

## Chapter 9 Invitation for Views

- 9.1 The ERB has 15 years of operational experience and its achievements are remarkable. At times of economic difficulties, the ERB had sought to assist the vulnerable groups to resolve employment problems. Now that the Hong Kong economy is recovering and the unemployment rate has shown a downward trend, the ERB should seize the opportunity to review its positioning and strategies. Through the proper use of the levy collected, the ERB should take on a broader mission to further empower the Hong Kong work-force in order to meet the expectations of the society and the public at large.
- 9.2 Our external environment constituting the wave of globalisation, the reality of knowledge-based economy and the opportunities offered by the rapid rise of our nation's economy, lead to the continuous surge of demand for learned professionals with high-level skills. Yet, internally Hong Kong encounters problems of an aging population with over 90% of population growth accounted for mainly by new arrivals with low education level. It is thus clear that there is the imminent need to tackle the "quality" as well as the "quantity" problem of our population.
- 9.3 Hong Kong should affirm its development strategy and positioning in order to draw up an effective human resource policy to meet the manpower demand. This strategic positioning must also leverage on the opportunities availed by the development of the nation. It should also help resolve the problem of labour mismatch arising out of economic restructuring in the longer term, and to improve the employment and income situation for the working poor and those with low skills and little education.
- 9.4 Having regard to the present global and national environments that Hong Kong is facing, training efforts in the 21st century should focus on the apt provision of education and training to the youths and adults. Consideration to the changes and demands of the labour market is necessary and a balance between academic and application skills should be struck. Clear delineation of qualifications and

progression ladders are necessary. Learning model should be flexible and outcome-based. To achieve these objectives, we shall liaise closely with employers such that appropriate and much needed training could be delivered to employees. Participation of employers in course development and their supply of job openings are important. Employers should also encourage and support their employees in upgrading themselves through continuous learning. The concept of life-long learning should be fostered in the community in order to meet the requirement of the knowledge-based economy and challenges arising out of globalisation.

- 9.5 Through provision of appropriate training, we aim to foster a forward looking and proactive attitude in the society and improve the skill level of the local working population, enabling individuals in the local work-force to commit to work, enjoy their work, ever seek improvement, and be multi-skilled. It is the primary objective to elevate the overall quality of the work-force and we are committed to step up training on the betterment of personal attributes and foundation skills. So that individuals would have full grasp of the ability of life-long learning and be abreast with the changing world.
- 9.6 We intend to strengthen our provision of tailor-made courses, in particular to the SMEs and social enterprises. We shall identify the training needs of fast growing industries, and formulate comprehensive and appropriate training plans to help local enterprises to increase their competitiveness. Through pre-employment training, training on skills upgrading, professional certifications and so forth, we aim to build up a more robust work-force with higher quality for Hong Kong.
- 9.7 Our vision is to strengthen the competitiveness of the local working population (and industries) by offering forward-looking training or retraining; to strive to lower structural unemployment by filling the skills gap and rectifying mismatch; to support the development of Hong Kong's Qualifications Framework, and to foster ongoing improvement of the quality of the work-force, so as to secure and sustain employment and facilitate upward mobility of our work-force.

9.8 Whether we can implement the various strategic initiatives smoothly hinges on the trust and acceptance of our stakeholders and the citizens of Hong Kong. In the mission of continuously adding value to the local work-force, we bear an important role and responsibility, and have a long way ahead. In order to live up to the expectations of the community and to achieve the highest cost effectiveness, we must execute with prudence and utilize the resources in an appropriate manner.

9.9 We earnestly invite yours views on our future directions and working plans. The consultation period will last from 24th January, 2008 to 31st March, 2008. Comments can be sent through e-mail, by post or by fax.

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Fax : 3129 1383 (Please mark "Comments on Consultative Document")

9.10 This consultative document has been uploaded onto ERB's website at **www.erb.org** and you are welcome to browse or download the document online. Please enlighten us with your views which will be highly valued and seriously considered.

*Should there be any ambiguity between the English and the Chinese versions of the Consultative Document, the Chinese version shall prevail.*