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### Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2019-20

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Session No. : 6

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CMAB01**

**(Question Serial No. S032)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): Not specified  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(TANG Yun-kwong)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in Reply Serial No. CMAB016 and CMAB017 that the actual expenditure in 2018-19 was about \$10.5 million, of which about \$2.7 million was incurred by the symposium. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of other expenditures for the relevant work in 2018-19?
2. What is the breakdown of the \$2.7 million incurred by the symposium?
3. Given that the estimated expenditure of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) in 2019-20 is about \$38 million, of which about \$21 million is staff cost on civil service posts, what is the breakdown of the remaining estimated expenditure?
4. Given that the reason for not setting any performance indicator for the Office is that "the work of the Office cannot be quantified", please further explain (a) why it cannot be quantified and (b) whether there is any value-for-money audit or method for evaluating work efficiency.

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

The expenditure for the publicity and promotion of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area) in 2018-19 was about \$10.5 million, of which about \$2.7 million was incurred by the symposium; about \$2.61 million by the production and broadcast of promotional clips; about \$4.1 million by the production of publicity posters of the Greater Bay Area for display at MTR stations, bus shelters and the Central Government Offices; about \$770,000 by promotion on social media; and about \$320,000 by the setting up of a dedicated website on the Greater Bay Area.

2. Among the \$2.7 million incurred by the symposium, about \$850,000 was the cost of venue hire and related services; about \$260,000 was the production cost of the symposium's information kit containing, among others, the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Outline Development Plan) and a Fact Sheet on the Greater Bay Area; about \$700,000 was the production cost of promotional clips; and about \$890,000 was the expenses for overall production and technical support etc.

3. The estimated expenditure of the Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) in 2019-20 is about \$38 million, of which about \$21 million is staff cost on civil service posts and about \$17 million is other expenses. The breakdown items of other expenses include an estimated expenditure of about \$9 million for office equipment, duty visits and meetings, and annual administrative costs; and an estimated expenditure of about \$8 million for publicity and promotion.

4. The work priorities of the Office for 2019-20 include the following: to carry out promotion and publicity work and disseminate information to deepen the understanding of the public and industries on the development of the Greater Bay Area; to co-ordinate with relevant central ministries/departments, the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government as well as the relevant bureaux/departments of the Hong Kong SAR Government; and to formulate annual work priorities to take forward the development of the Greater Bay Area. The Office will maintain close liaison with Members of the Legislative Council, industries, business associations, professional bodies and relevant stakeholders to gauge their views on the effective implementation of the Outline Development Plan to ensure that the relevant measures can best meet the needs of various sectors of the community. As for publicity, we will increase the frequency of screening Announcements of Public Interest on television and radio, promote the dedicated website, social media pages and WeChat official account, etc. The Office has also planned to produce promotional clips, publish publicity materials and organise exhibitions on the Greater Bay Area in the coming financial year. The Hong Kong SAR Government hopes that the publicity programme can help enhance public understanding on the Greater Bay Area Development and the Outline Development Plan, and encourage the community to seize the opportunities afforded by the Greater Bay Area Development. Since the above work can hardly be quantified, we have not set any performance indicators in this respect. In accordance with the Government's established principle of prudent fiscal management, we will review the work and resources of the Office having regard to the progress of the development of the Greater Bay Area to achieve the best value for money.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****S-CMAB02****(Question Serial No. S033)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): Not specified

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(TANG Yun-kwong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in Reply Serial No. CMAB012 that a sum of \$17 million would be set aside in 2019-20 for promoting the Basic Law. The Government stated that it will organise “various promotional activities via different means to enhance the public’s understanding of the ‘one country, two systems’ principle, the Constitution and the Basic Law”.

1. Please explain the reasons why the fund allocated to the promotion of the Basic Law is extended to cover the promotion of the Constitution.
2. Has the Legislative Council been consulted on the change of use of such fund? If no, what are the reasons?
3. With regard to paragraph (c) of the reply, please set out in the table below details of the “Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme” implemented in the past year.

Sponsored organisation	Method of granting the fund (Open auction/ tender/ quotation/ others (please specify))	Title of promotion project	Duration of project	Number of participants	Amount granted (\$)

4. With regard to paragraph (c) of the reply, please set out in the table below details of the “Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme” implemented in the past year.

Research organisation	Subject of research	Research fund granted (\$)	Date of commencement (month/year)	Progress of research (under preparation/ in progress/ completed (month/year of completion))	Follow-up action taken on research findings and its progress (if any)	If completed, has the research report been released? If yes, through what channels; if no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (the Constitution) and the Basic Law form the constitutional basis of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the HKSAR). In accordance with Articles 31 and 62 of the Constitution, the National People’s Congress enacted the Basic Law, prescribing the systems to be practised in the HKSAR, in order to ensure the implementation of the basic policies of the People’s Republic of China regarding Hong Kong, namely “one country, two systems”, “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy. The HKSAR Government has the responsibility to encourage the general public to have a comprehensive understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. We have all along placed equal emphasis on the concepts of “one country” and “two systems” and included the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law in our Basic Law publicity and promotional activities.

2. The “Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme” and “Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme” provide sponsorship to non-governmental organisations or community organisations for staging various promotional and research activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as seminars, quizzes and debate competitions, in order to reach a wider audience. In general, the sponsored projects should be completed within 12 months upon approval of sponsorship. The guide to application, application form and results of applications in respect of the Schemes can be found at <https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/sponsorship/index.html>.

3. The total amount of sponsorship and total number of participants of the “Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme” and “Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme” are set out below:

Year	Total amount of sponsorship (\$)	Total number of participants of sponsored projects
2018-19	Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme: \$2,718,000 Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme: \$1,358,500	About 34 500

4. Details of approved applications under the “Basic Law Promotion Activity Sponsorship Scheme” in the past year are set out below:

Name of organisation	Title of project	Expected duration of project (Duration of project refers to the duration stated in the application form)
New Home Association Kowloon West Service Center	Get to know the Basic Law	June 2018 - May 2019
Heung Yee Kuk New Territories	承先啟後：中國傳統文化的傳承與開啟香港未來的發展*	September 2018 - April 2019
Hong Kong Community Network Limited	3D Augmented Reality (AR) “Basic Law” Prize Winning Game	December 2018 - April 2019
Wofoo Leaders’ Network	Basic Law Promotion By Mobile App	September 2018 - August 2019
Basic Law Foundation	The Journey to Hong Kong Basic “Law” and “History”	November 2018 - April 2019
Hong Kong New Arrivals Service Foundation Limited	社區共融是一家 — 《基本法》推廣計劃*	November 2018 - April 2019
Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong	The 18 <sup>th</sup> Basic Law Debating Competition	September 2018 - February 2019
Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong	《基本法》社區及學界推廣計劃 2018-2019*	August 2018 - May 2019
Hong Kong Youth Nurture Association	「一國兩制」與《基本法》標語創作比賽*	February - June 2019
Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong	《基本法》多面體 — 全港學生辯論賽系列2019*	January - September 2019
Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong	紀念《基本法》頒布二十九周年活動*	January - November 2019

Chinese Law Programme, Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong	Basic Law Public Lecture Series	March to October 2019
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\* The organisation in question only submitted the Chinese title for the project

5. Details of approved applications under the “Basic Law Promotion Research Sponsorship Scheme” in the past year are set out below:

Research organisation	Subject of research	Date of commencement (month/year)
Basic Law Foundation	香港社會法律文化研究 — 為下一階段推廣憲法和基本法提供方法依據*	January 2019
Hong Kong Policy Research Institute	《基本法》的認知水平及推廣方法評估*	January 2019
Tsinghua Law Association (Hong Kong) Limited	香港《基本法》推廣和教育現狀及對策*	January 2019
One Country Two Systems Youth Forum Limited	Strengthening Teaching Qualifications, Venue and Curriculum Design of Constitution and Basic Law Education – Experiences and Insights from the Mainland	January 2019

\* The organisation in question only submitted the Chinese title for the project

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****S-CMAB03****(Question Serial No. S034)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Rights of the Individual

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(TANG Yun-kwong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

With regard to Reply Serial No. CMAB028, please advise this Committee on the following:

1. The breakdown of the number of callers by biological sex (i.e. male, female, intersex, others etc.) and gender identity (i.e. male, female, male to female, female to male, others etc.);
2. How much of the annual subsidy is used for publicising the hotline? Are there any plans to step up publicity in future to make the services more accessible to the sexual minorities in need?
3. Paragraph (3) of Reply Serial No. CMAB028 gives a classification of the aims of calls, including enquiries about the sexual orientation and gender identity of callers and "related issues". In this connection, please advise whether there is a detailed classification of the "related issues". If yes, what is the classification and the respective number of calls?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis

Reply:

As at the fourth quarter of 2018, the PRIDE Line received a total of 2 420 calls. The breakdown of the number of callers by their biological sex and gender identity are set out below:

<b>Biological sex</b>	<b>Number of calls</b>
Male	1 848
Female	511
Intersex	7
Others	54



<b>Gender identity</b>	<b>Number of calls</b>
Male	881
Female	427
Male to female	869
Female to male	43
Others	200

2. As publicity is part of the overall hotline service, a separate breakdown of such expenditure is not available. Since the launching of the hotline service in January 2018, the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) has publicised the hotline through various channels, including setting up a dedicated page of the hotline service on social media, producing promotional leaflets for distribution by social welfare service providers, and promoting the hotline service at activities related to sexual minorities. The TWGHs is making further efforts to extend publicity coverage to different social media, and has planned to discuss co-operation with service providers targeting for sexual minorities with a view to promoting the hotline to the sexual minorities who have connection with these service providers.

3. As for the content of related issues enquired by callers, a breakdown of the information by callers' sexual orientation or gender identity is not available. In general, the issues are mainly related to interpersonal relationship, stress, physical and mental health, and problems with family/partners etc.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CMAB04**

**(Question Serial No. S029)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WONG See-man)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

With regard to Reply Serial No. CMAB082, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. As stated in the paper on the approval of the Finance Committee for reverting the Principal Executive Officer in the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) to permanent post last year (EC(2017-18)16), Elections Division 1 of the REO is responsible for making logistic arrangements for setting up polling and counting stations. Please provide the details of the logistic arrangements.
2. It is reported by the media that the REO has amended its methods of supplies collection after the 2016 General Election, where registers of electors are to be put into yellow bags and other supplies into red bags, and bags in both colours are to be counted before being transported. Please elaborate on a) the reasons for amending the methods of supplies collection; and b) the designation of the staff in charge of reviewing, amending and implementing the amended methods of supplies collection.
3. Has the Government set value-for-money indicators for the proper retention of the personal data of registered electors? If not, what are the reasons? When will a review be conducted?

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

The logistical arrangements made by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) for setting up polling and counting stations include arranging for contractors of transportation services to deliver electoral materials (e.g., furniture and stationery, etc.) in batches to all polling stations from about 2 weeks before the polling day. In addition, after the completion of counting of votes and receipt of notification from the REO, Presiding Officers are required to deliver the sealed packets of the Registers of Electors, ballot papers and other electoral documents in accordance with the delivery note to the respective District Collection Centres (DCCs) of the Home Affairs Department located in 18 districts for

temporary storage under police escort. Staff at the DCCs are required to acknowledge receipt of all documents using the delivery note. The REO will usually transport the aforesaid electoral documents to its warehouses for storage within 2 days after the election. The REO will also retrieve all other electoral materials (such as furniture and stationery) from all polling stations and transport them to its warehouses for storage within about 2 weeks after the election.

2. The REO will review work procedures after every election to improve the entire election workflow. After the 2016 Legislative Council (LegCo) General Election, the REO also conducted a review and implemented a series of improvement measures, including measures to improve the handling of electoral materials. All work procedures and the election workflow will also be reviewed after every election. Where applicable, the improvement measures will also be reflected in the operational manual of the polling staff for their implementation in subsequent elections.

3. The REO strives to ensure that the particulars provided by an elector will be used solely for voter registration and election-related purposes. Any person who wishes to copy electors' particulars in the register of electors for public inspection must obtain prior consent from the Electoral Registration Officer and undertake to use the particulars concerned solely for election related purposes, including specifying which election the particulars will be used. Members of the public or candidates requesting or copying the particulars in the register of electors, or requesting electors' address labels or Mailing Label System DVDs in accordance with the law are required to sign an undertaking to abide by the terms governing the use of electors' particulars. The extracted data on the DVD is also protected by a password. The members of the public concerned or the candidates are required to comply with the undertaking to properly destroy the relevant particulars or return them to the REO for disposal. Under the existing electoral legislation, any person who uses, reproduces or permits another person to use or reproduce the particulars in the register of electors for any purpose other than a purpose related to an election commits a criminal offence.

4. The REO has formulated internal guidelines and procedures regarding the handling of voter registration particulars and adoption of relevant data protection measures. Apart from regular circulation to staff of the guidelines on handling personal data and adequate training on personal data protection, briefings and training for electoral staff are also provided before every major election to remind them of the duty to ensure the confidentiality of electors' particulars when serving at the polling stations. The REO will review the relevant guidelines and arrangements on a need basis from time to time and make adjustment as appropriate in the light of the actual operational experience.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CMAB05**

**(Question Serial No. S030)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WONG See-man)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

According to Reply Serial No. CMAB087, between the 2016 and 2018 voter registration cycles, 14 electors were removed from the register of electors by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) after investigation. Please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Whether the investigation mentioned above included the check on the register of electors of the 2016 Legislative Council General Election upon request by a law enforcement agency, during which a copy of register was found missing as recently revealed by the media.
2. During a meeting with the media today, the Chief Electoral Officer said that the REO would shortly complete the review of the voter registration information of some 8 000 electors on the register concerned to see if there had been unusual changes since 2016. Please elaborate on what it means by "unusual changes". What are the relevant criteria?
3. As stated under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019-20, there is "the conduct of checks on electors in the current registers in respect of their registered particulars, including cross-matching exercise with other government departments". Please detail the investigation procedure of the REO after receiving a complaint about inaccurate voter registration information.
4. Further to the above question, please detail the staffing (including the government departments involved) for conducting the investigation and checks.

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

According to the Registration and Electoral Office (REO)'s records, among the 14 electors removed from the register of electors after investigation in the voter registration (VR) cycles from 2016 to 2018 due to suspected false statements in VR, none was a

registered elector assigned to the polling station located at SKH Tsing Yi Estate Ho Chak Wan Primary School (Polling Station Code: S2001) in Kwai Tsing District in the 2016 Legislative Council (LegCo) General Election.

2. The REO has completed the verification of the VR information of the 8 136 electors on the register concerned, in particular the VR records of newly registered electors and electors moving into or out of the constituency concerned since the 2016 LegCo General Election. No unusual situation or change was identified, such as suspected fraudulent applications for change of registration particulars, applications for changing residential addresses followed by applications for reverting them to the original ones within the same VR cycle, and residential addresses with multiple electors or multiple surnames of electors. The REO has also attempted to contact the 424 electors who have changed their registered residential addresses since the 2016 LegCo General Election to verify their registered particulars.

3. The REO implements various checking measures in every VR cycle, including the conduct of cross-matching exercise with other government departments on the registered particulars of electors, and inquiry process to improve the accuracy and completeness of VR records. The checking measures include cross-matching of the residential addresses of electors with the Housing Department, the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Home Affairs Department. After implementing or following up with the checking measures, if the REO has reasonable grounds to suspect that any of the registered residential addresses might not be the only or principal residence of certain electors, it will issue inquiry letters to the electors concerned for verification or updating of the registered addresses. Upon the completion of the statutory inquiry procedures, electors failing to respond will be removed from the final register.

4. The work of the REO in checking and verifying the particulars of electors is undertaken by a team comprising civil servants and non-civil service contract staff responsible for VR matters. The REO will allocate sufficient manpower and resources for conducting the relevant work in 2019-20. During the peak period of the VR cycle, the above-mentioned work will be carried out by a team comprising 131 civil servants (including 20 time-limited civil service posts) and around 500 contract staff. Regarding other government departments, since the work of checking and verification of particulars is performed as part of the daily duties of their staff, information on the staff establishment concerned is not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CMAB06**

**(Question Serial No. S031)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WONG See-man)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

With regard to Reply Serial No. CMAB083, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The total expenditure for the by-election held on 11 March 2018 is estimated to be around \$223 million. Please set out a breakdown of the actual expenditure for and details of the Legislative Council by-election for (a) Hong Kong Island Geographical Constituency, (b) Kowloon West Geographical Constituency, (c) New Territories East Geographical Constituency, and (d) Architectural, Surveying, Planning and Landscape Functional Constituency;
2. The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) has reserved about \$53 million in 2019-20 for the preparation and conduct of any possible by-elections. Please advise of the estimated expenditure for REO to prepare the Registers of Electors of the polling stations for any possible by-elections.

Asked by: Hon AU Nok-hin

Reply:

The total expenditure for the Legislative Council by-election for the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon West and New Territories East Geographical Constituencies and the Architectural, Surveying, Planning and Landscape Functional Constituency held on 11 March 2018 is estimated to be around \$223 million. The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) does not keep record of the relevant expenditure by geographical constituency or functional constituency.

2. The REO has reserved about \$53 million in 2019-20 for the preparation and conduct of any possible by-elections, including staff cost, publicity and other election-related expenses, such as the costs for hiring venues, postage, printing (including production of the Registers of Electors of the polling stations), etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CMAB07**

**(Question Serial No. S047)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WONG See-man)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Government has mentioned that “in the 2018 voter registration cycle, the number of electors removed from the register because of their failure to respond to the statutory inquiry process was 41 794. The Registration and Electoral Office does not have a breakdown of the number of electors who have been removed from the register by District Council (DC) constituencies”.

- (1) Please provide the number of electors removed from the register in the past 5 years.
- (2) The Government has replied that DC data was currently not available. However, such data is, for members of the public and this Committee, of high reference value in respect of the understanding of this question and the work of the Government. Will the Government prepare a breakdown by the 400-plus DC constituencies within this month? If so, when will it be available?
- (3) Did the 41 794 persons learn of their removal from the register, and how? Have they registered with the Government anew subsequently?

If so, how many of them have done so? What is the number of persons registering anew using the same address?

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Reply:

In the 5 voter registration cycles from 2014 to 2018, the numbers of electors removed from the register because of their failure to respond to the statutory inquiry procedures were 13 740, 41 661, 67 509, 29 576 and 41 794 respectively.

2. The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) has not maintained a breakdown by District Council constituencies for the number of electors who have been removed from the register.

3. In the 2018 voter registration cycle, 45 562 electors were included in the omissions list published on 1 June 2018 because of their failure to respond to the statutory inquiry procedures. The REO issued reminding letters on 31 May 2018 to these electors to remind them that they could either make a claim or respond to the reminding letter by 25 June 2018 to confirm that they were still residing at the registered addresses or to update their addresses so as to maintain their registration status, otherwise they would not be included in the final register to be published in July 2018. 3 768 electors made valid replies to maintain their registration status at that time and the remaining 41 794 electors were eventually removed due to their failure to respond. Among the above mentioned electors who were removed from the register, 1 020 persons applied to the REO for registration as electors again in the 2019 voter registration cycle, and 115 of them provided residential addresses which were the same as their registered addresses before the removal from the register.

- End -