Committee on the Promotion of Racial Harmony

Notes of the meeting on 17 February 2017

**Present**

**Home Affairs Department (HAD)**

Mr Jack Chan (Chairman) Deputy Director

Mr Howard Yam Assistant Director

Mr KY Cheng Chief Executive Officer

Mr Alfred Shum (Secretary) Senior Executive Officer

**Official Members**

Mr DC Cheung Principal Assistant Secretary (Constitutional & Mainland Affairs)5, Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

Ms So Mei Yee, Sandy Acting Principal Information Officer (Local Promotion), Information Services Department

Ms Tang Wing Chi, Queenie Assistant Education Officer (Placement and Support)31, Education Bureau

Mr Chong Heung Yu, John Labour Officer (Employment Services)2, Labour Department

**Non-official Members**

Mr Dewan Saiful Alam

Mr Mohamed Ibramsa Sikkander Batcha

Mr Brian Chau

Ms Cheung Yee May, Mimi

Mr Kul Prasad Gurung

Dr Sharmila Gurung, MH

Mr Vijay Harilela

Mr Hung Chiu Wah, Derek

Mr Akil Khan

Mr Amirali Bakirali Nasir, MH, JP

Ms Rigam Rai

Ms Bungon Tamasorn

Dr Rizwan Ullah

Mr Yeung Chuen Chow, Thomas

**In Attendance**

Mr Raymond Ho Senior Equal Opportunities Officer, Ethnic Minorities Unit, Equal Opportunities Commission

For Agenda Item (3)

Ms Rebecca Choi Senior Manager (Course Development), Employees Retraining Board

Ms Helen Young Manager (Course Development), Employees Retraining Board

For Agenda Item (4)

Ms Leung Man Ying, Madelene Senior Inspector of Police (Family Conflict and Sexual Violence Policy Unit)(Crime Wing), Hong Kong Police Force

**Absent with apologies**

Dr Theresa Cunanan

1. Introduction
	1. The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting.
2. Confirmation of the notes of discussion on 28 June 2016
	1. The notes of the last meeting held on 28 June 2016 were confirmed.
3. Matters arising from the meeting on 28 June 2016
	1. There was no matter arising from the meeting on 28 June 2016.
4. Training opportunities and support for ethnic minority employees by the Employees Retraining Board
	1. At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms Rebecca Choi of the Employees Retraining Board briefed Members on the training opportunities and support for ethnic minority employees.
	2. In response to Members’ enquiries, Ms Choi provided the following supplementary information on the class arrangement and statistics of EMs taking ERB courses:
* This year, ERB offered 800 training places in training courses dedicated for EMs. There were around 300 trainees of whom 70% were female. The most popular courses among EMs were language, interpretation and information technology courses and the top choices for EM youth were training for office assistants, western food and beverage service agents and coffee specialists.
* 30% of EM trainees were aged between 20 and 29 and 20% were aged between 30 and 39.
* The class size of dedicated courses for EMs was 11 to 13 in compare with 20 to 25 for general courses. This minimised the chance that a course had to be cancelled due to insufficient enrolment.
* For placement-tied courses, there was no course fee and eligible trainees were entitled to a training allowance. For non-placement-tied courses, eligible trainees might apply for a fee waiver.
* In 2016-17 (as at December 2016), the graduation rate of EM trainees (who were required to pass an examination and fulfil the attendance requirement) was 97%. For placement-tied courses, 64% of the graduates could get a job within six months of graduation. The average monthly income of EM graduates working full-time was $10,053.
	1. Issues raised by Members and the discussions were summarised below:
		1. Noting that the ERB had set up a task force to review the content of existing languages courses, a Member enquired about the outcome of the review. Ms Choi replied that one of the suggestions from the task force was the articulation of language courses. In this connection, the ERB would consider developing new language courses at Qualification Framework (QF) Level 2, in addition to the existing ones at QF Level 1, so as to provide a training ladder for trainees.
		2. Members were interested in the consultation mechanism with the EM communities for developing dedicated courses. Ms Choi said that ERB had set up the Focus Group on Training for Ethnic Minorities which comprised representatives from EM groups, employers, training bodies and non-government organisations, etc. It would consult the industry concerned on the manpower requirement in the course development process. The Chairman suggested that ERB might consider engaging the EM communities through HAD’s support service centres for EMs.
		3. A Member suggested that there could be more advanced courses such as medical assistants for the more capable EM youths. Ms Choi replied that a new course on mobile application development was rolled out this year, and more courses on information technology and programming were under planning. Another Member suggested developing more courses suitable for both genders. Ms Choi replied that both genders were welcome to enrol in all the ERB courses. The ERB was open to suggestions and agreed to relay new ideas to the focus group for discussion.
		4. A Member concerned about marginalised youths who had dropped out from school. He enquired how the ERB would promote its courses to these young people. Ms Choi replied that there were about 100 training bodies appointed by the ERB. Most of them were non-government organisations which had established networks with different target groups, including EM youths. Some training bodies even employed EM assistants to promote the courses. Ms Choi added that the ERB subsidised training bodies to implement facilitative measures so as to facilitate the EM who can speak and comprehend Cantonese to attend the some 500 ERB training courses provided to members of the general public.
		5. Noting that many EM businesses need staff, a Member asked how employers could hire the graduates through the placement scheme. Ms Choi explained that training bodies would arrange placement for graduates upon successful completion of placement-tied courses through their own employer networks. She suggested that prospective employers could approach the ERB for arrangement.
		6. The Chairman thanked Ms Choi for her presentation.
1. Support to ethnic minority families to prevent domestic violence by the Family Conflict and Sexual Violence Policy Unit of the Hong Kong Police Force
	1. At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms Leung Man Ying, Madelene, of the Hong Kong Police Force briefed Members on the support to ethnic minority families to prevent domestic violence.
	2. Issues raised by Members and the discussions were summarised below:
		1. A Member enquired about the prosecution and conviction figures of domestic violence cases. Ms Leung replied that she did not have the figures in hand and these statistics were not maintained by the Police. The Police attach great importance to domestic violence and the protection of victim from further abuse. Therefore, the Police had paid concerted effort to raise public awareness and encouraged families to seek assistance as soon as possible.
		2. A Member concerned what the Police could do if the family denied any occurrence of domestic violence. Ms Leung said the Police would professionally handle and investigate all reports of domestic violence and make referrals to the Social Welfare Department when necessary. Another Member asked whether there was special arrangement for victims who were minors. Ms Leung replied that Police treated child abuse cases seriously and handled such cases under established procedures with sensitivity and professionalism.
		3. On the cause of domestic violence, Ms Leung said that according to social studies and experience, domestic violence might be associated with various reasons including but not limited to alcoholism, gambling, drug addiction as well as childhood experience.
		4. The Chairman enquired about the training provided to police officers handling suspected cases of domestic violence involving EMs. Ms Leung replied that frontline officers receives continuous training on related topics, with assistance from NGOs and HAD’s Support Service Centres for EMs to conduct guest lectures regarding EM cultures in police trainings.
		5. The Chairman asked how the Police reached out to the EM communities. Ms Leung said that various engagement projects with EMs had been launched by the Police, with different social activities, language courses, talks and seminars for the EM communities and train-the-trainer workshops for social workers. Episodes on ‘Police Magazine’ and anti-domestic violence posters were also produced. Meanwhile, joint publicity opportunities with other departments and non-government organisations would be considered.
		6. The Chairman thanked Ms Leung for her presentation.
2. Any Other Business
	* 1. Mr Howard Yam informed Members that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department was recruiting lifeguards. He appealed to Members to encourage qualified persons in the EM communities to apply for the post. In this connection, Mr Yam said that EM youths who were competent in swimming had good potential to become life savers. To enable interested youths to attain the required qualifications, HAD would arrange a pilot programme on lifesaving training for EMs for free in the coming summer. Details would be announced in due course.

(Post-meeting notes: The salary for a Seasonal Lifeguard of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department is $15,440 - $16,140 per month plus an end-of-contract gratuity of 10% - 15%, inclusive of the Government’s Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.)

* + 1. Mr Raymond Ho of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) told the meeting that the EOC had met several government departments to discuss the interpretation needs of EM users. In general, the departments concerned agreed to formulate policy to provide support to EMs, review their manpower structure to cater for the needs of EMs, translate documents such as application forms into EM languages and provide cultural sensitivity training to their staff. More specifically, the Social Welfare Department would designate an officer in every district to coordinate matters on services for EMs and the Labour Department would employ assistants to help EM job seekers in job centres. The Chairman thanked Mr Ho for the updates on the EOC’s work.
	1. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.
	2. For the date of next meeting, Members would be duly informed nearer the time.

**Home Affairs Department**

**March 2017**