

(Translation)

**Speech by the Secretary for the Civil Service at the
Special Meeting of the Finance Committee in the Legislative Council
on 21 March 2011**

Madam Chairman and Honourable Members,

Of the items relating to civil service expenses in the 2011-12 Draft Estimates of Expenditure, I would like to brief Members on two of them.

2. First, **civil service establishment**. In keeping with the principles of “big market – small government” and prudent management of public resources, the Government will continue to keep the civil service establishment under control in order to maintain a lean and efficient civil service. New civil service posts will only be created when the operational need is fully justified, when the work involved cannot be undertaken by re-deployment of existing staff, and when alternative modes of service delivery are considered inappropriate.

3. The 2011-12 Draft Estimates of Expenditure project an around 1% increase (1 680 posts) in the civil service establishment. Subject to the approval of the 2011-12 Draft Estimates by the Legislative Council, the civil service establishment is estimated to stand at 168 249 posts by end-March 2012.

4. Second, **financial provisions**. In the 2011-12 Draft Estimates of Expenditure, there are some financial provisions under various Heads of Expenditure which are directly related to the policy area of central management of the civil service. I would like to say a few words about the following items:

- (a) Head 37 Department of Health: Programme 7 “Medical and Dental Treatment for Civil Servants”: A financial provision of \$886.5 million is proposed for providing medical and dental services for serving and retired civil servants and their eligible dependants at government families clinics and dental clinics, as well as for reimbursement of medical fees and hospital charges. For the former, an allocation of \$506.5 million is proposed, representing an increase of \$31.9 million or 6.7% over the 2010-11 Revised Estimates. The additional provision is mainly for setting up additional dental surgeries and procuring specialist dental equipment. For the latter, an allocation of \$380.0 million is proposed, representing an increase of \$90 million or 31% over the 2010-11 Revised Estimates.

- (b) Head 143 “Civil Service Bureau: Programme 4 “Civil Service Training and Development”: A financial provision of \$107.9 million is proposed for civil service training and development. This represents an increase of \$7.6 million or 7.6% over the 2010-11 Revised Estimates. The increase is mainly to strengthen the national studies training programmes for civil servants. In brief, we will incorporate a new module on national studies in the induction programme for new recruits of degree or professional grades. We will increase the capacity of the national studies programmes for middle and senior civil servants. We will also organise more in-depth seminars on topical subjects relating to developments in the Mainland; and further enhance the current e-learning platform with new on-line courses on national studies for civil servants at all levels.

5. Madam Chairman, the civil service is the backbone of the Government. It contributes to the effective governance and stability of Hong Kong. In the face of the future challenges, the Civil Service Bureau will continue to maintain a civil service with high standards of integrity, efficiency and performance to serve the community of Hong Kong.

6. Madam Chairman, my colleagues and I are happy to answer questions from Members.

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