

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 001

Question Serial No.

0039

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35-Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :

Beijing Office

Programme : 3501 Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question : Beijing Office plans to spend \$4M on publicity. What kind of activities will be organised?

Asked by : Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP

Reply :

One of the tasks which the Beijing Office would wish to carry out in the Mainland is to publicise the HKSAR's latest developments after the Reunification. These include the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy and the Basic Law, as well as the economic, political and cultural developments in the HKSAR.

To achieve this objective, the Beijing Office plans to organise publicity activities in about six Mainland cities in the coming financial year. Activities being contemplated include exhibitions, cultural events, seminars and other related programmes. The actual programmes will have to be worked out with the local authorities concerned and in coordination with other Hong Kong organisations, such as the Trade Development Council and the Tourist Association.

Media coverage of the publicity activities will also help promote the HKSAR.

Moreover, when senior HKSARG officials pay official visit to the Mainland, the Beijing Office also aims to make arrangements for them to brief the media in the Mainland on policy developments within their purview. The media reports will further help residents in the Mainland to have a better understanding of the affairs of the HKSAR.

Signature Signed on Chinese Version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 14.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 002

Question Serial No.

0047

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 – Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question : In the past 12 months, what practical assistance has the Beijing Office provided to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland? Has the Beijing Office any plans to increase resources for handling cases involving detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland?

Asked by : Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP

Reply :

Between 2.3.1999 and 29.2.2000, the Beijing Office received a total of 113 cases seeking assistance. Among them, 53 cases were received directly by the Beijing Office. The remaining 60 cases concerning detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland were referred to the Beijing Office from August 1999 onwards by the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau for follow-up action.

2. Of the 53 cases received by the Beijing Office, 26 involved loss of travel documents and monies. Upon confirming the clients' identity as Hong Kong residents, the Beijing Office provided the following assistance to them as their cases might require: issuing Entry Permit for their return to Hong Kong; contacting their family in Hong Kong for remittance to settle their expenses incurred in the Mainland; providing information to them regarding the application for exit permit from the Mainland authorities; and arranging for their transportation to HK, etc. The services provided by the Beijing Office to the remaining 27 cases were related to clients seeking assistance due to traffic accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travels, or fatal cases requiring follow up actions with their families. In addition, the Beijing Office also liaised with the Mainland public security authorities for the return of confiscated travel documents of previously detained HK residents after their release.

3. The Beijing Office has worked through the liaison network it has built up with the public security, procuratorate and court authorities at both the central and local government levels in following up the 60 cases referred from the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau. On the whole, we have received earlier responses from these authorities on the enquiries we made on these cases. Some progress has also been seen, for example, prosecution procedures in some cases have been expedited, more information or explanation has been given on the current situation regarding some detained HK residents on their trials and appeals, and medical examination given to those who applied for parole on medical grounds.

4. Work related to most of the above types of cases was not included in the responsibilities of the Beijing Office when preparing for its establishment and hence no resource was set aside for it. The Beijing Office has so far managed to carry out these extra tasks by internal redeployment of staff and other resources, and has not applied for additional manpower resources in this aspect in the 2000/01 Draft Estimates. We shall continue to monitor the situation and keep it under review when necessary.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 003

Question Serial No.

0242

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 – Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) : 149
Beijing Office

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question : Provision of \$15,078,000 under the Subhead 149 General departmental expenses represents an increase of \$4,665,000 (44.8%) over the revised estimate for 1999-2000. What kinds of practical assistance will be provided to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland that justify the increase in provision?

Asked by : Dr Hon David LI Kwok-po, JP

Reply :

The Beijing Office will provide the following practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland:

- (1) for loss of travel documents and monies cases, after we have confirmed the identity of the Hong Kong resident, we will provide the following assistance: issuing Entry Permit for their return to Hong Kong; contacting their family in Hong Kong for remittance to settle their expenses incurred in the Mainland; providing information to them regarding the application for exit permit from the Mainland authorities and making arrangement for their transportation to HK, etc.;
- (2) for HK residents seeking assistance due to traffic accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travel or fatal cases requiring follow up actions with their families etc., we will contact the relevant Mainland authorities for immediate assistance. In addition, we will also liaise with the Mainland public security authorities for the return of confiscated travel documents of previously detained HK residents after their release.
- (3) the Beijing Office will work through the liaison network it has built up with the Mainland authorities at both the central and local government levels to follow up cases involving detention of HK residents referred by

the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau since August 1999. We will channel the requests made by the family or friend of the detained HK residents and reflect the case to the appropriate Mainland authorities, such as the public security, procuratorate and court authorities etc.

2. Work related to most of the above types of cases was not included in the responsibilities of the Beijing Office when it was setting and hence no staff or financial resources were set aside for it. The Beijing Office has so far managed to carry out these extra tasks by internal redeployment of staff and other resources, and has not applied for additional manpower resources in this aspect in the 2000/01 Draft Estimates. We shall continue to monitor the situation and keep it under review when necessary.

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Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 004

Question Serial No.

0495

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 – Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question : Regarding ‘continue to provide practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland’ under ‘Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2000-01’, what kind of practical assistance does it refer to? How much provision does this area of work need?

Asked by : Hon HUI Cheung-ching

Reply :

The Beijing Office will continue to provide the following practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland:

- (1) for loss of travel documents and monies cases, after confirmation of the identity of the Hong Kong resident, we will provide the following assistance: issuing Entry Permit for their return to Hong Kong; contacting their family in Hong Kong for remittance to settle their expenses incurred in the Mainland; providing information to them regarding the application for exit permit from the Mainland authorities and making arrangement for their transportation to HK;
- (2) for HK residents seeking assistance due to traffic accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travel or fatal cases requiring follow up actions with their families etc., we will contact the relevant Mainland authorities for immediate assistance. We will also liaise with the Mainland public security authorities for the return of confiscated travel documents of previously detained HK residents after their release.
- (3) the Beijing Office will work through the liaison network it has built up with the Mainland authorities at both the central and local government

levels to follow up cases involving detention of HK residents referred by the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau since August 1999. We will channel the requests made by the family or friend of the detained HK residents and reflect the case to the appropriate Mainland authorities, such as the public security, procuratorate and court authorities etc.

2. Follow up work related to most of the above types of cases is outside the area of responsibilities of the Beijing Office when it was set up and no staff or financial resources were set aside for it. The Beijing Office has so far managed to cope with these extra tasks by internal redeployment of staff and other resources which accounted for about 35% of the current resources allocated to the Immigration Section. In the 2000-01 Draft Estimates, no additional manpower and resources have been applied for in this aspect. We shall continue to monitor the situation and keep it under review when necessary.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO005

Question Serial No.

0595

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3501 Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question :

- (a) Please state the expenses incurred in the past year and those will be incurred in the next year by the Beijing Office in respect of entertainment.
- (b) Please state how many Central Government officials with their posts the Beijing Office met in the past year, and also the number of meetings and the major topics of discussion.

Asked by : Hon SZETO Wah

Reply :

- (a) In 1999-2000, the Beijing Office expended around \$300,000 on entertainment. In the coming year, we plan to strengthen and broaden our liaison network with CPG ministries/commissions and organisations. We will also pay more visits to different provinces, cities and autonomous regions. The estimated entertainment expenses will be around \$500,000.
- (b) In the past year, the Beijing Office has established a liaison network involving some 30 ministries/commissions of the Central Government and representative offices of 30 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in Beijing. The number of officials we met each time varied between 3 and 10. Since we maintain frequent contacts with these ministries and commissions, we have not made any specific record on the number of such meetings and dialogues. The Director, Beijing Office liaises mainly with officials at ministerial level, with some at director-general or director levels. Other staff of the Beijing Office largely liaise with officials at director or division chief level.

As regards the topics of discussion, they generally cover the relevant functions/responsibilities of the ministries/commissions concerned, and issues of interest to the HKSARG. They include the latest developments and changes to the Mainland's policies or practices in major areas; progress on China's entry to the WTO and opening up of markets; HKSARG's participation in the activities celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the Reunification of Macau; development plans in Hong Kong and the Mainland; co-operation in the development of science and technology and Chinese medicine; admission of talents scheme; transportation matters and assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 006

Question Serial No.

0596

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office
Programme : (1) Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question : Regarding 'broaden its liaison network with the CPG and other Mainland authorities/organisations' under 'Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2000-01', what will be the specific work to be done? How much provision will it involve?

Asked by : Hon Ambrose LAU Hon-chuen, JP

Reply :

In 2000-01, the Beijing Office plans to strengthen and broaden our liaison network with CPG ministries/commissions and organisations. Through calls and meetings, we will brief them on the successful implementation of the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle and the Basic Law in HKSAR, and Hong Kong's developments in various aspects. We will also seek information from them on the Mainland's latest legislation, regulations, policies and measures in major areas, as well as specific developments.

In addition, the Beijing Office plans to pay more visits to different provinces, cities and autonomous regions in order to have a better understanding of their developments and to strengthen the liaison between the HKSAR and these areas.

To carry out the above plans, we estimate that our expenditure on duty visits, entertainment and major receptions/functions in the coming year will be around \$2.6m.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 007

Question Serial No.

0597

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question : From March 1999 when the Beijing Office was established till the end of December 1999,

- (a) in how many cases has the Office provided practical assistance to HK residents in the Mainland? Please provide details by categories. How many cases does the Beijing Office expect to process in 2000?
- (b) How many cases regarding detention of HK residents in the Mainland has the Office dealt with? Please provide details by categories. How many cases does the Beijing Office expect to process in 2000?
- (c) How many applications for entry to HK for visit, employment, investment, training, residence and education has the Office processed? Please provide figures by those categories.

Asked by : Hon James TO Kun-sun

Reply :

- (a) From March 1999 when the Beijing Office was established to end of December 1999, the Office had processed a total of 89 cases requiring assistance from Hong Kong residents. By categories, they are 21 cases involving loss of travel documents or monies, 53 detention cases and 15 cases relating to traffic accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travel, and fatal cases involving HK residents in the Mainland requiring follow up actions. It is not possible for the Beijing Office to forecast the number of HK residents who might run into the above situations in the Mainland or the number of cases to be processed in 2000.
- (b) From March 1999 when the Beijing Office was established to end of December 1999, the Beijing Office has processed 53 cases involving the detention of HK residents in the Mainland. Categories with the figures within the brackets are as follows: fraud (28), smuggling and tax evasion (10), robbery/drug manufacturing/explosion cases/rape/kidnapping (5), killing/ injuring with intent (4), official tort (2), corruption and bribery (2), loan dispute (1) and forgery of national currency(1). It is not possible for the Beijing Office to forecast the number of detention cases involving HK residents and the number of cases to be processed in 2000.

- (c) From March 1999 when the Beijing Office was established to end of December 1999, the total number of entry applications to HK handled by the Office is 11,036. Categories with the figures within brackets are as follows: visit (626), employment (8,592), labour importation (586), training (606), study (598), issue of HK Entry Permit to HK residents who have lost their HK Identity Cards (20), resumption of residence in HK(5) and taking up of career consular post in HK by diplomatic personnel(3).

Signature Signed on Chinese version
Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG
Post Title Director, Beijing Office
Date 15 .3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 008

Question Serial No.

0598

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office
Programme : 3501 Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question :

- (a) Since Beijing Office's establishment in March 1999, which HKSARG bureaux and departments have given instructions to the Office to discuss specific issues with the Mainland departments? What are these issues? With which Mainland departments? Please provide details.
- (b) Since its establishment in March 1999, with which Hong Kong commercial organisations in Beijing has the Beijing Office exchanged views? On what issues of common interests? What were the views of these organisations? Please explain in details by categories.
- (c) Has the Beijing Office exchanged views with foreign commercial organisations in Beijing on their concerns about the HKSAR affairs? If so, what were their concerns?
- (d) What were the contents of the two exhibitions held by the Beijing Office in Beijing and Tianjin? What will be the contents of the exhibition and "Hong Kong Week" held by the Beijing Office in Wuhan and Tianjin respectively? Will the Beijing Office bear all the costs? What are their respective budgets?
- (e) The Beijing Office has handled 230 public enquiries and assistance cases. Please give figures by categories.
- (f) Will the Beijing Office consider submitting to the Legislative Council half-year reports on its liaison work?

Asked by : Hon LEE Wing-tat

Reply :

- (a) Since the establishment of the Beijing Office in March 1999, many HKSARG policy bureaux and departments have requested the Office to seek information from relevant Mainland authorities or discuss specific issues with them. These bureaux and departments include Economic Services Bureau, Security Bureau, Constitutional Affairs Bureau, Finance Bureau, Planning and Lands Bureau, Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau, Education and Manpower Bureau, Home Affairs Department, Central Policy Unit, Trade and Industry Bureau, Immigration Department, Administrative Wing, Industry Department, Government Supplies Department, Trade Department, etc.. The CPG ministries/missions hence approached by the Beijing Office include the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, State Development Planning Commission, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, State

Economic and Trade Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Information Industry, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, General Administration of Customs, State Environmental Protection Administration, Government Offices Administration of the State Council, General Administration of Civil Aviation of China, China National Tourism Administration and Chinese Academy of Sciences. Issues discussed include the latest legislation, regulations, policies and measures; China's accession into the WTO and market opening; participation of the HKSARG in activities celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the PRC and the reunification of Macau; development planning of the Mainland and of Hong Kong; cooperation on innovation and technology as well as Chinese medicine; Admission of Talents Scheme; transportation; and assistance to HK residents in the Mainland.

- (b) The Beijing Office holds regular meetings with the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce in China to discuss and exchange views on important economic and social developments in the HKSAR and the Mainland, as well as on doing business in the Mainland. Issues covered include: business opportunities for Hong Kong arising from China's accession into the WTO, Mainland legislation and policies governing individual industries, Hong Kong's economic situation and outlook, CE's 1999 Policy Address, establishment of the Mainland/HKSAR Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade, Hong Kong's plans for innovation and technology and Chinese medicine, tourism development in Hong Kong, cooperation with the Mainland on environmental protection, Admission of Talents Scheme, etc..
- (c) Liaison with foreign business organisations in Beijing is not part of the Beijing Office's functions.
- (d) Through holding exhibitions the Beijing Office seeks to publicise in the Mainland the latest developments of the HKSAR after the Reunification covering areas such as government structure, implementation of "One Country, Two Systems" and the Basic Law, economic developments, innovation and technology, Admission of Talents Scheme and an overview of Hong Kong. So far we have organised exhibitions in Beijing, Wuhan and Shanghai at a total cost of around RMB370,000.

"Tianjin Hong Kong Week" will be held from 18 to 26 March. Besides an exhibition, the programme includes a trade seminar, food promotion, fashion show, cultural exchanges and a variety show. The expenditure on exhibitions will be borne by the Beijing Office. The costs for the Tianjin Hong Kong Week will be shared among the Beijing Office, Hong Kong Tourist Association and the Tianjin Municipal Government. Of these, Beijing Office's share is around RMB3m.

- (e) By the end of February this year, the Beijing Office has handled 157 cases involving assistance sought by Hong Kong residents and 121 public enquiries. Assistance cases include: commercial disputes in the Mainland (52 cases), complaints concerning real estate deals in the Mainland (42), complaints against Mainland administrative, law enforcement and judicial agencies (34), and marriage, employment and miscellaneous matters (29). As to public enquiries, these include trade and business matters (51), information about the HKSARG and Hong Kong organisations (60) and others (10).

- (f) The Beijing Office has no plan to submit to the Legislative Council half-year reports on its liaison work. Nevertheless each year the Director, Beijing Office submits a controlling officer's report to the Council on the work of the Office and budget for the scrutiny of the public and the Council. The Director also attends the Special Meetings of the Finance Committee to Examine the Draft Estimates of Expenditure and, upon invitation, other LegCo panel meetings to answer Members' questions. Should the need arise, the Beijing Office will be pleased to provide information to the Council on issues of interest to LegCo Members.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 009

Question Serial No.

0599

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :149
Beijing Office

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question :

- (a) Provision under 'General departmental expenses' for 2000 represents an increase of \$4.66m plus (44.8%) over the revised estimate for 1999. That is mainly due to the increase in activities to promote Hong Kong's image, the increase in activities to broaden the liaison work, the increase in demand for providing practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland, and the maintenance cost of the office premises. Please state the increased provision and the increase in percentage for those individual items.
- (b) Regarding 'the increase in activities to promote Hong Kong's image and to broaden the liaison work', what publicity activities will be organised? Will the contents cover HK's political structure under the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle, such as the mechanism of Legislative Council elections and other elections?
- (c) How do the authorities estimate the increase in workload regarding 'providing practical assistance to HK residents in the Mainland'? What will be the nature of the increased cases and the respective scale of increase by the authorities' estimate?

Asked by : Hon LEE Wing-tat

Reply :

- (a) The Beijing Office was formally established and commenced its operation in March 1999. In the absence of any precedence, we went through an exploratory stage in the early months. Expenditure in 1999-2000 was therefore lower than what had been estimated. In 2000-01, the Beijing Office plans to strengthen and broaden our liaison network with CPG ministries/missions and organisations. We will also pay more visits to other provinces, cities and autonomous regions, with a view to promoting Hong Kong's image and establishing liaison. The additional expenditure on duty visits, entertainment and receptions/functions will be \$1.5m, an increase of 136% over 1999-2000.

As regards the provision of practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland, the Beijing Office has earmarked \$1m for legal consultancy fees and subsistence allowance for our staff to visit local areas to get a better understanding of

some of the cases.

In 2000-01, the additional expenditure on office maintenance is estimated to be \$645,000, representing an increase of 322%. This is mainly due to the fact that the Beijing Office assumed the full maintenance costs upon the expiry of the warranty period since early 2000. Moreover, the estimated increase in expenditure on video conferencing, telephone charges, etc. will be about 18.7%, or \$1.5m.

- (b) One of the tasks which the Beijing Office would wish to carry out in the Mainland is to publicise the HKSAR's latest developments after the Reunification. These include the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy and the Basic Law, the economic, political and cultural developments in the HKSAR, as well as the political structure of Hong Kong and the Legislative Council elections.

To achieve this objective, the Beijing Office plans to organise publicity activities in about six Mainland cities in the coming financial year. Activities being contemplated include exhibitions, seminars, cultural events and other related programmes. The actual programmes will have to be worked out with the local authorities concerned and in coordination with other Hong Kong organisations, such as the Trade Development Council and the Tourist Association.

- (c) It is impossible for the Beijing Office to estimate the number of Hong Kong residents or cases requiring practical assistance due to loss of identification documents or money, traffic accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travel, fatal accidents and detention.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 010

Question Serial No.

0600

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 – Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question :

Beijing Office allocates resources for conducting negotiations on visa free access with foreign diplomatic missions who have embassies only in Beijing but do not have representatives in HKSAR. What are these foreign diplomatic missions, how many meeting have been held so far and any progress?

Asked by : Hon Howard YOUNG, JP

Reply :

The Security Bureau has asked the Beijing Office to conduct negotiations for visa-free access of HKSAR passport holders with the following embassies in Beijing which do not have career consular posts in HKSAR: Bahrain, Bulgaria, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malta, Morocco, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

2. The Beijing Office has successfully completed negotiations with the Embassies of Bahrain and Slovak Republic. Bahrain announced its decision in August 1999 to grant visas to HKSAR passport holders upon their arrival in Bahrain. Slovak Republic has also agreed in principle to grant visa free access for HKSAR passport holders and arrangements are being made for the signing of a Visa Abolition Agreement in HK soon.

3. The Beijing Office is continuing negotiations with the embassies of Morocco and Saudi Arabia. Further meetings will be arranged to complete the negotiations.

4. The Beijing Office has also commenced discussions on visa free access for holders of HKSAR passport with the embassies of Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The matter is being actively pursued.

Signature _____

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 011

Question Serial No.

0601

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head Government Secretary: Beijing Office

Subhead (No. & title): 205 Publicity

Programme : 3501 Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question: Under Sub-head (205), HK\$4,000,000 is allocated for publicity, what kinds of promotional functions and publicity activities are going to be conducted in 2000? How much provision will be involved for each type of function/activity?

Asked by : Hon Howard YOUNG JP

Reply :

One of the tasks which the Beijing Office would wish to carry out in the Mainland is to publicise the HKSAR's latest developments after the Reunification. These include the implementation of the " One Country, Two Systems" policy and the Basic Law, as well as the economic, political and cultural developments in the HKSAR.

To achieve this objective, the Beijing Office plans to organise publicity activities in about six Mainland cities in the coming financial year. Activities being contemplated include exhibitions, cultural events, seminars and other related programmes. Details of these programmes, including the budget for individual activities, will have to be worked out with the local authorities concerned and in coordination with other Hong Kong organisations, such as the Trade Development Council and the Tourist Association.

Media coverage of the publicity activities will also help promote the HKSAR.

In addition, the Beijing Office would also try to make arrangements for visiting HKSARG officials to brief the media in the Mainland on developments within their policy purview. The media reports will further help residents in the Mainland to have a better understanding of the affairs of the HKSAR.

Signature _____

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 012

Question Serial No.

1192

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office
Programme : (1) Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question :

What is the breakdown of the 230 public enquiries and assistance cases handled by the Beijing Office in the past year, analysed by nature? What are the detailed results of handling these cases?

Asked by : Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP

Reply :

By the end of February 2000, the Office has handled 157 cases involving Hong Kong residents seeking assistance and 121 public enquiries. Assistance cases comprise commercial disputes in the Mainland (52 cases), complaints concerning real estate deals in the Mainland (42), complaints against Mainland administrative, law enforcement and judicial agencies (34), and cases relating to marriage, employment and miscellaneous matters (29). As to public enquiries, these involve trade and business matters (51), information about the HKSARG and Hong Kong organisations (60) and others (10).

When handling public enquiries, we responded within one to two working days on simple cases; whilst for more complicated cases the response time normally did not exceed one week.

The Beijing Office's role, when handling cases seeking assistance, is to make referrals and provide information on redress channels. In fact, most of cases requested us to refer them to the relevant authorities in the Mainland. As regards other cases, the Beijing Office provides information to enable the complainants to seek advice from Mainland lawyers or seek redress through appropriate channels. In accordance with the principle of "One Country, Two Systems", the HKSARG does not interfere with the administrative or judicial matters in the Mainland.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 013

Question Serial No.

1193

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat :
Beijing Office

Subhead(No. & title) :

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question :

- (a) Regarding 'providing practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland' and 'handling cases involving the detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland', are there any performance pledge and measures for that? So far, how many help-seeking cases involving detention of HK residents in the Mainland have the government authorities received in total? What is the respective progress of these cases?
- (a) How many additional resources will be allocated for providing practical assistance to HK residents in the Mainland in 2000-01? How will these additional resources be used and what are the estimated effects?
- (b) At present, regarding 'handling cases involving the detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland', in what ways does the Beijing Office provide assistance? Are there any plans to strengthen assistance in this respect for next year?

Asked by : Hon LAU Chin- shek, JP

Reply :

(a) & (c)

Between 2.3.1999 and 29.2.2000, the Beijing Office received a total of 113 cases seeking assistance. Among them, 53 cases were received directly by the Beijing Office. The remaining 60 cases concerning detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland were referred to the Beijing Office from August 1999 onwards by the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau for follow-up action.

2. Of the 53 cases received by the Beijing Office, 26 involved loss of travel documents and monies. Upon confirming the clients' identity as Hong Kong residents, the Beijing Office provided the following assistance to them as their cases might require: issuing Entry Permit for their return to Hong Kong; contacting their family in Hong Kong for remittance to settle their expenses incurred in the Mainland; providing information to them regarding the application for exit permit from the Mainland authorities; and arranging for their transportation to HK, etc. The services provided by the Beijing Office to the remaining 27 cases were related to clients seeking assistance due to traffic

accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travels, or fatal cases requiring follow up actions with their families. In addition, the Beijing Office also liaised with the Mainland public security authorities for the return of confiscated travel documents of previously detained HK residents after their release.

3. The Beijing Office has worked through the liaison network it has built up with the public security, procuratorate and court authorities at both the central and local government levels in following up the 60 cases referred from the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau. On the whole, we have received earlier responses from these authorities on the enquiries we made on these cases. Some progress has also been seen, for example, prosecution procedures in some cases have been expedited, more information or explanation has been given on the current situation regarding some detained HK residents on their trials and appeals, and medical examination given to those who applied for parole on medical grounds.

4. The Beijing Office can normally issue entry permits to Hong Kong residents who have lost their travel documents in the Mainland within 2 working days for their return to HK. Regarding other cases requiring assistance including detention of HK residents in the Mainland, since the nature and complexity vary from case to case, there are no specific performance pledge or measures for processing these cases. The Beijing Office will channel the HK residents' requests to the relevant Mainland authorities and provide assistance as much as possible. In the next year, the Office will continue with this area of work.

(b). Follow up work related to most of the above types of cases was not included in the responsibilities of the Beijing Office when preparing for its establishment and hence no resource was set aside for it. The Beijing Office has so far managed to carry out these extra tasks by internal redeployment of staff and other resources, and has not applied for additional manpower resources in this aspect in the 2000/01 Draft Estimates. We shall continue to monitor the situation and keep it under review when necessary.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 014

Question Serial No.

1194

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question : Concerning the proposal to set up a notification system regarding the detention of HK residents in the Mainland, what is the progress? How many resources will be involved?

Asked by : Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP

Reply :

Upon instructions of the CE's Office and the Security Bureau, the Beijing Office held discussions with the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) under the State Council on the proposal to set up a notification system for HK residents detained in the Mainland. The HKMAO has taken the lead to exchange views and study with the relevant Mainland authorities on the proposal and its operation. A final decision has yet to be made. Since the proposed notification system will operate within the existing communication channel between the HKSAR and the Mainland, there is no need for the Beijing Office to acquire additional resources from the HKSARG.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 015

Question Serial No.

1306

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION

Head 35 – Government Secretariat: Subhead(No. & title) :
Beijing Office

Programme : 3502 HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Security

Question : Please state what practical assistance has been provided to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland by the Beijing Office so far and how will the additional resources for 2000-01 be used in this area?

Asked by : Hon Howard YOUNG, JP

Reply :

Between 2.3.1999 and 29.2.2000, the Beijing Office received a total of 113 cases seeking assistance. Among them, 53 cases were received directly by the Beijing Office. The remaining 60 cases concerning detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland were referred to the Beijing Office from August 1999 onwards by the Security Bureau through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau for follow-up action.

2. Of the 53 cases received by the Beijing Office, 26 involved loss of travel documents and monies. Upon confirming the clients' identity as Hong Kong residents, the Beijing Office provided the following assistance to them as their cases might require: issuing Entry Permit for their return to Hong Kong; contacting their family in Hong Kong for remittance to settle their expenses incurred in the Mainland; providing information to them regarding the application for exit permit from the Mainland authorities; and arranging for their transportation to HK, etc. The services provided by the Beijing Office to the remaining 27 cases were related to clients seeking assistance due to traffic accidents, injuries, illness, accidents during travels, or fatal cases requiring follow up actions with their families. In addition, the Beijing Office also liaised with the Mainland public security authorities for the return of confiscated travel documents of previously detained HK residents after their release.

3. The Beijing Office has worked through the liaison network it has built up with the public security, procuratorate and court authorities at both the central and local government levels in following up the 60 cases referred from the Security Bureau

through the Constitutional Affairs Bureau. On the whole, we have received earlier responses from these authorities on the enquiries we made on these cases. Some progress has also been seen, for example, prosecution procedures in some cases have been expedited, more information or explanation has been given on the current situation regarding some detained HK residents on their trials and appeals, and medical examination given to those who applied for parole on medical grounds.

4. Work related to most of the above types of cases was not included in the responsibilities of the Beijing Office when preparing for its establishment and hence no resource was set aside for it. The Beijing Office has so far managed to carry out these extra tasks by internal redeployment of staff and other resources, and has not applied for additional manpower resources in this aspect in the 2000/01 Draft Estimates. We shall continue to monitor the situation and keep it under review when necessary.

Signature _____

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000

Bureau Serial No.

BJO 016

Question Serial No.

1316

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head 35 Government Secretariat: Subhead.(No. & title) :
Beijing Office
Programme : (1) Liaison

Controlling Officer : Director, Beijing Office

Bureau Secretary : Director, Beijing Office

Question :

- (g) The Administration indicates that the Beijing Office has in the past 12 months handled over 230 public enquiries and assistance cases. Please provide detailed breakdown of these enquiries and cases, e.g. enquiry issues, nature of cases, etc..
- (h) Please provide details of the provision under Sub-head 205 Publicity. How many major events will the Administration hold in 2000-01? What will be the expenditure involved?
- (i) Regarding the balance of \$ 9.36m under Sub-head 700 item 001 (One-off setting-up expenses). Will the Administration use this balance in 2000-01? If so, what are the details?

Asked by : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Reply :

- (a) By the end of February 2000, the Beijing Office has handled 157 cases involving Hong Kong residents seeking assistance and 121 public enquiries. Assistance cases comprise commercial disputes in the Mainland (52 cases), complaints concerning real estate deals in the Mainland (42), complaints against Mainland administrative, law enforcement and judicial agencies (34), as well as cases relating to marriage, employment and miscellaneous matters (29). As to public enquiries, these involve trade and business matters (51), information about the HKSARG and Hong Kong organisations (60) and others (10).
- (b) The Beijing Office plans to organise publicity activities in about six Mainland cities in 2000-01. Activities being contemplated include exhibitions, seminars, cultural events and other related programmes. Details of these programmes, including the budget for individual activities, will have to be worked out with the local authorities concerned and in coordination with other Hong Kong organisations, such as the Trade Development Council and the Tourist Association. It is estimated that the Beijing Office will incur a total expenditure of about \$ 4m in this regard.

- (c) We plan to use part of the remaining balance of the item in this year for the following purposes: purchase of vehicles for the Beijing Office to replace the existing leased cars; installation of a dedicated telephone line to enhance communication efficiency and reliability; and payment of the outstanding balance for fitting-out works. The estimated expenditure is about \$ 4.2m.

Signature Signed on Chinese version

Name in block letters BOWEN LEUNG

Post Title Director, Beijing Office

Date 15.3.2000