

**Information on whether the Administration had requested  
the Census and Statistics Department to conduct a survey to collect the  
views of parties affected by the proposal to impose a levy  
on employers of foreign domestic helpers**

**Background**

At the LegCo Panel on Manpower meeting on 24 April 2003, in the context of the Administration's decision to impose an Employees Retraining Levy on employers of foreign domestic helpers (FDHs), the Hon Cyd Ho asked whether the Administration had followed the administrative regulations of the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) in gauging public opinion. Specifically, she said that according to her understanding, a government bureau/department intending to implement a proposal that might affect over 1,000 persons should inform C&SD which should conduct a survey to collect the views of the affected parties on the proposal. The Administration was requested to provide a written response in this regard.

**General Regulation Concerning Statistics**

2. According to the General Regulations, the Commissioner for Census and Statistics (C for C&S) should be informed and consulted at an early stage if a department plans to conduct surveys which are likely to involve more than 1,000 respondents. This is to enable C for C&S to co-ordinate efforts of other departments where the collection of similar or inter-related statistics is contemplated. The Regulations do not prescribe any requirement for departments to conduct surveys on issues which affect more than 1,000 people. It is entirely up to the relevant bureau/department to decide whether any survey should be conducted. The Regulations only require bureau/department to inform C for C&S of any such plans so that he could provide technical advice on the survey and to avoid the duplicated collection of data by different bureaux/departments.

**Presentation of Views by Different Interest Groups**

3. The proposal to impose a levy on employers of FDHs has been widely discussed in the community for quite some time. Members of various sectors and political parties had expressed their views on the proposal to the Administration during consultations for the budget and the population policy. The Administration had a good understanding of the concerns and opinions of the different groups in the community.