

TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

Second Session

THIRD REPORT OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Parl. 1 of 2015

Presented to Parliament on

27th January 2015

National Archives of Singapore

National Archives of Singapore

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Members

Mr Seah Kian Peng (*Chairman*)

Mr Ang Wei Neng

Mr Arthur Fong

Dr Intan Azura

Ms Penny Low

Dr Janil Puthucheary

Mr Ong Teng Koon

Mr Png Eng Huat

National Archives of Singapore

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
THIRD REPORT OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE	1
Measures to Control Rising Household Debt	1
Cost of Living	6
Continuing Education for Workers	9
Business Costs and Productivity Improvements	10
Budget	22
Affordability of University Education	25
Jurong Rock Caverns	29
ANNEXES	
Annex A: Average Retail Prices of Selected Items	30
Annex B: Government Financial Assistance Schemes for Undergraduates at AUs	32
APPENDIX	
Minutes of Proceedings	33 – 35

National Archives of Singapore

THIRD REPORT OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

The Estimates Committee, appointed in pursuance of Standing Order No. 100 (3), had agreed to the following Report:

1. The Estimates Committee considered the Budget for the Financial Year (FY) 2014/2015 (Paper Cmd. 1 of 2014) and enquired into certain matters, including the effectiveness of measures to (a) control rising household debt; (b) monitor the impact and growth of licensed moneylenders and pawnbrokers; (c) assist lower-income families and older Singaporeans remain gainfully employed; (d) assist small and microenterprises cope with rising business costs and improve productivity; and (e) ensure affordability of university education.

2. In the course of its enquiry, the Committee received two memoranda from the Ministry of Finance (MOF) on 13 October 2014 and 28 November 2014.

MEASURES TO CONTROL RISING HOUSEHOLD DEBT

3. The Committee expressed its concern with rising household debt and the increased financial risk Singaporeans and their families might face should there be an economic slowdown or increase in interest rates. The Committee supported the various measures to encourage financial prudence (see Second Report of the Estimates Committee, Parl. 1 of 2014) and enquired whether these policies had been effective.

4. MOF reported that since 2009, several rounds of property-related measures had been implemented. These included loan-to-value (LTV) ratios, the Total Debt Servicing Ratio (TDSR) framework, minimum cash down-payment requirements and loan tenure limits for housing loans. The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) had also addressed other components of household debt. Car loans were also subjected to LTV limits and loan tenure restrictions, and new rules on unsecured credit and credit cards would be implemented.

5. Taken together, these measures had strengthened household balance sheets. Firstly, the pace of growth of household debt had slowed down. Year-on-year growth of household debt had moderated from nearly 13% in Q3 2011 to 5.6% in Q2 2014. As a result, the household debt-to-GDP ratio had stabilised at around 75% since Q2 2013, after an average

annual increase of close to 4 percentage points between Q2 2011 and Q2 2013. Secondly, the risk profile of borrowers had improved. New housing loans taken up since the introduction of the various measures had lower LTV ratios¹ and shorter loan tenures². Borrowers taking multiple housing loans had also declined³.

6. The new rules on unsecured credit facilities would help borrowers avoid getting into debt problems by ensuring that they do not borrow beyond their means. The risk profile of existing borrowers would continue to improve over time as they repay their loans and would have to exercise prudence before committing to a new debt.

7. The Committee enquired (a) on the number of borrowers with (i) monthly debt servicing ratio of over 60% of their monthly income, and (ii) monthly debt servicing ratio of between 40% and 60%; and (b) whether there had been, in the last three years, an increase in the number of such borrowers.

8. The TDSR profile of new housing loan borrowers had improved. The share of new borrowers reporting TDSR of less than 40% had increased to 40% as of Q2 2014 from 37% in Q4 2013. Correspondingly, the proportion of new borrowers with TDSR of between 40% and 60% declined from 61% to 57% over the same period. The proportion of new borrowers with TDSR of above 60% was low. These exceptions with TDSR of above 60% relate mostly to the refinancing of loans taken up before the introduction of the TDSR framework, which would take time to reduce.

9. The TDSR profile of existing borrowers remained largely unchanged from 2013, with an estimated 5% to 10% of all existing borrowers having a TDSR of above 60%. This number was expected to decline over time as borrowers repaid old loans and would have to exercise prudence before committing to additional debt.

10. The above estimates of borrowers' TDSR were based on housing loans granted by financial institutions, which were mainly for the purchase of private residential property. The

¹ The share of housing loans in higher LTV bands of above 70% has declined from 77% in Q2 2010 to stabilise at about 66% since 2012.

² The average tenure of new private housing loans had declined, from 30 years in 2012 to 25 years in Q2 2014.

³ The share of borrowers taking up multiple loans had declined from about 30% of new housing loans in 2011 to about 13% as of Q2 2014.

majority of the borrowers, including those with TDSRs of between 40% and 60%, had above-median incomes and were servicing only one housing loan.

Observations and Recommendations

11. The Committee noted that the introduction of the TDSR framework was effective in controlling household debt and ensuring that borrowers did not overleverage their ability to repay loans. The Committee was pleased to note that the proportion of high-risk borrowers, such as borrowers who took up multiple loans or with TDSR of above 60%, had fallen significantly and encouraged MOF to continue monitoring the effectiveness of the policy.

Pawnbrokers and Licensed Moneylenders

12. The Committee observed that there had been an increase in the number of pawnshops and licensed moneylenders, and expressed concern that the growth of such businesses, especially in the heartlands, might indicate a growing number of such transactions among the more vulnerable group of Singaporeans (see Second Report of the Estimates Committee, Parl. 1 of 2014). This group of Singaporeans and their families might be adversely affected in an economic downturn.

13. The Committee enquired about the total number of pawnbrokers and licensed moneylenders in Singapore, and the total value of loans granted by them for each of the years from 2006 to 2013.

14. Table 1 below shows the data from MinLaw:

Table 1. Value of loans granted by pawnbrokers and licensed moneylenders

Year	No. of pawnbrokers	Total value of loans granted by pawnbrokers	No. of licensed moneylenders	Total value of loans granted by licensed moneylenders
2006	104	\$1.6 billion	150	\$101 million
2007	111	\$1.6 billion	169	\$98 million
2008	114	\$1.8 billion	173	\$189 million
2009	138	\$2.0 billion	221	\$289 million
2010	163	\$2.7 billion	239	\$460 million
2011	175	\$4.9 billion	249	\$480 million
2012	191	\$7.1 billion	209	\$346 million
2013	204	\$5.5 billion	200	\$478 million

15. The Committee further enquired about the number of applications for bankruptcy arising from licensed moneylending activities; the proportion of all bankruptcy applications arising from licensed moneylending activities; and the profiles of these debtors in terms of age and income for each of the years from 2006 to 2013.

16. Table 2 below shows the data from MinLaw:

Table 2. Number and proportion of proofs of debt filed by licensed moneylenders

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total no. of Bankruptcy Orders	2,982	2,766	2,326	2,058	1,537	1,526	1,748	1,992
No. of Bankruptcy Orders who had Proofs of Debt filed by Licensed Moneylenders ⁴	42	45	72	39	30	80	128	210
Proportion of Bankruptcy Orders who had Proofs of Debt filed by Licensed Moneylenders	1.4%	1.6%	3.1%	1.9%	2.0%	5.2%	7.3%	10.5%

⁴ The list of licensed moneylenders changes monthly. This set of figures is based on the list of licensed moneylenders as at October 2014. As it does not include the proofs of debt filed by licensed moneylenders who had exited the industry by October 2014, this is likely to be an under-estimate.

17. In terms of the age profile of bankrupts involving licensed moneylending activities from 2006 to 2013, about 77% of them were below 50 years old. Less than 10% of them were below 30 years old while less than 5% were above 60 years old. It was difficult to provide a representative breakdown of incomes because many bankrupts had highly irregular patterns of income.

Observations and Recommendations

18. The Committee was concerned with the increasing number of licensed moneylenders and pawnbrokers. It noted that although the number of licenced moneylenders had declined from 249 in 2011 to 200 in 2013, however, the total value of loans granted had only dipped slightly from \$480 million to \$478 million in the same period. The Committee further observed that the number of pawnbrokers had almost doubled since 2006 and the value of loans granted by pawnbrokers had increased from \$1.6 billion in 2006 to \$7.1 billion in 2012, before declining to \$5.5 billion in 2013.

19. The Committee noted that the value of licensed moneylender and pawnbroker transactions was significant and had grown considerably in the last eight years. The Committee expressed concern that while there had been effective control of debt through the banking and financial system, lower-income Singaporeans might now be borrowing from licensed moneylenders and pawnbrokers.

20. The Committee commended the relevant agency for monitoring the number of bankruptcies arising from licensed moneylending activities. The number of Bankruptcy Orders filed by licensed moneylenders had grown, but the Committee noted that the number of such bankrupts remained relatively small.

21. While the number of bankrupts remained low, however, the Committee cautioned that the increase in the amount of debt and number of debtors, if unchecked, might potentially give rise to other widespread social problems in the future, including heightened stress, dysfunctional individuals and families and an increase in crime.

22. The Committee noted that Parliament passed the Pawnbrokers Bill in January 2015 to ensure that legislation regulating Singapore's pawnbroking industry continued to remain relevant. The Committee urged the relevant agency to continue monitoring the situation

closely and to work with other agencies to consider the social impact of the increase in borrowing activities, especially among lower-income Singaporeans.

COST OF LIVING

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

23. The Committee noted that the CPI figures published by the Department of Statistics (DOS) were in terms of “weight per 10,000” for a basket of items and percentage change of such weightages over previous years. The Committee recommended the possibility of including an illustration of what the figures meant in dollar terms with regard to actual expenses and income, and enquired (a) whether steps had been taken to help Singaporeans better understand their expenditure patterns and the impact of CPI changes on their expenses; and (b) whether the CPI figures on the cost of living for the elderly, including medical and healthcare-related expenses, could be published in dollar terms.

24. MOF clarified that the percentage change in the CPI published monthly by DOS referred to the change in the prices of goods and services in the CPI basket, and not a change in the weights of the items in the basket.

25. The CPI basket comprised goods and services commonly purchased by households, for example, rice, apples, shirts, newspapers, school fees, electricity and water tariffs. To ensure that the CPI basket was comprehensive and representative of households’ consumption patterns, different brands and varieties of such goods and services were captured in the basket. In line with international statistical practice, the price movements of these items were then compiled and presented as indices by main expenditure groups/sub-groups, rather than in absolute dollar terms. Based on this methodology, changes in the overall CPI reflected average changes in the prices of items in all expenditure groups, with the weight of each expenditure group being determined by its relative importance in the CPI basket. These weights were updated every five years, based on the expenditure patterns of households captured in the latest Household Expenditure Survey (HES).

26. Nonetheless, DOS was cognisant that the public might be interested in the price movement of specific items in dollar terms. Hence, in addition to the CPI, DOS also published the average retail prices of commonly purchased items every month in the *Monthly Digest of Statistics* (see [Annex A](#)).

27. To help users better understand the CPI, DOS provided explanations of the key concepts of the CPI on its website⁵. Illustrations were also included to help Singaporeans understand their expenditure patterns and the CPI. For a deeper understanding of the CPI, readers can refer to DOS' Information Paper on the rebasing of the CPI⁶. DOS would continue to look for ways to improve and augment its education materials on the CPI to better engage users.

28. DOS was in the process of collecting and compiling the relevant data to study the feasibility of a CPI for elderly households. The study would be completed by the fourth quarter of 2015. DOS would share its assessment on the feasibility of compiling such a CPI series with the Estimates Committee when ready.

29. Apart from the CPI, DOS also published data from the Household Expenditure Survey (HES). These included data on the expenditure pattern of households, such as the average amount spent on different types of goods and services. In 2012/13, retiree households, comprising solely of non-working persons aged 60 years and above, spent an average of \$140 per person per month on healthcare-related expenses, including medical products, outpatient and hospital services.

Projected CPI Increase

30. The Committee enquired about the projected CPI excluding rentals on owner-occupied accommodation (CPI ex-OOA) increase for the middle 60% and lowest 20% of households for 2014, and what were the reasons for the increase.

31. In the first half of 2014, CPI ex-OOA for the lowest 20% income group rose by 2.0%, while that for the middle 60% income group increased by 1.7%. The largest contributors to the increase in CPI ex-OOA for both income groups were the costs of food, healthcare and "recreation and others". However, while the cost increases for these items were similar for

⁵ FAQs on CPI can be found in: http://www.singstat.gov.sg/educational_corner/FAQ_on_CPI.html

⁶ DOS Information Paper can be found in: http://www.singstat.gov.sg/publications/publications_and_papers/prices/ip-e36.pdf

both groups⁷, the rate of inflation for the lowest 20% income group was higher as food and healthcare constituted a larger share of expenditure for this group.

32. Both MTI and MAS did not forecast CPI ex-OOA by income groups. Instead, the forecasts were for MAS Core Inflation, which excluded the costs of accommodation and private road transport, as well as the CPI-All Items inflation for general households.

Financial Education

33. The Committee enquired whether the Government had plans to set up a dedicated committee or working group, as in the case of the Financial Education and Literacy Programme, to help Singaporeans better understand their expenditure patterns and cost of living.

34. MOF explained that MoneySENSE, which was spearheaded by the Financial Education Steering Committee (FESC)⁸, aimed to help Singaporeans develop the following five core financial capabilities⁹, some of which cover aspects of understanding expenditure patterns and cost of living:

- (a) Understanding money
- (b) Understanding yourself, your rights and responsibilities
- (c) Managing everyday money
- (d) Planning ahead
- (e) Selecting financial products

National Archives of Singapore

35. In particular, *Understanding money* was about having the numeracy skills to evaluate the costs and benefits of decisions involving money. It included a better understanding of how economic conditions, such as inflation or a rise in interest rates, could affect consumers

⁷ In 1H14, both the lowest 20% and middle 60% income groups experienced a similar pace of increase in food prices, at 2.9%. For healthcare costs, the increases experienced by the lowest 20% and the middle 60% income groups were 3.7% and 3.5% respectively. For the cost of “recreation & others”, the increases experienced by the lowest 20% and the middle 60% income groups were 2.6% and 2.4% respectively.

⁸The Monetary Authority of Singapore chairs the FESC, which comprises representatives from several public sector agencies and Government Ministries, including the Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), Central Provident Fund Board (CPF Board), National Library Board (NLB) and People’s Association (PA).

⁹The MoneySENSE Core Financial Capabilities Framework is available at http://www.moneysense.gov.sg/~media/Moneysense/IFL/CSI_Core%20Capabilities%20Framework_230413.pdf

and their personal finances. *Managing everyday money* was about being able to budget, to live within one's means, and to use credit facilities responsibly, for example, spending using a credit card. These messages were delivered through a range of programmes, either through dedicated initiatives, such as workplace talks on *Making Sense of Your Money*, or embedded within other topics, such as managing debt and retirement planning. MoneySENSE would use numeric illustrations and case studies to help participants apply concepts learned.

36. MoneySENSE's learning outcomes would help Singaporeans build a strong foundation in money matters. In this regard, there was no immediate need to set up a separate committee.

Observations and Recommendations

37. The Committee recognised that the CPI information published by DOS was presented in a manner to allow Government agencies and domain experts to conduct more in-depth analysis of CPI developments. To make this information more accessible and of practical use to a layperson, the Committee urged the Government to consider repackaging the information targeted at all Singaporeans. In terms of format and information, this new effort could be more illustrative, descriptive, and educational, and utilise various forms of media. Information could be customised for different income groups and age segments, expenditure patterns and household budgeting. The impact of choices made by consumers could also be illustrated, such as how to maximise the dollar and the benefits of Government subsidies, for example, the GST Voucher and Pioneer Generation package.

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR WORKERS

38. The Committee was encouraged to note that based on data from 2008 to 2010, workers who obtained Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Statements of Attainment (SOAs) and full WSQ full qualifications earned higher wages than workers who did not (see Second Report of the Estimates Committee, Parl. 1 of 2014). The Committee further enquired, in each year from 2008 to present, (a) what was the amount of money spent on updating of skills and continuing education; (b) how many workers had attained WSQ SOAs and WSQ full qualifications; and (c) whether the trend of workers attaining WSQ SOAs and WSQ full qualifications had been increasing.

39. Over the period 2008 to 2013, both the number of individuals who attained at least one WSQ SOA and the number of individuals who attained at least one WSQ full qualification had been steadily increasing.

40. Table 3 below shows the expenditure of the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) on updating of skills and continuing education for workers from FY2008 to FY2013.

Table 3. WDA's expenditure over FY2008 – FY2013

FY	Total expenditure (\$ mil)
2008	219
2009	399
2010	400
2011	422
2012	485
2013	524

Observations and Recommendations

41. The Committee noted that the number of workers who had attained WSQ qualification had been increasing over the years and that more than a million workers had benefited from the training opportunities. In addition, the expenditure on training has been increasing since 2008. The Committee encouraged the Government to continue its strong support in this area and ensure that workers who upgraded and upskilled themselves would continue to move up the value chain and be rewarded with better paying jobs.

BUSINESS COSTS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

Special Employment Credit

42. The Committee enquired how the Government evaluated the effectiveness of the Special Employment Credit (SEC) scheme in helping older lower-income Singaporeans remain employed or gain re-employment.

43. MOF informed the Committee that the objectives of the enhanced SEC were to provide employers with support for the increase to their business costs, and to serve as an

incentive for employers to attract, retain and reward lower-wage older workers¹⁰. The SEC was enhanced in 2012, together with the increase in CPF contribution rates for older workers aged 50 and above. Employers qualified for the SEC for workers in employment between 1 January 2012 and 31 December 2016.

44. MOF explained that the employment rate of residents aged 50 and above had increased from 53.3% in 2012 to 54.1% in 2013 (see Table 4 below). However, MOF clarified that this may not be due to the SEC alone, but also because of the tight labour market and other policies to encourage work among older workers¹¹.

45. With the rising employment rate of older workers, the amount of SEC paid out to employers had increased. In 2012, \$475 million of SEC was paid out for the employment of about 417,000 older workers. In 2013, \$520 million of SEC was paid out to employers for the employment of 445,000 older workers.

Table 4. Resident employment rate by age (2012 – 2013)

Age (Years)	Resident employment rate in 2012 (%)	Resident employment rate in 2013 (%)
50-54	77.0	77.8
55-59	70.3	71.0
60-64	56.1	57.7
65-69	36.9	38.5
70 & above	12.6	14.0
50 & above	53.3	54.1
55 & above	44.9	46.0

Source: MOM

46. The Committee further enquired whether the Government considered the SEC to be effective in incentivising employers to attract, retain and reward older Singaporean workers.

47. MOF explained that the rising resident employment rate for older workers was due in part to the on-going tight labour market conditions. Other than the SEC, there were also

¹⁰ The salary cap and the SEC schedule are designed to give 8% SEC to employers of older workers aged above 50 earning less than \$3,000, and a lower % for those earning from \$3,000 to \$4,000.

¹¹ This includes schemes such as the Workfare Income Supplement scheme, which supplements the incomes of older low-wage workers, the Workpro scheme and the then-Advantage scheme, which help employers enhance their HR systems and redesign jobs to hire older workers.

various Government schemes linked to employment of older workers, such as Workfare Income Supplement (WIS). Given that the SEC was introduced only fairly recently, MOF had not concluded a separate assessment on the impact of the SEC.

48. Although the SEC scheme was designed to give a higher payout (as a proportion to wages) to employers of older workers earning \$3,000 or less per month, the benefits were extended to those earning up to \$4,000 per month. As this income threshold covered most older workers, it might be more appropriate to look at targets set for employment of older workers instead. The Tripartite Committee on Employability of Older Workers had earlier set a target employment rate of 65% for residents aged 55 to 64. The Government achieved the target of 65% in 2013, two years ahead of time. This employment rate was one of the highest among developed countries.

Observations and Recommendations

49. The Committee noted that there was a suite of programmes to support the continued employment of older lower-income Singaporeans and to reduce such payroll costs to businesses. The Committee commended the Government for its commitment to older lower-income workers and for taking the lead by extending the re-employment age of public sector officers from 65 years of age to 67 years from 1 January 2015.

Productivity and Innovation Credit Scheme (PIC)

50. The Committee had urged MOF to continually review the effectiveness of the various productivity incentive schemes (see Second Report of the Estimates Committee, Parl. 1 of 2014) and noted that there was potential to improve productivity in several key sectors. In this regard, the Committee enquired about the amount of PIC benefits disbursed to the following sectors: construction, food services, retail, food manufacturing and furniture manufacturing; and what were the corresponding productivity increases in these sectors.

51. Table 5 below shows the total benefits disbursed under the PIC Scheme to companies from the construction, food services, retail, food manufacturing and furniture manufacturing sectors for year of assessment (YA) 2013, and the corresponding annualised productivity growth (in real terms).

Table 5. Total PIC benefits¹² disbursed and Productivity Growth by CAGR for VA/worker

Sector	YA 2013		Share of economy ¹³ (2013)	Annualised productivity growth (2009 to 2013)
	Total PIC benefits disbursed (\$mil)	PIC benefits disbursed to the sector, as share of total PIC benefits		
Construction	60.3	5%	4.9%	0.8%
Food services	13.9	1%	0.8%	3.6%*
Retail	21.5	2.6%	1.4%	1.7%*
Food manufacturing	10.3	2.1%	0.6%	2.0%*
Furniture manufacturing	2.6	0.2%	0.3%	3.1%*

* Due to data limitations, the overall GDP deflator was applied to Food Services, Retail, Food Manufacturing and Furniture Manufacturing to calculate the real annualised productivity growth figures in these sectors.

52. The percentage of PIC benefits disbursed to the respective sectors was generally consistent with the sector's contribution to GDP¹⁴. Among the five sectors, construction enjoyed the largest percentage of total PIC benefits disbursed.

53. Looking at the last four years (2009-2013), the five sectors had recorded positive annualised productivity growth (see Table 5). However, much of the gain for the construction, food services and retail sectors was due to the surge in productivity in 2010 as the economy rebounded from the global financial crisis.

54. Among the various sectors of the economy, there was a dichotomy between the export-oriented sectors and domestic-oriented sectors. Overall productivity for the export-oriented sectors in Singapore's economy grew by 5.8% per annum over 2009 to 2013, as compared to the 0.9% per annum growth for the domestic-oriented sectors in the same period.

55. In general, the export-oriented sectors performed better because they were subjected to global competition and adjusted processes quickly to changing market conditions. The

¹² Based on data as at 31 August 2014.

¹³ Based on 2013 Nominal VA share of GDP.

¹⁴ Except for Furniture Manufacturing, as the percentage of contribution to GDP is for General Manufacturing (Miscellaneous), of which Furniture Manufacturing is only a sub-sector.

domestic-oriented sectors, on the other hand, were facing more problems adjusting to the tight labour market, and in raising efficiency and moving up the value-chain. Sector-specific factors might also explain the slow productivity growth in some sectors. For example, productivity gains from process improvements might take a longer time to materialise in the construction sector, due to the long lag time from project design to project completion. Many productivity initiatives, such as greater use of manpower-lean construction technologies, only applied to new construction projects and not existing projects. Nevertheless, the Government would continue to press on with their restructuring efforts in these sectors.

56. The Committee enquired if the Government could do more to improve productivity in these sectors.

57. MOF informed the Committee that raising productivity was at the centre of the Government's economic agenda and was a major, multi-year undertaking. The approach was two-fold: first, to tighten foreign worker inflow through progressive steps since 2010, and, second, to provide firms with strong support for productivity and innovation improvements. Besides introducing broad-based assistance schemes, sectoral productivity roadmaps for 15 priority sectors had been endorsed by the National Productivity Council (NPC) to address sector-specific productivity challenges.

58. There was a need to press on with the restructuring efforts to ensure that productivity improvements were more broad-based and sustained. The Government would continue to:

- (a) Support companies in restructuring their operations, upgrading their business processes and models, and adopting technology. For example, the Government launched the Technology Adoption Programme (TAP) in 2013 to raise the adoption of productivity-raising technologies through facilitating collaboration between our research institutes and local companies. TAP had helped commercialise 12 technology solutions that had impacted about 650 companies to-date. In Budget 2014, the Government also announced that the PIC scheme would be extended for three years till YA2018 to provide more time for businesses to put in place productivity improvements. The PIC+ scheme was also introduced to help SMEs that were making more substantial investments to transform their businesses.

- (b) Help workers deepen and master skills relevant to the future. A new tripartite SkillsFuture Council had been established to develop an integrated system of education, training and progression for Singaporeans, with increased involvement by employers in building and utilising industry-relevant skills.
- (c) Work together with companies and workers to shift our workplace culture towards a more productivity-minded one. The national “Way to Go, Singapore!” campaign, which aimed to raise awareness about productivity and call companies and workers to action, would start its third wave in 2Q2015. The inaugural National Productivity Month, held from 7-30 October 2014, also showcased and shared ideas, methods and perspectives on how companies could improve productivity.

59. Beyond broad-based interventions, the Government would also focus its efforts on key laggard sectors, such as construction, retail and food services:

- (a) Construction: The Government would take more aggressive upstream measures to ensure more buildable designs and promote the use of prefabrication and other high-impact technologies. Private developers will face stricter tender conditions to require the use of these technologies for Government Land Sales (GLS) sites. They would also be incentivised to adopt such technologies on non-GLS sites. Government procuring entities (GPEs), such as HDB and LTA would also take the lead in adopting productive technologies and aim for 2-3% annual productivity growth for their projects.
- (b) Retail: The Government would work with the industry to develop platforms to support omni-channel retailing. In particular, online retailing could help retailers grow with less manpower. SPRING would also continue to drive the adoption of other manpower-lean ICT solutions, such as self-service technologies.
- (c) Food Services: The dependency ratio ceiling (DRC) and sub-DRC cuts implemented in 2013 would take effect in July 2015. This would affect the number of foreign workers food service companies could employ. The

Government would be rolling out initiatives with sector-wide impact, such as centralised dishwashing facilities and self-service technologies.

Innovation and Capability Voucher (ICV)

60. The Committee enquired about the take-up rates and disbursement rates for the Innovation and Capability Voucher (ICV) in each of the last three financial years.

61. MOF explained that the ICV was a voucher scheme, valued at \$5,000 that was simple for SMEs to apply for. It was established in June 2012 to encourage SMEs to take their first steps in developing capabilities. SMEs could use the voucher to upgrade and strengthen their core business operations through consultancy in the areas of innovation, productivity, human resources and financial management. Each SME was entitled to a maximum of eight vouchers¹⁵. In March 2014, ICV was enhanced to support SMEs in the adoption and implementation of simple solutions¹⁶ to improve business efficiency and productivity. With the enhancement, each SME could apply up to a maximum of two vouchers to implement solutions out of the available eight vouchers. The take-up rate of ICV had increased significantly since the enhancement as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Take-up rate of ICV

Financial year	Number of vouchers disbursed
FY2012 (Jun 2012 to Mar 2013)	1,727
FY2013 (Apr 2013 – Mar 2014)	1,882
FY2014 (Apr 2014 – Aug 2014)	5,496

Assistance for Micro and Small Enterprises

62. The Committee enquired about the effectiveness of the various assistance schemes, such as the ICV, for micro and small enterprises and whether additional measures could be taken to help these small and micro enterprises improve their productivity and cope with rising business costs.

¹⁵ A maximum of two vouchers per capability area for supported services, that is,. (i) innovation, (ii) productivity, (iii) human resources, and (iv) financial management.

¹⁶ SMEs can use the ICV to implement productivity solutions under the supportable cost categories of (i) equipment and hardware, (ii) technical solutions and training, and (iii) design and renovation.

63. MOF informed the Committee that the various assistance schemes, such as PIC and ICV, had helped small and micro enterprises upgrade their capabilities and cope with higher business costs.

64. The amount of PIC benefits disbursed to micro and small companies¹⁷ had increased by more than three-fold from YA2011 (\$58 million) to YA2013 (\$199 million). More details are provided in Table 7.

Table 7. PIC benefits disbursed to micro and small companies over YA2011 to YA2013

	YA2011	YA2012	YA2013
PIC benefits disbursed ¹⁸	\$58.2 million	\$96.2 million	\$199.5 million
As percentage of total PIC benefits disbursed to all business entities	15%	24%	27%

65. Various surveys had shown that SMEs had an increased awareness of Government assistance schemes to enhance productivity. For example, the SME Survey by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) released in September 2014 showed that the percentage of micro enterprises that applied for Government schemes increased from 45% in 2013 to 59% in 2014. The percentage of small enterprises that applied for Government schemes also increased from 65% in 2013 to 84% in 2014. However, the productivity measures undertaken by SMEs would take time to have an impact on national productivity indicators.

66. MTI and SPRING were also working actively through the SME Workgroup, SME Centres, as well as the Trade Associations and Chambers, to engage SMEs and provide guidance on the sorts of productivity improvements and schemes that could be helpful to the SMEs. As an illustration of this, more than 20,000 SMEs had been reached through the SME Centres in 2013. MTI and SPRING were also studying ways to further help micro and small enterprises improve their productivity.

¹⁷ Turnover of less than \$10 million.

¹⁸ Does not include PIC benefits disbursed to non-corporate business entities such as sole-proprietorships and partnerships.

67. Raising productivity was a long-term endeavour which required close collaboration between the Government, businesses, unions and workers. Innovation was key to unlocking and enabling productivity gains. The Government would continue to look at ways to support innovation and productivity.

Observations and Recommendations

68. The Committee was encouraged by the proactive productivity improvement measures that the Government had taken, particularly to develop and promote sector-wide facilities and technologies in sectors where productivity was lagging. The Government's involvement in targeting, promoting and developing online platforms and centralised facilities in certain sectors would facilitate the restructuring process, especially for smaller businesses. The Committee also urged the Government to consider feedback from trade and business bodies including, among other suggestions, the possibility of consolidating resources for SMEs under one agency for more comprehensive formulation and seamless delivery of programmes.

69. The Committee further noted that in YA 2013, there had been significant increases in the amount of PIC and ICV benefits disbursed to micro and small enterprises. Enhancements to the ICV Scheme in 2014 had made it more accessible. The Committee commended the Government for the financial support and incentives given to micro and small enterprises and its sustained efforts to increase awareness of such schemes. The Committee encouraged the Government to ensure that the objectives of inculcating a culture of innovation and increased productivity were met through these schemes.

70. The Committee was assured that the Government would give businesses sufficient time to adapt to the new business environment by extending the PIC Scheme for another three years till 2018. The Committee urged the Government to take the initiative and continue looking for opportunities to take the lead in building, developing and promoting facilities, such as new technologies and infrastructure, thereby providing businesses with the tools to restructure their processes and operations.

National Archives of Singapore

Abuse of PIC and ICV Schemes

71. The Committee enquired about the annual number of PIC and ICV fraud cases and the abuse of such Schemes since their implementation and the amount of money involved in such cases.

72. MOF informed the Committee that the Productivity and Innovation Credit (PIC) scheme was introduced in Budget 2010 for the Years of Assessment (YA) 2011 to 2015¹⁹. Since then, Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) had identified about 150 cases involving fraudulent or abusive PIC claims. These cases involved PIC claims or cash payouts of around \$6.7 million.

73. Even though these fraudulent claims formed a small minority of total PIC claims, both in terms of number and value, the Government took a serious view of any attempt by PIC claimants, consultants or vendors to fabricate claims or artificially inflate the value of the PIC expenditure. In the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2014, the Government had introduced anti-abuse measures to tighten the qualifying conditions for PIC cash payouts and provided the Comptroller with additional powers to take action against abusive arrangements aimed at obtaining PIC benefits. These measures included:

(a) Requiring a PIC automation equipment to be in use before an application for PIC cash payout on the equipment could be made;

(b) Strengthening the Comptroller's powers to deny PIC benefits arising from PIC abusive arrangements; and

(c) Imposing penalties on intermediaries who promoted or facilitated PIC claims for such abusive arrangements.

74. The Income Tax (Amendment) Bill was passed by Parliament in November 2014 and had been gazetted.

¹⁹ In Budget 2014, it was announced that the PIC scheme would be extended till YA 2018.

75. MOF informed the Committee that the Innovation & Capability Voucher (ICV) scheme was introduced in 2012. Since inception, more than 20,000 applications had been received. To date, 10 service providers were suspected to have been fraudulent and were investigated.

76. SPRING took a serious view of any attempt made by companies, consultants or vendors to fabricate claims or artificially inflate the value of project expenditures and would not hesitate to take action against these parties. SPRING would continue to monitor the applications and claims submitted and would refine and enhance the ICV scheme funding model to reduce the chances of potential fraud. This includes the use of data analytics to identify and investigate possible patterns leading to potential fraudulent applications and claims and conducting quarterly random audits on high volume applications from same vendors/consultants.

77. In addition, SPRING had further refined the ICV to make the support more meaningful by encouraging integrated solutions which are easy-to-adopt packaged solutions that combine hardware and equipment, software and/or training components.

Observations and Recommendations

78. The Committee endorsed the stronger measures to curb fraudulent claims and prevent abuse of the productivity schemes and acknowledged that a balance had to be struck between efficiency in making and processing a claim and accountability for the use of public funds.

Social Enterprises (SEs)

79. The Committee enquired about the outcome of the Government review on the implementation of the various productivity and incentive schemes to ensure that SEs were included in such schemes.

80. MOF explained that SEs could take on different legal structures, such as a company, co-operative or a society. SEs were typically set up as a company, and were incorporated under the Companies Act. For charities which run social enterprise projects, the Commissioner of Charities had advised that they set up a separate business subsidiary to carry out such business activities. These subsidiaries were also typically incorporated under the Companies Act. All companies could apply for various productivity and incentive

schemes, such as the Productivity Innovation Credit (PIC) scheme, Capability and Development Grant (CDG) and Innovation and Capability Voucher (ICV).

81. SEs that were co-operatives under the Co-operative Societies Act were exempted from paying corporate tax. Therefore, they would not qualify for PIC benefits. However, they could benefit from assistance for co-operatives²⁰.

82. MOF further explained that all employers, regardless of legal structure, might benefit from the Wage Credit Scheme (WCS) and Special Employment Credit (SEC) Scheme, if they fulfilled the qualifying conditions.

83. In addition, the Government had been working to provide separate assistance to SEs. This included providing seed funding to help cover start-up and operating costs. For example, the ComCare Enterprise Fund provided seed grants to new and existing SEs that provided employment opportunities to the vulnerable groups. SEs could receive business advisory services as well as subsidies for training courses conducted through SE Association²¹. SEs could also apply for funding under various Government schemes, such as Tote Board's SE Hub Ltd (Equity and Loans), and the National Youth Fund. Beyond these efforts, more Government agencies were procuring from SEs or had enquired about their services. MSF was working with the SE Association and MOF to generate greater awareness of such procurement opportunities.

Observations and Recommendations

84. The Committee noted that social enterprises were a growing sector with the potential to increase the country's social capital and provide meaningful and fulfilling jobs and lives for Singaporeans. There was much scope for productivity improvements in this sector. The Committee was encouraged by the support that social enterprises received and urged the relevant Ministry to ensure that not-for-profit companies, such as voluntary welfare organisations, were not inadvertently excluded when the Government reviewed or enhanced the productivity and innovation schemes.

²⁰ They can seek funding support and training subsidies from the Central Co-operative Fund administered by the Singapore National Co-operative Foundation (SNCF).

²¹ The courses cover topics ranging from corporate governance, practical law, business plan writing and raising capital.

BUDGET

Sustainability of the Budget

85. The Committee noted that the Government had allocated a substantial budget to support quality growth, create a fair and equitable society, build a liveable and endearing home, and promote a cohesive community through various schemes and programmes. These included grants and tax incentives for innovation, subsidies for lower-income workers, increased bursaries for students, enhanced housing grants, subsidised MediShield Life premiums, GST Vouchers for lower-income families, Pioneer Generation Package for older Singaporeans and the Bus Service Enhancement Programme for all public commuters. The Committee enquired whether the Government would be able to ensure that all its schemes and programmes remained financially sustainable in future Budgets.

86. MOF assured the Committee that the Government was committed to fiscal sustainability. Each term of Government had to spend within the revenues that it receives. In addition, the Government took a forward-looking approach in fiscal planning, to ensure the affordability of the schemes and programmes into the future.

87. MOF outlined the approach taken by the Government:

(a) the Government is aware of the need to be judicious in its spending. A key principle was to design policies, programmes and transfers that are targeted at those who needed the help most. This has allowed the Government to manage overall spending and achieve outcomes effectively.

(b) the Government would avoid a build-up of welfare entitlements, but put in place programmes aimed at building up our capacity for the future. For example, student bursaries provided students from lower-income families with better opportunities to move up. Similarly, infrastructure investments and support schemes for innovation, productivity improvements and enterprise development would enhance Singapore's economic capacity and help create good jobs for Singaporeans. This created a virtuous circle where more resources could become available for re-investment in the society and economy.

National Archives of Singapore

- (c) the Government would set aside resources today for future spending needs that the current Government has committed to, in order to avoid passing the fiscal burden to future generations. For example, the Government had set up and made regular top-ups to endowment funds, such as Medifund, Edusave Endowment Fund and ComCare Endowment Fund, to provide a stable source of funding for important programmes that span many years into the future. More recently, \$8 billion had been set aside to fund the future costs of the Pioneer Generation Package.

88. The Committee commended MOF for the strong emphasis of the Budget on economic growth and job creation, and enquired whether social value indicators were also included when measuring the success of the Budget and, if so, what were these indicators and how were they measured.

89. MOF explained that the Government published the Singapore Public Sector Outcomes Review (SPOR)²² once every two years, to take stock of how Singapore had fared in key areas of national interest. This provided a good sense of how Government expenditures had enabled the public, private and people sectors to meet key national objectives.

90. Some examples of social indicators tracked in SPOR were:

(a) Education/Continuing Education and Training

- Levels of education measured by the percentage of the labour force with at least post-secondary qualifications
- Percentage of workers going for training measured by overall training participation rate of the Resident Labour Force aged 15 – 64

(b) Marriage and Parenthood

- Fertility rates
- Divorce rates before the 7th and 20th year of marriage

²² SPOR can be found at: <http://app.mof.gov.sg/data/cmsresource/SPOR/2014/SPOR%202014.pdf>

(c) **Health Outcomes and Affordability**

- Life expectancy of residents at birth
- Average coverage of Class B2/C bills by Medisave and MediShield

(d) **Retirement Adequacy**

- Active CPF members who were able to meet the Minimum Sum in cash and property at age 55

(e) **Community Participation**

- Level of charitable donations given to Institutes of Public Character both in absolute dollars and as a percentage of GDP
- National volunteerism rate

(f) **Social Support System**

- Number of households assisted under ComCare

(g) **Home Ownership and Affordability**

- Home ownership rates among resident HDB households
- Affordability of HDB flats measured by a weighted average debt servicing ratio for first-timer applicants buying new flats in non-mature estates

(h) **Living Environment**

- Satisfaction with living environment measured through surveys

(i) **Law and Order**

- Overall crime rate per 100,000 population
- Ex-offenders' recidivism rate.

Observations and Recommendations

91. The Committee expressed its support for the inclusion of social indicators in SPOR and urged the Ministry to ensure that the targets and indicators continued to be reviewed and updated regularly to remain relevant in the rapidly changing society.

AFFORDABILITY OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Provision of Government Subsidies

92. The Committee enquired on the annual amount of grants provided by the Government to each Autonomous University (AU) for each year from FY2004 to FY2014.

93. MOF provided the summary table below showing the annual amount of grants provided by the Government to each AU between FY2004 and FY2014.

Table 8. Annual amount of grants provided by the Government to each AU between FY2004 and FY2014

	Actual Amount of Grants Provided to the AUs (in millions of S\$)										
	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13*	FY14^
NUS	726	739	901	771	993	1,079	1,248	1,226	1,163	1,187	1,068
NTU	431	449	538	475	560	660	679	806	744	761	854
SMU	327	118	196	155	150	126	164	166	163	192	176
SUTD	-				0.04	22	51	515	172	188	85
SIT	-					4	35	50	93	541	167
Total	1,484	1,306	1,635	1,401	1,703	1,890	2,176	2,762	2,335	2,869	2,350

* Revised estimate

^ Estimated

94. The Committee enquired about the amount and percentage of the grant used to subsidise tuition fees payable by Singaporean students; whether the subsidies had been keeping pace with increases in university fees; and what were the measures taken by the Government to ensure that AU fees remain affordable.

95. MOF informed the Committee that the Government subsidised about 75% of the total education cost for all Singaporeans in publicly-funded universities, with the remaining 25% paid for through tuition fees.

96. Government-funded loans and needs-based bursaries were available to assist lower- and middle-income students with tuition fees and living expenses. These were reviewed periodically to ensure that they kept pace with inflation and changes in tuition fees. With the 2014 review of needs-based bursaries for students at the Institutes of Higher Learning, bursaries generally covered up to 45% of the average university tuition fees and were available to two-thirds of Singaporean households. Students who faced difficulties covering the remaining tuition fees and living expenses could tap on Government-funded loans, which

were interest-free during their course of study. The list of Government financial assistance schemes can be found in Annex B.

97. Beyond this, the Government monitored fees carefully to ensure that they were set reasonably. MOE also worked closely with the AUs on any proposed increase in fees to assess its impact on affordability.

98. The Committee enquired about the measures adopted by the Government to ensure that the grants had been used effectively by the AUs.

99. MOF informed the Committee that the AUs' operating grants were reviewed periodically, taking into account changes to their cost structures and inflation, and MOE reviewed the expenditure patterns of each AU annually.

100. The use of Government grants was subject to the Policy Agreement and Performance Agreement signed between MOE and each AU. AUs were required to: (a) formulate goals and specify key deliverables and performance targets in the areas of teaching, research, service and organisational development; and (b) put in place internal controls and procedures to ensure resource accountability and financial sustainability. This was closely monitored through an annual Performance Review Forum between MOE and each AU. AUs had been taking active cost control measures such as bulk tendering of goods and services, outsourcing non-core activities, and leveraging IT to improve productivity.

Review of University Fees

101. The Committee further enquired about the annual amount and percentage of increase in undergraduate university fees for each AU since 2004 and the criteria used by the Government to assess the justification for any fee increase.

102. MOF explained that tuition fees were reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis, taking into account the cost of delivering quality university education, while being mindful of the prevailing economic situation. The AUs sought to strike a balance between ensuring the affordability of tuition fees, and setting them at a realistic and sustainable level. The Government monitored fees carefully to ensure that they were set reasonably. MOE also

worked closely with the AUs on any proposed increase in fees to assess its impact on affordability.

103. The fee changes for the majority of undergraduate programmes since 2004 were as follows:

- (a) Between Academic Year (AY) 2004 and AY2007, fee increments ranged between 3% and 5% per annum (or within \$300 per annum) for Singapore Citizens²³. No fee increase was implemented for AY2007.
- (b) From AY2008, the AUs adopted the cohort-based fee charging system²⁴. Fees would be made known to students at the point of admission and would remain unchanged throughout the entire course duration. The revised fee structure served to provide undergraduates with greater certainty in fees and help them to better plan the financing of their studies. The fee increases implemented for the bulk of undergraduate programmes was 4% (or an average annual 1.6% increase over the entire course duration) between AY2008 and AY2012²⁵, and 2.5% (or an average annual 1% increase over the entire course duration) in AY2013 and AY2014. Fee increment for Singapore Citizens for AY2008 to AY2014, in absolute quantum, for these programmes was within \$300 per revision²⁶.

Bursary and Financial Aid Schemes

104. The Committee enquired about the measures put in place to ensure that Government financial aid schemes for undergraduates in AUs were adequate and accessible to those who were eligible.

105. Government financial aid schemes were reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure that they remained relevant and continued to provide the appropriate level of aid to Singaporean students in need. The bursary schemes (CDC/CCC Bursary and MOE Bursary) were

²³ During this period, AU fees were set on an enrolment basis, such that any fee increases would affect both the new intake and existing students.

²⁴ SMU started setting fees on a cohort basis since AY2005.

²⁵ A one-year fee increase deferment was applied to all students in AY2009, given the economic downturn.

²⁶ Fee increases for permanent residents (PR) and international students were higher, with the highest revision at about \$1,000 for PR students and about \$1,600 for international students during the period of AY2008 to AY2014.

reviewed once every three years, where (a) bursary quanta would be raised to minimally keep pace with inflation and fee increases; and (b) income eligibility threshold would be adjusted in tandem with the latest national household income data, to allow the pool of students from the bottom two-thirds of national households to continue to qualify for Government bursaries.

106. In recent bursary reviews, the Government had provided assistance beyond fee increases. In 2009, Government-funded bursaries covered up to 24% of average university fees. This increased to 46% in 2014. Needy students could also draw on Government-funded Tuition Fee Loans to cover the remaining tuition fees and living expenses, if needed. The Tuition Fee Loans were interest-free during the course of study.

107. Besides Government bursaries and loan schemes, there were also other financial assistance schemes offered by the AUs, foundations, private and professional organisations, community groups and self-help groups. Students could, therefore, tap on a range of financing schemes. Each AU also had its own dedicated Financial Aid Office to provide advice and customise appropriate student financing packages to meet the needs of students.

Observations and Recommendations

108. The Committee expressed its concern over the affordability of university education in Singapore. The Committee received feedback that AU fees had increased significantly over the past few years. There was a perception that operating costs of the AUs had gone up without the matching increases in grants from the Government, resulting in significant increases in tuition fees. This perception was reinforced by the narrowing gap between fees for publicly-funded and private universities in Singapore.

109. The Committee was assured to note that the Government continued to subsidise about 75% of the total education cost in publicly-funded universities and that bursaries were available to two-thirds of Singaporean households to pay for part of the remaining cost. However, the Committee urged the Ministry to monitor the take-up rate of such bursaries and, where necessary, ensure that the Financial Aid Offices in the AUs took more proactive and effective measures in reaching out to Singaporean students from household which qualified for such bursaries and other financial-assistance schemes.

JURONG ROCK CAVERNS

110. The Committee noted that \$950 million would be spent developing the Jurong Rock Caverns and enquired about the returns of investment in terms of economic growth and job creation for Singaporeans.

111. MOF explained that the development of Phase 1 of the Jurong Rock Caverns (JRC) for oil storage underground had freed up 60 hectares of land above ground. The land would help the Government anchor more downstream petrochemical and specialty chemical projects, which were expected to generate a value-added of more than \$700 million per year.

112. The first two caverns in the JRC had been leased to Jurong Aromatics Corporation for the storage of condensate, a key feedstock for its new \$1.9 billion aromatics project on Jurong Island. This project was expected to generate a value-added of more than \$500 million per year.

113. The projects were expected to directly create about 600 PMET jobs. More importantly, they would also strengthen the competitiveness of Singapore's energy and chemical industry, and help maintain the competitive advantage over competitors. In 2013, there were about 25,000 PMET jobs in this industry, of which 60%²⁷ were filled by Singaporeans.

Observations and Recommendations

114. As the cost of building underground storage caverns were significantly higher than building on land, the Committee urged the Ministry to monitor the take-up rate for the storage space and to ensure that there was sufficient demand before proceeding with Phase 2 of the Jurong Rock Cavern development.

²⁷ Based on MTI's estimates

Annex A: Average Retail Prices of Selected Items (Extracted from *Monthly Digest of Statistics, September 2014, Table 15.4*)

15.4 AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SELECTED ITEMS

Item	Unit	Dollars							
		2012	2013	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	May 2014	Jun 2014	Jul 2014	Aug 2014
Rice & Other Cereals									
Thai Rice 100% Fragrant	5 kg pkt	12.67	12.78	12.82	12.77	13.06	12.92	13.08	12.67
Instant Noodles	5 pkts	2.23	2.23	2.25	2.20	2.25	2.27	2.24	2.21
Ordinary White Bread	400 g	1.46	1.49	1.51	1.51	1.51	1.51	1.51	1.51
Vitamin Enriched Bread	400 g	1.60	1.68	1.76	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.76
High Fibre Bread	400 g	2.20	2.21	2.37	2.37	2.37	2.37	2.37	2.37
Meat & Poultry									
Chilled Lean Pork	Per kg	13.07	13.14	13.30	13.36	13.19	13.12	13.12	13.28
Chilled Streaky Pork	Per kg	14.40	14.67	14.91	14.85	14.84	14.85	14.90	14.95
Chilled Pork Rib Bones	Per kg	16.48	16.40	16.46	16.44	16.52	16.26	16.48	16.38
Chilled Beef	Per kg	21.96	21.43	21.64	21.57	21.76	21.57	21.62	22.06
Chilled Mutton	Per kg	17.79	17.89	17.79	17.79	17.79	17.79	17.79	17.79
Hen	Per kg	5.87	5.96	6.35	6.28	6.29	6.29	6.10	6.09
Duck	Per kg	6.75	6.87	6.86	6.87	6.89	6.87	6.87	6.84
Chilled Chicken Wing	Each	0.66	0.68	0.70	0.70	0.69	0.69	0.70	0.71
Seafood									
White Pomfret	Per kg	24.76	24.70	24.67	24.05	23.82	23.94	24.44	25.21
Flowery Grouper	Per kg	14.62	14.63	13.82	13.76	13.72	13.87	14.10	14.34
Kurau (cut)	Per kg	44.80	48.53	45.19	47.66	49.28	52.14	56.89	57.09
Gold Banded Scad (kuning)	Per kg	6.57	6.57	6.67	6.62	6.70	6.88	7.07	7.02
Spanish Mackerel (tenggiri)	Per kg	10.97	11.07	10.95	10.92	11.08	11.17	11.64	11.78
Golden Snapper	Per kg	16.77	17.71	16.91	17.28	18.42	18.16	17.37	17.78
Sea Bream (kerisi)	Per kg	8.27	8.43	8.38	8.38	8.50	8.75	8.72	8.70
Sea Bass	Per kg	12.46	12.29	11.78	12.00	12.26	12.53	12.84	12.92
Cod Fish	Per kg	48.85	49.58	48.88	49.48	49.56	49.75	49.55	49.82
Salmon	Per kg	25.41	26.23	27.62	27.64	27.61	27.66	27.76	27.65
Small Prawns	Per kg	11.17	11.69	12.85	13.10	12.71	12.62	12.86	13.02
Medium Prawns	Per kg	17.23	17.88	18.82	18.10	18.04	17.90	17.98	18.12
Large Prawns	Per kg	23.53	24.71	23.68	23.37	24.12	23.47	24.12	25.01
Squids	Per kg	11.32	11.97	12.30	12.11	12.02	12.31	12.67	12.74
Fish Balls	Per 10	1.91	1.90	1.90	1.92	1.93	1.93	1.93	1.93
Dairy Products & Eggs									
Fresh Milk	1 litre pkt	2.88	2.93	2.90	2.92	2.96	2.91	2.82	2.93
Condensed Milk	397 g tin	1.65	1.64	1.66	1.66	1.65	1.65	1.63	1.64
Infant Milk Powder	900 g tin	40.28	44.30	48.22	48.52	48.97	49.23	49.59	49.93
Cheese	Pkt of 12 slices	5.07	4.85	4.66	5.06	4.84	4.79	4.72	4.85
Ice-cream	1.5 litre tub	6.09	6.20	6.26	6.29	6.28	6.16	6.04	6.22
Hen Eggs	Per 10	1.88	1.94	2.00	1.99	1.98	2.00	2.02	2.05

Note : Prices may not be strictly comparable with those published earlier due to changes in specifications.

15.4

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SELECTED ITEMS (continued)

		Dollars							
Item	Unit	2012	2013	Mar 2014	Apr 2014	May 2014	Jun 2014	Jul 2014	Aug 2014
Cooking Oil	2 kg bottle	5.99	5.67	5.66	5.62	5.75	5.67	5.71	5.71
Vegetables									
Cabbage	Per kg	1.91	1.94	1.94	1.95	1.90	1.96	1.98	1.97
Spinach (bayam)	Per kg	2.79	2.81	2.84	3.12	3.13	3.08	3.05	3.11
Small Mustard	Per kg	2.97	3.04	3.17	3.34	3.30	3.26	3.11	3.21
Kale	Per kg	4.13	4.31	4.70	4.72	4.76	4.72	4.71	4.82
Broccoli	Per kg	7.54	7.38	7.21	7.24	7.02	6.91	7.71	7.62
Tomatoes	Per kg	2.00	2.20	2.16	1.52	1.72	2.15	2.81	2.40
Potatoes	Per kg	1.71	1.78	1.92	1.94	1.96	1.93	1.96	1.97
Carrots	Per kg	1.96	1.98	2.03	2.03	2.05	2.05	2.06	2.04
Fresh Fruits									
Papaya	Per kg	1.79	1.92	2.11	2.16	2.18	2.29	2.49	2.37
Bananas (emas)	Per kg	1.65	1.81	2.06	2.07	2.08	2.13	2.16	2.20
Watermelon	Per kg	1.34	1.46	1.62	1.62	1.59	1.56	1.58	1.58
Grapes	Per kg	7.88	8.43	8.21	8.39	8.50	9.00	8.66	9.09
Orange	Each	0.34	0.36	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.35
Apple	Each	0.40	0.42	0.43	0.44	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.46
Pear	Each	0.93	0.95	1.01	1.02	1.01	1.00	1.00	0.95
Other Food and Beverages									
Sugar	2 kg pkt	3.34	3.28	3.11	3.26	3.17	3.15	3.09	3.11
Instant Coffee	200 g packaging	10.07	9.96	9.92	9.92	9.81	10.13	10.08	10.11
Chicken Extract	½ doz	16.68	17.30	17.62	17.62	17.62	17.62	17.62	17.62
Food Beverage	400 g tin	4.24	4.25	4.25	4.32	4.39	4.46	4.33	4.36
Beer	330 ml can	3.10	3.10	3.21	3.34	3.35	3.39	3.38	3.37
Aerated Soft Drinks	330 ml can	0.67	0.68	0.70	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69
Non-Aerated, Soft Drinks	6 pkts of 250 ml	2.38	2.42	2.50	2.48	2.49	2.49	2.43	2.46
Petroleum Related Products & Cigarettes									
Diesel	Per litre	1.50	1.51	1.55	1.55	1.55	1.55	1.54	1.52
Petrol, 98 Octane	Per litre	2.13	2.20	2.26	2.27	2.28	2.29	2.30	2.25
Petrol, 95 Octane	Per litre	2.00	2.05	2.09	2.10	2.11	2.12	2.13	2.08
Petrol, 92 Octane	Per litre	1.95	1.99	2.03	2.04	2.06	2.07	2.08	2.03
Liquefied Petroleum Gas	Per kg	3.15	3.20	3.31	3.24	3.24	3.26	3.26	3.25
Cigarettes	20-stick pack	10.80	10.86	11.52	11.77	11.77	11.77	11.77	11.77

Note : Prices may not be strictly comparable with those published earlier due to changes in specifications.

Annex B: Government Financial Assistance Schemes for Undergraduates at AUs

Scheme	Application Eligibility	Quantum per year [for undergraduates]
Tuition Fee Loan (TFL) Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All full-time undergraduates 	Up to 90% of tuition fee
Study Loan (SL) Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All full-time undergraduates Should have taken up the maximum TFL Monthly household per capita income \leq \$2,400 for Singapore Citizens /Permanent Residents, and \leq \$1,200 for International Students 	Up to 10% of tuition fee plus living allowance of \$3,600 per annum
Tertiary Tuition Fee Subsidy Scheme by Yayasan Mendaki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malay Singapore Citizens 	Up to 100% tuition fee, depending on household income
CDC/CCC Bursary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore Citizens Monthly household per capita income \leq \$950 	\$3,600
MOE Bursary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore Citizens Monthly household per capital income \leq \$1,400 	\$2,600
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore Citizens Monthly household per capital income between \$1,401 and \$1,900 	\$1,300

National Archives of Singapore

Appendix

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

10th Meeting

Thursday, 4th September 2014

9.35 am

PRESENT

Mr Seah Kian Peng (*in the Chair*)
Mr Ang Wei Neng
Mr Arthur Fong
Dr Intan Azura
Dr Janil Puthucheary
Ms Penny Low
Mr Png Eng Huat

ABSENT

Mr Ong Teng Koon

-
1. The Committee deliberated.

National Archives of Singapore
Adjourned to a date to be fixed.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

11th Meeting

Tuesday, 14th October 2014

12.35 pm

PRESENT

Mr Seah Kian Peng (*in the Chair*)
Mr Ang Wei Neng
Mr Arthur Fong
Dr Janil Puthucheary
Mr Ong Teng Koon
Mr Png Eng Huat

ABSENT

Dr Intan Azura
Ms Penny Low

-
2. The Committee deliberated.
 3. The Committee considered a Memorandum submitted by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) in respect of (a) household debt; (b) cost of living; (c) business costs and productivity improvements; (d) success of the Budget; (e) sustainability of future government Budget; (f) affordability of university education and (g) Jurong Rock Caverns.
 4. The Committee further deliberated.

Adjourned to a date to be fixed.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

12th Meeting

Thursday, 15th January 2015

10.35 am

PRESENT

Mr Seah Kian Peng (*in the Chair*)
Mr Ang Wei Neng
Dr Intan Azura
Dr Janil Puthucheary

ABSENT

Mr Arthur Fong
Ms Penny Low
Mr Ong Teng Koon
Mr Png Eng Huat

-
1. The Committee deliberated.

Report.

2. The Chairman's report brought up and read the first time.
3. Resolved, "That the Chairman's report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph."

Paragraphs 1 to 114 inclusive read and agreed to.
4. Resolved, "That this report be the Report of the Committee to Parliament."
5. Agreed that the Chairman do present the Report upon printed copies thereof being available for distribution to Members of Parliament.

Adjourned *sine die*.