

**Replies to questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the
Draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02**

**[Bureau Secretary/Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs]
[Session No. : 2]**

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Bureau Serial No.

CAB001

Question Serial No.

0163

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What measures have been taken by the Constitutional Affairs Bureau (CAB) last year to implement the Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP)? What was the amount of expenditure thus reduced? What further actions will CAB take in the implementation of EPP in 2001-02? What is the estimated reduction in expenditure?

Asked by : Dr Hon YEUNG Sum

Reply : The Constitutional Affairs Bureau achieved the 5% EPP savings of \$2 million in full in the 2000-01 financial year by deleting six permanent non-directorate posts. These posts comprise 1 Senior Administrative Officer, 2 Personal Secretary I, 1 Personal Secretary II, 1 Clerical Officer and 1 Confidential Assistant. Although we have not set a target of savings for the 2001-02 financial year, we will continue to explore other measures to make full use of our human resources through process re-engineering and the use of information technology. We will also adopt measures to reduce office expenses on paper, overseas telephone calls, rental of vehicles, stationary, etc.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Michael M Y Suen

Post Title Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date 13 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB002

Question Serial No.

0164

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What were Government's provisions for promoting people's understanding of the Basic Law in, respectively, 1998-1999, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001? And what were the details of programmes launched? Please also provide information on the estimated provision and planned programmes for 2001-2002.

Asked by : Dr Hon YEUNG Sum

Reply : When the Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (BLPSC) was set up in January 1998, a sum of \$10 million was set aside for the promotion of the Basic Law. In 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, the BLPSC allocated \$5.27 million and \$4.73 million respectively to sponsor various promotional activities organised by government departments and non-governmental organisations. A list of the promotional activities are at Annex A. It should be noted that some of the activities approved by the BLPSC in 1999-2000 were held in 2000-2001 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law. Of the approved allocation of \$4.73 million in 1999-2000, the actual expenditure in 1999-2000 is \$2.93 million and the estimated expenditure in 2000-2001 is \$1.75 million. Subject to verification of the final account, there will be an unspent provision of \$0.05 million.

2. Since the allocation of \$10 million has been fully committed, the BLPSC has decided that from 2000-2001 onwards, government bureaux and departments should absorb the expenditure for the promotion of the Basic Law within their annual departmental expenses. In the 2000-2001 financial year, the relevant bureaux and departments have altogether put aside some \$3.75 million for promoting the Basic Law. A list of the promotional programmes are at Annex B.

3. For 2001-2002, bureaux and departments concerned are now working on the programmes and action plans for the promotion of the Basic Law. These will be funded by their own recurrent expenditure sub-heads. Details of the promotional programmes and their estimated costs are not available yet. For CAB, we will continue to coordinate these efforts and operate the Basic Law Homepage. On top of that, we have been allocated \$5.56 million to launch an intensive publicity campaign in the next two financial years, i.e. 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, to promote understanding of specific provisions of the Basic Law.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Michael M Y Suen

Post Title Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date 15 March 2001

List of Activities to promote the Basic Law in 1998-1999 and 1999-2000

1998-1999

Local Community

- Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong (JCPBL) holding a Basic Law seminar
- JCPBL holding Basic Law carnivals in 18 districts
- HAB launching a series of publicity programmes (including advertisements in MTR train compartments and outside the cross harbour tunnels, production of APIs, pocket diaries and souvenirs)
- HAB holding a publicity campaign to publicise the “Basic Law Promotion Funding Scheme”
- Sponsoring various projects organised by NGOs under HAB’s “Basic Law Promotion Funding Scheme” (including quizzes, exhibitions, carnivals and seminars)

Teachers and Students

- JCPBL holding a debate for students of tertiary institutions

Civil Service

- CSB organising roving exhibitions and an inter-departmental quiz competition

Others

- CAB setting up the Basic Law Resource Centre
- CAB launching the Basic Law Homepage

1999-2000

Local Community

- Projects organised by NGOs under HAB's "Basic Law Promotion Funding Scheme" (including quizzes, exhibitions, carnivals, webpage design competition, seminars, production of TV programmes, slogan design competition and production of leaflets)
- HAB organising publicity to promote the local community's interest in the Basic Law (production of posters, pamphlets and souvenirs)

Teachers and Students

- ED producing CD-ROMs to promote the Basic Law among secondary and primary students
- 5 projects under EMB's "Basic Law Funding Scheme for Tertiary Institutions" (including quizzes, debate and computer game design competition) held in tertiary institutions

Programmes to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law

- Roving exhibition held by HAB in six public housing estates from April to September 2000
- Constitutional Law Conference co-organised by the Department of Justice and the Faculty of Law of the University of Hong Kong held on 28-29 April 2000
- Symposium organised by the JCPBL held on 1 April 2000
- Publicity campaign, including production of posters, giant banners and announcements of public interest, jointly funded by ISD and BLPSC
- 5 projects under EMB's "Basic Law Funding Scheme for Tertiary Institutions" (including carnival, webpage design competition, computer game design competition, lyrics competition and essay writing competition) held in tertiary institutions

Others

- CAB carrying out a survey on the public's perception and understanding of the Basic Law

Basic Law Promotional Programmes in 2000-2001

<u>Bureau/Department</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Constitutional Affairs Bureau	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Survey on the public's understanding of the Basic Law(2) Improving the design and contents of the Basic Law Homepage
Home Affairs Bureau	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Basic Law promotional programmes organized by NGOs through the Community Participation Scheme(2) Webpage design competition(3) Training courses and other promotional activities
Information Services Department	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Announcements of public interest (APIs) on television and radio(2) Production of a VCD of the TV APIs for distribution(3) Basic Law promotional pamphlets and leaflets on frequently asked questions(4) Posters and giant banners(5) Roving exhibition to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law held from April to July 2000
Education and Manpower Bureau	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Inter-varsity Debate organized by the Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong(2) Basic Law promotional programmes under the "Basic Law Promotional Funding Scheme for Tertiary Institutions"(3) General publicity

Education Department

- (1) Symposium on the implementation of the Basic Law in the HKSAR for secondary school teachers and students held on 8 December 2000
- (2) Production of a VCD of three ETV Programmes on the Basic Law
- (3) Commissioning tertiary institutions to organize the Civic Education Teacher Development Programme (with modules on the Basic Law) for primary and secondary school teachers and principals
- (4) Inter-school Debate organized by the Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong

Civil Service Bureau and
Civil Service Training and
Development Institute

- (1) Seminars
- (2) Basic Law Promotional Activities Suggestion Competition
- (3) Basic Law singing contest
- (4) Production of Basic Law games kits
- (5) Publication of a new booklet entitled “The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China” (carrying both the English and Chinese versions of the Basic Law)

Bureau Serial No.

CAB003

Question Serial No.

0165

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What is the amount of provision set aside by the Government for further enhancing our working relationship with the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the State Council and the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA Office) in 2001-02? What kind of enhancement programmes are planned ?

Asked by : Dr Hon YEUNG Sum

Reply : Working relationship with the HKMAO

CAB works closely with the HKMAO to cultivate and maintain a constructive working relationship between the HKSAR Government and the Central People's Government (CPG) and other Mainland authorities. We oversee and advise on official exchanges with the CPG and other Mainland authorities.

2. The annual staff cost for the six permanent posts devoted for this and other duties in 2001-02 is \$4 million.

3. In 2001-02, we have set aside \$300,000 to invite Mainland officials at provincial and municipal levels to visit Hong Kong to enhance their understanding of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the "One Country, Two Systems" principle.

Working relationship with the MFA Office

4. CAB keeps an overview of the conduct of the HKSAR's external affairs and assumes an overall coordinating role in managing contacts between the HKSAR Government and the MFA Office. We work closely with the MFA Office on matters relating to the HKSAR's external affairs to ensure full compliance with the Basic Law and to meet the practical needs of the HKSAR.

5. The annual staff cost for the five permanent posts devoted for this and other duties in 2001-02 is \$3.5 million.

6. To further enhance our co-operation and exchanges with the MFA, we have set aside \$115,000 in 2001-02 to invite officials from the MFA in Beijing who deal with matters relating to the HKSAR to visit Hong Kong.

Signature

Name in block letters

Michael M Y Suen

Post Title

Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date

13 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB004

Question Serial No.

0447

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : Please advise this Council : -

- (a) what are the details of the intensive publicity campaign to enhance knowledge and understanding of specific provisions of the Basic Law? Please provide a detailed breakdown of the estimated expenditure.
- (b) regarding the survey to gauge the public's understanding of the Basic Law and identify the effective means to better promote the Basic Law, when will it be conducted and when will it be completed?
- (c) please provide a detailed breakdown of the expenditure on the survey.
- (d) what is the estimated cost for implementing improvements proposed in the survey?

Asked by : Hon IP Kowk-him

Reply : (a) CAB has been allocated a sum of \$5.56 million to launch an intensive publicity campaign in the next two financial years of 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. We plan to spend about \$2.8 million in the first year and we will consider publicizing the Basic Law provisions that are closely related to people's daily lives through various means. The design of promotional programmes will take into account the findings of the survey conducted to gauge the public's understanding of the Basic Law. We will seek to finalise the design of the promotional programmes in the first quarter of 2001-2002. A detailed breakdown of the expected expenditure is therefore not yet available.

- (b) As referred to above, in order to gauge the public's understanding of the Basic Law and to identify the effective means to promote the Basic Law, CAB has, with the assistance of the Census and Statistics Department, commissioned a research firm to conduct a Basic Law opinion survey in the fourth quarter of 2000. The survey report will be available by end of March or early April.
- (c) The cost of the Basic Law opinion survey is \$300,000.
- (d) The Basic Law opinion survey has focussed on four specific target groups i.e. "Local Community", "Teachers", "Students" and "Civil Servants". The Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee will consider the survey's findings when formulating future promotional strategies and plans. As the promotional plans have not yet been formulated, it is not possible to give their estimated costs.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Michael M Y Suen

Post Title _____

Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date _____

15 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB005

Question Serial No.

0448

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : (a) what are the new channels of communication to be established to facilitate the liaison with the Guangdong Province and what is the amount of expenditure involved?
(b) what are the expected benefits brought by these new channels on facilitating communication?
(c) are there any reviews and evaluations on the effectiveness of the communication and liaison of the past? If yes, what are the details of these reviews and evaluations? If no, why?

Asked by : Hon IP Kwok-him

Reply : (a) Constitutional Affairs Bureau coordinates communication between the HKSAR Government and the authorities in Guangdong. The communication channels include the Boundary Liaison System which handles operational issues affecting both sides of the boundary, and the Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference which provides the forum for regional cooperation with Guangdong Province on major issues such as environmental protection and tourism. Various sub-committees and expert groups have been set up under these channels to discuss and examine specific issues.

We will continue to make use of the existing communication channels to strengthen liaison and cooperation with the Guangdong authorities. Where necessary, we will assist the relevant bureaux/departments to establish new sub-committees or expert groups under these channels to consider specific subjects of mutual concern. The amount of expenditure can only be assessed as and when these sub-committees and expert groups are established. It is envisaged that expenditure in this regard will be absorbed by the relevant Bureaux/Departments.

(b) The setting up of sub-committees or expert groups will enable the relevant Bureaux/Departments of the HKSAR Government and the Guangdong authorities to conduct in-depth studies of specific problems or cooperation proposals. It will also enhance mutual understanding and cooperation.

(c) The effectiveness of the existing communication channels is kept under review from time to time. In particular, both sides would review and evaluate the effectiveness of the liaison channels in the annual boundary liaison meetings and the plenary sessions of the Hong Kong/Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference. We consider that the present channels have been functioning satisfactorily.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Michael M Y Suen

Post Title Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date 15 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB006

Question Serial No.

0449

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : As regards the feasibility study of introducing a political party law, please advise this Council -

- (a) what are the details of the work and expenditure involved in 2001-02?
- (b) what are the Government's criteria for determining whether or not to consult the public on the related legislative proposal and the time of the consultation ? If public consultation is found necessary, when will it be conducted ?

Asked by : Hon IP Kwok-him

Reply : a) As pledged in the Policy Objective for Constitutional Affairs Bureau in 1999, we have started examining the desirability and feasibility of introducing a political party law after the 2000 Legislative Council election, taking into account our evolving electoral systems and the actual political situation in Hong Kong. The study is being handled with existing resources available within the Bureau.

- b) The study is still at a preliminary stage. It is too early to come to any conclusion as to whether or not to consult the public.

Signature :

Name in block letters : Michael M Y Suen

Post Title : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date : 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB007

Question Serial No.

0450

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme: Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : As regards the study on the feasibility of using more technology to improve our electoral arrangements, please advise this Council:

- (a) What are the details of the work and expenditure involved in 2001-02?
- (b) When will the feasibility study be expected to complete?
- (c) Will the Government consult the public on the recommendations of the feasibility study? If yes, what are the details of the consultation? If no, why?

Asked by : Hon Ip Kwok-him

Reply : (a) The feasibility study will look at the technical viability of developing a new Electoral and Registration system (EARS) to facilitate the maintenance and management of electoral records by the Registration and Electoral Office. Subject to the recommended option being accepted by the Administration, we will seek the funding approval of the Finance Committee to proceed with detailed system design and implementation. We have earmarked \$65 million for the project under Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation and the expected expenditure for 2001-02 is \$2 million. In addition to developing a new EARS, the study will also look at the feasibility of wider application of information technology in electoral services. We will consider the study results before deciding whether the recommendations should be implemented.

- (b) The study is expected to be completed within the first half of 2001.
- (c) We will consult Members of the Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs on the recommendations of the feasibility study in due course.

Signature : _____

Name in block letters : Michael M Y Suen

Post Title : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date : _____ 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB008

Question Serial No.

0649

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head: 144 GS: Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme: Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer: Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary: Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question: It is said in the section "matter requiring special attention in 2001-02" that the Government will continue the feasibility study of introducing a political party law. Please advise this Council –

- (a) will academics and political organizations be consulted in the course of the study ?
- (b) what is the progress of the study and when will the report of the study be published for public's reference ?
- (c) what is the amount of expenditure involved ?

Asked by: Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Reply: (a) & (b) As pledged in the Policy Objective for Constitutional Affairs Bureau in 1999, we have started examining the desirability and feasibility of introducing a political party law after the 2000 Legislative Council election, taking into account our evolving electoral systems and the actual political situation in Hong Kong. The study is still at a preliminary stage. It is too early to come to any conclusion as to whether or not to consult the public.

(c) The study is being handled with existing resources available within the Bureau.

Signature :

Name in block letters : Michael M Y Suen

Post Title : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date : 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB009

Question Serial No.

0650

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question :

In respect of further enhancement of our working relationship with the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the State Council and the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in HKSAR (MFA Office), how many official exchanges between CAB and HKMAO and MFA Office were organized in 1999 and 2000 respectively? What is the topic of discussion of the respective exchanges?

Asked by : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Reply :

CAB works closely with HKMAO to cultivate and maintain a constructive working relationship between the HKSAR Government and the Central People's Government (CPG) and other Mainland authorities. Official exchanges take the form of discussions over the telephone, correspondence and meetings. In 1999 and 2000, in addition to exchanges by correspondence or over the telephone, we had 7 meetings with HKMAO. Subjects discussed included the following broad areas :

- (a) working relationship between the HKSARG and the CPG;
- (b) liaison channels between bureaux and departments of the HKSARG and their counterparts in the Mainland;
- (c) cooperation between Hong Kong and Guangdong;

- (d) mechanism for amending the Basic Law;
- (e) matters relating to “Home Visit Permits”;
- (f) referral mechanism of cases of Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland;
- (g) visits to HKSAR by CPG and provincial/municipal officials;
- (h) exhibition on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the PRC.

2. CAB also works closely with the MFA Office in Hong Kong. The subjects of official exchanges include matters relating to -

- (a) the negotiation and conclusion of international agreements between HKSAR and foreign governments;
- (b) HKSAR’s participation in international organizations and conferences;
- (c) the establishment of consular missions and other consular matters;
- (d) the implementation of the PRC’s international obligations applicable to HKSAR; and
- (e) the application to HKSAR of international agreements to which PRC is or will become a party.

Official exchanges take the form of meetings, discussions over the telephone and correspondence. We do not keep statistics of our official exchanges with the MFA Office but such exchanges occur frequently.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Michael M Y Suen</u>
Post Title	<u>Secretary for Constitutional Affairs</u>
Date	<u>15 March 2001</u>

Bureau Serial No.

CAB010

Question Serial No.

0771

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Constitutional Affairs Bureau

Programme: Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question :

In the section "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2001-02", there is no mention of the study on the accountability of principal officials which was proposed in the Chief Executive's Policy Address last year. Does it mean that CAB has not included in the 2001 Estimate any provision for the study?

Asked by : Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing

Reply :

We have not included in the 2001-02 Estimate additional provision for the purpose of providing the Bureau's input to the study on the accountability of principal officials as it was envisaged that we would be able to absorb the additional work within the Bureau's existing provision.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MICHAEL M Y SUEN

Post Title Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB011

Question Serial No.

0786

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead (No. & title) :
Head : (163)

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : Regarding consultancy studies for policy making and assessment commissioned by the departments/services under your Bureau,
(1) was there any financial provision allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2000-01? If yes, please reply with the following details:

Names of consultants	Consultancy fees	Status of consultancy studies (in plan/in progress/finished)

(2) will there be any financial provision allocated for commissioning consultancy studies in 2001-02? If yes, please reply with the following details:

Names of consultants	Consultancy fees	Status of consultancy studies (in plan/in progress/finished)

Asked by : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Reply : We have not allocated any financial provision for the Constitutional Affairs Bureau for commissioning of consultancy studies in 2000-01 and 2001-02. Regarding the Registration and Electoral Office, the financial provision for the consultancy study in the Development of a New Electoral and Registration System is as follows -

Name of consultant	Status	Consultancy fees	Year
Unisys China/Hong Kong Ltd.	In progress	US\$366,000	2000-01
		US\$90,000	2001-02

Signature : _____
Name in block letters : Michael M Y Suen
Post Title : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs
Date : 15 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB012

Question Serial No.

0899

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What are the details of the established and new channels to facilitate liaison and cooperation with the Guangdong Province? What is the amount of estimated expenditure?

Asked by : Hon James TIEN Pei-chun

Reply :

The channels of communication between the HKSAR Government and the authorities in Guangdong coordinated by CAB include the Boundary Liaison System which handles operational issues affecting both sides of the boundary and the Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference which provides the forum for regional cooperation with Guangdong Province on major issues such as environmental protection and tourism. Various sub-committees and expert groups have been set up under these communication channels to discuss and examine specific issues.

2. Where necessary, we will assist the relevant bureaux/departments to establish new sub-committees or expert groups under these channels to consider specific subjects of mutual concern.

3. For CAB, the staff and other costs for coordinating the Annual Boundary Liaison Review Meeting and the plenary session of the Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference in 2000/2001 were minimal. The staff and other costs in respect of the sub-committees and expert groups are borne by the relevant bureaux and departments.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Michael M Y Suen</u>
Post title	<u>Secretary for Constitutional Affairs</u>
Date	<u>15 March 2001</u>

Bureau Serial No.

CAB013

Question Serial No.

0963

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : Regarding the Hong Kong/Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference, please provide information on its expenditure, number of meetings and outcome of deliberations in the current financial year, and also provision for the next financial year.

Asked by : Hon James TIEN Pei-chun

Reply :

The plenary session of the Hong Kong/Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference (Joint Conference) met on 25 September 2000. Under the Joint Conference there are over 10 expert or ad hoc groups formed by the relevant bureaux and departments and their Guangdong counterparts working in different areas of cooperation. These groups met formally and informally on many occasions in 2000-01. At the plenary session in September 2000, both sides agreed on a number of long-term co-operation initiatives, such as in the area of environmental protection. The meeting also reported substantive progress made in the area of tourism, extending operating hours of Shenzhen/Shekou passenger crossing, implementing a joint cheque clearance system between Hong Kong and Guangdong, the language teacher exchange programme and linking up information networks between the government departments on both sides.

2. For CAB, the staff and other costs for coordinating the plenary session of the Joint Conference in September 2000 were minimal. The staff and other costs in respect of the expert or ad hoc groups formed under the Joint Conference are borne by the relevant bureaux and departments.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Michael M Y Suen</u>
Post title	<u>Secretary for Constitutional Affairs</u>
Date	<u>15 March 2001</u>

Bureau Serial No.

CAB014

Question Serial No.

1326

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head: 144 GS: Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme: Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer: Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary: Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question: The Basic Law provides that, as an ultimate aim, the Chief Executive and all Members of the Legislative Council shall be elected through universal suffrage. What is the measure that the Constitutional Affairs Bureau will put in place for the 2001-02 financial year pursuant to the Basic Law requirement?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chin-shek

Reply: The Basic Law (BL) provides that the method for the selection of the Chief Executive (CE) and for the formation of the Legislative Council (LegCo) shall be specified in the light of the actual situation and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress (BL 45 and 68). While universal suffrage is the ultimate aim, the BL provides that, in the meantime, the CE shall be elected in accordance with the method prescribed in Annex I (BL 45) and the LegCo, Annex II (BL 68).

For the 2001-02 financial year, our task is to introduce a Chief Executive Election Bill into LegCo to provide the legal framework for the election of the CE in accordance with the principles laid down in the BL and the specific method of election set out in BL Annex I. In respect of LegCo, we are undertaking a study on the government systems practised in selected countries, with a view to developing a system that best suits Hong Kong's long-term interests.

Signature :

Name in block letters : Michael M Y Suen

Post Title : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date : 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB015

Question Serial No.

1327

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme: Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : In respect of devising a mechanism for amending the Basic Law, what are the details of the efforts and results attained in 2000-01? What is the progress expected to make in 2001-02?

Asked by : Hon LAU Chin-shek

Reply : We are still in the process of consulting the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the Central People's Government on the matter. We have briefed them on the views expressed by LegCo Members, academics and other relevant parties on the matter. We also briefed them on Members' views and the views of others on our preliminary analysis of the issues identified for study. HKMAO indicated that they would study the matter, but given the complexity of the issues involved, they would need more time to examine the issues. HKMAO also considered it necessary to study the matter in conjunction with the NPC as many issues involved arrangements relating to the NPC.

2. We have reported to the LegCo CA Panel our discussion with HKMAO on the matter.

3. This process will continue in the coming year.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Michael M Y Suen

Post Title Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date 15 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB016

Question Serial No.

1488

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 144 GS : Constitutional Affairs Bureau Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme: Constitutional Affairs

Controlling Officer :Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : Is the Constitutional Affairs Bureau conducting a review on district administration, in which matters related to the demarcation of administrative districts/district councils, number of seats and the population quota in respective district councils are considered. If yes, what are the details?

Asked by : Hon Fred Li Wah-ming

Reply : The term of the first District Councils will expire on 31 December 2003. The second term District Council ordinary elections will be held in late 2003. In order to prepare for the elections, the issues mentioned in the question will have to be considered at an appropriate time. However, it is premature to go into the details at this stage.

Signature : _____

Name in block letters : Michael M Y Suen

Post Title : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Date : _____ 14 March 2001

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 710 Computerisation

Subhead (No. & title) : A007ZV

Programme : Electoral Services

Controlling Officer : Chief Electoral Officer

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : In respect of subhead no. A007ZV, what are the nature, objective and details of the "Development of a New Electoral and Registration System"? What are the reasons for developing a new system?

Asked by : The Hon LAU Chin-shek

Reply : We plan to replace the existing Electoral and Registration System (EARS) introduced in 1993 for the maintenance of electors' records with the proposed new EARS. The objective is to provide improved electoral services in order to cope with the increasing number of electors and the future development of the electoral system. The proposed new EARS will –

- (a) store electoral records in both Chinese and English;
- (b) have an expandable storage of up to 6 million electoral records;
- (c) support the delineation of geographical constituencies and automatic re-allocation of electors;
- (d) process voter registration applications received by electronic means;
- (e) support application of information technology to improve the electoral process in future; and
- (f) provide management information and statistical data in support of the electoral process.

Signature : _____

Name in block letters : LI Wing

Post Title : Chief Electoral Officer

Date : 9 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB018

Question Serial No.

0240

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 163 Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 16301 Electoral Services

Controlling Officer : Chief Electoral Officer

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What is the provision in 2001-02 for conducting the second term Chief Executive election? How will the provision be used?

Asked by : The Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming

Reply : A total of \$10.46 million has been included in the 2001-02 draft Estimates for the Chief Executive (CE) election, of which \$4.28 million is for the creation of ten civil service posts and \$6.18 million for other expenses related to the election. The additional posts are required to deal with the preparatory work for the second term CE election such as preparation of electoral guidelines and subsidiary legislation, and practical arrangements for polling and counting.

Signature : _____

Name in block letters : LI Wing

Post Title : Chief Electoral Officer

Date : 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB019

Question Serial No.

0241

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 163 Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title) : 258 Election Expenses

Programme : 16301 Electoral Services

Controlling Officer : Chief Electoral Officer

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : How much was spent on the publicity and the registration of voters for the voter registration exercise conducted last year before the Legislative Council Elections, and in 1999 before the District Councils Election?

Asked by : The Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming

Reply : The expenditure on publicity and the registration of voters for the voter registration exercise conducted in 1999 and 2000 were \$10 million and \$40.6 million respectively.

Signature : _____
Name in block letters : LI Wing
Post Title : Chief Electoral Officer
Date : 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB020

Question Serial No.

0242

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 163 Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title) : 258 Election Expenses

Programme : 16301 Electoral Services

Controlling Officer : Chief Electoral Officer

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What is the provision in 2001-02 for the annual voter registration exercise? Taking into account the need for enhancing productivity, will the Government make use of the opportunity of conducting population census to distribute voter registration forms or to conduct voter registration during household visits?

Asked by : The Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming

Reply : In the 2001-02 draft Estimates, the provision for the Voter Registration exercise is \$3.9 million.

Census officers conduct interviews with individual households according to the provisions in the Census and Statistics Ordinance. They cannot, during their visits to households, engage in other activities such as promotion and distribution of voter registration forms.

Signature : _____
Name in block letters : LI Wing
Post Title : Chief Electoral Officer
Date : 14 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

CAB021

Question Serial No.

0446

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 163 Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 16301 Electoral Services

Controlling Officer : Chief Electoral Officer

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Constitutional Affairs

Question : What are the concrete preparatory arrangements for the second term Chief Executive election next year? What are the expenses for such preparatory work?

Asked by : The Hon IP Kwok-him

Reply : Preparatory work for the second term Chief Executive election will include the drawing up of electoral guidelines and subsidiary legislation, and practical arrangements for polling and counting. A total of \$10.46 million has been included in the 2001-02 draft Estimates for the Chief Executive election, of which \$4.28 million is for the creation of ten civil service posts to meet the additional workload and \$6.18 million for other expenses related to the election.

Signature : _____

Name in block letters : LI Wing

Post Title : Chief Electoral Officer

Date : 14 March 2001