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**Panel on Security**

**Information note prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 7 July 2015**

**Long range search and rescue service of  
the Government Flying Service**

The Government Flying Service ("GFS") was established under the GFS Ordinance (Cap. 322) in 1993 to provide flying services to the Government and those in need, including air ambulance service, search and rescue, fire fighting, aerial surveys and law enforcement. As at 31 December 2014, GFS had a fleet of 11 aircraft comprising four fixed-wing aircraft and seven helicopters.

2. One of the major tasks of GFS is search and rescue operations. The area of responsibility covers the majority of the South China Sea up to 1 300 kilometres south of Hong Kong. In 2014, GFS assisted in 567 search and rescue operations and transported 1 968 people to hospitals by helicopters.

3. The long range search and rescue service of GFS per se has not been discussed by the Panel on Security ("the Panel"). However, when the Panel was consulted on the Administration's proposal of replacement of seven helicopters and the associated mission equipment of GFS at the meeting on 27 May 2013, members were advised that as all new helicopters would be installed with various kinds of mission equipment, GFS would be able to deploy more aircraft at any one time for providing different disaster relief and undertaking night time and offshore search and rescue operations.

4. In the course of the examination of the Estimates of Expenditure 2015-2016, there was a concern that some on-scene time targets for search and rescue call-outs of GFS had not been achieved over the past years. The Administration explained that flying missions of GFS were

often affected by various external factors, including the weather, air traffic control and the special geographical environment of the incident location, for example, high voltage cable or windshear, etc. There were also cases when time was required for changing equipment on the aircraft to perform different tasks, and extra time was required for pre-flight planning and manpower deployment. These factors would lead to longer than usual on-scene time for certain call-outs. The Administration assured that GFS would continue to review from time to time its operation, including the deployment of aircraft, equipment and aircrew, and make necessary adjustments for meeting service demand.

5. The Administration will brief the Panel on the long range search and rescue service of GFS at the meeting on 7 July 2015.

Council Business Division 2  
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