

**For information on
20 November 2006**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE

IMPLEMENTATION OF FIVE-DAY WEEK IN THE GOVERNMENT

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the progress of implementation of five-day week in the Government and the outcome of the review on the phase one implementation which started on 1 July 2006.

BACKGROUND

2. The Chief Executive announced on 12 January 2006 the setting up of a working group, comprising representatives of the Civil Service Bureau, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Efficiency Unit, to examine the proposal and implementation details of a five-day week in the Government with effect from 1 July 2006. We briefed Members on 15 May 2006 (vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1440/05-06(03)) of the four basic principles which would guide our implementation of the five-day week proposal, namely: no additional staffing resources, no reduction in the conditioned hours of service of individual staff, no reduction in emergency services, and continued provision of some essential counter services on Saturday. We also informed Members that the Government would implement the proposal in phases, with phase one commencing on 1 July 2006, and that the administrative and backend offices and those public services summarised at **Annex A** would migrate to the five-day week operation under phase one.

REVIEW OF PHASE ONE

3. Working together with bureaux and departments (B/Ds), we have reviewed the phase one implementation on the basis of the experience in the month of July 2006. Our review covers the following aspects –

- (a) Public sentiment;
- (b) Monitoring and contingency measures;
- (c) Impact on service utilization and operational efficiency;
- (d) Impact on performance pledge compliance; and
- (e) Impact on staff.

Public sentiment

4. Generally speaking, the phase one migration to the five-day week is well received by members of the public. The weekly number of enquiries, complaints, and suggestions received by the 1823 Citizen's Easy Link dropped from 1 242 during the week of 7 July 2006 to 53 as of 2 November 2006. This suggests that the general public is becoming more informed about the five-day week arrangement. The majority of comments and complaints received expressed a general concern over reduced convenience as a result of the Government working five days a week. The issues raised and our response or enhancement measures taken are summarised at **Annex B**.

Monitoring and contingency measures

5. In addition to government-wide publicity and targeted communication with stakeholders, B/Ds offering direct services to the public have provided drop-in box or leave-a-message service at the closed counters/offices. A number of departments with a wide client base arranged duty officers to monitor public reaction and to render suitable assistance to visiting members of the public on the four Saturdays in July 2006. The assistance rendered included explaining the new opening hours, handing out application forms, responding to service-related enquiries, taking down questions/case numbers for follow-up action on Monday, etc.

Impact on service utilization and operational efficiency

6. Of the B/Ds offering direct services to the public, 12 (24%) saw an increase in the average weekly service utilization rate in July 2006, 22 (44%) saw a decrease and 16 (32%) recorded either increase or decrease in

the utilization of different services. B/Ds consider that any change in service utilization in July 2006 may not be directly attributable to the five-day week initiative, as the latter was only implemented for one month. Also, other factors such as seasonal service demand, expiry of previous approved permits/licences, etc. may have contributed to the change in service utilization. At this stage, there is no evidence to suggest that the five-day week has led to an increase or decrease in overall service utilization, nor is there noticeable change in the number of transactions conducted through alternative forms of service delivery.

Impact on performance pledge compliance

7. Prior to the move to the five-day week, B/Ds already compressed the performance pledges for the delivery of the affected services, where applicable, to ensure that these services would be delivered within the same calendar period; or undertook to clear outstanding applications by Friday where practicable. So far, the implementation of the five-day week initiative has not had any adverse impact on performance pledge compliance.

Impact on staff

8. Some 59 300 civil servants have migrated to working on a Monday-to-Friday basis; and 16 600 civil servants to a “five-day-work, two-day-off” roster while services continue to be provided on Saturday (and Sunday in certain cases). Some 9 600 NCSC staff have also joined the five-day week in phase one. The staff sides of the central consultation councils support the initiative and appeal to the management to extend the five-day week to as many staff as possible. They generally agree that maintaining service quality and efficiency is of primary importance and accept that some staff may not be able to switch to the five-day week on operational ground. For individual staff who are on a five-day week, most welcome the new arrangement, noting that they are able to spend more time with their family, pursue further studies, sports and recreational activities, etc. during the longer weekend. Some staff, however, find the extended hours of work per weekday or the staggered working hours less convenient than before. Some staff who are required to work 45 hours net per week (i.e. excluding meal break) request a shorter meal break so that they may go off duty earlier. Staff not yet working on the five-day week arrangement continue to express the wish to migrate to the new work pattern. We will remind B/Ds to pursue fair and transparent posting/rotation arrangements to support the five-day week.

9. To complement the migration to five-day week, B/Ds have varied, where applicable, their outsourced service contracts in IT, cleansing, security, etc. The variations are mainly to require the contractors to provide longer hours of service on weekdays in lieu of service provision on Saturday, while keeping largely unchanged the total hours of service to be provided by the contractors to the B/Ds concerned and the contract sums payable by the B/Ds concerned to the contractors. Such variations should not have significant implication on the salary income of the workers employed by the contractors.

Overall summary

10. We are satisfied that the phase one implementation has been generally smooth. We will continue to work with B/Ds to further improve the five-day week arrangement.

SERVICE MIGRATION IN SUBSEQUENT PHASES

11. B/Ds have drawn up implementation plans for phase two implementation of the five-day week initiative, taking into account possible implications on their statutory obligations, performance pledges, occupational safety and health concerns, and views of staff and major stakeholders in the private sector as appropriate. They have ensured that the overall level of service available to the public will be compensated fully (if not more than) during the weekdays, following the non-provision of service to the public on Saturday.

Phase Two: 1 January 2007

12. For phase two starting from 1 January 2007, the following services will migrate to the five-day week –

- (a) **Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department:** Applications for various permits and certificates for trade or import/export purposes, Endangered Species Resource Centre and Fisheries Education Centre¹;

¹ The Fisheries Education Centre will be closed on Monday and Sunday with service hours extended on Saturday.

- (b) **Companies Registry:** Applications for incorporation and registration of companies, receipt of documents, registration of documents, application for Money Lenders Licences and public searches;
- (c) **Department of Health:** Registration services for medical and healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical services, registration and licensing services relating to Chinese medicines, special preventive programme (on HIV/AIDS and Viral Hepatitis), school dental clinics, dental units in hospitals, Sai Ying Pun dermatological clinic and Chai Wan social hygiene clinic;
- (d) **Department of Justice:** Shroff for receiving payment of debts/damages;
- (e) **Education and Manpower Bureau:** Support services to schools, teachers and the general public including school places allocation service (Lui Kee Education Services Centre), special education services (including special education resource service and speech therapy services), educational psychology services, Regional Education Offices and Guidance and Discipline Section;
- (f) **Electrical and Mechanical Services Department:** Registration services for electrical workers/contractors/competent persons, gas installers/contractors, LPG cylinder wagons, lifts and escalators, builders' lifts/tower working platforms and amusement rides;
- (g) **Housing Department:** Shroff/counter services for public rental collection at Property Management Units and District Tenancy Management Offices [Note: this is subject to the commencement of outsourced rent collection service which is estimated to come into operation in March 2007²];

² At present, public housing tenants may choose to pay rent through alternative means such as autopay, Payment by Phone Service, ATM, e-banking, etc. HD is working to expand the rent collection points (e.g. convenient stores) through outsourced services. We note that notwithstanding the existing alternative payment channels, an average of 7 700 public housing tenants (around 5% of total) still choose to pay their rents on Saturday at HD's 70 shroff offices. In light of this, we consider it prudent to cease provision of this service on Saturday when the outsourced rent collection service is available. HD will separately inform all affected tenants of the exact implementation date in advance.

- (h) **Labour Department:** Processing of sick leave clearance for employees claiming work injury compensation by Occupational Medicine Unit;
- (i) **Legal Aid Department:** Family litigation and insolvency matters, services dealing with criminal matters, Receipt and Dispatch Unit at the headquarters and shroff offices;
- (j) **Marine Department:** Licensing and port formalities at four Marine Offices³ and advance booking of professional ship surveying and inspection service;
- (k) **Social Welfare Department:** Services for offenders (including probation service, Community Service Orders Scheme) and medical social services at Department of Health's Kowloon Bay Integrated Treatment Centre;
- (l) **Transport Department:** Road driving tests and driving ability assessment services to people with disabilities; and
- (m) **Water Supplies Department:** Customer Enquiry Centres and meter testing services.

13. Measures to complement the five-day week operation, including alternative means of service delivery of the above services, are set out in **Annex C**. In addition, the B/Ds concerned have undertaken to compress their performance pledges to ensure that the relevant services would be delivered within the same calendar days as at present or endeavour to clear outstanding applications by Friday where practicable.

Final Phase: 1 July 2007

14. Owing to reasons such as legislative amendment, system enhancement, further assessment of public/staff reaction, some Departments have advised that certain services should move to the five-day week in the final phase starting 1 July 2007. We will inform Members of the implementation details of these services in due course.

³ Another four of the Marine Offices have migrated to five-day service in phase one starting 1 July 2006.

Emergency and Essential Services

15. Some Departments consider it necessary to maintain certain specific services on Saturday (or even Sunday). Emergency services, most notably those involving the maintenance of law and order, administration of penal institutions, provision of rescue services, etc. will continue to be provided round-the-clock. Where viable from an operational point of view, concerned Departments will endeavour to introduce a “five-day-work, two-day-off” duty pattern for staff engaged in providing some of these services, such as management of country parks/wetland parks/wholesale markets, etc.

Overall Situation in July 2007

16. At this stage, our assessment is that a total of 94 800 civil servants will be on a five-day week work mode (including those on a “five-day-week, two-day-off” duty pattern) by July 2007. The breakdown by phases and work pattern is as follows –

	Phase One	Phase Two	Final Phase	Total
Civil servants working on weekdays only	59 300	4 700	3 500	67 500
Civil servants on a five-day-work and two-day-off duty pattern	16 600	3 700	7 000	27 300
<i>Sub-total</i>	75 900	8 400	10 500	94 800 (65%)
Civil servants working more than five days/shifts per week	-			51 000 (35%)
<i>Total</i>				145 800⁴ (100%)

⁴ Excluding those civil servants working in government schools who follow the school calendar, those working in the Judiciary, Hospital Authority, Vocational Training Council, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, etc.

Services Linked to the Operation of Other Organisations

17. Some departments operate in tandem with other organisations, e.g. medical social service units in certain Hospital Authority clinics/treatment centres. They will keep in view the decision of relevant organisations on the introduction of the five-day week, and determine whether and when their related services should follow suit and migrate to the five-day week arrangement.

Publicity

18. As in phase one, we will roll out territory-wide publicity for service migration under phase two. At the central level, we will highlight changes under phase two in our official website on five-day week, with links to individual B/Ds' dedicated webpages on the new opening hours. Efficiency Unit's 1823 Citizen's Easy Link will be enhanced to provide a one-stop and ready source of information on the new opening hours of the phase two public services. Through TV/radio APIs, posters, leaflets, media interviews, etc., we will enhance public awareness of those services that will cease operation on Saturday under phase two and coordinate the publicity efforts of concerned B/Ds. At the departmental level, each B/D will reach out to its target clients through direct mailing, posters, fliers, pamphlets, enquiry hotlines, and so on.

WAY FORWARD

19. Members are invited to note the progress of the implementation of five-day week in the Government. A further progress report on the subject will be provided around May 2007.

Implementation of Five-day Week in the Government

Summary of Services that have Ceased to be Provided on Saturday¹ in Phase One Starting 1 July 2006

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Administration Wing	Archive reference service	Internet access to finding aids and selected archival images.
Buildings Department	Counter for applications for various permits/plans under the Buildings Ordinance	Applications may be made by post.
Census and Statistics Department	Statistical enquiry service, sale of statistical products, enquiries related to import and export declarations	Frequently asked statistics, sale of statistical data and general information are available in the departmental website. An Interactive Voice Response System provides information on import and export declarations.
Civil Service Bureau / Treasury	Resource Centre / Enquiry Service for pensioners (for general enquiry and issue of form TRY 447 to pensioners for seeking medical treatment)	General information about services to pensioners is available in the departmental website. Enquiries and requests for form TRY 447 can be made by phone, fax, post or e-mail.

¹ In addition to the relevant departmental headquarters or offices, services listed in this Annex have also switched to a five-day week starting from 1 July 2006.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Customs and Excise Department	Counters for processing registration of motor vehicles importers and distributors, assessment of provisional taxable value of imported vehicles, and licence/permits applications in respect of dutiable commodities	Submissions may be made by post, through electronic service or drop-in box.
Civil Aviation Department	Counter for flight crew and aircraft maintenance engineers licensing	Applications may be made by post. Submissions by fax or e-mail are also acceptable if the original documents are not required for processing.
Civil Engineering and Development Department	Services related to applications for sand removal permit and dumping licence	Applications may be made by post, fax, e-mail or through drop-in box.
Department of Health	Health education and promotion, medical services by referral and/or appointments (family medicine clinic, clinical genetic service, child assessment service, school immunization team, student health service, elderly health service), one Travel Health Centre, families clinics for civil servants and eligible persons	Health education and promotion materials can be downloaded from the departmental website.
Drainage Services Department	Inspection of drainage records, counter handling public enquiries on sewage charging	Telephone recording and hotline service are available for public enquiries.
Economic Development and Labour Bureau	Services of Travel Agents Registry	Applications for licences may be made by post, fax or electronic means. A hotline is available for enquiries.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Environmental Protection Department	Customer service counters, applications for various permits and licences by contractors and business operators, including those under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance and vehicle exhaust emission approval	Applications may be made by post, fax or electronic means.
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Shroff /counters for various licensing service (e.g. food business licences, liquor licences and other trade licences/permits), for processing of hawkker licences and market tenancies and for payment of departmental and related charges, counter for application and collection of import licence, and district pest control and special cleansing services ²	Payment of departmental and related charges may be made by post. Market stall rent may be paid at Post Offices, by post, by using Phone Payment System, through internet or Automated Teller Machines.
Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau	Counter for searching/photocopying of insurers' register	Basic information on the insurers' register may be obtained from the OCI website.
Fire Services Department	Counter and shroff for collection of fees and/or issue of licences and certification under various regulations	Applications and payment may be made by post.
Government Logistics Department	Shroff for collection of fees for placing notices in the Gazette	Payment may be made by post.

² District pest control and special cleansing service is provided five days a week. The service cessation days vary for different districts depending on operational needs, and do not necessarily fall on Saturday or Sunday.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Home Affairs Department	Public Enquiry Service Centres and counter for the Office of the Licensing Authority for licensing of hotel and guesthouse accommodation, bedspace apartments, clubs and karaoke establishments	Request for information may be made by fax or e-mail to the department's central telephone enquiry centre. Licence applications may be submitted by post or electronic means, as appropriate.
Housing Department	Offices providing public enquiries and management/maintenance services at public rental estates (except shroff for rent payment), receiving applications for public housing and related subsidies, checking of Housing Authority projects against the Buildings Ordinance	Departmental Communication Centre continues to handle emergency cases outside office hours. Applications for public housing may be made by post.
Hong Kong Observatory	Counter at the Resource Centre for sale of Observatory publications, souvenirs and weather data	Request for service may be made by post, fax or electronic means. Publications will be available for sale at four Post Offices.
Intellectual Property Department	Counter for applications for trademarks, patents and design, public enquiries and collection of fees	Submissions and payment may be made by electronic means or by post. Public enquiries may be made by e-mail or voice message.
Inland Revenue Department	Enquiry counters, Business Registration counters, Stamp Duty counters	General information is available at the departmental website, other services may be provided by e-mail, fax, post, ESD Life, or through drop-in box.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Innovation and Technology Commission	Calibration service and accreditation service by appointment, product standards library service, standards sale service	Customers may send their requests for services by post, e-mail or fax. Library service and index of product standards are available at the departmental and related organisations' websites.
Information Services Department	Counters for sale of government publications and photos	Public may purchase government publications by placing orders online, by fax or e-mail.
Labour Department	Counters for services relating to employment, labour relations and employees' rights and benefits	Enquiries may be handled by the department's 24-hour hotline.
Lands Department	Counter for general enquiry service, land administration (e.g. small house applications and government rent and premium enquiries), survey and mapping service (e.g. sale of maps)	Applications may be made by post or by fax where appropriate. Information is available at the departmental website.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Shroff and counters at district leisure services offices and operator-assisted telephone service for booking of leisure facilities and enrolment to leisure activities, booking offices at cultural services venues	For booking leisure facilities (except hard-surface pitches) and enrolment to leisure activities, public may make use of the Leisure Link services available at leisure venues and on the internet. The Leisure Link Telephone Booking Service (operated by the Interactive Voice Response System) and enquiry service remain available from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm from Monday to Sunday. For booking of cultural services venues, applications may also be made by post or fax.
Marine Department	Professional ship surveying and inspection services, marine industrial safety inspection, examination and certification for maritime qualification, and registration of ships, general enquiry services provided by four Marine Offices	Advance booking of service may be made by fax, by phone, e-mail or through drop-in box.
Office of the Telecommunications Authority	Receiving applications for licences of telecommunications services	Applications may be made by post or through electronic means.
Official Receiver's Office	Public enquiry and service counter/search service for bankruptcy/company wind-up cases, receipt of case documents, collection of petition deposits and provision of attestation service	Online search service is available at ESD Life; drop-in box is available for collection of documents; and hotline for handling public enquiries.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Planning Department	Counter for submissions to the Town Planning Board	Submissions may be made by post.
Registration and Electoral Office	Services relating to voter registration and conduct of public elections (except during periods of public elections)	Submission of voter registration forms may be made by post, fax or through ESD Life.
Rating and Valuation Department	Counters for public enquiries and submission of forms relating to rating and Government rent matters	Enquiries may be made through the 24-Hour Enquiry Hotline or e-mail; submissions may be made by post, through electronic means or drop-in box.
Security Bureau	Counter of the Security and Guarding Services Industry Authority for distributing various forms/printed materials relating to Security Company Licence (SCL) and Security Personnel permit and applications for SCL	Most forms/printed materials are available on the Authority's website.
Student Financial Assistance Agency	Counters for applications for student financial assistance and loan documents and for collection of cheques and repayment demand notes	Submissions may be made through drop-in box.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Social Welfare Department	Licensing service relating to elderly homes and drug dependents treatment centres, services provided by the Criminal and Law Enforcement Injuries Compensation Section, Traffic Accident Victims Assistance Section, and Senior Citizen Cards Office	For licensing service, applications and services by the Criminal and Law Enforcement Injuries Compensation and Traffic Accident Victims Assistance, submissions may be made through drop-in box, by post, fax or e-mail. Applications for Senior Citizen Card may be made by post, through drop-in box and ESD Life. General information about all services are available through enquiry hotline, voice-mail system and departmental website.
Transport Department	Licensing of drivers and vehicles, applications for cross boundary closed road permits, change of driving test appointment, conducting written driving tests, licensing of public vehicles, vehicle examination booking service, conducting vehicle examination service at Kowloon and Sheung Kwai Chung Vehicle Examination Centres ³	Applications may be submitted by post or through drop-in box and ESD Life as appropriate.
Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority	Counters for film classification, newspaper registration, entertainment licensing for amusement game centres, amusement with prizes, trade promotion competition, etc.	Submissions may be made by post or by fax as appropriate. Drop-in box will be arranged for registration of newspaper.

³ Except for bus inspection and taxi meter sealing service at To Kwa Wan Vehicle Examination Centre (VEC) and the service provided by the contractor at New Kowloon Bay VEC.

Bureau/Department	Counter services/Functions	Alternative means of service delivery
Trade and Industry Department	Counters for Small and Medium Enterprises Funding Schemes Section, services in textiles licensing and origin certification ⁴ , licensing/registration relating to the controls on rough diamonds, ozone depleting substances, radioactive substances and irradiating apparatus, Hong Kong Service Supplier Certification service	Submissions may be made by post, fax, or electronic services as appropriate.
Water Supplies Department	Document Management Centre (for submission of documents from licenced plumbers, Authorised Persons and the public)	Submissions may be made by post or by fax.
Various bureaux and departments	Various information/resource centres	Some of the information is available at the departmental websites.
Various bureaux and departments	Counters for submissions to various appeals boards	Submissions may be made by post, fax, or e-mail, as appropriate. Drop-in box may also be provided for submission of documents where applicable.

⁴ Electronic services are available round the clock for most of the services in textiles licensing and origin certification. Some of the services are also available from other authorised organizations which operate on Saturday.

Summary of Public Views on Implementation of Five-day Week in the Government

Major Comments	Administration's Response / Enhancement measures
<p>Non-availability of services on Saturday in some departments has caused inconvenience to the public</p>	<p>The Administration has carefully considered the nature of services, the availability of alternative means of service delivery and the average service utilization rates in coming to the decision to cease their provision on Saturday. We note that some members of the public may find the five-day week less convenient than before, whilst others may take time to adjust to the work pattern. In view of these comments, departments have enhanced/plan to enhance service delivery as appropriate. For example -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health has reinforced the shuttle bus service from/to schools with increased capacity to make it more convenient for students receiving health assessment service at student health centres with effect from 2006/07 school year. • Government Property Administrator has uploaded more tender documents in the departmental website since July 2006. • Home Affairs Department (HAD) provides booking service under the Free Legal Advice Scheme throughout lunch time since 1 July 2006. The department has also extended the service hours of its Central Telephone Enquiry Centre and Public Enquiry Service Centres (PESCs) at the 18 districts up to 7:00 pm. • Inland Revenue Department has with effect from 1 July 2006 made available a bilingual message form, listing the major services normally required by members of the public, to facilitate members of the public who may call at the department on Saturday to leave a message and their contact telephone numbers. • To strengthen the enquiry service for employees' compensation, Labour Department will launch a new computer system in early 2007, which allows injured employees and their employers to check relevant information via phone/internet round-the-clock.

Major Comments	Administration's Response / Enhancement measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) has enhanced the database of the 1823 Citizen's Easy Link to facilitate the operators in handling enquiries on completion of all RVD forms. • Transport Department (TD) has uploaded more application forms to the departmental homepage, placed 17 popular forms at Post Offices/PESCs of HAD, and placed licence renewal forms at petrol stations and TD carparks. • Trade and Industry Department (TID) will continue to explore measures to enhance the use of electronic services. The department has also enhanced the Support and Consultation Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises website to better serve the SMEs. Moreover, it has simplified the public forms under Factory Registration (FR) and on-line FR application is targeted to be in service in the first quarter of 2007.
Inadequate public consultation	Bureaux and departments (B/Ds) have reached out to consult the stakeholders in the private sector such as the relevant customer liaison groups, advisory committees or representatives of the industry sectors served when drawing up the implementation plans. Where appropriate, their views and suggestions such as the revised opening hours have been taken on board.
Business operations of the private sector are affected by the implementation of five-day week, e.g. alternative means of service delivery are not substitutes for counter / in-person services	<p>Many government services, especially those business-related are highly accessible through electronic means. Non-provision of selected services on Saturday should not have any significant impact on business operations. For example, users can apply for business registration and stamp instruments related to property transactions on the web, while applications for Certificates of Origin and lodgement of Production Notifications with TID are already 100% electronic. Drop-in boxes are also made available in various departments for submission of documents at any time.</p> <p>In most cases, it is not necessary for members of the public to acquire the various government services in person. We encourage members of the public to make greater use of other means to transact business with Government, such as by post, fax, internet, telephone services. This will save their traveling and possibly waiting time at the service counters.</p>

Major Comments	Administration's Response / Enhancement measures
<p>Opening hours should be aligned for all departments; daily opening hours should be advanced or further extended (e.g. up to 7:00 pm); services during lunch hours should be strengthened</p>	<p>B/Ds determine their opening hours and lunch breaks having regard to demands for services, usage habits of their clientele as well as relevant operational considerations. Because of the difference in nature of the services and usage patterns, there have always been variations in the opening hours and lunch breaks among B/Ds. Upon the implementation of five-day week, the service hours "lost" on Saturday will be fully made up by extension of hours on weekdays. Standardising the opening hours of all government services might not serve the best interest of their respective clientele. B/Ds have actively publicised their new opening hours. The 24-hour 1823 Citizen's Easy Link also provides a one-stop enquiry service in this regard. Where operationally viable, B/Ds will review and adjust the opening hours of individual services having regard to client feedback.</p>
<p>Departments should arrange staff to work shifts in order to provide services on Saturday and Sunday</p>	<p>Since the service utilization on Saturday is relatively low for services moving to the five-day week, we consider it more appropriate to concentrate our staffing resources to improve the Monday-to-Friday service. Within the parameters that no additional staffing resources should arise from the five-day week initiative, it is not feasible for the Government to consider this option on a service-wide basis. Furthermore, putting all staff engaged in frontline counter services on a seven-day roster will seriously disrupt the family and social life of the staff concerned. This is against the Government's policy objective of enhancing the quality of staff's family life.</p> <p>For those services in high demand, we will continue to provide them on Saturday for the time being. These include ID card, visa and passport applications; job centres; occupational health clinics; integrated family service centres, and so on.</p>
<p>Departments should increase manpower so as to allow staff to switch to five-day week but maintain the provision of services on Saturday</p>	<p>One of the basic principles governing the five-day week initiative is no additional staffing resources. We shall adhere to the basic principles in taking forward the initiative.</p>

Major Comments	Administration's Response / Enhancement measures
<p>Alternative means should be introduced to facilitate the submission of documents / payment of rent when offices are closed on Saturday</p>	<p>B/Ds have arranged drop-in boxes and channels for electronic submission where appropriate. Various departments have also established alternative channels for rental payment, such as autopay, PPS, ATM, phone banking, etc. Individual departments will examine the scope for reducing the processing time for postal applications.</p>
<p>Publicity materials should be clear and widely accessible; different publicity channels should be adopted</p>	<p>In early May 2006, the Government began a publicity drive to enhance awareness of the new work hours in the civil service. An official website on five-day week, hyperlinked to dedicated webpages of individual bureaux and departments, was launched to provide detailed information on opening hours and services affected. The 1823 Citizen's Easy Link has been beefed up to provide a one-stop, ready source of information on the implementation of the five-day week.</p> <p>The following publicity measures have also been taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) posters have been put up throughout the territory to publicise the website and hotline; (ii) a pamphlet has been produced to explain the rationale behind the scheme; (iii) flyers from individual departments have been distributed to explain changes in services and new opening hours; (iv) clients of certain departments have been notified via direct mails or notices put up at the office premises; (v) press conferences, media interviews have been held; and senior officials have appeared on public affairs programmes and radio talk shows; (vi) announcements have been broadcast on TV and radio; (vii) press releases and columns have appeared in local daily newspapers; (viii) messages have been displayed on public transport systems, including MTR, KCR, Light Rail, and public buses; and (ix) video and text messages have been screened on the Housing Channel installed at public housing estates.

Major Comments	Administration's Response / Enhancement measures
	We appreciate that the public might take some time to adjust to the new work pattern and will continue to explore making use of various publicity channels to disseminate information on the implementation of five-day week in the Government in a most cost-effective manner.

Implementation of Five-Day Week in the Government

Summary of Services to be Ceased on Saturday in Phase Two Starting 1 January 2007

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Applications for various permits and certificates for trade or import/export purposes, Endangered Species Resource Centre and Fisheries Education Centre ¹	Applications may be made by mail, fax, online or drop-in box. At present, there are less than 10 visitors to the Endangered Species Resource Centre on Saturday.
Companies Registry	Applications for incorporation and registration of companies, receipt of documents, registration of documents, applications for Money Lenders Licences and public searches	Service users may make applications / collect documents through agents, drop-in box is available. Some 97% of public search transactions are conducted through the Internet.

¹ The Fisheries Education Centre will be closed on Monday and Sunday with extended service hours on Saturday.

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Department of Health	Registration services for medical and healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical services, registration and licensing services relating to Chinese medicines, special preventive programme (on HIV/AIDS and Viral Hepatitis), school dental clinics, dental units in hospitals, Sai Ying Pun dermatological clinic and Chai Wan social hygiene clinic	<p>Registration/licensing services may generally be obtained by mail or electronic means, or through drop-in box.</p> <p>Clinical and testing services are mainly provided by appointment, the service level of which will be maintained.</p> <p>Currently, transportation is provided for primary one to four students to receive annual dental checks in the school dental clinics. Coverage of the shuttle bus will be extended to cover all primary students by phases subject to discussions with the participating schools.</p>
Department of Justice	Shroff for receiving payment of debts/damages	Some 76% of the transactions are conducted by mail. Drop-in box is available. The number of clients using counter service on Saturday is less than one person per week on average.

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Education and Manpower Bureau	Support services to schools, teachers and the general public including school places allocation service (Lui Kee Education Services Centre), special education services (including special education resource service and speech therapy services), educational psychology services, Regional Education Offices and Guidance and Discipline Section	<p>School-based consultation/school-based speech therapy services will be enhanced. Saturday service may be arranged on a need basis.</p> <p>Training seminars/workshops for parents may be arranged on Saturday or evening on a need basis.</p> <p>Telephone enquiry service and web-based resource system will be enhanced/developed respectively.</p>
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Registration services for electrical workers/contractors/competent persons, gas installers/contractors, LPG cylinder wagons, lifts and escalators, builders' lifts/tower working platforms and amusement rides	Over 50% of the applications are received by mail. Increasing use is made of drop-in box and e-submission.

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Housing Department	Shroff counter services by the Property Management Units (PMUs) and District Tenancy Management Offices (DTMOs)	<p>Around 95% of the services were delivered from Monday to Friday or through alternative means from January to August 2006 (the average utilization rate of counter service on Saturday was about 5% and the average usage rate of alternative means, such as autopay, Payment by Phone Service, ATM, e-banking, phone-banking, JetsoNet, etc. was about 37%).</p> <p>Since the introduction of e-Payment Cards in January 2006, tenants can pay rent at any of the 70 shroff counters at PMUs and DTMOs convenient to them throughout the territory.</p> <p>Implementation is subject to the commencement of outsourced rent collection service (i.e. to further enhance rent collection points by including, for example, convenient stores) which is expected to come into operation in March 2007.</p>

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Labour Department	Processing of sick leave clearance for employees claiming work injury compensation by Occupational Medicine Unit (OMU)	Clients having difficulty attending the OMU in person may submit documents (e.g. sick leave certificates) by fax or mail. Drop-in box is available. Communication between the clients and OMU can be made by phone.
Legal Aid Department	Family litigation and insolvency matters, services dealing with criminal matters, Receipt and Dispatch Unit at the headquarters and shroff offices	<p>The following measures will be adopted:</p> <p><u>Family litigation and insolvency matters</u> Publicity will be arranged to inform the public, aided persons, judgment debtors and legal practitioners of the new opening hours. The Law Society and Bar Association will also be advised.</p> <p><u>Criminal matters</u> There should be adequate lead-time for completion of application procedure prior to court hearing. For public requiring urgent assistance, they will be advised to approach the Courts on the day of hearing and apply for postponement, if needed.</p>

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
		<p><u>Shroff Office</u> Drop-in box will be provided to facilitate cheque payment. The Application & Processing (A&P) Division (which maintains operation on Saturday in Phase two) will provide facilitation for an applicant to complete the procedure to accept a legal aid offer on Saturday in urgent cases.</p> <p><u>Receipt & Dispatch Unit</u> Staff of A&P Division will help receive documents delivered to the departmental headquarters on Saturday.</p>

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Marine Department	Licensing and port formalities at four Marine Offices ² and advance booking of professional ship surveying and inspection service	<p>Service users may make applications in advance, by mail or by drop-in boxes provided in the Marine Offices. The relevant documents if not collected in person will be returned by registered mail.</p> <p>The department plans to send a mail to those licensees whose licences will expire in January or February next year notifying them the new service hours with effect from 1.1.2007. Such an advance notification by direct mailing will be subject to review and may continue if there is such a need. Under the existing arrangement, a licensee can renew his/her licence two months before the expiry of the licence.</p> <p>24-hour ship surveying and inspection service will not be affected.</p>

² Another four of the Marine Offices have migrated to five-day service in phase one.

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Social Welfare Department	Services for offenders (including probation service, Community Service Orders Scheme) and medical social services at Department of Health's Kowloon Bay Integrated Treatment Centre	To tie in with court sittings, and the integrated treatment centre, which have already moved/ will migrate to the five-day week. Duty officers would be arranged to serve the specific courts, which remain operating on Saturday.
Transport Department	Road driving tests and driving ability assessment services to people with disabilities	Driving tests slots are allocated through the computer system and applicants are not allowed to choose the date and time of test. Only 2% of the tests are conducted on Saturday. At present, all driving ability assessment services for people with disabilities are conducted on weekdays. About 90% of the applications for Disabled Persons' Parking Permit are received by mail, fax or drop-in box.

Bureau / Department	Services/Functions	Remarks
Water Supplies Department	Customer Enquiry Centres (CECs) and meter testing services	Over 80% of the enquiries/transactions at the CECs are conducted through mail, telephone or the Internet. There is no requirement for the customer of the Meter Testing Laboratory to attend meter accuracy test in person, test result will be mailed to the customer.
Total : 13 bureaux and departments		