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**Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in
examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-25**

Controlling Officer: Secretary General, Legislative Council Secretariat

Session No. : 4

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Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
LC001	1175	IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina	112	(-) Not Specified

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

LC001

(Question Serial No. 1175)

Head: (112) Legislative Council Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Secretary General, Legislative Council Secretariat
(Kenneth CHEN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary General, Legislative Council Secretariat

Question:

Regarding the administrative matters relating to the Legislative Council (“LegCo”), will the authorities inform this Committee of the following:

1. It is learnt that there are a number of vacant posts in the LegCo Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) at present, which may have a negative impact on the provision of Council business services in the long run. In this connection, please provide a detailed breakdown of the changes in the staffing establishment of the Secretariat in the past 3 years (including (i) the total number of staff members and (ii) the respective numbers of directorate and non-directorate posts, as well as the numbers of new recruits and departures, broken down by division), together with the number of vacant posts at present;
2. Please provide a detailed breakdown of the promotional activities for staff recruitment conducted by the Secretariat in the past 3 years, as well as the expenditures incurred by and the staffing establishment involved in conducting these activities;
3. Earlier on, there were multiple incidents of water pipe bursts or leaks on individual floors of the LegCo Complex. In this connection, please provide a detailed breakdown of the number of complaints received by the Secretariat in relation to water pipe bursts or leaks in the LegCo Complex in the past 3 years, together with the expenditures incurred by and the staffing establishment involved in maintaining and managing various building systems of the LegCo Complex; and
4. Have the authorities put in place any measures to improve the existing building systems to reduce the possibility of similar incidents recurring in the future?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- (1) (a) The total numbers of staff members in the Legislative Council Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) in the past 3 financial years are as follows:

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24# (#as at 13.3.2024)
Total number of staff members¹	653	659	642

- (b) In the past 3 financial years, the respective numbers of directorate and non-directorate posts, as well as the numbers of new recruits and departures in different divisions are as follows:

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24#	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24#	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24#
	Posts(establishment)			New recruits			Departures ²		
<i>Directorate</i>	15			1	0	0	2	1	1
<i>Non-directorate (broken down by division)</i>									
Administration Division ³	229	239		12	17	20	14	15	24
Council Business Division 1 and Public Complaints Office ⁴	41	59		4	3	1	4	4	4
Council Business Division 2	35	35		3	0	0	3	0	4
Council Business Division 3	29	29		2	7	1	4	6	1
Council Business Division 4	40	30		4	2	1	2	6	3
Human Resources and Accounts Division ⁵	67	51		6	9	6	6	6	8
Legal Service Division	24	24		2	2	3	1	1	1
Media and Public Relations Division ⁶	54	54		4	12	13	10	6	12
Research and Information Division ⁷	56	56		5	2	4	5	3	9
Translation and Interpretation Division	96	94		10	7	4	10	7	6
Total	686			53	61	53	61	55	73

¹ The situation on the last day of the year

² Including retirement and death

³ Formerly known as “總務部” in Chinese

⁴ Formerly known as Council Business Division 1

⁵ Formerly known as Complaints and Resources Management Division

⁶ Formerly known as Public Information Division

⁷ Formerly known as Information Services Division

(c) As at 13 March 2024, there were 44 vacant posts in the Secretariat, and the recruitment is progressing in an orderly manner.

(d) The current vacant posts in the Secretariat are concentrated at the ranks of the supporting staff (such as Administrative Assistant and Clerical Assistant), whose main duties are to provide administrative support and undertake document processing. Not filling the relevant vacant posts immediately will not have any impact on the current operation of Council business.

(e) In recent years, the Secretariat has adopted a number of information technology and artificial intelligence (“AI”) tools to significantly enhance work efficiency and cope with increased workload through workflow enhancement and automation. For example, since 2022, the Secretariat has been making every effort to promote paperless meetings and paperless office operation, including the establishment of the online Members’ Portal and the development of the Journal production system, substantially reducing the workflows arising from and the manpower required for producing paper documents. In addition, the AI-powered Automatic Speech Recognition System (“ASRS”) was officially launched in September 2023 to provide verbatim transcription services for the meetings of the Council and a number of committees, allowing Secretariat staff to swiftly generate complete and accurate verbatim records of the proceedings. Since January 2024, these transcription services have been extended to the meetings of all committees. ASRS will undergo further enhancements, and more AI-powered functionality modules, including smart translation tools, real-time stenography and voiceprint recognition, will be incorporated progressively. These tools will enable the Secretariat to better manage the existing workload without the need to fill all the vacant posts immediately.

(f) The introduction and application of emerging technologies have had a far-reaching impact on the Secretariat’s operation model. Before filling the vacant posts, the Secretariat must review the skill and quality requirements for each post to ensure that the talents recruited are well-suited to meet its evolving needs. In the short term, certain existing job categories may become redundant or require no additional manpower, thus freeing up resources to be re-allocated for the provision of new services that are more tailored and efficient for the Legislative Council (“LegCo”), its Members and the public. Therefore, staff recruitment must be conducted in a planned manner.

- (2) (a) The promotional activities for recruitment conducted by the Secretariat include:
- (i) Posting recruitment advertisements on popular job portals and the LegCo Website, as well as placing recruitment advertisements in newspapers;
 - (ii) Publicising the Secretariat’s job opportunities through online platforms and publications of universities, professional bodies and industry-related organisations to conduct targeted recruitment among relevant professionals; and
 - (iii) Participating in job fairs (including the recently held Hong Kong Top Talent Recruitment Fair 2024) to promote the job opportunities.

(b) The Secretariat’s publicity expenditures for recruitment in the past 3 financial years are as follows:

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at 13.3.2024)
Total publicity expenditure (\$)	132,000	163,000	234,000

(c) There are currently 22 staff members at the Secretariat’s Human Resources Office, including 2 Chief Council Secretaries, 4 Senior Council Secretaries, 5 Council Secretaries and 11 supporting staff, responsible for overseeing and/or executing tasks related to human resources management (including staff recruitment). Each staff member is required to undertake or support the promotion of the Secretariat’s recruitment for various posts at any time according to operational needs.

(3) (a) Since January 2021, the Secretariat has received the following number of complaints in relation to water pipe bursts or leaks in the LegCo Complex (“the Complex”):

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024 (as at 13.3.2024)
Water pipe leaks (cases)	82	105	94	18
Water pipe bursts (cases)	0	0	2	0

(b) In the past 3 financial years, the expenditures incurred for maintaining various building systems of the Complex are as follows:

Item	Responsible department	Financial year		
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at 29.2.2024)
Expenditure (\$)				
Electrical and mechanical facilities	Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (“EMSD”) (Providing services in accordance with the Service Level Agreement entered into with the Secretariat)	Around 17.3 million	Around 21.2 million	Around 21.4 million
Building facilities	Architectural Services Department (“ArchSD”)	Around 2.03 million	Around 3.7 million	Around 920,000
Total		Around 19.33 million	Around 24.9 million	Around 22.32 million

(c) The building systems of the Complex are primarily managed by the Secretariat’s Estate Management Office (“EMO”), while the repair and maintenance work is shared by EMO, EMSD and ArchSD. As at 13 March 2024, the staffing establishment of the Secretariat’s EMO is as follows, while EMSD and ArchSD have assigned relevant teams to handle the repair and maintenance work of the Complex:

Rank	Establishment
Chief Council Secretary	1
Senior Council Secretary	2
Council Secretary	1
Estate Management Officer	2
Senior Security Officer	1
Security Assistant I	4
Security Assistant II	5
Supporting staff ⁸	12
Total	28

- (4) (a) The recent water seepage incidents were related to the expansion project of the Complex. In this connection, the Secretariat has, through ArchSD which is responsible for overseeing the project, instructed the contractor to improve the waterproofing and leak prevention measures during construction. Furthermore, to prevent the recurrence of water pipe bursts or leaks, and to respond promptly to and mitigate the impact in the event of water accumulation and leaks, the Secretariat has, with the assistance of ArchSD, implemented the following waterproofing measures and works projects to improve the existing building systems:

	Waterproofing measures
(i)	Providing additional drains on the rooftop platform and at the vent duct rooms to drain the accumulated water
(ii)	Elevating the height of the chimney of the emergency generator room at the Complex to prevent the accumulated water from flooding into the generator room through the chimney when the platform drains fail to drain rainwater promptly
(iii)	Adding waterproofing layers to the walls and floors of the rooms housing important equipment (such as network rooms and switch rooms) to mitigate potential damage in the event of water seepage
(iv)	Installing water leakage detectors and drains at high-risk locations (such as pipe rooms and equipment stores)
(v)	Installing reinforced components at the joints of rainwater pipes to prevent leakage
(vi)	Replacing the water pipe fittings which have experienced multiple instances of water leakage
(vii)	Applying waterproofing tapes to seal the joints between the aluminium roofing sheets of the Chamber

⁸ Administrative Assistant, Clerical Assistant, Artisan, Office Assistant, etc.

	Waterproofing measures	
(viii)	Replacing the flush valve components inside all the pipe rooms to prevent leakage	
(ix)	Strengthening the waterproofing layers on the floors of the rooms located above Conference Rooms 2, 3 and 4	
Total expenditure (funded under ArchSD's "Maintenance of government buildings" Subhead)		Around \$4.15 million

(b) In addition to the aforesaid waterproofing measures, a number of enhancement measures have been adopted in the design of the newly built Members' floors of the Complex, which are constructed using the modular integrated construction method, to further reduce the chance of water pipe bursts or leaks occurring in the Complex in the future. The measures include:

- (i) Members' offices are assembled from three modules. After the pre-fabricated units are fitted together, the gaps between them will be promptly sealed and filled with waterproofing materials. A concrete floor and waterproofing layer will also be added on the roof of the top floor of the pre-fabricated units (i.e. 14th floor) to prevent rainwater from seeping into Members' floors;
- (ii) Pantries, toilets and water pipe rooms are all stand-alone modules, with a kerb separating each of them to prevent water leakage from spreading to adjacent areas when it occurs. Additionally, water leakage detectors will be installed both inside and outside these rooms. Upon detecting water leakage, the detectors will immediately send signals to the building management system to enable timely follow-up actions;
- (iii) The glass curtain wall features a multi-layer leak prevention design and is subject to various water pressure tests before installation. Upon completion of the overall assembly of the curtain wall on-site, further leak detection tests will also be conducted;
- (iv) The roof garden on the 11th floor is equipped with ample drainage points. The ground level of the garden is set lower than that of the floor to prevent rainwater from seeping into the floor area; and
- (v) Detecting devices will be installed in drainage pipes to monitor and provide early warnings of pipe blockages.

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