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Registration and Restoration

- 6.1** As at 31 December 2005, 1,941 dentists were entered in the Register of Dentists of Hong Kong, either as being residents in Hong Kong or residents outside Hong Kong. **Table 7(A)** shows that there has been a slight increase in the number of registered dentists from 1,848 in 2003, 1,892 in 2004 to 1,941 in 2005, mainly due to new registration to the register.
- 6.2** One of the major tasks for the Dental Council Secretariat is to keep these entries in the register accurate and up-to-date while enabling public access to those current names registered on the list. Hundreds of transactions are carried out on a monthly basis, including change and/or addition of practising address, addition of advanced qualifications, deletion and restoration to the register, transfer to and from the local and overseas lists respectively, as well as issuance of Certificate of Good Standing, Duplicate Copy of Certificate of Registration, Certified Copy of Certificate of Registration (which is required when a dentist opens a new premises for the practice of dentistry) and certificates verifying registration, etc. In addition, as a public service, the Council Secretariat processed an annual average of over 10,000 general enquiries from members of the profession and the public.
- 6.3** **Table 7(B)** lists in detail the registration figures as well as cases of restoration to the register in 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively.
- 6.4** In addition to the registered dentists with full registration, there were 7 “deemed-to-be registered” dentists in 2005. The “deemed-to-be registered” clause was introduced under section 30(3) of the Dentists Registration Ordinance to enable all persons on full-time teaching employment of the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Hong Kong to discharge their teaching duties or perform hospital work in the Faculty of Dentistry of the University.
- 6.5** A dentist who has advanced qualifications, training and experience in a branch of dentistry may apply to the Council for the use of a Specialist Title. The objective of granting a Specialist Title is for the recognition of expertise so that patients may be referred to them for opinion and/or consultation if the need arises.
- 6.6** As at 31 December 2005, the Council had granted approval for the use of Specialist Titles in the following specialties - Orthodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Periodontology, Endodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Prosthodontics and Family Dentistry.
- 6.7** Another key task for the Council Secretariat is the annual exercise of renewal of practising certificates for all registered dentists whose names are on the Register of Dentists resident in Hong Kong. A total of 1,766 annual practising certificates for dentists resident in Hong Kong were issued in 2005, as compared with 1,727 practising certificates issued in 2004.

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6.8 Every registered dentist whose name is on the register for dentists resident in Hong Kong is reminded at the end of the year that his practising certificate is due for renewal. Relevant provisions in section 11A and section 15(3) of the Ordinance have been included in the application form for renewal of practising certificate to remind dentists about the consequences of not renewing the practising certificate on time. A dentist who fails to apply for a new practising certificate on time may be liable for his name to be removed from the register.

6.9 A review had been conducted on the need of maintaining a "Dentists Resident Outside Hong Kong" list in the register. In the past, if a registered dentist on the "Dentists Resident in Hong Kong" list decided to reside outside Hong Kong, he could apply to transfer his name to the "Dentist Resident Outside Hong Kong" list. The Council considers that while a dentist can always leave Hong Kong for any period as he wishes, his name should be removed from the register in accordance with section 15 (3)(b) of the Ordinance if he has no intention to practise in Hong Kong during his leave. There are already provisions in the Ordinance for the dentist to apply to restore his name to the register if he intends to practise dentistry in Hong Kong again. Members of the profession have been reminded that effective on 1 March 2003, dentists would not be allowed to transfer their names to the "Dentists Resident Outside Hong Kong" list anymore.