

Bureau Serial No.

OMB 001

Question Serial No.

0449

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 114 - Office of The Ombudsman

Programme : Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer : The Ombudsman

Bureau Secretary : ---

Question: What measures will be taken by the Office for its plan to sever its link with the civil service and what are the resource implications?

Asked by : The Hon. Ronald Arculli

Reply : Under the delinking proposal, the Office will take over and operate its own administrative and financial support systems. It will recruit its own staff to replace civil servants serving on secondment to the Office. In concrete terms, this will involve:

- establishing new systems for human resource management
- establishing new systems for financial management and control;
- formulating recruitment policies; and
- formulating new terms and conditions of appointment for contract staff of the Office.

As the delinking proposals have not yet been discussed with the Administration, it is not possible to make a precise estimate of funding requirements beyond 2000/2001. However, in formulating proposals on the terms and conditions of appointment for staff of the Office, the Office will make reference to the pay and fringe benefit packages of other independent public organizations being funded by the general revenue. Where it is more cost-effective to do so, the Office intends to continue using support services currently being provided by Government departments. Apart from some commissioning costs, it is not expected that delinking will result in any significant net increase in the Office's expenditure. However, from a book keeping point of view, there will be significant increases in the accounts of the Office, which will have to be revamped to incorporate certain expenditure items that have hitherto been provided out of various departmental accounts throughout the civil service. These will primarily be accounting arrangements and would not

involve increased expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Alice Tai

Post Title The Ombudsman

Date 20 March 2000

Bureau Serial No.

OMB 002

Question Serial No.

1338

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 114 - Office of The Ombudsman

Programme : Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer : The Ombudsman

Bureau Secretary : ---

Question: The Office of The Ombudsman plans to delink further from the civil service so as to strengthen its independence. What is the timetable of this delinking exercise? What will be the amount of savings achieved or additional resources required by the Office?

Asked by : The Hon. Albert HO Chun-yan

Reply : The Ombudsman's working target is to commence delinking on 1 April 2001. Under current plans, the Office will take over and operate its own administrative and financial support systems from that day. It will recruit its own staff to replace some civil servants now serving on secondment to the Office. The Ombudsman intends that the Office will eventually be staffed predominantly by its own appointees. It is expected that until the Office has built up a sufficient level of expertise, a number of civil service secondees will be retained for sometime after delinking. The Office will discuss with heads of grades concerned on the phased transfer of civil servants back to the civil service.

As the delinking proposals have not yet been discussed with the Administration, it is not possible to make a precise estimate of funding requirements beyond 2000/2001. However, in formulating proposals on the terms and conditions of appointment for staff of the Office, the Office will make reference to the pay and fringe benefit packages of other independent public organizations being funded by the general revenue. Where it is more cost-effective to do so, the Office intends to continue using support services currently being provided by Government departments. Apart from some commissioning costs, it is not expected that delinking will result in any significant net increase in the Office's expenditure. However, from a book keeping point of view, there will be significant increases in the accounts of the Office, which will have to be revamped to incorporate certain expenditure items that have hitherto been

provided out of various departmental accounts throughout the civil service. These will primarily be accounting arrangements and would not involve increased expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Alice Tai

Post Title The Ombudsman

Date 20 March 2000

Bureau Serial No.

OMB 003

Question Serial No.

1339

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2000-01

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 114 - Office of The Ombudsman

Programme : Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer : The Ombudsman

Bureau Secretary : ---

Question: Under Sub-head 000, there is an increase in expenditure of about \$10M for Remuneration for Special Appointment, as compared with the 1999 revised estimates. This represents an increase of 80%. What are the reasons behind this increase?

Asked by : The Hon. Albert HO Chun-yan

Reply : The increase of about \$10M under Subhead 000 is made up as follows:

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
\$5M	This amount, comprising \$4M in salaries and \$1M in cash allowances in lieu of fringe benefits, is earmarked for the appointment of non-civil service contract staff in 2000/2001. This amount is currently included under the "Salaries" sub-head for the salaries of the serving civil servants and the central vote for their fringe benefits.
\$2M	End-of-contract gratuities for 5 non-civil service contract officers completing their contracts with the Office within the year.
\$2M	Earmarked for the creation of 1 Senior Complaints Officer and 1 Complaints Officer posts and the upgrading of 2 existing posts of Complaints Officer to Senior Complaints Officer in 2000/2001.
\$0.7M	This entry, which is being offset by an equivalent deletion from the central vote, is in

respect of housing and passage allowances for The Ombudsman. As The Ombudsman is a non-civil service appointee, allowances relevant to the post should be transferred to this Office's head of expenditure so as to give a complete picture of the funding requirement of the Office.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Alice Tai

Post Title The Ombudsman

Date 20 March 2000