specialised Service	
Gold Prize:	
Hong Kong Police Force	'Let's T.A.L.K.' Child Protection Campaign [Raising public awareness of child protection by a large-scale education and publicity campaign on child protection.]
Silver Prize:	
Drainage Services Department	A Playful "Pump Park" [Enhancing the Kwun Tong Sewage Pumping Station located between Kwun Tong Bypass and Wai Yip Street and constructing a green "Pump Park".]
Bronze Prize:	
Hong Kong Police Force	Animal Watchers Programme [Raising public awareness of caring for animals and sharing joint responsibility for combatting animal crime through collaborating with the community.]
Meritorious Award:	
Civil Engineering and Development Department	Cycle Track between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun - Advance Works [Adopting an incremental approach to construct and open the cycle track between Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun by phases.]
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Work Together to Fight the Epidemic [Adopting an incremental approach to construct electrical and mechanical systems in hospitals rapidly.]
Housing Department	"Zero Irrigation System" - Rainwater Harvesting for Eco-friendly Planting [Developing a "Zero Irrigation System" that reuses rainwater for landscape irrigating to increase sustainability of public housing developments.]
Management of Crisis	
Gold Prize:	
Housing Department	Conversion of Chun Yeung Estate into a Quarantine Centre and the Subsequent Reinstatement [Conversion of Chun Yeung Estate into a Quarantine Centre and the subsequent reinstatement works at top speed.]

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Management of Crisis (Cont'd)	
Silver Prize: Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Together, We Filter out the Virus [Developing an IoT-enabled Mobile Modular High Efficiency Particulate Arrestance (HEPA) Unit in collaboration with the industry to retrofit general wards into isolation wards for hospitals at low costs.]
Bronze Prize: Hong Kong Police Force	Know the Fact Rumours and Lies Can Never Be Right [Verifying facts swiftly and combating false information that incites hatred and related crimes in order to maintain public confidence in the Force.]
<u>Meritorious Award</u> : Correctional Services Department	CSD Mask Production [Making an unprecedented move to produce surgical masks round-the-clock at Lo Wu Correctional Institution for frontline anti-epidemic personnel.]
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	E&M 100 – CHT Rescue Team [Repairing damaged facilities at Cross- Harbour Tunnel through the provision of professional electrical and mechanical support.]
Housing Department	Conversion of 3 000 Public Housing Units into Community Isolation Facilities at Top Speed [Conversion of three newly built public estates into Quarantine Centres and the subsequent reinstatement works at top speed.]
Regulatory Service	
Gold Prize: Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	The Digital Log-books for Lifts and Escalators [Developing the digital log-books for lifts and escalators for joint monitoring of system security with various stakeholders.]

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Regulatory Service (Cont'd)	
Silver Prize:	
Hong Kong Fire Services Department	Work Together, Stay Safe from COVID-19
	[Processing the approval of building plan and acceptance inspection of fire service installations at top speed, such that anti-epidemic facilities can put into operation safely.]
<u>Bronze Prize</u> : Companies Registry	Money Lenders Section [Enhancing the regulation of money lenders.]
Meritorious Award: Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Advance Inspection Booking System for Lifts and Escalators Major Alteration Works [Developing advance inspection booking system for lifts and escalators to enable every staff involved to plan and monitor works projects flexibly.]
Internal Service	
Gold Prize: Architectural Services Department	TechnoLand – We Build Our City, Turn Lines to Dreams [Manifestation of architectural design in a common 3D digital platform to facilitate the collaboration among professionals of different disciplines.]
Silver Prize: Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Round-the-clock Monitoring of Community Vaccination Centres [Developing electrical and mechanical monitoring systems to ensure the smooth operation of Community Vaccination Centres.]
Bronze Prize: Hong Kong Fire Services Department	Converging Knowledge Connecting Wisdom [Enabling the transmission of professional skills and knowledge through implementing an internal Knowledge Management system.]
<u>Meritorious Award</u> : Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Innovation Facilitator [Facilitating the application of new technologies and collaboration between government departments and I&T industry through the provision of one- stop support.]

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Internal Service (Cont'd)	
Hong Kong Police Force	e-Ticketing Scheme [Designing and launching e-Ticketing mobile applications to streamline workflow and minimise human errors.]
Hong Kong Police Force	The Fourth Generation Command and Control Communications System (CC4) Radio [Applying various innovative technologies in the CC4 Radio to enhance the overall operational efficiency of the Force.]

Innovation and Technology Award *

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Best Use of Technology	
<u>Gold Prize</u> : Environmental Protection Department	Licence to Clean - Robot, Wisdom and Combat [Facilitating the law enforcement work of staff by integrating frontline practical experience in enforcement, team wisdom and applying innovative technologies.]
Silver Prize: Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Digitalisation Journey - E&M 2.0 [Making continuous improvement in innovation and technology to provide digitised electrical and mechanical engineering solutions for government departments.]
<u>Bronze Prize</u> : Drainage Services Department	Smart Caverns IT Driven [Adopting innovation and technology, and green construction methods to enhance the "Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to Caverns" works project.]

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Best Citizen-centric Innovation	
Gold Prize: Immigration Department	Connecting the Globe with Advanced Technology: Next Generation Electronic Passport System [Introducing smart elements into the Next Generation Electronic Passport System to maximise operational efficiency with a view to promoting the full digitalisation of government services.]
Silver Prize: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer Bronze Prize: Transport Department	"LeaveHomeSafe" - Targeted Anti- epidemic Measures Using Innovation and Technologies [Launching the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application to support Government's targeted anti-epidemic measures.] Easy Park, Easy Pay [Launching new on-street parking meters to facilitate users to look for vacant spaces, park their vehicles, pay fees and extend parking time easily.]
Best Stakeholder Collaboration	
<u>Gold Prize:</u> Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	E&M InnoPortal [Matching suitable Greater Bay Area and local I&T parties with government departments and public organisations for piloting I&T initiatives with an aim to pursuing the development of Hong Kong into a smart city.]
Silver Prize: Office of the Government Chief Information Office	Effective Support for Consumption Voucher Scheme by Leveraging Technology [A first ever measure that boosts local consumer consumption. With a wider use of information technologies, the disbursement of consumption voucher was more efficient and effective.]

Winning Departments/Teams	Information on Winning Entries
Best Stakeholder Collaboration (Cont'd)	
Bronze Prize: Civil Engineering and Development Department	Tung Chung New Town Extension - Reclamation and Advance Works [Adopting a real-time "Digital Twin" technology to simulate the construction site in a virtual space so as to enhance the day-to-day management and collaboration in the project team.]

* Only Gold, Silver and Bronze Prizes for Innovation and Technology Award.

Please visit the thematic website at <u>https://www.servicexcellence.gov.hk</u> to understand more about the winning entries.