

**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs
Session No. : 15**

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
<u>S-HAB01</u>	SV028	Hon. HO Chun-yan, Albert	53	Subvention: Duty Lawyer Service and Legal Aid Services Council
<u>S-HAB02</u>	SV027	Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick	63	District Administration
<u>S-HAB03</u>	S080	Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel	63	District Administration
<u>S-HAB04</u>	S081	Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel	63	District Administration
<u>S-HAB05</u>	S082	Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel	63	Community Building
<u>S-HAB06</u>	S083	Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel	63	Community Building
<u>S-HAB07</u>	S084	Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel	63	Local Environmental Improvements
<u>S-HAB08</u>	S077	Hon. WONG Kwok-hing	94	All Programmes

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB02

Question Serial No.

SV027

Head : 63 - Home Affairs
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) District Administration

Controlling Officer : Director of Home Affairs

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

In relation to Hon Frederick FUNG's concern about the enhancement of functions of District Council (DC) in district administration, the Administration undertook to provide the following information –

- (a) the nature and effectiveness of the pilot community involvement projects completed so far; and
- (b) the additional manpower engaged by DCs to assist their work in implementing the pilot community involvement projects, particularly under the arrangement for DCs to use 10% of their respective allocation for engaging additional staff.

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

- (a) The four District Councils (DCs) which participated in the pilot scheme on enhancement of DC functions (i.e. Tuen Mun, Sai Kung, Wong Tai Sin and Wan Chai) organised various district partnership programmes as well as recreational, sports and cultural activities in 2007. These include major projects such as –
 - (i) promotion of reading programme in Tuen Mun;
 - (ii) community libraries partnership programme in Sai Kung;
 - (iii) martial arts promotion programme in Wong Tai Sin; and
 - (iv) greening project of park facilities management in Wan Chai.

The projects were launched taking into account the district characteristics and community needs. They directly benefited the local community and were well received. The smooth implementation of these projects involving various local organisations and departments demonstrates the effectiveness of DCs in forging district partnership, prioritising community needs, allocating resources to meet district aspirations and promoting community harmony.

(b) Since January 2007, additional staff including one Liaison Officer I, one Executive Officer II and one Assistant Clerical Officer have been provided for each of the four pilot districts to support the DCs in implementation of the pilot scheme. The four pilot DCs have also made use of their allocation in engaging additional staff on a need basis to help discharge DC duties, including implementation of community involvement projects, as follows –

- (i) Tuen Mun : One Executive Assistant and two Project Assistants;
- (ii) Sai Kung : Two Executive Assistants and two Project Assistants;
- (iii) Wong Tai Sin : One Executive Assistant and five Project Assistants; and
- (iv) Wan Chai : Two Executive Assistants, four Project Assistants and some part-time staff.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs PAMELA TAN

Post Title _____ Director of Home Affairs

Date _____ 10 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB03

Question Serial No.

S080

Head : 63 – Home Affairs Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) District Administration

Controlling Officer : Director of Home Affairs

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

As set out in the Chief Executive (CE)'s Policy Address, to enhance district administration, District Councils will be actively involved in the management of certain district facilities. Likewise, CE had mentioned in his previous Policy Address that the Government would give full play to Heung Yee Kuk's functions and forge a stronger partnership with it. Would the Administration inform this Committee why the Budget has not included related arrangements?

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply :

Under section 9 of the Heung Yee Kuk (HYK) Ordinance (Cap. 1097), the functions of the HYK are to promote and develop mutual co-operation and understanding among the people of the New Territories (NT) and between the Government and the people of the NT. The HYK also advises the Government on social and economic developments in the interests of the welfare and prosperity of the people of the NT and encourages the observance of customs and traditional usages of the people of the NT.

To forge a stronger partnership with the HYK, the Home Affairs Bureau has set up a Liaison Committee with it to discuss issues of mutual concern. Different bureaux and departments have also set up other channels of communications with the HYK. The Administration will continue to work closely with the HYK and provide subventions to it and other NT organisations to help meet their general expenses.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs PAMELA TAN

Post Title _____ Director of Home Affairs

Date _____ 9 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB04

Question Serial No.

S081

Head : 63-Home Affairs Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) District Administration

Controlling Officer : Director of Home Affairs

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

In view of the representativeness of the Heung Yee Kuk (HYK), will the Administration consider involving the HYK in district administration and management as in the case of the District Councils? On what aspects will the Administration consult the HYK?

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply :

Under section 9 of the Heung Yee Kuk (HYK) Ordinance (Cap. 1097), the functions of the HYK are to promote and develop mutual co-operation and understanding among the people of the New Territories (NT) and between the Government and the people of the NT. The HYK also advises the Government on social and economic developments in the interests of the welfare and prosperity of the people of the NT and encourages the observance of customs and traditional usages of the people of the NT. The HYK has been playing an important role in these aspects. The Administration will continue to work with the HYK and consult it on issues relating to the welfare and prosperity of the people of the NT.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs PAMELA TAN

Post Title _____ Director of Home Affairs

Date _____ 9 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB05

Question Serial No.

S082

Head : 63 – Home Affairs
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Community Building

Controlling Officer : Director of Home Affairs

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

It is noted that the Home Affairs Department has taken measures to facilitate the promotion of district attractions. How much resource is intended for the promotion of tourist attractions in the New Territories? Does promotion include upgrading or landscaping works? Where are those tourist attractions?

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply :

The Home Affairs Department has been working in collaboration with District Councils (DCs) on initiatives to promote district attractions. In 2007-08, about \$8.6 million was incurred for the implementation of such initiatives in the New Territories, which included the promotion and celebration of traditional and festive events, organisation of guided tours, production of pamphlets and leaflets, etc. The Lantau Link View Point and the Tai O Fishing Village are examples of the tourist attractions being promoted.

In 2008-09, we will continue to work with DCs to promote district attractions. The expenditure to be incurred will depend on the initiatives formulated and approved by DCs during the course of the year.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs PAMELA TAN

Post Title _____ Director of Home Affairs

Date _____ 9 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB06

Question Serial No.

S083

Head : 63 – Home Affairs
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Community Building

Controlling Officer : Director of Home Affairs

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

Regarding the development of rural tourism in the New Territories, the Heung Yee Kuk (HYK)'s working group on rural cultural heritage and environmental development submitted a proposal to the Government in 2006 urging the establishment of a fund on New Territories cultural heritage and environment conservation. Has the Government taken the HYK's proposal into account when drawing up district attractions in the New Territories? Will the Government consider allocating resources to establish the fund? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply :

Following Heung Yee Kuk (HYK)'s submission of a proposal on rural cultural heritage and environment development (「鄉郊人文環境發展小組建議書」) to the Government in 2006, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and other concerned bureaux have considered the proposals under their respective purviews. The subject has been discussed at the HAB-HYK Liaison Committee. The Administration is working on a survey of territory-wide intangible cultural heritage and the HYK has been invited to participate in drawing up a checklist of intangible rural cultural heritage which would be of significance to future work on cultural conservation. The HYK is an important partner of the Government in rural development and its views will be considered in rural cultural heritage conservation and development of district attractions.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Mrs PAMELA TAN

Post Title _____

Director of Home Affairs

Date _____

10 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
 SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB07

Question Serial No.

S084

Head : 63 – Home Affairs
 Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (3) Local Environment Improvements

Controlling Officer : Director of Home Affairs

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

Regarding the expenditure on Rural Public Works Projects and the projects completed in 2006, 2007 and 2008, please provide a breakdown, by district in the New Territories, of the expenditure allocation and statistics on the projects completed.

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply : The breakdown of Rural Public Works projects completed and the expenditure involved by district in 2006, 2007 and 2008 is as follows –

A) Projects completed

District	Islands	Kwai Tsing	North	Sai Kung	Shatin	Tai Po	Tsuen Wan	Tuen Mun	Yuen Long	NT districts	Total
2006											
No. of projects completed	13	8	11	6	4	14	11	11	19	2	99
2007											
No. of projects completed	9	8	10	9	1	19	12	9	25	0	102
2008											
No. of projects to be completed	14	12	12	12	5	21	13	7	34	0	130

B) Expenditure involved

District	Islands	Kwai Tsing	North	Sai Kung	Shatin	Tai Po	Tsuen Wan	Tuen Mun	Yuen Long	NT districts	Total
2006											
Expenditure (\$M)	32.8	6.5	16.2	5.0	2.6	9.0	4.7	8.4	14.4	5.0	104.6
2007											
Expenditure (\$M)	13.3	9.6	15.4	13.8	1.0	30.9	5.2	8.2	18.0	0	115.4
2008											
Estimated expenditure (\$M)	25.4	9.5	17.9	13.5	3.5	18.0	6.6	10.4	20.2	0	125.0

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs PAMELA TAN

Post Title Director of Home Affairs

Date 9 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HAB08

Question Serial No.

S077

Head : 94 Legal Aid Department Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational expenses

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Legal Aid

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Home Affairs

Question :

With reference to Reply Serial No. HAB 110 (Question Serial No. 0477), the creation of the 13 non-directorate posts in 2008-09 is necessitated by the need to cope with the growing number and increasing complexity of cases taken up by the Official Solicitor's Office in the past few years. Please provide details of the increase in the number of cases taken up, their match with the duties of 13 posts to be created and the complexity of these cases.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

Of the 13 new posts, only eight (namely one Senior Legal Aid Counsel, three Legal Aid Counsel and four Law Clerks) are created for the Official Solicitor's Office (OSO) whereas the rest are Clerical Assistants posts created for the Legal Aid Department.

Details of the increase in the number of cases taken up by OSO since 2000-2001 are shown in the table below:

	<u>Cases in hand as at end of Financial Year</u>
2000-01	218
2001-02	226
2002-03	264
2003-04	291
2004-05	330
2005-06	359
2006-07	440
2007-08	455

In the past few years, OSO handles an increasingly large number of different types of cases, varying from cases in specialist areas such as healthcare and welfare disputes to cases involving care and wardship proceedings and custody/access disputes. OSO has also taken on an

increasing number of cases involving management of estate of mentally incapacitated persons, some of whom have substantial local and overseas assets in various forms.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Benjamin CHEUNG

Post Title Director of Legal Aid

Date 10.4.2008