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Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2014-15

The Ombudsman
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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**OMB001****(Question Serial No. 5782)**

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 719 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 255):

In the past three years, how many complaint cases against different Government departments and public organisations were received by the Office of The Ombudsman? How many of those cases were found substantiated by the Office? Please provide a breakdown by individual policy bureaux, Government departments and public organisations.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

Upon receipt of a complaint, we will first examine if it falls within the statutory purview of The Ombudsman and whether there is *prima facie* evidence for us to launch an investigation. For complaint cases screened-in, we will decide whether to pursue by inquiry, full investigation or mediation, depending on their nature. For cases concluded by inquiry, we will comment on whether any deficiencies or inadequacies have been found. For cases concluded by full investigation, we will decide whether the complaints are substantiated.

The following table provides a breakdown, by organisations, of the number of complaint cases received by this Office and their results upon completion of our inquiry/full investigation.

	Year								
	2010-11			2011-12			2012-13		
	(a) : Number of complaints received								
	(b)* : Number of cases concluded by inquiry/full investigation								
	(c) : Number of complaints substantiated/partially substantiated, with deficiencies or inadequacies found								
Organisation	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	58	37	9	17	20	4	166	136	119
Airport Authority	2	3	0	5	3	1	4	4	1
Architectural Services Department	11	3	2	13	2	1	11	4	3
Audit Commission	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0
Auxiliary Medical Service	3	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Buildings Department	341	290	124	290	225	97	260	160	50

	Year								
	2010-11			2011-12			2012-13		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
	(a) : Number of complaints received (b)* : Number of cases concluded by inquiry/full investigation (c) : Number of complaints substantiated/partially substantiated, with deficiencies or inadequacies found								
Organisation	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
Census and Statistics Department	5	0	0	10	1	1	6	1	0
Civil Aid Service	7	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	1
Civil Aviation Department	4	1	0	6	3	0	6	4	1
Civil Engineering and Development Department	19	12	1	8	5	1	13	6	1
Companies Registry	8	5	1	14	5	0	41	5	2
Consumer Council	26	14	7	32	16	4	26	8	2
Correctional Services Department	116	33	3	90	55	1	82	34	1
Customs and Excise Department	25	12	2	23	3	0	22	5	0
Department of Health	45	24	11	52	31	9	40	24	0
Department of Justice	22	2	0	13	7	2	31	3	0
Drainage Services Department	21	20	5	16	10	1	33	20	0
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	23	14	4	22	8	2	33	10	5
Employees Retraining Board	15	6	1	13	5	3	16	7	3
Environmental Protection Department	195	180	3	60	45	3	51	26	6
Equal Opportunities Commission	21	5	2	32	18	0	36	4	1
Estate Agents Authority	6	2	1	10	4	0	10	9	2
Financial Reporting Council	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire Services Department	50	16	1	41	19	3	68	16	4
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	459	334	203	559	396	190	611	318	180
General Office of the Chief Executive's Office	0	2	2	7	2	0	13	2	1
Government Flying Service	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Government Laboratory	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Government Logistics Department	2	1	0	4	1	0	1	0	0
Government Property Agency	10	5	3	5	2	1	5	1	0
Government Secretariat									
- Chief Secretary for Administration's Office	39	19	9	53	28	14	141	39	11
- Chief Secretary for Administration's Private Office	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
- Civil Service Bureau	13	1	0	6	0	0	12	2	1
- Commerce and Economic Development Bureau	7	5	1	11	5	0	162	3	0
- Constitutional and	8	2	0	2	3	3	4	2	0

	Year								
	2010-11			2011-12			2012-13		
	(a) : Number of complaints received (b)* : Number of cases concluded by inquiry/full investigation (c) : Number of complaints substantiated/partially substantiated, with deficiencies or inadequacies found								
Organisation	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
Mainland Affairs Bureau									
- Development Bureau	26	7	2	19	6	1	17	4	0
- Education Bureau	85	44	13	79	35	9	69	40	12
- Environment Bureau	6	2	0	3	2	0	2	1	0
- Financial Secretary's Office	6	1	1	5	2	0	1	0	0
- Financial Secretary's Private Office	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
- Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau	9	5	0	21	8	2	25	10	2
- Food and Health Bureau	4	2	1	10	2	1	5	4	2
- Home Affairs Bureau	7	2	1	17	8	1	12	3	1
- Labour and Welfare Bureau	3	4	3	4	3	1	8	2	1
- Security Bureau	12	3	2	2	1	0	3	0	0
- Transport and Housing Bureau	13	5	0	8	3	1	10	4	0
Highways Department	51	37	5	49	26	4	56	30	3
Home Affairs Department	141	98	31	142	84	17	415	65	11
Hong Kong Arts Development Council	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	1	0
Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority	26	13	3	23	14	3	17	8	2
Hong Kong Housing Authority	17	9	0	6	3	0	8	4	1
Hong Kong Housing Society	45	18	2	34	16	5	24	6	0
Hong Kong Monetary Authority	55	31	9	54	26	6	30	14	3
Hong Kong Observatory	3	1	0	3	0	0	4	0	0
Hong Kong Police Force	7	5	2	4	1	1	6	4	1
Hospital Authority	209	107	31	216	91	22	200	103	34
Housing Department	486	330	79	494	310	60	486	241	40
Immigration Department	113	50	16	117	44	11	166	31	5
Independent Commission Against Corruption	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Information Services Department	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
Inland Revenue Department	40	14	6	56	16	4	60	34	15
Intellectual Property Department	1	1	1	3	3	0	4	2	1
Invest Hong Kong	14	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Judiciary Administrator	67	9	4	50	11	1	66	14	0
Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Labour Department	79	43	6	98	34	8	115	46	5
Land Registry	11	4	0	12	3	0	9	2	1
Lands Department	458	378	45	387	249	52	334	188	62

	Year								
	2010-11			2011-12			2012-13		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
	(a) : Number of complaints received (b)* : Number of cases concluded by inquiry/full investigation (c) : Number of complaints substantiated/partially substantiated, with deficiencies or inadequacies found								
Organisation	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
Legal Aid Department	73	27	3	69	19	2	69	30	7
Legislative Council Secretariat	2	2	0	2	0	0	7	0	0
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	168	97	41	225	163	55	216	104	34
Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority	18	10	6	16	5	1	17	5	3
Marine Department	4	6	1	12	7	1	12	5	1
Office of the Communications Authority	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	9	2
Office of the Telecommunications Authority	20	11	3	34	9	1	0	4	0
Official Receiver's Office	12	8	2	36	21	14	191	12	3
Planning Department	177	170	3	29	15	0	16	7	0
Post Office	69	36	26	86	47	21	65	39	21
Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data	15	7	3	24	11	2	38	11	2
Radio Television Hong Kong	4	2	1	8	0	0	18	6	1
Rating and Valuation Department	17	9	4	11	4	1	19	8	2
Registration and Electoral Office	16	6	4	21	9	2	22	16	8
Securities and Futures Commission	55	42	1	32	14	4	15	4	0
Social Welfare Department	238	116	39	225	155	37	210	93	20
Student Financial Assistance Agency	41	33	16	40	32	6	33	15	6
Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority	6	1	0	9	4	2	0	1	0
Trade and Industry Department	6	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	0
Transport Department	173	98	26	173	118	20	216	111	28
Treasury	3	2	0	5	0	0	4	1	1
University Grants Committee, Secretariat	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Urban Renewal Authority	22	7	2	13	8	0	16	8	3
Vocational Training Council	16	4	1	19	7	3	11	5	3
Water Supplies Department	115	79	42	106	76	21	89	52	12
West Kowloon Cultural District Authority	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	4 841	3 094	883	4 545	2 655	747	5 404	2 263	765

* Including cases brought forward from the previous year and deducting those carried forward to the following year.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**OMB002****(Question Serial No. 5783)**

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operating Expenses

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 720 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 256):

Will the Office of The Ombudsman allocate additional resources in 2014-15 to conduct more direct investigations and make more comments and recommendations? If yes, what are the relevant work plans and estimated expenditure? If no, why not?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

The Ombudsman is empowered to conduct direct investigations ("DIs") in the absence of complaints. This power enables The Ombudsman to look at issues at a more macro level. Before deciding whether to launch a DI against an organisation or into an issue, we may conduct an initial assessment (called "DI assessment").

The number of DIs and DI assessments completed in the years 2010-11 to 2012-13 are given below:

	Year		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Number of DIs completed	6	5	6
Number of DI assessments completed	10	23	47

In 2013-14, we expect to complete 6 DIs and 21 DI assessments, similar to the numbers in the past three years. Regarding DIs, we have kept a close watch on issues of wide community concern and will consider initiating DIs even without relevant complaints received from the public. We will also deploy our resources flexibly based on actual needs in handling complaint cases. At present, we do not have any plan to allocate additional resources for conducting DIs in 2014-15.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**OMB003****(Question Serial No. 5784)**

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 719 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 257):

In the past three years, how many complaint cases relating to the Code on Access to Information did the Office of The Ombudsman handle annually? How many of these cases were found substantiated?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

On receipt of any complaint relating to the Code on Access to Information, we will first examine whether they come within the statutory purview of The Ombudsman, and whether there is *prima facie* evidence to warrant an investigation. Complaints screened in are pursued by way of inquiry, full investigation or mediation, depending on their nature. For cases concluded by inquiry, we will comment on whether any deficiencies or inadequacies have been found. For cases concluded by full investigation, we will determine whether the complaints are substantiated.

The number of complaints relating to the Code on Access to Information received in the past three years and the results of such cases concluded by inquiry and full investigation are given below:

		Year		
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
(a)	Complaints for processing	60	49	66
	- Received	42	39	59
	- Brought forward	18	10	7
(b)	Complaints processed	50	42	49
	- Non-pursuable*	8	7	15
	- Pursued and concluded	42	35	34
	(complaints substantiated/partially substantiated, deficiencies or inadequacies found)	(16)	(20)	(20)
(c)	Carried forward	10	7	17

* Outside our jurisdiction or restricted by The Ombudsman Ordinance, withdrawn by complainant, or discontinued or not undertaken by this Office, e.g. sub judice or lack of prima facie evidence.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

OMB004

(Question Serial No. 2591)

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Complaints Administration

Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)

Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman

This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 770 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 46):

Regarding the records management work in the Office of The Ombudsman for the past three years, please provide the following information:

1. The number of staff members dedicated to records management in different divisions and their ranks. If there were no dedicated staff for records management, please provide the number of staff members involved in records management, the number of hours they spent on records management work, and the scope of other duties concurrently carried out by them;
2. Please list in the table below details of programme and administrative records which were closed and pending transfer to the Government Records Service ("GRS") for appraisal:

Category of records	Period covered by the records	Number and linear metres of records	Year in which records appraised by GRS as having archival value	Confidential documents or not

3. Please list in the table below details of programme and administrative records transferred to GRS (before The Ombudsman (Amendment) Ordinance 2001 came into operation on 19 December 2001) for retention:

Category of records	Period covered by the records	Number and linear metres of records	Year of transferring records to GRS	Year in which records appraised by GRS as having archival value	Confidential documents or not

4. Please list in the table below details of records destroyed with the approval of GRS (before The Ombudsman (Amendment) Ordinance 2001 came into operation on 19 December 2001):

Category of records	Period covered by the records	Number and linear metres of records	Year of transferring records to GRS	Year in which records appraised by GRS as having archival value	Confidential documents or not

5. Please advise whether the Office of The Ombudsman has set up a division especially for records management since The Ombudsman (Amendment) Ordinance 2001 came into operation on 19 December 2001. If yes, please list in the tables under items 3 and 4 above respectively details of records transferred to that records management division and those destroyed with the approval of that division after the aforesaid Ordinance came into operation. If no, why not?

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply:

The number of staff members assigned with special duties of records management in this Office and their ranks are as follows:

Rank	Number
Senior Administrative Assistant	1
Administrative Assistant	6
Office Assistant	1

Since this Office formally became operational under The Commissioner for Administrative Complaints Ordinance on 1 March 1989, we have had full discretion to dispose of our records. We do not need to transfer records to the Government Records Service for retention.

When The Ombudsman (Amendment) Ordinance 2001 took effect on 19 December 2001, this Office was established as a corporation sole and formally delinked from Government's systems, procedures and practices. Since then, The Ombudsman has full discretion to make financial and administrative arrangements for this Office.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

OMB005

(Question Serial No. 4574)

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Complaints Administration
Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)
Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman
This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 770 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 67):

With regard to studies (if any) conducted by the Office of The Ombudsman on the formulation and assessment of policies, please provide relevant information in the following tables.

(a) Please provide in the table below information relating to the public policy study programme(s) and strategic public policy study programme(s) that were publicly funded in the past two financial years (2012-13 and 2013-14).

Name of consultant	Method of award (open bidding/ tender/ others (please specify))	Name of programme, content and purpose	Consultancy fee (\$)	Commence -ment date	Progress of study programme (under preparation/ in progress/ completed)	The Office's follow-up action on the study report and its progress (if any)	If already completed, were the results published? If yes, via what channels? If no, why not?

(b) Has any funding been earmarked for conducting consultancy studies this year (2014-15)? If yes, please provide the following information:

Name of consultant	Method of award (open bidding/ tender/ others (please specify))	Name of study, content and purpose	Consultancy fee (\$)	Commence -ment date	Progress of study programme (under preparation/ in progress/ completed)	The Office's follow-up action on the study report and its progress (if any)	If expected to complete this year, would the results be published? If yes, via what channels? If no, why not?

(c) What were the criteria considered in awarding the programmes/studies to the consultancy agency concerned?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

- (a) This Office had not conducted any public policy study programme in 2012-13 and 2013-14.
- (b) This Office had no plan, nor had any funding been earmarked, to conduct consultancy studies in 2014-15.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

OMB006

(Question Serial No. 4600)

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Complaints Administration
Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)
Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman
This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 770 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 100):

1. Please provide in the table below details of expenditure on entertainment and gifts incurred by your Office in the past three years.

Policy bureau / policy branch / department and year	Estimated expenditure on entertainment and gifts in the year	Actual expenditure on entertainment and gifts ultimately incurred in the year	Upper limit of expenditure (including beverages) per participant in the year	Upper limit of expenditure on gifts given to each guest in the year	Number of receptions and total number of guests received

2. Please provide in the table below details of expenditure on entertainment and gifts incurred by your Office in 2013-14.

Policy bureau / policy branch / department	Date of reception (Y/M/D)	Department / organisation of guests received (please list out the number of guests from each department or organisation) and their titles	Expenses on foods for the reception	Expenses on beverages for the reception	Expenses on gifts for the reception	Venue of the reception (office premises / restaurant at Government facilities / private restaurant / others (please specify))

3. Please provide in the table below details of estimated expenditure on entertainment and gifts in 2014-15.

Policy bureau / policy branch / department	Estimated funding for entertainment and gifts	Upper limit of expenditure on entertainment per guest	Upper limit of expenditure on gifts per guest

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply:

In the arrangement of official entertainment and meals, we have adopted Government principles and set the same upper limits on expenditure per person. At present, the upper limits for lunch and dinner are \$450 and \$600 respectively. Regarding gifts, our Office guidelines stipulate that officers should as far as possible refrain from giving souvenirs to others during official activities. Where presentation of souvenirs is necessary or unavoidable due to operational, protocol or other reasons, the souvenirs should not be lavish, their number should be kept to a minimum and be restricted to the exchange of souvenirs between organisations.

This Office does not have a separate account solely for official entertainment or procurement of gift items, so there is no estimated funding in this regard. The actual expenditure on entertainment and gifts incurred by this Office for reception of guests in the past three years are given below:

Year	Actual expenditure on entertainment and gifts in the year	Upper limits of expenditure (including beverages) per participant in the year	Number of receptions and total number of guests received in the year (excluding Office staff)
2011-12	Entertainment: \$25,913 Gifts: \$3,241	Lunch: \$350 Dinner: \$450	37 receptions and 596 persons in total
2012-13	Entertainment: \$89,004 Gifts: \$4,421	Lunch: \$350 Dinner: \$450	71 receptions and 1 155 persons in total
2013-14 (as at 28 February)	Entertainment: \$42,508 Gifts: \$2,217	Lunch*: \$ 350/450 Dinner*: \$450/600	54 receptions and 1 296 persons in total

* *Upper limits of expenditure revised on 17 January 2014*

Details of expenditure on entertainment and gifts incurred by this Office for reception of guests in 2013-14 (as at 28 February) are given below:

Date of reception (Y/M/D)	Department / organisation of guests received (please list out the number of guests from each department or organisation) and their titles (excluding Office staff)	Expenses on foods for the reception	Expenses on beverages for the reception	Expenses on gifts for the reception	Venue of the reception (office premises / restaurant at Government facilities / private restaurant / others (please specify))
2013/4/17	Expert, 1 person	\$588	-	-	Private restaurant
2013/5/2	Training Course on Civil Servants Management for officials from Guizhou Province, 45 persons in total	-	-	\$108	Office premises
2013/7/28	The Ombudsman of Thailand and delegates, 11 persons in total	\$7,000	-	\$1,529	Private restaurant
2013/7/29	The Ombudsman of Thailand and delegates, 11 persons in total	\$3,900	-	-	Private restaurant
2013/7/29	The Ombudsman of Thailand and delegates, 11 persons in total	\$6,300	\$430	-	Private restaurant
2013/10/17	Advisers and Justices of the Peace, 55 persons in total	\$23,100	-	-	Private restaurant
2013/11/29	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 9 persons in total	-	-	\$290	Office premises
2013/12/30	Expert, 1 person	\$510	-	-	Private restaurant
2014/1/2	Expert, 1 person	\$680	-	-	Private restaurant
2014/1/22	Internal and Judicial Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, 2 persons in total	-	-	\$290	Office premises

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

OMB007

(Question Serial No. 4653)

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Complaint Administration
Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)
Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman
This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 770 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 150):

Regarding the increasing cross-border collaboration between China and Hong Kong in recent years, please provide relevant information about cross-border projects or programmes that the Office of The Ombudsman has engaged in.

(a) Please provide in the table below details of the China-Hong Kong cross-border projects or programmes that the Office had engaged in from 2011-12 to 2013-14:

Name of project/ programme	Content and purpose, and whether it is related to the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/ Guangdong Cooperation	Expenditure involved	Names of Mainland officials, and departments or organisations involved	Progress (percentage of completion, commencement date and expected completion date)	Had the content, purpose, amount of money incurred, or impact on the public, society, culture or ecology been published? If yes, via what channels, and what were the manpower and expenditure involved? If no, why not?	Details of legal or policy changes involved in the programme

(b) Please provide in the table below details of the China-Hong Kong cross-border projects or programmes in 2014-15:

Name of project/ programme	Content and purpose, and whether it is	Expenditure involved	Names of Mainland officials, and	Progress (percentage of	Will the content, purpose, amount of money	Details of legal or policy

	related to the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/ Guangdong Cooperation		departments or organisations involved	completion, commencement date and expected completion date)	incurred, or impact on the public, society, culture or ecology be published? If yes, via what channels, and what are the manpower and expenditure involved? If no, why not?	changes involved in the programme

(c) Apart from the projects or programmes listed above, is there any other form of China-Hong Kong cross-border collaboration? If yes, what kind of collaboration? What were the manpower and expenditure involved in the past three years, and what are the expenditure and manpower earmarked for 2014-15?

Asked by: Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply:

- (a) This Office had not engaged in any China-Hong Kong cross-border projects from 2011-12 to 2013-14.
- (b) This Office does not have any China-Hong Kong cross-border project or programme in 2014-15.
- (c) Since 1996, this Office has maintained an exchange programme with the Ministry of Supervision of China and occasional visits between both parties are arranged to learn about each other's systems of government administration and complaint handling. This programme is not related to the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Cooperation. The most recent visit was made to the Ministry of Supervision of China in 2011-12 and the expenditure incurred was HK\$68,105.

The estimated expenditure for the exchange programme in 2014-15 is HK\$100,000.

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

OMB008

(Question Serial No. 5286)

Head: (114) Office of The Ombudsman
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operating Expenses
Programme: Not Specified
Controlling Officer: The Ombudsman (Alan N LAI)
Director of Bureau: The Ombudsman
This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume 1 Page 722 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 62):

What is the estimated expenditure of the Office of The Ombudsman for duty visits to and exchanges with mainland China in 2014-15? Please provide the themes of the duty visits to and exchanges with mainland China under planning in 2014-15. What measures will the authorities concerned take to avoid engaging in activities not related to such visits? How can the authorities concerned prevent subsequent applications for changing the destinations from being a mere gesture?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yuk-man

Reply:

The estimated expenditure of this Office for duty visits to and exchanges with the Ministry of Supervision of China in 2014-15 is HK\$100,000. Such visits and exchange programmes aim to promote understanding between both parties on enhancing public administration and complaint handling mechanism. Prior to a duty visit, we screen the itinerary provided by the host and request to have activities not related to official duties removed. After the visit, participating officers are required to submit a report to The Ombudsman. Where The Ombudsman himself participates in an exchange programme, he must submit a proposal to the Chief Executive for prior approval.